

KOENECKE'S PILOT IS HELD AS SLAYER

Companion in Fatal Battle in Plane Also Is Charged at Toronto With Manslaughter.

AVERTED CRASH, THEY SAY

Lost Course in Fight to Keep Passenger Away From the Controls and Landed Blindly.

By The Associated Press.
TORONTO, Sept. 17.—With the pilot and his companion under arrest on a charge of manslaughter, provincial authorities started a thorough investigation today of the battle in a careening airplane high over this city in the early hours this morning in which Leonard Koenecke, outfielder for the Brooklyn baseball club of the National League, was killed when he attempted to take control of the plane in his own hands.

The pilot, William J. Mulqueaney of Detroit, said that his passenger, Koenecke, flew into a rage, grabbed at the controls and grappled with his companion, Irwin Davis. The plane was in danger, he said, and he used a fire extinguisher as a club to quiet Koenecke.

"If he's dead, I'm the one that killed him," said Mulqueaney. "My God, I wish I could take those blows back."

Dr. W. H. Taylor of New Toronto, autopsy surgeon, said a brain hemorrhage caused Koenecke's death and that the ball player's face was severely battered.

Coroner's Jury Reserves Judgment.

A coroner's jury viewed the body, inspected the blood-spattered cabin which had been rocked by the weird struggle in mid-air, and reserved judgment.

Colonel Douglas Joy, Inspector of Civil Aviation, examined the interior of the plane and the damage caused by its emergency landing on the infield of the Long Branch race-track.

"This isn't a flying accident," he said. "It is a criminal case."

Attorney General Reebuck, who heard the pilot's strange story, and reports of investigators said:

"The circumstances of this incident are such as to cause grave uneasiness. This matter has very grave implications. We are as anxious to protect American citizens while on our soil as we are to protect our own citizens. I have given instructions that a charge of manslaughter shall be laid."

The plane in which the fatal fight took place was originally owned by Libby Holman, Broadway blues singer, and her husband, Smith Reynolds, young tobacco heir who was found shot to death in his Winston-Salem (N. C.) home, in 1933.

The two survivors of the hand-to-hand battle in the skies told, over and over, the same story—to suburban police, to special investigators, to Colonel Joy, to newspaper men.

Mulqueaney called it a nightmare which is not over yet. Here is the story he told:

"En route East from St. Louis via Chicago with two other Brooklyn players, Leslie Munns and Bobby Barr, Koenecke was said by airline officials to have caused a disturbance during the flight from Chicago to Detroit. A part of his fare was refunded at Detroit, and the baseball player chartered Mulqueaney's plane to fly to Buffalo.

"Accompanied by a friend, Irwin Davis, we left the Detroit Airport about 10 P. M. for Buffalo," Mulqueaney said. "During the middle of the trip Koenecke became restless and started grabbing at the controls.

"As he was seated in the front

FIGURES IN FATAL BATTLE IN SPEEDING AIRPLANE.



Irwin Davis (left) and William J. Mulqueaney as they landed in Toronto, Canada, after the fight in which Len Koenecke, outfielder of the Brooklyn National League baseball team, was killed. Davis is holding up one arm to show his torn and blood-stained coat sleeve.

seat I advised him to get into the back seat and he did. Davis came to the front seat. Everything went O. K. for a short time. Then he grabbed me by the neck, which interfered with my flying. I asked Davis to get into the rear seat and try to quiet him. After about ten minutes he started fighting with Davis and there was quite a commotion.

Heard Davis Call for Help.

"Davis yelled for help. I looked back and saw that Koenecke was fighting Davis. He then tried to get at me. Davis hit at Koenecke with a fire extinguisher. The latter knocked it out of his hand. He again made for me.

"Holding the controls in one hand, I picked up the extinguisher and hit at Koenecke but hit Davis. I then hit Koenecke two or three times with the extinguisher but he kept on fighting so I hit him again."

The plane was off its course and veering wildly. Once Koenecke had been battered down, the pilot said he had no idea where the plane was. When the lights of Toronto were sighted he circled, looking for a landing field, and finally spotted the race track. The machine was slightly damaged in the landing.

"I guess I was in a trance," Mulqueaney recalled, "but when I hopped out of the cockpit I thought I was about to be attacked by wolves. For a minute I thought that instead of being killed in a crash I was to be devoured by wild animals."

Police dogs used by the race track caretaker as a protection against trespassers were on the scene, but did not attack the fliers.

Mulqueaney and Davis were arraigned on the manslaughter charge in suburban Mimico police court. They were not asked to plead and were remanded until Friday morning, pending the outcome of the adjourned inquest which will be held Thursday night.

Defense Will Summon Stengel.

By The Canadian Press.
TORONTO, Sept. 17.—E. J. Murphy, K. C., counsel for Pilot Mulqueaney and Irwin Davis, in whose plane Len Koenecke met his death, announced tonight that Casey Stengel, manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, would be subpoenaed as a witness at the inquest Thursday. He will be questioned about the mental condition of the player.

Mr. Murphy said that Edward G. Stepe of Detroit, owner of the plane and the pilot's employer, would fly to Toronto early tomorrow and make arrangements for posting any bail demanded for release of Mulqueaney and Davis.

Mr. Murphy said he thought



Associated Press Photo.
Len Koenecke.

"Koenecke was deliberately attempting to commit suicide."

