

KEEPING LISTENERS IN TOUCH

How N.Z. Followed the Big Air Race.

THROUGHOUT New Zealand on those three days from October 20 until Scott and Black flashed past the winning posts thousands listened patiently at their wireless sets for the roar of the 'plane that announced another bulletin of air race news.

No voice was more eagerly awaited than that of 2YA's announcer. "We have further news of the fliers."

There is a story behind every broadcast of this description—a story of intensive and complete organisation—of hard work by the staff of the broadcasting stations, from the general manager to the office junior. The air race broadcasts were no exception. No effort was spared to give listeners as complete and authentic a story as was humanly possible.

The general manager of the Broadcasting Board (Mr. E. C. Hands) started the arrangements while he was in Australia a short time ago. It was largely due to his handling of the Australian arrangements that the board's national stations were able to receive and transmit news so promptly.

The most noticeable feature of the event was that news of the racers was scarce. Even at the control committee's office in the Town Hall, Melbourne long periods went by with absolutely no fresh news from the airmen. This, of course, was quite understandable. The winners only landed at five control points throughout the whole 12,000 miles, and in the feverish rush that followed their landing it would have been very difficult to get fresh news on the cables.

In the offices at 2YA each cable that came through was subedited after the information had been checked. Wild rumours were plentiful. At one point news was received that an American competitor, Wright and Palando, had arrived at Alor Star. This was obviously impossible, for the last report had stated that he was at Baghdad. That news was not sent out over the air. The positions of all racers were plotted from official news only, on a large chart in the offices.

The elusive comma accounted for one of the only two mistakes made in the hundreds of cables broadcast. The missing of this punctuation mark gave the sentences an entirely different meaning, and was the cause of some telephonic inquiries.

It was a most difficult job to handle. No one knew when the next report would come through, and it was impossible to make assumptions. Nevertheless, a complete schedule was drawn up showing the times of each bulletin, and this schedule was rigidly adhered to throughout the race. More than once the roar of the 'plane was being broadcast in order that the three other national stations would have time to arrange their relays as the news was actually being phoned through from Auckland. A few minutes of feverish activity followed as the bulletin was checked and made out with seconds to spare.

"The Best I've Ever Seen"

Critics All Over New Zealand Praise the "Radio Record Annual"

Praise for the "Radio Record Annual" has come from many quarters since last week, when the publication was placed on the market. Newspapers in many parts of New Zealand have given generous and eulogistic notices to the issue, while dozens of letters have poured into the "Radio Record" office expressing admiration for the originality and quality of the contents. "It is the best annual I've ever seen," said one prominent Wellington man.

THE Christchurch "Press," in a very favourable review states: "There is considerable justification for the claim made in the foreword to the Radio Record Annual, 1934, that 'the illustrations prove that New Zealand need not lag behind the rest of the world in reproducing artistic camera studies; and the reading matter proves that, given a little sympathetic tending, the Dominion's literary garden may bloom as sweetly as any other.' The reproductions of portraits, and there are many of these, are very well done, and the series entitled 'New Zealand Cities at Night' deserves special mention for its effectiveness.

"Comprised within the Record's 72 pages are some 40 articles, covering a wide range of subjects relating to broadcasting and other items of interest. Lady Statham writes on 'Radio's Influence in the Home,' B. R. O'Brien on 'Broadcasting in the Antarctic,' and Professor G. W. von Zedlitz on 'The Voice that Talks to the World.' There are many short stories and light articles, together with a sprinkling of verse. Under the heading of 'Cartoonist and Characters' an interview with A. S. Paterson is related.

"Of particular interest is a brief article giving the views of Mr. E. C. Hands, the Broadcasting Board's general manager, on the future of broadcasting. The publication is to be commended for its interest, variety, and information, and not a little of its attractiveness is due to the illustrations and the arrangement of material."

Advertisers and advertising agencies have been unanimous in their praises, one prominent agency saying "It is quite the brightest annual I have seen." All were equally enthusiastic about the layout and general quality of the production. An agency which does a considerable amount of business on both sides of the Tasman writes: "Many thanks for the copy of, the 'Radio Record Annual.' We have not had time to fully digest it so far, but will say from our brief perusal that you have reason to commend yourselves on this production."

Every effort was made to see that the Annual was representative of the best work that New Zealand could do, not only in literary and artistic fields, but in the more technical departments of photographic reproduction and quality printing. That we have succeeded in this aim is made abundantly clear by the comments which have been made in the press and elsewhere.

A prominent citizen of Wellington wrote on receiving a copy: "It gives me great pleasure to compliment you on its interesting contents, and on the

good taste and elegance of your publication," and from all over the country similar letters are arriving by every mail. It seems generally agreed that the "Radio Record Annual" fills a definite and long-felt want, covering ground not touched by other annuals, which seem to become more and more stereotyped year by year.

Broadcasting to the Empire.

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receivable, but at inconvenient times or at weak strength. This is an important matter, and one which is now under consideration along with other adjustments to the present arrangements. This is every hope that before many months have elapsed British listeners in South America will be no less well served than their fellow countrymen in the West Indies and Canada. And secondly, there is the question of the short-wave activities of foreign countries. The obvious determination of Great Britain to build up a first-class Empire service caused Continental nations to increase their energies. To-day it is fair to state that the British Empire broadcasting station is received as well in nearly all parts of the world as the German, French, Spanish, Dutch, Italian, and Russian short-wave stations. But the programmes of these countries can also be received in most parts of the Empire, and there is a vital obligation to maintain a service for British Empire listeners, which, on its programme merits, will be at least as acceptable, if not more so, than those of foreign countries.

Radio Men Watch Printing of Special Number.

ON Tuesday morning of this week representatives of New Zealand broadcasting interests gathered beside the printing presses of the Wellington Publishing Company to watch the printing of the British Broadcasting Number of the "Radio Record." Later, at a morning tea at the Hotel St. George, complimentary references were made concerning the paper, which, by furthering the interests of wireless in New Zealand, has earned the goodwill of thousands of listeners.