

# Chapter VI

## Big Country, and Lots Of It

The 1930 tour set out to traverse the wide-open spaces of the Western United States and Canada. As one pilot recalled,

“It was big country, and lots of it. Endless stretches of lonesome prairie, the wind blowing a gale, gas gauges knocking on Empty and the sun going down behind a mountain range ’way out there a thousand miles ahead of you...”

Much of the route was indeed longer, higher, and more lonely than in previous years. But airplanes and engines had improved, and pilots had long urged the tour committee to plan longer hops and make the tour a tougher competition. And September of 1930 was a good time to get out in new territory and drum up sales; even the optimists who dismissed the 1929 stock market crash as a temporary setback must admit there was a dismal lack of airplane buyers. Nor were investors still eagerly buying stock in any scheme that had to do with being air minded — whether a transoceanic dirigible passenger line, or a transcontinental cargo line utilizing gliders towed behind tri-motored airplanes.

People did invest in a new and popular diversion called Miniature Golf, they listened on their radio sets to a blackface comedy team called Amos ‘n’ Andy and they went to the Talkies to watch a newcomer called Mickey Mouse. A St. Louis man kept the Roaring Twenties spirit alive by driving a Ford roadster from New York to California and back again, all the way both ways in reverse gear. He owed it all, he said, to his use of Texaco products. Another Texaco user, pilot Duke Jernigan, flew a Waco biplane coast to coast, towing a glider manned by Frank Hawks.

The Hunter Brothers kept a Stinson aloft over Chicago for nearly 23 days, and the old St. Louis Robin team went up again, for 27 days. Navy Lieutenant Apollo Soucek made an altitude record of 43,166 feet and two Frenchmen, Costes and Bellonte, flew from Paris to New York in just over thirty-seven hours, then followed up with a 15,000 mile See America tour in their big Breguet biplane.

But for all the headline flights, only fourteen manufacturers entered planes in the 1930 tour. There were only two tri-motors, and but one amphibian. The one Diesel powered ship was only “accompanying,” not competing, and there were no Autogiros. And only one woman pilot, for a total of eighteen airplanes.

The trials began right after Labor Day, and to nobody’s great surprise the highest Figure of Merit was set by Harry Russell’s big Ford. But the little four-place Cessna had a high score too, and this year the smaller planes would compete for a new prize, an award offered by the Great Lakes Aircraft Corporation for the highest scoring ship powered by an engine of not over 510 cubic inches displacement. And for the first time since 1926 any leisurely cruising speed was out; top speed would count for points on every leg.

The wild racing which marked the 1930 tour was evident on the second day out, when Myron Zeller’s big Wasp powered Ford shed a square foot of leading edge wing skin as he dived it full throttle across the finish line at Wausau. That was one spare part the Ford group did not carry, so Zeller telephoned the factory for a replacement and a rescue plane was dispatched, as far as Green Bay. Zeller agreed to meet it there, to save time and save the factory pilot the risk of landing in bad weather and darkness at Wausau. Bill Gould flew him to Green Bay in the Pratt & Whitney Company Stearman, and then managed to run off into the weeds when he landed there. For Zeller, it meant a long night auto ride back to Wausau clutching his precious piece of metal and for Bill Gould, it meant his ship was out of the tour.

The wind was blowing hard from the north as the fleet went on west and north across the wilderness of Minnesota lakes, and Swanee Taylor gave up the fight in his underpowered Eaglet and parked it at Bemidji, the second accompanying plane to drop out. But the contestants raced on, with Harry Russell holding a slim lead in his Ford as they roared along the Red River and across the plain to

Winnipeg. There they turned west, and into a head-wind blowing sixty miles an hour, right on the nose. The 120 miles to Brandon took some of them two hours; the 211 miles to Regina almost twice as long. Volunteers waited for them at Regina, standing out in the gale wind and blowing dust, poised like forward pass receivers to grab for wing tips and struts as the flyers brought their planes down. They landed "tail high, in flying position," engines turning up enough to keep from blowing away, and the Canadian ground crews literally grabbed them from the air.

Moose Jaw next day, turned out to be more than just a Hudson's Bay trading post with a Mounty and a few Indians. Moose Jaw was a thriving place, with its own enthusiastic flying club. The government would sponsor the clubs if the local people acquired an "Air Harbour" and hired an instructor, the government furnished them a training airplane.

