

Our Globe-Circling Newspaperboys



Next Saturday is National Newspaperboy Day, and here's a story about two carrier boys who extended their routes from neighborhood to the world

By DAVID McKAY, Carrier boy for the Sacramento Union

RICKY HIDLEBAUGH, carrier boy for the Davenport (Iowa) *Times-Democrat*, and I were the top-prize winners at America's First National Newspaperboy Convention sponsored by FAMILY WEEKLY last spring at California's Disneyland.

Our prizes—trips around the world via Qantas Airways.

We started in Vancouver, British Columbia, where Patrick Dooley, carrier boy for the Vancouver *Sunday News*, taught us a new "twist" way to roll newspapers. If we can remember the knack of smacking the open end of the papers to tighten the fold, we can almost guarantee our customers that they'll have a neat bundle of news on their porches each day.

Next came Hawaii and carriers Peter Brown and Robert Morganstein. Robert told us he has three routes and must rise at 2:30 a.m. Well, anyway he doesn't have to contend with winter snows as Ricky does while delivering the *Times-Democrat* nor the sleet and winds in my home town.

For sheer fun, I guess Ricky and I would vote for the afternoons we spent riding on the Waikiki surf—or under it, since it fooled us a lot.

It was winter in Sydney, Australia, and everybody was bundled up except Rick and me. We



Carrier boy in Thailand delivers to river boats.

thought it was brisk but no more. We found we had some talent in boomerang throwing. The carrier boys in Australia even throw their newspapers with a boomerang motion so it just sidles up on the front porch. Must try that. They also jump on buses and sell a few papers before the conductor can collect a fare. That's a dying skill, though, because, as carrier Jeff Lee told us: "Either conductors are getting faster or we're slowing down."

In Singapore and Bangkok, we were really in a foreign world. Bangkok boys deliver papers to homes and shops floating in the canals, and in Singapore they use motorcycles and motor bikes to hot-rod it through the crowded streets as if they were carrying blood plasma to an emergency operation.

WE NOTICED that the carriers usually came from large families and were quite poor. In one city we heard them described as a "bunch of ragamuffins." We didn't think of them that way, though, maybe because Ricky and I also come from large families. I'm one of six children, and my father is a factory inspector; Ricky is one of seven children, and his father is a truck driver. While we're certainly not poor, we have to work for any extra spending money.

The most exciting city we visited was Bangkok. We were fascinated by Thai boxing matches with the contestants using feet as well as fists, and we found ourselves yelling with excitement.

It is also a very religious country and one of the happiest we visited; I think religion and happiness go together.

In Egypt and Rome we visited the places we'd read about in history classes. The Pyramids and Sphinx, the Colosseum and the Trevi fountain. What impressed us most? A camel ride! No amusement-park ride is as dizzying as that!

We wished we had more time in England, but we did see Eton (and wore those top hats), a play at the Old Vic, and Buckingham Palace. We could have come back day after day to watch the changing of the guard.

Newspaperboys in London have real headaches. They must peddle 10 or 15 different papers at the same time. I tried selling them on a street corner, but you have to shuffle the papers like playing cards, and I'm afraid my customers got a bit impatient with my slowness.

By the time you read this, Ricky and I probably will be back on our old routes—same houses, same streets, same daily rush. Our routes aren't as exotic as those in Bangkok or Singapore, but we learned some things are the same in London and Sydney as in Davenport and Sacramento: first, newspapers are the most wanted commodity in the world and, second, the boys who deliver them may be "ragamuffins," but they aren't the kind who will stay that way—not if hard work and determination count for anything.



David and Rick learn Australian boomerang toss.



David peddles British papers on London corner.

COVER:

Familiar red- and amber-hued leaves dot this autumn scene—and fashion a comfortable nestling place for this lovely couple and their baby. Photo by Vivienne Lapham.

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