



The original Uiver over Rotterdam. KLM operated a total of 18 DC-2s between 1934 and 1946, each bearing the Dutch or Indonesian name for a bird. "Uiver" is translated "Stork".

## THE DOUGLAS DC-2 'UIVER' FLIES AGAIN

*Editor's Note: This story with the photos is reprinted here by permission of the Public Relations Bureau of KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. It appeared originally in the September 17, 1983 issue of KLM Wolkenrider, the fortnightly company newspaper of Royal Dutch Airlines - international edition.*

*This DC-2, NC39165, S/N 1404, on loan to KLM, is owned by Colgate W. Darden III (EAA 14846, A/C 7674), Cayce, South Carolina. It previously was on display in the Wings and Wheels Museum in Orlando, Florida.*

*The story was brought to our attention by Antique/Classic Division Vice President Bob Lickteig (EAA 71468, A/C 2433), Albert Lea, Minnesota. Through Bob's efforts and those of his friends in KLM, the story is presented here.*

The DC-2 "Uiver" (Stork), the KLM airplane which took part in the legendary London-Melbourne Race of 1934 and, with captain Parmentier, won first prize in the handicap section, is going to fly again!

A group of enthusiastic Dutchmen have definitely decided, after two years of intensive preparations, that the race will be re flown now almost 50 years later. Holland will once again be able to experience this flight along almost the same route prescribed then by the Australian chocolate manufacturer and organizer of the race, McPherson Robertson.

Many older Dutch people still know exactly how the Uiver, the DC-2 with a four-man crew of captain Parmentier, first officer Moll, radio operator Van Brugge and flight engineer Prins, and three passengers on board, started off the race together with 19 other airplanes at

Mildenhall near London.

Participation in the race was the initiative of KLM's President at that time, Albert Plesman, who wanted to prove that it was possible to transport passengers and mail safely and on time by air over a distance of more than 20,000 kilometers. In 1934 there was still no single airline which had developed a regular scheduled flight over that distance.

The race, which started on October 20, 1934, kept not only Holland, but the entire world in a state of excitement. Tense moments were experienced with the morning paper and radio reports which told of the adventures of the Dutch participants. The courageous crew which, in spite of a storm-forced landing on a horse race track in Albury (Australia), saw a chance to finish second in the speed race and first in the handicap class.

The crew of the KLM aircraft then took three days, 18 hours and 13 minutes. The winners Scott and Black from England took two days and 23 hours with their Comet, which was designed especially for speed.

### NOS TV Series

An enthusiastic team from the NOS Netherlands Broadcasting Corporation under Rob Swanenburg, has traced the best, still airworthy DC-2 in the world. This DC-2, owned by Colgate W. Darden, is in very good state and has in the meantime been painted in the old KLM colours with the contest number 44 on its tail. On September 3, the DC-2 arrived at Schiphol East by canal and, just as in 1934, was transported by means of a block and tackle and a deep-loader to KLM's technical area.

If all preparations progress according to plans, the Uiver will have re-departed in mid-December 1983 with a NOS television team on board to film the entire flight and the location along the way. The film will be shown serially on television in October 1984, the month in which the Melbourne Race took place 50 years ago. The TV series will also deal with the development in civil aviation in the past fifty years.

#### Uiver Memorial Foundation

In order to pay the high costs of the entire Uiver project (total costs, including the film production, are about 2.5 million guilders), the Uiver Memorial Foundation was set up. The foundation is managed by representatives of Fokker, KLM, EVD (Netherlands Foreign Trade Agency) and the daily newspaper Telegraaf.

These are also main sponsors of the Uiver project. Other large sponsors include Shell, Schiphol Amsterdam Airport, Bendix and Philips. The public relations is being handled by the international Hill & Knowlton Agency in Amsterdam.

In 1981 Rob Swanenburg of the television department of the NOS, the Netherlands Broadcasting Corporation conceived the idea to make a documentary of the flight of the Uiver. This documentary was to be shown in 1984, the 50th anniversary of the London-Melbourne Race, in which this KLM DC-2 became first in the handicap and second in the speed section. Slowly it occurred to him that it would be nice to have the flight repeated, not with a modern aircraft, but with a DC-2.

