

● Carsey Diary

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MADRID, Thursday, July 3—Got a mimeo "General Information" sheet long after everything was fouled up . . . They can't understand us, or we them, even with an interpreter . . . But they do try, and come up with something occasionally . . . I'm trying to pretend everything is fine . . . Everything is scattered from hell to yonder over the field, and we walk ourselves down trying to keep up with things . . .

MADRID, Friday, July 4—Yesterday, Thursday, first contest day, Dick Johnson landed on top of a mountain and hit a rock, ripping out a panel of plywood covering just behind the skid and breaking one bulkhead . . . Also hit a rock with left wing tip . . . Fortunately, Dr. Klemperer¹⁰ brought two Austrians with him who are good woodworkers, and there is an airplane factory on the field . . . They jumped on it, and will have it ready for Monday's contest flying . . .

. . . The first 10 gliders in the takeoff order took off in a "wave" with each tow plane about 300 ft. behind the glider on tow immediately in front of him . . .

MADRID, Saturday, July 5—Attended July 4th reception at U. S. Embassy. Hundreds of people there . . . More spoke foreign languages than spoke English . . . We went in a taxi and were met at driveway gate by a Marine officer, who presented us individually to the Ambassador and his niece . . . We were served hors d'oeuvres, wines, and mixed drinks. We stood in the drive, as there were so many people standing we couldn't walk about without knocking drinks out of each other's hands . . . We stood for about two hours, from about 8 to 10 o'clock. The Ambassador and his niece disappeared about 9. Remarks were soon rife that we should leave so that he could go to sleep . . .

MADRID, Sunday, July 6—Two bus loads of us went to Segovia, an ancient town of Spain . . . One of the buses broke down before we left, delaying our start two hours . . .

. . . Had dinner one night at Ritz Hotel with Fran Hall . . . A beautiful place. Dinner is served in the patio outside. It is overlooked by a terrace. Two bands played . . . Left about 1 A.M. Cost about 125 pesetas (\$1.60 each) . . .

MADRID, Monday, July 7—The task for today was a speed dash to Torresavinan, 123 kilometers, or about 75 mi. from Cuatros Vientos. Takeoff time was 1:30, and all were away about 2:30 . . . Conditions were not supposed to be too good, but by takeoff time they had become pretty good, and all of the 56 or 57 pilots except 3 or 4 made the goal . . . Best time was by Wills (England), 1 hr., 24 min. . . . (Ed. Note: Four days later, Dick Johnson flew the same route in 1 hr., 9 min., for a new world's record.) . . .

. . . Since the first morning (after complaints about the obvious danger in the "wave" takeoff), they have been allowing about one minute between tows, which spaces them several hundred yards apart but enables them to get off within an hour . . .

. . . Pilots' meetings are impossible. Discussions are always in several languages, usually in Spanish first, then in French and English. By the time the

English is given, all is in confusion . . . This was especially true of the meteorological report on Saturday . . . We finally gathered from all that was said that there was a frontal condition in the north-west, and a low in the east, and that the winds were truly "Cuatros Vientos" ("Four Directions") . . . The Spanish "met." man finally volunteered to admit that he didn't know which way the wind would blow in any part of the country as the day wore on . . . Our boys (except Dick, who was out) decided to go west, which proved to be wrong. The only people to make their goals were the French, who have their own weatherman. . . **Sure looks bad for us . . .**

MADRID, Tuesday, July 8—After all ships were in position, it was declared a no contest day because of weather. Sky was nearly overcast with stratus and cirrus clouds . . . Before the announcement was made, Paul Mac. and two or three others had been towed aloft. Paul and an Australian remained up for quite a long time . . . Paul came down after 1 hr 45 min., and said he was getting 8 to 10 ft. per sec. up . . .

MADRID, Wednesday Night, July 9—Contest today was an open distance day. Sky looked about like yesterday, but no wind. All our boys got away on their first tow, and we've not heard from them . . . It's practically impossible to call the field from here. I'm at the hotel. And equally as bad from the field to here . . . so bad that I don't try it . . . Wally Setz just called and said he and Naomi (Mrs. Setz) were invited somewhere by the Time-Life correspondent, and that I should be ready by 9 P.M., about 20 minutes, so I'll have to hurry . . .

MADRID, Thursday Noon, July 10—Today is a no contest day. Yesterday was a distance day, and some of the pilots won't get back until tonight . . . Ernie Schweizer, his wife, Marion Smith and Fran Hall were just in here. Ernie reported that Dick J. made only 190 kms., which is about the average for all others of our team . . . Kuettner¹¹ was supposed to be our weatherman, but was ill early, and got to the field just after all pilots were in the air. Paul S. and Paul Mac. were contacted by radio, and given Kuettner's decision on the best direction. Either they chose to go their own way, or his advice was poor, for those who went the opposite direction made the greater distances . . . Only one, or maybe two, more contest days . . . We are sunk unless Bill Beuby and Shelly Charles can have some good luck . . . I'm still in my room this morning, because the "tourista" (Ed. Note: Polite translation, "Tummy twubble.") finally caught up with me . . . It is now 11:30, and I'm beginning to feel better . . . Took a couple of Bill's¹² pills . . . They are improving the situation . . . Several of the others have taken them, too . . .

MADRID, Thursday Night, July 10—Our pilots have been cautious without anyone telling them to be. I think that is one reason we are way behind . . . The roads are so poor, and transporting so difficult, along with the language problem, that if they don't fly near a main road, they might be lost for days . . . I think their effort to stay in sight of a

¹⁰Dr. Wolfgang Klemperer, America's most famous figure in soaring. Honorary V.P. of S.S.A.

¹¹Dr. Joachim Kuettner, meteorologist; lately with Bishop Wave project.

¹²Dr. Willard C. Sellman, Jr., Dallas, Texas, Member, Texas Soaring Association.