



Poor weather did little to dampen the excitement at Detroit Metropolitan Airport Saturday, as the thunderously loud take-off of a British Airways supersonic Concorde jet awed thousands of on-lookers.

Flying high

Concorde zooms in on Detroit area

By M.B. Dillon Ward
staff writer

No one's eardrums popped, nor did any airport windows shatter. But as Nomad travellers whistled off to London aboard Concorde supersonic jets Friday and Saturday, the ground trembled. So deafening were the take-offs that car alarms were triggered.

One hundred Nomads departed on each of four flights last weekend, which marked the Detroit debut of the state-of-the-art airliner capable of flying at twice the speed of sound, and at altitudes of 60,000 feet.

Passengers — among them Joene McCoy of Canton, Virginia Gibson of Plymouth Township and Barbara Harper of Rochester — are touring England for four days before boarding the Queen Elizabeth 2 for a five-day cruise to New York. Then we turn into pumpkins and fly Republic back to Detroit," said a harried McCoy the day before her flight.

The supersonic transport Concorde, manufactured jointly by the governments of France and Britain, can travel at speeds of 1,350 mph, making it the fastest-flying passenger jet afloat today. Most commercial jetliners fly at about

600 mph or less.

"It goes twice the speed of sound and 10 percent faster than a rifle bullet — so that's fast. I understand they can't break the sound barrier until we get to the coast," said Gibson before she left. "They have to stay within the speed of sound, otherwise dishes and everything else will break." Gibson completed a 24-year career as a Plymouth-Canton school nurse in 1982.

"We'll be there (in London) in four hours — normally it's an eight-hour trip," said McCoy, adding that the Nomads are getting a healthy discount. The trip will cost each traveller a total of \$2,000, while a one-way ticket from New York to London routinely sells for \$1,500, she said.

ANYONE cussing about having missed the Concorde's Detroit visit doesn't feel they've missed the boat. On Monday, Sept. 9, the last of the Concorde flights chartered by the Nomads — a Michigan air travel club celebrating its 20th anniversary — will depart from Metro Airport.

Put into service by Air France and British Airways in 1976, the Concorde's "droopable" needle nose, delta wings and slim fuselage render it highly re-

cognizable as well as efficient across a wide speed band. Four Rolls-Royce turbojets propel the craft at speeds so high that the resulting heat friction causes it to expand up to 10 inches during flight. "Time machine" passengers speed along at up to 12 miles above sea level, so they can see the curvature of the earth — a sight formerly reserved for astronauts and the military. Conventional airplanes cruise at altitudes of roughly 38,000 feet or less.

Despite the plane's capabilities, Concorde production stopped in 1979. The world's only fully operational supersonic airliner and the first to enter regular service has long been the object of

controversy. The route network has grown, but the program suffered when Braniff and Singapore Airlines withdrew their sectors, according to Hiroshi Seo, author of *Civil Aircraft of the World*.

Controversy was the last thing on McCoy's mind as she embarked on her European getaway. Hired by McCoy's friends, Linda Puryear of Efficiency Management Consultants is taking care of car maintenance, shopping, and home repair in the world traveler's absence. Her pals' gift even included a limo ride to Metro Saturday morning for McCoy and her daughter.

College offers sports grants

Both the soccer and golf teams at Detroit College of Business in Dearborn have athletic scholarships available for the 1985-86 academic year.

The scholarships, which range from \$800 a year to full tuition, are based on athletic ability.

The soccer team participates in the Great Lakes Soccer League, the Michigan Indoor League, and also schedules games against local colleges.

The golf team participates in college tournaments throughout the tri-state area in both the fall and spring.

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