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THE BLUE JEANS

By
WILLY

For years, ever since I saw them first, I had looked on blue jeans as a despicable kind of garment. I thought them ugly, ill fitting, things to be looked at with contempt. I connected them with teddy boys who wore winkle-pickers and were badly in need of haircuts. I found them revolting and considered them eyesores of modern civilisation. I was obviously not "with it". How could one, I used to think, stoop so low as to wear such things.

One day I saw one of my neighbours, a perfectly respectable gentleman, wear blue jeans. We were both members of the "Sunday Brigade" which met practically every Sunday morning — unless it was raining — round about 11 o'clock, outside our respective houses and garages to wash and polish our cars. My neighbour must have noticed my look of incredulity, for he started talking straightaway about this latest addition to his wardrobe. He extolled their virtue. He told me how wonderful they were to wear and how lovely it was not to have to bother about creases. They were, he said, strong, extremely comfortable, washable and ideal leisure wear for all kinds of jobs. I looked at him more closely and had to agree they did not look horrible at all on him. He was slim and his jeans did not have those awful huge turnups at all. In fact, as he was slim, they fitted him rather nicely. Now after all, I began to think, I was slim too. How would I look, I began to wonder, clad in a pair of jeans? And how could I ever live it down, if I bought some, with my wife?

The idea had caught on. About a week later I took all my courage into both hands and went, without telling anybody anything beforehand, to an outfitters and asked for a pair of jeans. "Blue, black, grey or white, Sir?" he asked without batting an eyelid, whereupon I said "blue". "Hipster or not Sir?" the enquiry continued, and there I got stuck. Would he, I said, kindly explain what exactly he meant, as I was, I added, rather new to this sort of thing. He did and I took a pair of "hipsters".

Since then I have acquired four pairs of them. My wife first looked at me aghast — and then laughingly adjusted their length neatly for me. I have taken to them like a duck to water. I too find them comfortable and ideal for leisure wear and for doing odd jobs. At first I did not dare to show myself in them outside the house and then one day, putting on a deliberate air of defiance, I did. To my amazement I got away with it. Nobody refused to recognise me. Nobody laughed, nobody looked at me sneeringly. I began to feel "with it". All that was, perhaps, two years ago.

Now a few days ago something funny happened. I was outside my garage, clad in jeans, of course, happily polishing my car, when a somewhat dubious looking character with a stubbly, unshaven face came along. "Tell me, mate", he said, taking me for a chauffeur or an odd-job man, "what sort of a bloke is the owner of this bus?" Was he, he wanted to know, approachable and would I, as one mate to another, tell him, whether my boss could perhaps be touched for a quid or so with a good heart-break story? He was utterly amazed when I told him I had no boss, the car was mine and here was half a crown to help him along. He took the half a crown, looked at me with disgust and said: "Fancy misleading an honest working man by wearing *these*". He pointed at my jeans and walked away . . .

SWISSAIR DC-8's 7,460-MILE RECORD

The first of Douglas's fifty-three DC-8's, being flown by a Swissair crew from Long Beach, California, established a world record on Thursday, 31st October, with a 7,460-mile great-circle flight to Beirut, in the Lebanon. The actual distance flown by the aircraft — registration HB-IDD — was 7,896 miles, which were covered in 13 hours 59 minutes.

The fan-powered DC-8 will join Swissair's other three DC-8's on North Atlantic routes and will be able to operate direct between Switzerland and North America under any weather conditions and with a load of 142 passengers (16 first class and 126 economy class). The maximum seating capacity of this type is 156 passengers.

The new airliner had been handed over to Swissair at Long Beach on 29th October. During its record flight it averaged a ground speed of 565 m.p.h. and the altitudes varied between 33,000 feet and 42,000 feet. With an average tail wind of 50 m.p.h., the highest ground speed reached during the journey was 690 m.p.h.

The DC-8 series fifty-three is powered by Pratt & Whitney JT3D-3B turbofans, each giving a maximum thrust of 18,000 lb., and its maximum cruising speed is 594 m.p.h.

Compared with the 16,800-lb.-thrust JT4A-9 engines of the DC-8 series thirty, the new turbofans have ten per cent less fuel consumption, improving the range by about twenty per cent. With spares, the JT3D-3B costs about £125,000. It is a development of the JT3D, which has to its credit more than three million operating hours in commercial service and, as the TF33, two million hours in military aircraft.

Three DC-8 series thirty-two were delivered to Swissair between April and August, 1960, and have been used on transatlantic routes. In 1962 Swissair decided to have the three aircraft modified by extending the wing leading edges to increase the full-load range by 275 miles.

The work has already been carried out by Swissair on HB-IDA and HB-IDC. During the coming winter, HB-IDB will be converted to a series fifty-three by Douglas at Long Beach. Besides the fitting of turbofan engines and new nacelles, this work entails the lengthening of the passenger cabin by 5 feet 4 inches, making room for twelve additional passengers, and the extensions to the wing leading edges.

When modifications are completed, Swissair will have a North Atlantic fleet of two DC-8 series fifty-three (142 passengers) and two improved DC-8 series thirty-two (130 passengers).

SWISSAIR'S WINTER PLANS

For the winter period — 1st November until 31st March — Swissair has planned a record total production of 101,875,000 ton-miles, compared with 91,250,000 ton-miles last winter. Pure-jet aircraft will account for 94 per cent of the traffic.

Switzerland's private-enterprise airline is in a period of consolidation after a profitable year in 1962, when there was a big expansion of the jet fleet.

During the season DC-8's will be making up to twelve flights a week to New York and two a week to Montreal and Chicago. Swissair's Coronado fleet, which includes the Convair 990A, the world's fastest airliner, links Switzerland with South America, the Middle and Far East and West Africa. The weekly Caravelle service between Geneva and Algiers is being continued.