One year later, in December 1982, an article appeared in the *Wolkenridder* that the plan had taken shape and that it seemed likely that the flight would take place. A KLM crew had been appointed and even an original DC-2 had been found. A tremendous amount of work was going on behind the scenes.

Soon it became apparent that the execution of the plans could no longer be an affair of NOS and KLM only. And so the Uiver Memorial Foundation was established in May of last year. In the committee of the foundation are representatives of the Royal Dutch Aviation Association (KNVvL), Fokker, the Netherland Foreign Trade Agency (EVD), the morning paper *Telegraaf* and KLM. Fred Zandvliet was appointed chairman. Fred is a retired KLMer with a fabulous knowledge of the history of KLM and also chairman of the KNVvL. Head of KLM's Public Relations Bureau, Ron Wunderink sits on the Foundation committee for KLM.

The aim of the foundation was to try to raise enough funds to make the commemoration flight possible. The first contacts with the business world and the authorities were such that the decision could be taken in June. The commemoration flight is on!

Although the following summary is far from complete, it mentions some of the contributions of the business world.

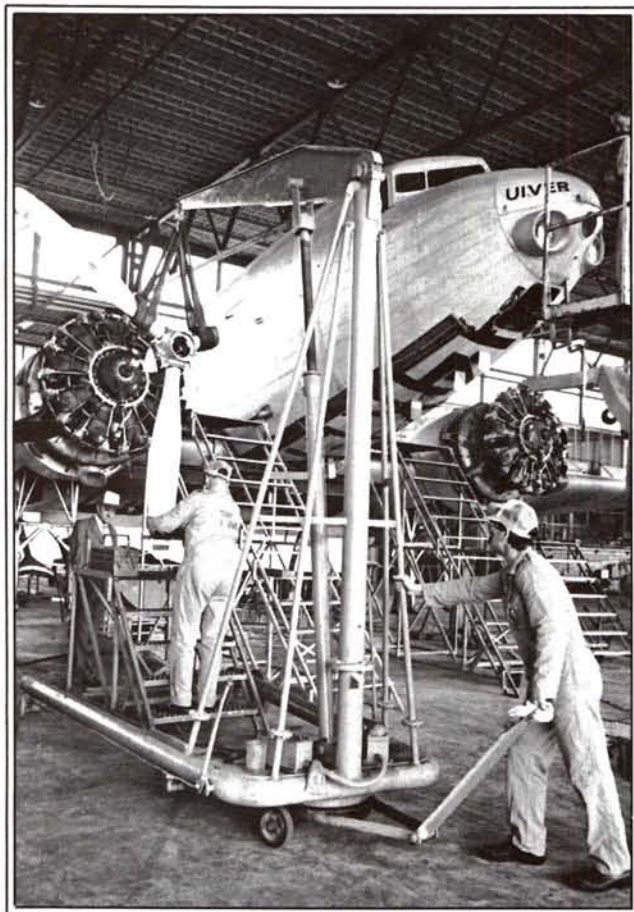
Fokker is considering to have the entire flight of the DC-2 accompanied by a Fokker Fellowship which has to be delivered to Australia anyway. This F-28 would carry extra equipment, spare parts and baggage.

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The new Uiver crew, (L-R): Ton Deegenars (engineer), Jan Plesman (captain), Boone Pijpstra (engineer), Fred Schouten (first officer).

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The "new" DC-2 Uiver being overhauled in the technical facilities of KLM at Schiphol Airport in October 1983.

Shell is going to shoulder the fuel costs for the entire flight.

The morning paper Telegraaf has bought the rights for the exclusive publication of the report on the flight.

Also Philips, Schiphol Airport Authorities, Bendix and the Netherlands Foreign Trade Agency have shown interest. The arrival of the Uiver in Singapore coincides with a Holland week, organized by the EVS and . . . with the Singapore Airshow.