The tour planes headed on across the prairies and wheat fields to Saskatoon, and North Battleford and Edmonton. And now they were nearing the foothills of the Canadian Rockies, close to the wilds of British Columbia and the Yukon Territory, of which a Canadian flyer named Oakes had said, "It's a land where the mountains are nameless, and the rivers run God knows where."

But the Americans stopped short of the nameless wilderness and turned, like sailboats coming about to run before the wind, south to Calgary and Lethbridge. The wind helped them now, boosting the

faster planes up to ground speeds of 170 and better as they came roaring down across the border into Montana. The Fords and Wacos were ahead, flown by Russell and Zeller, Davis and Livingston-four hard driving veterans in bitter competition with every other pilot, including their own factory team mates. Zeller averaged 175.8 miles per hour from Great Falls to Sheridan; Livingston 170 from Edmonton to Calgary. Art Davis led them all with an average of 148.3 for the whole tour and only Harry Russell's high Figure of Merit which he'd established back at Dearborn enabled him to hold his lead in points scored.

Misfortune descended on them all at Great Falls, for 'way out here miles from nowhere a steely eyed Customs man searched out all those who carried Canadian spirits, assessed the standard fine of five dollars a bottle — and confiscated the bottles.

Misfortune struck the Curtiss Kingbird too, as Walter Beech crossed the finish line in a wide-open race with Zeller and his Ford. The Kingbird won, but its top fuselage fabric let go with a great rip and roar and flew off into space, somehow miraculously missing the tail surfaces as it went. But the ship was patched up with sheet metal from a local plumber's shop, and stayed in the race.

Sheridan, Wyoming put on an old-fashioned outdoor chuck wagon lunch and Nancy Hopkins added to the show that day, climbing on a cowpony for a hard gallop around the airfield.

Then on through Cowboys and Indians and



Nancy Hopkins and the Kitty Hawk at Saskatoon.

(Antique Airplane Association)



From left, Swanee Taylor, Myron W. Gould, Myron Zeller.

(NASM, Kenneth J. . Boedecker)

Custer Cavalry country, across the Powder River and the Rock River, the Yellowstone and the Little Big Horn. And the Green River, which actually did have a greenish tint from the shale rocks where it flowed. And watch for the lonely settlements: Crazy Woman, and Black Eagle, Medicine Bow and Roundup, Ten Sleep, Crow Agency, Lost Cabin.

And the little rivers and creeks — or “cricks” — North Fork, and South Fork, Middle Fork, Red Fork, Dry Fork. And Teapot Creek, Dugout Creek, Clear Creek and Muddy Creek, Sand Creek, Salt Creek, Nine Mile Creek, Bear Creek and Sheep Creek and Poison Spider Creek.

The wild race continued, across the high lonesome range country through Casper and Laramie and Cheyenne and on to Denver, with the smaller airplanes gaining on the bigger ones simply because they could turn in and out of the airfields a little faster; save a few seconds getting off the ground. But now they were leaving the mountains, heading downhill over the Kansas plain and across the Mississippi, to Terre Haute and Cincinnati. And too late now, for anyone to overtake Harry Russell and his big Tri-motor; too late for desperately hard

flying John Livingston and Art Davis to take the trophy for the third time and gain permanent possession in the name of Waco Airplanes.

