M. SANTOS-DUMONT ROUNDS EIFFEL TOWER

Aeronaut Loses Prize by About Forty Seconds.

Balloon's Motor Worked Very Successfully—Easy Progress Against Wind—Decision Disputed.

PARIS, Oct. 19.—The Santos-Dumont airship ascended at St. Cloud at 2:42 o'clock this afternoon, and five minutes afterward began to round the Eiffel Tower. Santos-Dumont completed his trip successfully, but a question arose as to whether it was done within the time limit. M. Deutsch, who offered the prize, said the aeronaut won.

The committee, however, declared that M. Santos-Dumont took 30 minutes 40 4-7 seconds to make the trip. M. Deutsch offered a prize of 100,000 francs for any machine that would make the trip from St. Cloud to and around the Eiffel Tower and back within thirty minutes.

Santos-Dumont started for the first time at 2:29, but on leaving the park his guide-rope caught in a tree and he was obliged to descend. He started again at 2:42 P. M., rose 250 yards, and then pointed for the Eiffel Tower, the balloon going in a straight line. It was seen, through field-glasses, to arrive at the tower and round it. The time, up to that point, with the wind in the balloon's favor, was 8 minutes and 45 seconds. It returned against the wind and made slower headway, but still kept in the true direction for St. Cloud, which it reached in the total time of 29 minutes 15 seconds.

But, instead of descending immediately, Santos-Dumont made a broad sweep over the Aero Club grounds, with the result that another minute and twenty-five seconds were consumed before the workmen seized the guide rope. Thus, technically, Santos-Dumont exceeded the time limit by forty seconds.

The enormous crowd which had gathered inside and outside the grounds gave the aeronaut a tremendous ovation. As his basket came within speaking distance, Santos-Dumont leaned over the side and asked:

"Have I won the prize?"

Hundreds of spectators shouted: "Yes, yes!" But the Comte de Dion, a member of the committee, approached and threw a damper on the enthusiasm by saying:

"My friend, you have lost the prize by forty seconds."

Numbers of onlookers protested against this announcement in lively terms, but the Comte de Dion said:

"That is the decision of the committee in accordance with the rules of the contest."

The crowd, however, refused to accept this view and a warm discussion ensued, the majority of the spectators taking the ground that Santos-Dumont was entitled to the prize because he had reached the grounds within thirty minutes, although he had not descended immediately. The aeronaut, after protesting against the decision of the committee, finally shrugged his shoulders and remarked:

"Anyway, I do not care personally for the 100,000f. I intended to give it to the poor."

But the crowd persisted in declaring that Santos-Dumont had won. A number of ladies who were present threw flowers at the aeronaut, others offered him bouquets, and one admirer, to the amusement of the onlookers; even presented him with a little white rabbit.

At this moment M. Deutsch himself arrived at the club grounds, having only shortly before that moment reached Paris from Biarritz. He advanced, embraced Santos-Dumont, shook hands with him, and said:

"For my part, I consider that you have won the prize."

The crowd then gave the two men a great ovation, cheering heartily for Santos-Dumont and Deutsch. Santos-Dumont claims that he won the prize because he reached the park within the time, and that the original rules governing the contest made no mention of having to touch the ground within the thirty minutes.

The dispute is due to the action of the committee, which some time ago modified the terms of the contest by inserting the latter stipulation. Santos-Dumont, at the time, protested, and refused to be bound by the fresh regulation, and strenuously upheld this view with the Comte de Dion and other members of the committee on descending to-day, finally declaring that he considered he had won the prize and would not try again. If the money was withheld, it was not his fault.

M. Deutsch said he would give 25,000f. to the poor, notwithstanding the decision of the committee. But Santos-Dumont declined to accept the offer as a solution of the difficulty.

There was a large assemblage of people at the Eiffel Tower, and considerable interest was manifested in the experiment in other parts of Paris, groups of people gathering in the streets to watch the progress of the elongated, yellow balloon with its long guide rope hanging and white canvas propellers whirling round, while those below distinctly distinguished the loud buzzing of the motor.

Santos-Dumont rounded the Eiffel Tower between the second and topmost platforms, at about 75 yards away from the tower. The balloon pitched somewhat when going against the wind, and Santos-Dumont, when he descended, said the motor suddenly stopped while the balloon was at a little distance from the tower. He thought he might have to descend, but luckily he succeeded in getting the machine started again. From that time on the motor worked satisfactorily.

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