



(Left: Maxine Walker, Right: Louise Smith)

INTERNATIONAL AIR RACE

. . . Maxine Walker

The International Air Race is sponsored by the Florida Chapter of the Ninety-Nines, Inc. which is an International Organization of licensed women pilots. The IAR is co-sponsored with another government each year. The race this year was co-sponsored by the Cuban Government and McAllen, Texas acted as host. The race was set up to be run following our annual convention of the Ninety-Nines, which was held in McAllen so that the two could be combined, saving an extra trip to another starting point.

I flew as co-pilot with Louise Smith, High Point, N.C. in her Beechcraft Bonanza F-35. We departed Greensboro, N. C. on June 10th for McAllen, Texas where we spent a week having our ship handicapped and completing details for the start of the race. During this time we attended the annual convention of the Ninety-Nines, Inc., International Organization of Licensed Women Pilots. McAllen is located in the southern tip of Texas, a sub-tropical strip of land along the Mexican border.

We took off on June 17th with two minutes separation between each aircraft and followed a course which took us over Alice, Texas, Beaumont, Texas and Valdosta, Georgia. We remained overnight at Ft. Lauderdale, Florida and then departed the following day for the final hop to Cuba and the termination of the race. Nineteen aircraft entered the race but only fifteen started and fourteen finished. We were restricted to daytime VFR operation along the route (no on-top flight unless all stations along the route were reporting 1,000 feet or better and at least three miles). We were faced with a choice of "on the deck" or about 10,000 feet or better as our whole route was covered with low broken clouds to scattered with CU and CB buildups to 12,000 feet. Our longest hop was from Beaumont, Texas to Valdosta, Georgia where we spent the night of the 17th. At our stop in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, there was an endless round of entertainment and activity. Our first evening in Ft. Lauderdale was sponsored by members of the Coral Ridge Yacht Club. We were guests of the Club for cocktails and the finest smorgasbord that I have ever had the pleasure of eating. On Thursday morning, June 20th, we were again briefed for the over-water hop and given instructions on how to operate our Mae West equipment, etc. The weather was fine and visibility unlimited. The distance from Ft. Lauderdale to Varadero Beach, Cuba was roughly 250 miles, partly over the Everglades and then about 100 miles over water from Key West to Varadero. There were three vessels spaced about 40 miles apart along the route in the event anyone went down, but we all made the flight just fine. We were able to see the coast line of Cuba about 30 miles out. We were the fourth ship to touch the ground and when everything was computed speedwise, we came in seventh. My pilot received a bracelet, set with a beautiful stone

surrounded with small diamonds.

We stayed at the new Oasis Motel which is a very lovely and unusual place. On our first night we were honored by a welcoming committee of the Cuban Government. The following day, on June 21st, we went by air-conditioned bus into Havana stopping for lunch outside the city as guests of the Cuban Government. After checking into our hotel for the night, we were taken by special limousines to the Capital where we were presented to President Batista. After a reception, we went to the famous Tropicana Club for dinner and the show.

Mrs. Margaret Calaway and her co-pilot, Eloise McBride won first place in their Cessna 120. Mrs. Edna Gardner Whyte came in second with another Cessna 120. Third place was taken by a Piper Tri Pacer. Our return flight was very fine but uneventful, making stops at Ft. Lauderdale for customs, Columbia, S. C. for lunch and Greensboro.

We had a wonderful time and I'd like to do it once a month and rest up in between.

ROLLICK RECEIVES HONORARY DEGREE

The Central Technical Institute of Kansas City, Missouri recently conferred an honorary degree as an associate in the Science of Aviation Electronics and Communications to Walt Rollick, Assistant Superintendent of Communications in INT.

The awarding of this degree is a service by the Central Technical Institute to provide recognition to individuals who have made substantial contributions to development of the technical or operational aspects of electronics and communications in civil and military aviation.

JUNE IS RECORD MONTH

Traffic for the month of June reached an all time high with 43,434 passengers having flown over the 3,290 mile system.

A new record was also set for load factor for the month of June, reaching a mark of 62.32%, a 9.5% increase in passenger miles was also revealed over June of 1956.

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