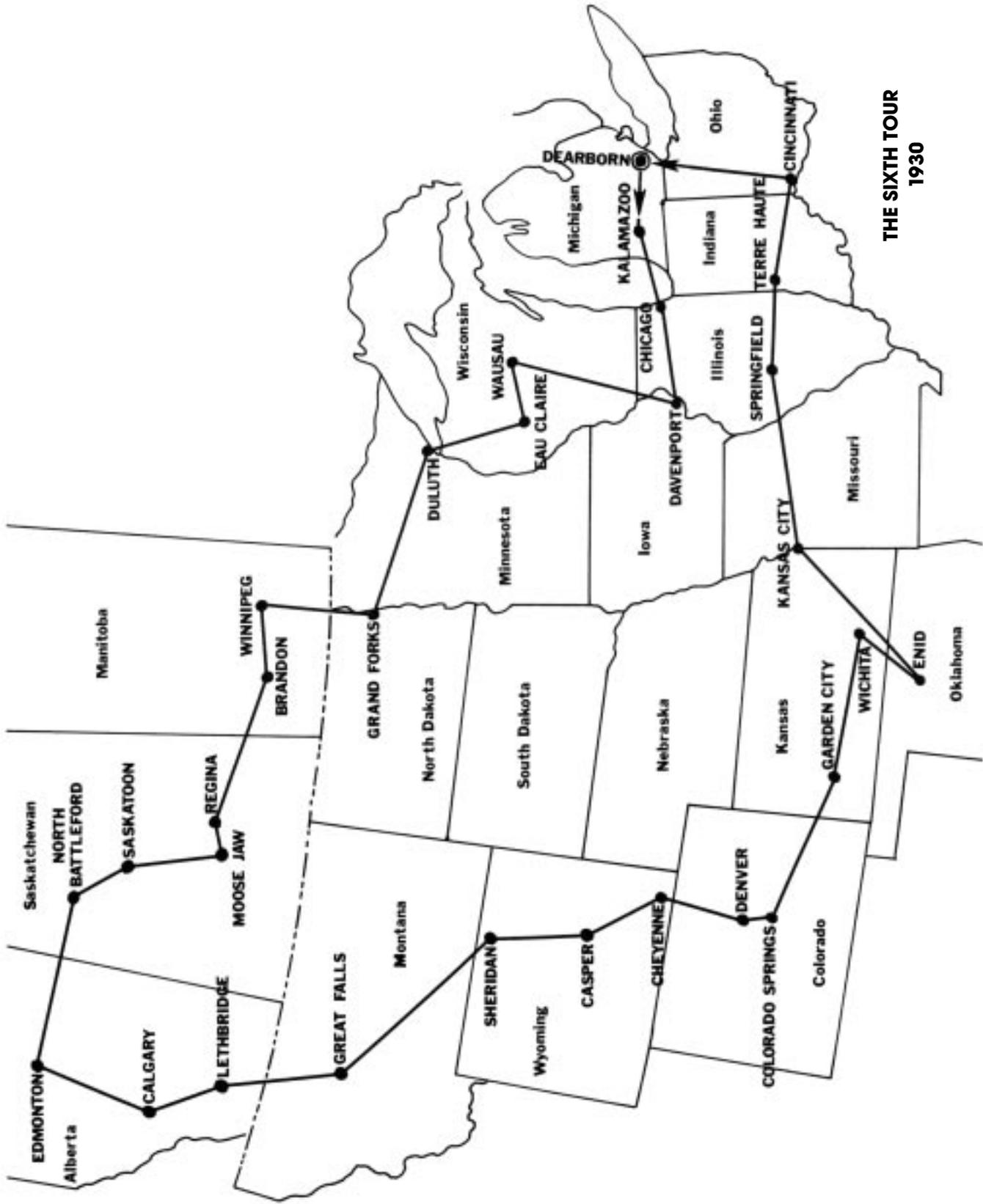
The whole fleet of eighteen airplanes had traveled some big country; nearly five thousand miles, across fourteen states and three provinces of Canada. And for the first time in any tour every contestant had finished on schedule, even the lumbering Sikorsky amphibian.

Though she made the final banquet at one point in Canada, when a dinner party was being held, Nancy Hopkins parked her little biplane, checked in at the hotel and made ready for the grand affair. Then she lay down to catch forty winks-and slept through the whole thing. She'd been on her own the whole trip, all the way from Rhode Island, pilot and mechanic of a slow going, open cockpit ship with no brakes and a cranky and troublesome motor. Nancy Hopkins was entitled to a nap along the way.



The Curtiss Kingbird. Owen Harned, in white shirt, leans against wing strut. American Eagle in left background.

