

49/75

IT COULD HAPPEN ONLY IN AMERICA

America's annual beauty contest reaches its climax in Atlantic City. Americans can find a title for everyone. Canada's Margaret Munn - crosses the border to become "Miss Ability." From New Jersey comes Betty Crowley "Miss Congeniality." 45 other Miss Hopefuls now line up in the final parade for the mightiest Miss of all - "Miss America." Last year's Queen - Bebe Shepp - crowns her successor - Jacqueline Mercer - "Miss America 1949." An 18-year-old ranch-hand from Arizona, Jacqueline wins a scholarship, a motor-car, \$10,000 and the chance of a film contract. A full dress ball ushers in a year of glory. Next year, perhaps Jacqueline can turn up for the "Mrs. America" contest, another annual event. Winning the title this time is Mrs. Francis Cloyd - a former "Miss America" and now a mother of three. What has she got to look forward to? Well, there is an American grand-mothers contest. Title week moves up to Virginia and calls on the Flying Tigers Air Circus. The object - why, to find "Mr. Daredevil," of course! Chief contender for the honour, Red Grant, rides the wings of his plane with the ease of a cowboy. There must be an awful lot of suction in his rubber soles!

But Captain Tommy Walker wins the title by crashing his plane into a solid wall.

So that the juniors don't think they are neglected, there's a contest for them, too. A pair of toddlers take the honours in Florida. Eighteen-months old Kathy Tongay is this year's baby diver. From a 15-foot board, all 28 pounds of her jump into space. Kathy started swimming when she was 10-months. Recently, she swam the Mississippi. Next year, her parents say, it's the Channel. Her big brother Bubber (two-and-a-half) does a back flip to become 1949's Master Diver. Kathy and Bubber make the rest of the world's springboard experts look awfully old. Who said it could only happen in America?