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PIEDMONITOR

News about Piedmont. The Up-And-Coming Airline.

Piedmont's first 737-300 began taking shape last month at Boeing's plant in Renton, WA. In the background are 737-300s being assembled for other carriers.



737-300 to fly PI colors first time in April

Piedmont's first 737-300 — our aircraft of the future — will arrive next month from Boeing.

The new aircraft has one of the lowest seat-mile cost and overall noise levels of any commercial airliner of its type. It will give us greater scheduling flexibility, fly more passengers while consuming less fuel, and provide airports served by Piedmont with one of the quietest aircraft in production today.

Boeing already predicts that the 737-300 will be one of the best selling aircraft the company has ever produced. Sixteen airlines will be flying the 737-300. Boeing has firm orders for more than 162 of the aircraft and there are options on many more. USAir and Southwest already have 737-300s in service, and the aircraft is performing well with a dispatch reliability in excess of 99 percent. USAir has firm orders totaling 30, and Southwest, 31. Piedmont has ordered 18 737-300s with options on 15 more.

"The 737-300 fits with what we have and that's what I like about it," Gordon Bethune, senior vice president-operations, said.

"Because it's not radically different from the 737-200, it will be easier to integrate into our fleet.

"The aircraft will offer us marketing flexibility and save us money in training expenses because of its commonality with the 200. And since almost 60 percent of its parts are the same as those on the 200,

we won't have to build up two completely separate inventories.

"The 737-300 is going to be an exciting aircraft, one that will help to ensure our future growth," he said.

appearance

Because the 737-300 is so similar in appearance to the 737-200, the 737-300 will have a special design on its tail for identification. Three thin blue stripes and the name "737-300" in red will appear on the lower portion of the tail structure, and logo lights, positioned on the wings, will be directed at the name.

With the 737-300, Piedmont will also introduce a completely new interior that coordinates with our white, red, and blue on the outside of the aircraft.

The fabric for the seats will be wool because of its durability instead of the polyester currently used, and the new colors will give the interiors a bigger and brighter look.

Two styles — one for all coach and the other for coach and first class — have been designed for the aircraft. The first three 737-300s will be all coach, each with 138 seats. The next five we receive this year will have eight first-class seats and 120 in coach and will be fitted with auxiliary fuel tanks. These five long-range aircraft will have audio systems like our long-range 727-200s. Current plans are for the

remaining 10 aircraft on order to be all coach.

"We have an interior that will provide us with a great deal of flexibility," Bethune said.

"If we decide that we need an all-coach configuration rather than two classes, we can convert the interior overnight. If a market doesn't materialize, there's no loss. We can quickly adapt for another schedule."

pilot training

"Our pilots are very excited about the new aircraft," Captain C.D. McLean, director-flight training and technical support, said.

"We think it will be one of the most fuel-efficient because of its state-of-the-art computer system. The auto pilot and flight management computer system are efficient and easy to operate. In reality, the captain can just key in a program and the computer will fly the plane, including navigation and automatic landing."

One of the primary advantages of the 737-300 is its similarity to the 737-200 in the cockpit. From the pilot's standpoint, the 737-300 will physically fly like the 737-200 and instruction on the new aircraft will not be as time-consuming or complicated as it would be on a totally different aircraft.

By the time the first 737-300 arrives in April, 68 GSO-based

continued page 5



A Boeing employee works on the tail section of our first 737-300.

With this issue, the frequency of the Piedmonitor will grow from six issues annually to 11 each year. If you have a story idea or items of interest, your input is welcomed. The Piedmonitor is published to keep you informed about your Company and its employees. Just call extension 5545 or write to the editor at A390 with your suggestions.