(S. J. Hudek)



**THE SIXTH TOUR  
1930**

**ITINERARY  
1930**

<b>Date</b>	<b>City and Airport Name</b>	<b>Miles</b>
Thursday, September-11	Dearborn, Ford Kalamazoo, Municipal Chicago: Curtiss, Glenview	120 142
September-12	Davenport, Cram Wausau, Alexander	153 238
September-13	Eau Claire, Municipal Duluth, Municipal	94 135
September-14	Grand Forks, Municipal Winnipeg, Stevenson	245 124
September-15	Brandon, Aero Club Regina, Municipal	120 213
September-16	Moose Jaw, Rosedale Saskatoon, City Airdrome	45 127
September-17	North Battleford, Civic Airfield Edmonton, Blatchford	85 233
September-18	Calgary, Municipal	180
September-19	Lethbridge, Municipal Great Falls, Vance	111 170
September-20	Sheridan, Municipal Casper, Wardwell	282 136
September-21	Cheyenne, Municipal Denver, Municipal	144 99
September-22	Colorado Springs, Municipal	70
September-23	Garden City, Army Wichita, Municipal	218 196
September-24	Enid, Municipal Kansas City, Fairfax	95 245
September-25	Springfield, Municipal Terre Haute, Dresser	274 128
September-26	Cincinnati, Lunken	161
Saturday, September-27	Dearborn, Ford	231
		<u>Total 4,814</u>



Typical American Eaglet with Cleone engine, somewhat similar to Swanee Taylor's tour ship.

(NASM)



The Pratt & Whitney tour ship, NC769H, was similar to these Stearmans, NC783H, 784H and 785H, seen in flight over San Francisco. These are 1930 model 4-Es, built for Standard Oil Company, flown by pilots Allen, Brush and Doolin.

(Standard Oil Company of California)



The 1930 fleet ready to go. At left, Cessna #21, Kitty Hawk #14, Waco #23, Great Lakes #38, Monocoupe #48, Tom Colby's Monocoupe, Pratt & Whitney Stearman. At right, Swanee Taylor's American Eagle, Curtiss Wright Travel Air #3, Waco #4, Ken-Royce #8, Kingbird #9, Paramount #11, Bellanca #13 and #14, Sikorsky #19. At right, background: two Air Corps P12s, a Ryan, a Stinson, then a one-of-a-kind twin-engined Stewart monoplane, built in Flint, Michigan.

(S. J. Hudek)



Typical Wasp Ford, TAT NC9606.

(Ford Motor Company)



NC8485 placed third in 1929, first in 1930, second in 1931 tour.

(Ford/Hudek)



Bart Stevenson's Monocoupe.

(S. J. Hudek)



"Pop" Mayo and Nancy Hopkins

(Nancy Hopkins Tier)



Bart Stevenson, left, and Clayton J. Brukner



(George B. Stevenson)



Livinton's Waco, in use later as a sky-writing ship.

(Charles N. Trask)



Waco INF similar to Bowman's tour ship.

(NASM)



Leslie H. Bowman  
(W. P. Kupka)

Art Davis' Waco. Note the high "still" landing gear, Airwheels, and single ailerons, the latter most unusual for a Waco. Tail of Fleet NC64OM, at right.  
(S. J. Hudek)





For the first time since the tours began, the Army did not assign an official accompanying ship, however military planes joined up at various points along the way, as they always had. This is a typically impressive Army formation of the time: Keystone Panther bombers, over Pittsburgh, in 1932.

(J. Victor Dallin)



The 1930 American Eagle was a considerably improved version of the 1929 Wallace Touroplane.

(Ford/Hudek)



Eddie Schneider's Cessna C9092.  
(The Ford Archives)



**Charlie Meyers and Great Lakes #38.**

(Charles W. Meyers)



**Clyde Cessna, right, with Dwane Wallace, 1953.**

(Cessna Aircraft Company)



**Ed Porterfield, left, with Charles Lindbergh and Larry Ruch, at right. Porterfield was Kansas City businessman who financed American Eagle factory and flying school.**

(Antique Airplane Association)



**Eddie Schneider poses in narrow front doorway of Cessna C9092, shakes hands with unidentified admirer.**

(John W. Underwood)



**Larry Ruch, center, with two unidentified men, possibly students, at Porterfield School.**

(Henry G. Arnold)



Frank Hawks and his Travel Air.

