



PIEDMONITOR

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

Piedmont's early birds Flying Dayton to Dallas

Piedmont's first flight to Dayton arrived promptly, 20 days ahead of schedule.

It wasn't an attempt to break the record for the earliest arrival of a scheduled inaugural. Rather it was the result of many departments working at full speed to take advantage of a rare opportunity that might otherwise have been lost.

Here's how it all happened.

Piedmont's earliest plans for Dayton had included 20 daily departures. It is now history that, because of air control capacity limitations, these plans were scaled down to a more modest 12 departures.

"We were disappointed," President Bill Howard said, "because we felt the 20 flights were an ideal level for a startup of a new hub. Most of that disappointment centered around the loss of our ability to fly between Dayton and Dallas/Fort Worth."

Dallas/Fort Worth is among the world's busiest gateways and is the most important gateway for air traffic to much of the nation's Sunbelt and rapidly growing Southwest.

slots open at DFW

But two things happened near the end of May: First, the only airline flying between Dayton and Dallas nonstop announced plans to suspend all its Dayton services. Second, Braniff Airlines ceased operations, leaving an enormous void of slots to fill at Dallas.

That made it easy. Right? Wrong!

Aviation and business community leaders petitioned Piedmont to

do everything possible to replace this important lost service. At Piedmont, a decision was made that this had to be a first priority, not just for the Dayton/Dallas market, but the beyond traffic Dallas would represent for us at Akron/Canton, Ft. Wayne, Lansing, and Toledo when the full hub opened July 1.

lottery held

The Federal Aviation Administration held a lottery for some of Braniff's slots. The luck of the draw, for Piedmont, was all bad. The slots we wanted were gone halfway down the list before Piedmont's choices were even reached.

When it comes to ambitious undertakings, such as Piedmont's establishment of a new hub at Dayton, there are many moments when it is easier to give up than to go on. This is one. But no one at Piedmont gave up.

Two other slots we had acquired were traded to another airline. Those slots, in turn, were traded to a second airline which had something to offer at Dallas. But a third trade was required to get the exact slots we needed.

Ron Rush was already on the scene as Piedmont's new station manager at Dayton. Bruce Parrish, director-station facilities, was there speeding up everything in the construction project to meet a potential earlier startup date.

Maintenance was alerted to adjust its schedules. Flight Operations and In-Flight Services began rounding up crews for the two daily round-trip services expected. Tariffs



Passenger Paul Reed receives his ticket from agents Chris McKinney (left) and Carl Willmore for Piedmont's first flight from Dayton to Dallas/Fort Worth on June 11.

were quickly calculated. Equipment was rushed to Dayton.

Then, on Wednesday, June 9, permission was received from the Federal Aviation Administration. A press conference was called in Dayton, and the travel world there told the story: In less than 48 hours, Piedmont would begin nonstop service between Dayton and Dallas.

final touches added

The City of Dayton Aviation Department was fully cooperative. Final touches were put on the Piedmont ticket counter the night of June 8. A temporary gate, to serve Piedmont passengers on June 11 was pressed into service with temporary signage erected.

"The City of Dayton did a tremendous job for us," Parrish said. "Just 100 days earlier, our ticket counter area had been out-of-doors. Grass was growing there. Now it's the most attractive counter in the ticketing lobby area."

July 1 will be a different story. More departments, more people, more cities will be involved when Piedmont's full hub goes into operation. It has grown to 16 daily de-

partures, with the addition of Dallas flights and additional schedules to Akron/Canton and Toledo.

But it will be a different sense of Piedmont accomplishment from that Piedmont people had when the first Dallas flight departed from Dayton.

"We certainly had incentive working for us," Howard said. "The rules of the game were that those two Dallas slots had to be in use by June 11, or, according to the rules of the lottery, they were lost to us."

After the flight was airborne, Piedmont was told it had several extra days' grace. But, what matter. Piedmont didn't really need the time.



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And they're off? CLT Agent Dave Smith (far right) won the 400 Meter Race at the Carelines Games June 5. Bill Gentry, RDU agent, (second from right) received the silver medal and Miami Agent Mark Pusey (fourth from left), the bronze. For more winners, turn to page six.