

ROYAL TOURNAMENT PARACHUTE JUMPING REHEARSAL BY R.A.F.

The principal feature being staged by the Royal Air Force at the 1961 Royal Tournament (Earls Court, May 31 - June 17) is being produced by R.A.F. Flying Training Command, assisted by other Commands, and will be entitled "Search and Survival in the R.A.F."

It will demonstrate techniques used in the rescue of aircrew following a flying accident.

One phase of the display will involve the "rescue" of "aircrew" who have parachuted into the sea. These men (R.A.F. parachute jumping instructors) will be "rescued" by a one-third scale model of a high-speed R.A.F. search and rescue craft built at Hendon entirely from scrap materials.

The rehearsal this morning will show you what will happen in the Earls Court arena, and will involve parachute jumps from the 300-foot-high rafters of the hangar at R.A.F. Cardington, Beds., originally built to house the airship R.101. The parachutists will come down in an "ocean" which has also been produced from scrap at Hendon, inflate their survival dinghies and eventually be picked up by the rescue launch.

It may be of interest that, besides the building of the launch - a perfect copy of a launch still operative at Coastal Command's No.19 Group Headquarters at Mount Batten, Plymouth - the overall display will contain an air traffic control tower, electrically lighted plotting tables, and other equipment built by the R.A.F. Royal Tournament detachment at Hendon at the extraordinarily low cost, so far, to the Royal Tournament of only 25/-. This cost is unlikely to be greatly exceeded between now and the opening of the Tournament. The answer, of course, has been the use of a wide range of scrap materials.

After the rehearsal has demonstrated what will be seen at Earls Court, we shall be prepared to assist photographers to get such further pictures as they may want by arranging for additional jumps and rescues.

Present to talk to you about the display is Squadron Leader John Reed, M.B.E., of Pattingham, Wolverhampton, the producer, who also produced last year's R.A.F. "Missile Age" display at the Tournament.

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