(S. J. Hudek)



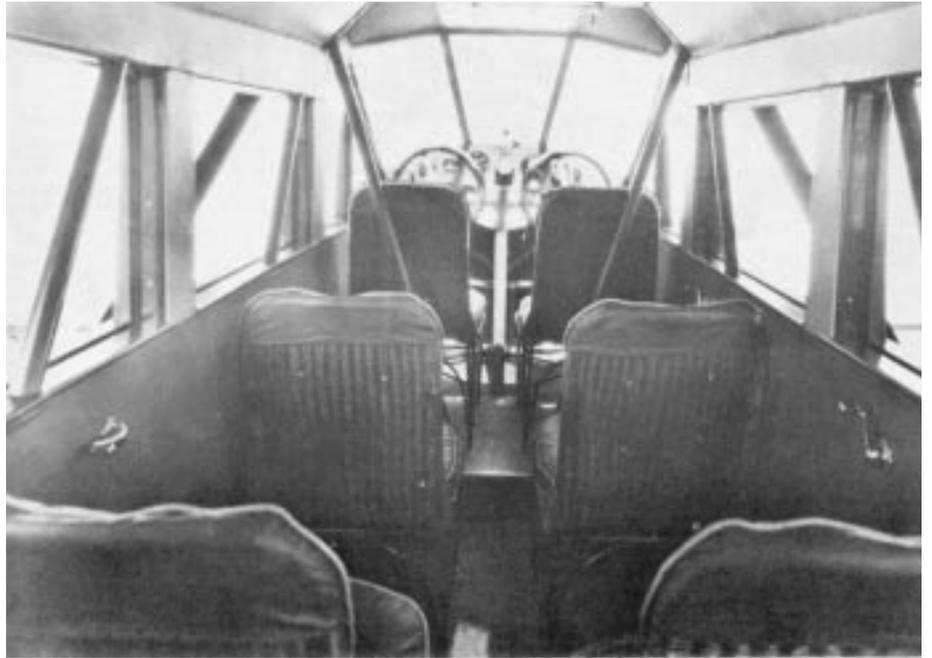
Travel Air factory, Wichita. Note rooftop sign, "This Is Travel Air City."

(Antique Airplane Association)



Truman Wadlow's Curtiss-Wright Travel Air, just rolled out for first test hop. The plane was finished in customary Travel Air orange and black.

(Truman Wadlow)



Interior of Travel Air B6000. Plane had big automobile crank-down windows, no safety belts.

(NASM)



Frank Byerly and *Detroit News* Vega. The plane was bright red, with cream color trim and lettering.

(S. J. Hudek)



The Kingbird at Enid, Oklahoma. From left, Owen G. Harned, Bob Hutchinson, Mrs. Walter Beech, Walter Beech, and mechanic H. M. (Mel) French, known as "Frenchy," above.

(Owen G. Harned)



Walter Carr gets away in Paramount Cabinaire as Pop Cleveland, at left, checks the time.

(S. J. Hudek)



Walter Carr, with Viola Gentry.

(Viola Gentry)

Another Cabinaire, NC551V, powered by Continental.

(NASM)



Rae Rearwin with sons Royce, left, and Kenneth, right. Ken-Royce biplane was named for the two boys. Rae Rearwin was a homesteader and Kansas businessman who founded airplane factory.

(Kenneth Rearwin)



Rearwin Ken-Royce flown by Jack Story.

(S. J. Hudek)



**Giuseppe Bellanca.**  
(J. Wesley Smith)



**Wes Smith, left, and George Haldeman**  
(J. Wesley Smith)



**Bellanca #14. The ring cowling for the J6-9, seen lying on ground, was poorly installed and caused delays during the tour. Note mechanic using bucket for work stand.**

(S. J. Hudek)



**Typical Bellanca CH300 Pacemaker. Emblem of this Omaha, Nebraska airline includes reassurance, "Safe And Sane Flying."**

(NASM)



George Meissner and S-39

(Igor Sikorsky)



Lionel M. Woolson, left, with Walter Lees and Diesel powered Stinson SM1DX.

(NASM)



A Sikorsky S-39B, NC-55V, used in airline service on San Francisco Bay in 1933. Varney Air Ferries served commuters, also connected with the company's Lockheed Orions at the Bay Airdrome, Alameda, for fast scheduled service to Sacramento and Glendale, California. Tail of Orion NC12228 can be seen behind Sikorsky.

(Mrs. Carl Bigelow)



Endurance flights continued through 1930. John and Kenneth Hunter stayed up 23 days in the Stinson SM-1 F *City of Chicago*. Brothers Albert and Walter refueled from the Stinson Big Ben, joining up 223 times to provide 7,630 gallons of gas and 400 gallons of oil.

