

Action In Sky Ends Carnival As 20,000 Turn Eyes Upward

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By ROBERT GRAY

Amid the roar of whirling propellers, the 1948 Memphis Cotton Carnival concluded yesterday after eight eventful days.

A crowd of more than 20,000 spectators witnessed spectacular displays of speed and precision flying during the Memphis Air Show at Municipal Airport yesterday afternoon.

Most exciting performance of the program was given by the 12-man team of P-51 pilots from the 155th Fighter Squadron, Tennessee National Guard. In their "bursting bomb," the group flew over the field in tight formation and pulled up sharply for several thousand feet. The two outside four-plane flights peeled out in opposite directions to form with the center flight the pattern of an exploding bomb.

Off Field In Hurry

Under conditions of a simulated enemy attack, the 12 pilots raced against time to get into the air to intercept the enemy. The first plane was off the runway just three minutes after an alert was sounded, and the last plane in about four minutes and 30 seconds.

The pilots then demonstrated a 12-plane formation loop, a rare sight, and made repeated low passes over the field—rolling and weaving—in a "rat race."

Members of the team are Lieut. Col. Fred Hook Jr., J. C. Harbin Jr., J. T. Layne, Robert Little, William (Bill) Johnson, Joe Johnson, James Allen, William Cowan, Joe Hearn, Tommy Summers, Claude (Pete) Hays and David Fox. Three alternates are Tommy Boston, Alvin Solari and W. T. Cheiars. All are Memphians.

A group of 21 P-47 Thunderbolts from the 105th Fighter Squadron, T. A. N. G., displayed low level

maneuvers. The group was led by Lieut. Col. Skeets Gallagher and Col. Robert Burns. Low level passes were made over the field by Air Guard A-26 light bombers from Birmingham.

Catches Ribbon With Wing

Diminutive Betty Skelton, international women's aeronautics champion, thrilled the crowd when she picked up with the wing of her plane a ribbon held about 12 feet off the ground.

Dave Binns proved himself a jump artist in a low-level parachute leap from a 1910 model Curtiss pusher plane, with two high altitude leaps—one with a ribbon-type 'chute. Vern Littig and Lud Steigner substituted a comedy act of acrobatic flying in a Cub for their scheduled act of making "rain and snow." Ray Miller and Clem Honnekamp exhibited colorful acrobatics with smoke effects.

The show was sponsored by the Junior Chamber of Commerce and the George Stokes Chapter, Air Reserve Association. A special guest was Miss Memphis Aviation, Miss Marie Barrios, who arrived in a Chicago & Southern DC-3 plane.