And what does KLM do, many KLMers may ask. Yes, KLM too is one of the sponsors. We already mentioned that three of the four crew members have been made available by the Flight Operations Division and Schiphol Station (the fourth is a retired volunteer). The aircraft will be completely overhauled by the Engineering and Maintenance Division at Schiphol East and - not an unimportant facet either - KLM's ground organization is at the disposal of the Foundation.

The Handling Contracts department of the Ground Handling Department has already been busy for months to organize the intermediate landings and everything that goes with it. The KLMers enroute will contribute their share to provide a smooth handling at their station.

Assistance will also be given by the KLMers of the Controllers Department Commercial Affairs and Field Organization of the Accounting Division, of the Insurance department of the Finance Bureau, the Public Relations Bureau and the Movement Control department of the Logistics Division. This summary shows that KLM plays an important part in the realization of the flight, but still it is one of the many sponsors. So we emphasize again that the commemoration flight is made under the auspices of the Uiver Memorial Foundation and not KLM.

The whole trip should result in a TV documentary in three parts of fifty minutes each, which will be shown in Holland in October 1984 and for which other countries have shown interest too. KLM will then be 65 years old and the actual flight took place 50 years ago. A better occasion could hardly be found.

### The Flight Schedule

#### 1983

December 17 Schiphol - Duxford (Great Britain)  
 December 20 Duxford - Rome (Italy)  
 December 22 Rome - Athens (Greece)  
 December 29 Athens - Adana (Turkey)  
 Adana - Aleppo (Syria)  
 December 30 Aleppo - Baghdad (Iraq)

#### 1984

January 1 Baghdad - Abu Dhabi (Un. Arab Emirates)  
 January 3 Abu Dhabi - Karachi (Pakistan)  
 January 6 Karachi - Jodhpur (India)  
 January 7 Jodhpur - Allahabad (India)  
 January 9 Allahabad - Calcutta (India)  
 Calcutta - Rangoon (Burma)  
 January 10 Rangoon - Alor Star (Malaysia)  
 January 11 Alor Star - Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia)  
 January 14 Kuala Lumpur - Singapore  
 January 23 Singapore - Jakarta (Indonesia)  
 January 26 Jakarta - Selaparang (Indonesia)  
 January 27 Selaparange - Kupang - Darwin (Australia)  
 January 29 Darwin - Cloncurry (Australia)  
 January 29 Cloncurry - Charleville (Australia)  
 January 30 Charleville - Albury (Australia)  
 February 3 Albury - Melbourne (Australia)

This schedule shows that the flight will take much longer than the original Uiver flight which took 90 hours and 17 minutes. But then, it is not the intention to match the record flight. We emphasize the fact that it is a tentative flight schedule with prolonged intermediate stops. There are several reasons for this. One of them is that not all the permissions have been received from the countries where a landing has to be made or over which the flight is scheduled to fly.

Another reason is that in those fifty years since 1934, aviation has increased "somewhat" and is completely different now. In 1934 captain Parmentier still could say: I fly a direct route from A to B. But in 1984 this is no longer possible and they have to use air corridors.

Again another reason is that prolonged technical delays are always possible. Aircraft technicians these days are not used to repairing a Douglas from 1934.

And finally the NOS film team has to have time to shoot scenes for the documentary. Although shots will be taken at each airport, there are some airports for which one or even two whole days have been earmarked.

All these facts together require a rather leisurely flight schedule.

It is also not possible to copy the 1934 route exactly. Some airports no longer exist, others are unavailable because of political reasons. But the route in general is the same.

To begin with, the flight will commence from Duxford airport near London instead of the old Mildenhall. Duxford has an airport which has been made into an air museum. For the start of the commemoration flight it will be made operational again.

Two other airfields of the 1934 route cannot be used either. Jask in Iran cannot be used at present and Rambang airport in Indonesia no longer exists. Abu Dhabi and Selaparang will be used instead.

Another thing that will be hardly possible, or not at all - accommodating crew and passengers in the same hotels as in 1934 . . . ●