(John W. Underwood)



Stinson Junior with Wright J6-9 similar to Wright company ship flown by Leon Allen.

(NASM)



Harvey Mummert and Mercury Chic. The Chic had an unusually high parasol wing, which made it difficult to handle on the ground, and full span ailerons, actuated by push-rods which slanted out through cockpit coaming.

(S. J. Hudek)



Speed Holman and his Laird

(Northwest Orient Airlines)



Finish line, 1930. Two Fords at left, then, right to left, Monocoupe, Great Lakes, Kingbird, Rearwin Ken-Royce. Two Wacos, two Bellancas at right, and in far row, Goodrich Vega, unidentified low-wing monoplane, three Wacos, two Air Corps O-2s, three Curtiss Fledglings, a Monocoupe, and the Monarch Coffee Ford. The four round objects at right center are platform scales for final weighing of contestants' loads.

(Ford/Hudek)

**OFFICIAL RESULTS: SIXTH NATIONAL AIR TOUR FOR THE EDESEL B. FORD RELIABILITY TROPHY  
AND THE GREAT LAKES LIGHT PLANE TROPHY  
September 11 - September 27, 1930  
(Contestants listed in order of final standing.)**

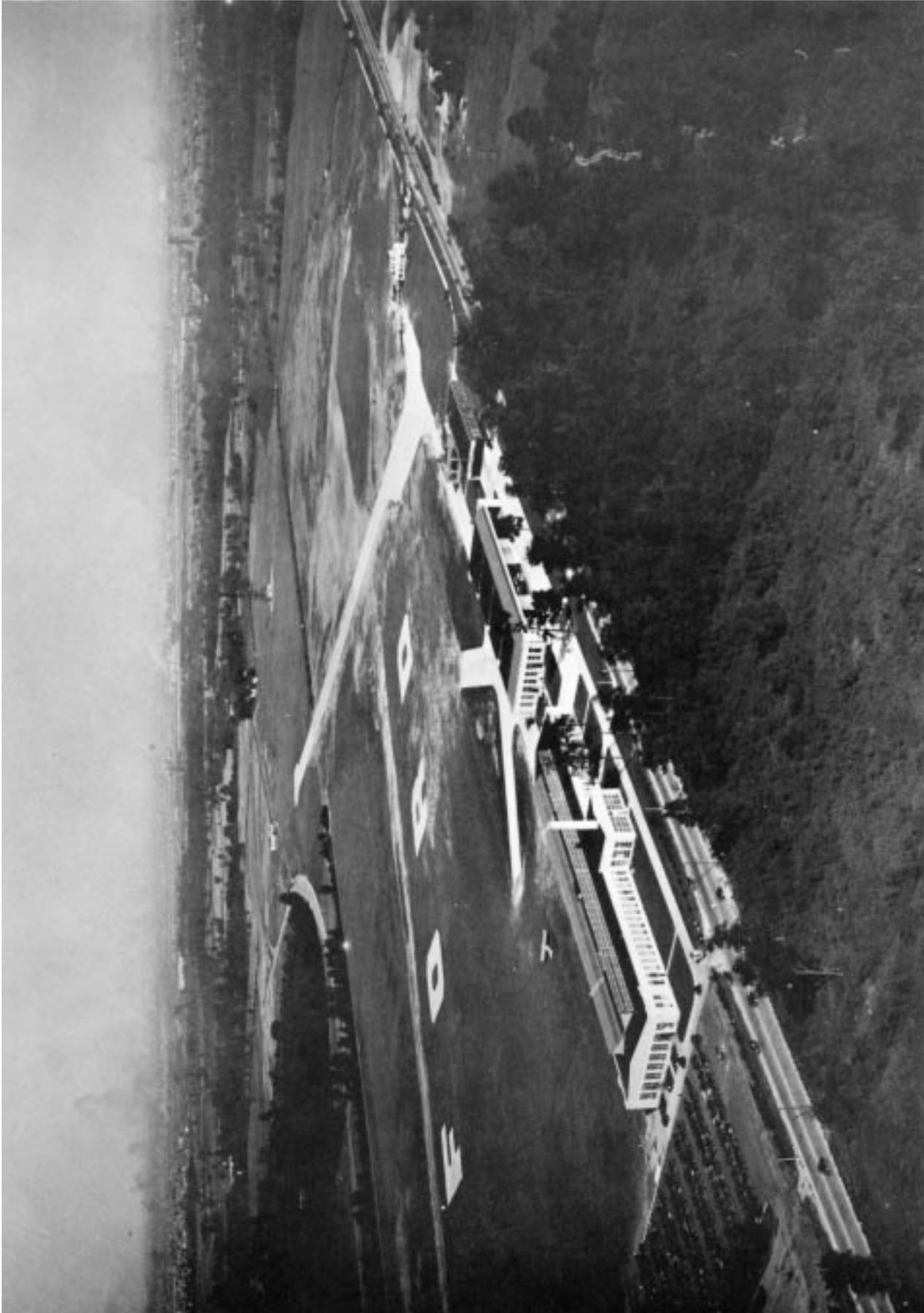
PILOT	RANK	REG. NO.	AIRPLANE TYPE and ATC	ENGINE TYPE		WEIGHTS			SECONDS		AVG. <sup>1</sup> SPEED	FIGURE OF MERIT	FINAL SCORE	WASP	PASSENGERS
				DISPL.	H.P.	EMPTY WT.	LOAD	GR'SS WT.	ST'K	UST'K					
Harry L. Russell	6	NC8485	Ford Tri-Motor 7-AT 246	(1) P&W Wasp C (2) Wright J6-9 3294 1020		7,280	5,630	12,910	11.46	11.58	131.9	14.8	56,575.6	\$2,500	Chic Barsik
John H. Livingston	2	NC600Y	Waco CRG 362	Wright J6-7 760 240		1,359	1,241	2,600	5.03	6.83	148.3	12.4	55,628.2	2,000	
Arthur J. Davis	4	NC660Y	Waco CRG 362	Wright J6-7 760 240		1,359	1,241	2,600	5.03	7.13	148.4	12.3	55,226.0	1,750	
Myron E. Zeller	5	NC401H	Ford Tri-Motor 5-AT-C 165	(3) P&W Wasp C 4032 1260		7,500	6,000	13,500	12.80	10.70	147.9	12.3	55,016.2	1,500	Tony Wallach
