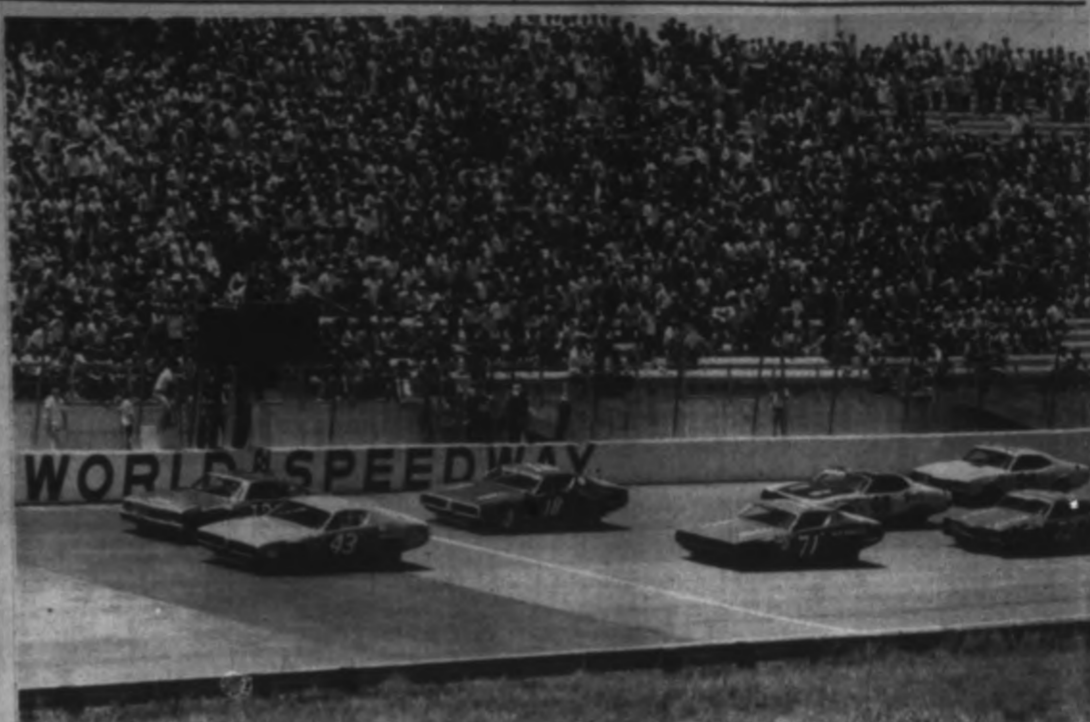




IT WAS A HOT DAY out at Texas World Speedway Sunday and even hotter on the track. Richard Petty needed oxygen after winning the Lone Star 500 on a 140' track. Over 30,000 people attended the race.



Photos by KENNETH STROEBEL

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NASA scientist working on new jet wing design

A radical change in the basic geometry of an aircraft wing might, according to preliminary NASA theoretical and test predictions, allow future jet transports to operate quietly and efficiently at both take-off and supersonic speeds.

Dr. R. T. Jones of NASA's Ames Research Center, Mountain View, Calif., is suggesting that an anti-symmetrical wing, pivoting on its center point, may be the way to achieve supersonic transport capability without the penalties of high fuel consumption and noise associated with conventional SST aircraft in production.

"Man has an instinctive feeling for bilateral symmetry," Dr. Jones remarks, "which is no doubt derived from seeing naturally evolved birds and animals. It is natural for us to mold the shape of a supersonic aircraft to suit this instinctive feeling. However, nature does not provide us with a guide for supersonic flight; there are no supersonic birds."

"It is interesting, and probably important, that mathematical theory indicates a completely different kind of symmetry for supersonic aircraft."

Now a senior staff scientist at Ames, Jones is credited with the development in 1945 of swept-wing theories which were instrumental in advancing aircraft speeds into the transonic and supersonic ranges. Most jet transports now in use are based on his aerodynamic theories and on his

work with slender delta wings.

The new design would appear to have a conventional straight wing at right angles to the fuselage during take-off on medium length runways such as the Washington National Airport. An aircraft in this configuration would require only about one-fourth the take-off energy now needed by comparable delta wing jet transports with similar payloads.

As the conceptual aircraft reaches the speed and altitude where swept wings would be efficient, the entire wing would rotate about 45 degrees so the wing on one side would point more in the direction of flight and the other half would trail

toward the rear.

Studies indicate that cruising in this configuration at supersonic speeds up to about Mach 1.2 would not produce a sonic boom on the ground and could be accomplished with nearly the same fuel economy per passenger mile as current jet aircraft at subsonic speeds. Over ocean areas where sonic effects are not detrimental, the conceptual aircraft could cruise up to Mach 1.5.

If current testing, computational prediction and further research verified the promise of the new design, the anti-symmetrical wing concept would open the door to development of a more commercially efficient, ecologically acceptable jet transport for the nation's future needs. The Ames Research Center is continuing theoretical computer studies and wind tunnel studies using models "flown" at speeds up to Mach 1.4.

New NROTC leader joins TAMU faculty

Col. Clarence E. Hogan of the Marine Corps has joined the A&M faculty as professor of naval science and head of the Naval ROTC program to be initiated on campus this fall.

The new unit will be Marine Corps oriented but will produce both Navy and Marine officers. TAMU then becomes one of only two institutions in the nation with full-time corps of cadets offering all three ROTC programs leading to commissions in all four branches of the service. The Citadel at Charleston, S. C., also offers Army, Air Force and Naval ROTC.

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