Once a Railway Fireman.

ADAMS, Wis., Sept. 17 (AP).—Len Koenecke was 27 years old and made his home here with his wife.

Born in Baraboo, Wis., he developed his powerful physique as a fireman for the Chicago & North Western Railroad. After playing baseball as a boy he served with teams in Escanaba, Mich.; Springfield, Mo.; and Quincy, Ill., before going to Indianapolis of the American Association.

Mrs. Gladys Koenecke, wife of the baseball player, and their daughter, Ann, 3 years old, have been living at an apartment at 2,025 Regent Place, Brooklyn, for the summer.

Mrs. Koenecke would not talk yesterday about the death of her husband, Leslie Munns of 265 Ocean Avenue, one of the players on the Brooklyn baseball team who flew as far as Detroit with Koenecke, called early at the apartment and spoke for Mrs. Koenecke. He said that she would leave as soon as possible for Adams, Wis., Koenecke's home, and that the player's father and brother had left Adams for Toronto and would take the body home for burial.

Munns also said that he had been in communication with the Detroit airport by telephone, seeking to find out why Koenecke had been allowed to charter a plane if he had been in such condition as not to be acceptable as an airline passenger.

LEFT AIRLINER AT DETROIT.

Koenecke in Fighting Mood, Says Stewardess of the Plane.

Officials of the American Airlines here disclosed yesterday that Len Koenecke, Brooklyn baseball player, who was killed in a fight

with the pilot of a chartered airplane after taking off from Detroit on Monday evening, had been ejected from one of the airline's planes at Detroit after a fight on the trip from Chicago. The co-pilot left the cockpit during the flight and attempted to quiet the athlete when the efforts of the stewardess were unavailing.

Two other ball players who were with Koenecke continued East by air after he had been refused permission to ride on from Detroit. Koenecke then chartered the plane, not an airline craft, in which he was killed.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

NEWARK, N. J., Sept. 17.—Miss Eleanor Woodward, a small slender airline stewardess, told today of a battle with Len Koenecke on Monday while flying at nearly 10,000 feet between Chicago and Detroit.

According to the story told by Miss Woodward, a young woman in her early twenties, weighing less than 112 pounds and about 5 feet 4 inches in height, Koenecke boarded the American Air line plane due out of Chicago at 3 P. M. a short time before it took off. A few minutes after he took his seat she observed, she said, that he carried a bottle. Miss Woodward notified James A. Hammer, the pilot, that one of the passengers was apparently drinking. Such a report is an ordinary course on commercial planes.

About twenty-five minutes out of Chicago Miss Woodward observed that the ball player had left his seat and was arguing with one of the passengers. As she approached he struck at her and knocked her down. He then offered to fight another passenger.

As the heavy Douglas airliner bounced through the air the hostess picked herself up and notified R. C. Pickering, co-pilot of the plane. He went into the cabin and succeeded in getting Koenecke back to his seat. After he thought he had quieted the man he returned to the cockpit. A few minutes later the ball player was again out of his seat and bumping through the narrow aisle of the plane.

While Miss Woodward explained that there was no danger, several of the seven other men and women passengers in the plane became frightened and she then signaled to Hammer, who turned over the controls to Pickering. With the aid of Leslie Munns and Bobby Barr, the baseball players with whom Koenecke was traveling, he succeeded in again getting Koenecke into his seat.

During the rest of the trip to Detroit Pickering, who is about 6 feet tall and weighs nearly 200 pounds, stood over Koenecke. From Detroit, the airliner continued on to Newark.

—DODGERS WEAR MOURNING.

Players Weep When They Are Told of Koenecke's Death.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

ST. LOUIS, Sept. 17.—News of Len Koenecke's tragic death struck the Brooklyn baseball club with numbing force early today and sent the players on the field against the Cardinals in a depressed mood that no ordinary ill fortune of baseball could have brought about.

The big outfielder, outstanding in his position last season, was well liked by his fellow-players, all of whom regretted his departure from the club, the more so because it was almost a certainty that he would not again appear in a Brooklyn uniform.

Some of the Dodgers wept unashamed when, after many conflicting first reports, the details of Koenecke's death were given to them. Big Sam Leslie was the most visibly affected of all.

As for Manager Casey Stengel, that veteran of baseball for more than two decades was unable to talk about the tragedy when the news came to him early in the morning.

"I can't believe it," he said. "I won't believe it."

"How," he demanded in pained puzzlement, "could Koenecke have been on a plane at Toronto when he left on one that doesn't go near there?"

Stengel Talks to Players.

It was only after daylight that he had the complete story confirmed and then his normal loquacity deserted him entirely. He said little to newspaper men save to voice his regret and issued no formal statement to the press.

Leaving early for Sportsman Park, he assembled his players in the clubhouse and spoke briefly to them before the start of practice for the double-header. No newspaper men were present, of course, but it was understood that his remarks were confined to an expression of his and the players' sorrow.

When the Dodgers came out on the field each man wore a black band on his left sleeve.

Because Koenecke, along with Munns and Barr, was sent home such a short time before the club was due to return, unfounded reports of trouble between Koenecke and his manager were circulated.

While Koenecke was a star last season, it is a matter of record to baseball followers that his work this year was far below that standard. The recent acquisition of several new players, including four new outfielders, indicated clearly that more than one replacement was to be made and that Koenecke would be one of the players to go.