Geo. W. Haldeman	13	C257M	Bellanca PM300 245	Wright J6-9 975 300		2,290	2,310	4,600	9.05	14.05	139.1	12.5	53,830.3	1,250	
Walter H. Beech	9	NC589N	Curtiss Kingbird D-2 348	(2) Wright J6-9 1950 600		3,877	2,238	6,115	11.27	7.87	131.8	13.6	53,794.8	1,000	Owen G. Harned, (Mrs Beech, part way) R.L. Hutchinson, H.M. (Mel) French, mechanic.*
J. Wesley Smith	14	C874M	Bellanca CH300 129	Wright J6-9 975 300		2,363	1,937	4,300	8.50	13.30	133.5	11.4	47,648.7	750	Ralph W. Cram
Eddie A. Schneider	21	C9092	Cessna AW 72	Warner Scarab 422 110		1,225	1,035	2,260	11.80	13.03	113.1	14.0	47,488.0	550 +500	Great Lakes Trophy
Truman T. Wadlow	3	NC453N	Curtiss-Wright Travel Air 6B 352	Wright J6-9 975 300		2,707	1,720	4,427	10.05	14.32	132.6	10.3	42,976.3	400	
Leslie H. Bowman	23	NC864V	Waco INF 345	Kinner B5 441 125		1,171	740	1,911	11.1	7.73	111.3	11.4	42,742.9	300	
Jack B. Story	8	NC400V	Ken-Royce 2000 CO 314	Continental A70 544 165		1,447	912	2,359	7.5	8.0	119.3	11.7	41,504.7	200	
Barton Stevenson	48	NC175K	Monocoupe 90 306	Lambert R266 266 90		859	631	1,490	7.38	10.8	103.2	12.7	39,255.5	200	
Lawrence D. Ruch	1	NC457V	Am. Eagle E430 302	Continental A70 544 165		1,875	1,133	3,008	8.13	14.25	101.4	11.7	37,710.8	200	
Nancy Hopkins	22	NC30V	Viking Kitty Hawk B4 166	Kinner B5 372 90		1,107	768	1,875	15.45	9.6	92.9	13.0	36,528.0	200	
Walter Cair	11	NC17M	Paramount Cabinaire 265	Wright J6-5 540 165		1,620	1,010	2,630	8.55	11.25	104.9	11.4	35,887.2	200	
Charles W. Meyers	38	700K	Great Lakes 2T1E 354	Amer. Cirrus 310 95		1,012	568	1,580	11.26	13.5	106.6	10.5	33,905.4	200	
Harvey C. Mummert	7	NC883K	Mercury Chic T2 235	LeBlond 90 508 90		935	578	1,513	17.37	11.57	95.6	10.5	30,130.2	200	P.B. Rogers
George W. Meissner	19	NC42V	Sikorsky S39-A 340	P&W Wasp Jr. 985 300		2,555	1,145	3,700	9.79	11.52	94.8	9.1	27,899.6	200	

