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## **Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Hoff, William H.**

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dated January 17, 1912, along with students J.W. McClaskey, S. C. Lewis, J. B. McCalley and C. W. Shoemaker.

At that time Curtiss was preparing to send his entire group of pilots and students to the 1912 Los Angeles Meet at Dominguez Field January 19th to 28th. Hoff was entered as a contestant at this event, one of fourteen pilots sent there with seven planes. This was a large meet with sixteen of the leading U.S. pilots competing for honors and prizes. Hoff did exceptionally well considering this was his first public flying. He went in largely for speed contests and always came in second or third against more experienced pilots.

Following the Los Angeles Meet, Hoff was a contestant at the Oakland, California. Meet held at the Emeryville Race Track February 17th to 25th. Also flying there were Lincoln and Hillary Beachey, