

Carsey Diary

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main highway has definitely hampered our chances of success . . .

Paul Schweizer has landed 12 or 15 miles from the road twice, and has had a very hard time getting word back, and his crew has been delayed in finding him for 5 or 6 hrs. each time. Last night it took him 6 hrs. to communicate with Ernie . . . His crew had gone the wrong way, too . . . I must say one thing for the Spanish: They have worked out a system for calling back (when the pilot can get to a telephone) that is nearly perfect (provided there is anyone at the "Recuperacion" that is intelligent, and there have been one or two exceptions) . . .

. . . They have given each pilot a letter (in Spanish) to the police that really alerts them. They get busy, and call by telephone, giving a sort of distress signal that gets the call through immediately. They also guard the ship, as the letter instructs them to, and find the pilot a place to rest and send for him when his crew arrives . . . These police are national police, and are everywhere along the roads, in some places standing about a mile apart, as though they were guarding a military installation . . . It is not too difficult to find the pilots, once the crews get a location, or the vicinity of the locations, since the Spanish talk so much. The drivers of the Unimogs are Spanish, so they can ask anyone along the road. Within an hour after the ship has landed, I'm told, the grapevine has carried word of it about 25 mi. in all directions . . . This, of course, does not work in the more remote, or sparsely settled, areas . . .

MADRID, Friday, July 11—Today's task is a speed dash to the same airfield as on Monday, 123 kms. from Madrid (place not on the map) . . . No word from any of the pilots or crews at 5 P.M. All our boys got away in their proper places . . .

MADRID, Saturday, July 12—The contest ended with yesterday's speed dash. Dick Johnson got enthused, and won the event (Ed. Note: As previously noted, Johnson broke the record.) . . . Our only hopes of a good showing were in Beuby and Charles, who were in second or third place in two-place competition until yesterday. They might have won first in two-places, but in some way missed the goal, when most all the other made it, which, of course, dropped them way down . . . Wolf Hirth¹³ and Gehriger have talked up a "get-together" for all at the Aero Club at the field for this evening . . . Finally was able to borrow a magazine type camera from the British cameraman. I'll need a filter for it, since my magazine film is type A . . . I've taken all of E. J.'s¹⁴ film, and hope to use some of mine to get some of the things I'd like to get and some of the people I haven't gotten . . .

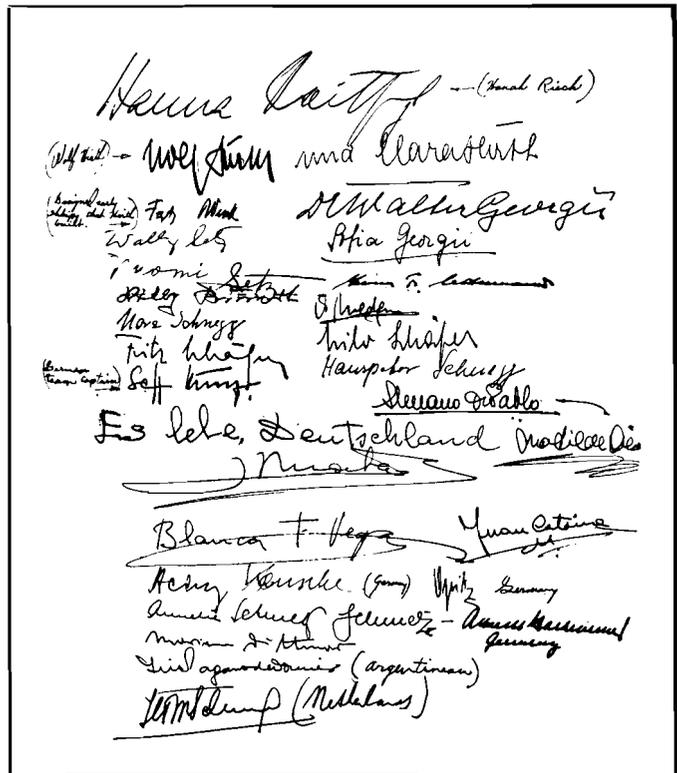
MADRID, Sunday, July 13—It's all over now, except the Awards Banquet tonight . . . We didn't win, but made a showing and learned what to do next time . . .

. . . There were many contributing factors to our disappointment. The principal one, I think, was our lack of good meteorological advice. We had no one

¹³Wolf Hirth, world famous German aircraft designer and soaring enthusiast.

¹⁴E. J. Reeves, Dallas, Tex., President, Texas Soaring Association

to analyze the conditions in whom our boys would place confidence, so they went in all directions except the right one . . .



International Autographs Secured at Awards Banquet

. . . Those who won went the same route, east or northeast, every day. They had been here for a week's practice, and I believe, decided before the contest started that that was the best choice, regardless of weather reports . . . Dick Johnson had hard luck the first contest day. I'm sure he was afraid of losing his ship. Many ships were badly damaged in the rough terrain, some of them complete losses . . .

MADRID, Monday, July 14—The Awards affair was quite something. It began at 9 P.M. and lasted until 7 A.M. I left about 5 A.M. . . . I met many of the people, and enjoyed talking with them and knowing them a little . . . Hannah Reitsch¹⁵ is a surprisingly nice person . . . She had tears in her eyes when she said she wished people of different countries would know each other better and would not "make wars" . . .

¹⁵Hannah Reitsch, world-famous pre-war German soaring pilot. A former top-ranking member of the Hitler regime.

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