NOTES: <sup>1</sup> Average speed was full-throttle, or nearly so. <sup>2</sup> Tour scoring based on most points for most speed, each leg. <sup>3</sup> Tour publicity curtailed in 1930, therefore many passenger names unlisted.

**OTHER ACCOMPANYING AIRPLANES**

PILOT	REG. NO.	AIRPLANE TYPE	PURPOSE	PASSENGERS <sup>2</sup>
Frank M. Hawks	NR1313	Travel Air R Wr. J6-9	Pathfinder Airplane and Official Advance Plane. The Texas Co.	
Myron W. Gould	NC769H	Stearman 4-D P&W Wasp Jr.	Official Tour Plane and Prat & Whitney Aircraft Service.	Out at Wausau.
Walter E. Lees	NR4N	Waco HTO Packard Diesel DR980	Official Tour Plane. Packard Motor Co.	Tour Manager, Ray Collins
Vernon M. Johns	NC7863	Ford Tri-Motor 4-AT-B (3) Wr. J-5	Press Plane. Monarch Coffee.	Carl F. Schory, Neil Goodall, Harry Slater, John T. Nevill, Wayne J. Sheldon, Mrs. Frank Hawks
Thomas B. Colby	NC533W	Monocoupe 110 Warner 110	Committee, Official Berryloid	Mrs. E.N. Pendleton
Leon S. Allen	NC8432	Stinson SM2-AC Wr. J6-7	Official, and Wright Aero. Corp. service.	Kenneth Boedecker
E.W. Cleveland	NC9965	Travel Air R Wr. J6-9	Official Tour Plane, Cleveland Aerol Co.	Arthur Schlosser, E.P. Crocker
Swanee Taylor	458V	American Eaglet B-31 Szekeley SR3	Official Tour Plane Richard H. Blythe, N.Y.	Out at Bemidji, Minnesota
Wm. S. Brock	NC32M	Lockheed Vega 5 P&W Wasp	De Forest Crosley Radio Ship, Detroit News Co.	James V. Pierson, Joseph A. Chambers, B.B. Kennedy, F.B. Watt
Lee F. Schoenhair	NC308H	Lockheed Vega 5 P&W Wasp	Goodrich Rubber Co.	Norman Siegel
G.A. Blunden	u	Kari Keen Coupe	Accompanying, Red Deer-Edmonton	Reginald Whyte
Wm. B. Stout*	NC640M	Fleet 1 Warner 110	Accompanying, Dearborn - Chicago Airplane Sales Co. of Michigan.	
u*	493M	Stewart M-2 (2) Wr. J6-9	Accompanying, Part way, Stewart Airplane Co., Flint, Michigan	
Fred W. Wahl	u	Aeronca C-2 Aeronca E113	Accompanying, Laramie - Colorado Springs.	
James. S. McDonnell	N157N	McDonnell Doodle Bug	Accompanying, Joined in Cheyenne.	First McDonnell Aircraft Gave STOL demos at each stop

<sup>2</sup>These are probable



Ford Airport in 1930, much improved over 1925, when four flyers called it "Lake Ford." Ford River Rouge plant in distance, dirigible mooring mast in background, factory and hangars in foreground, passenger terminal and cleared space for future Dearborn Inn at right.  
(Mrs. S. L. Manning)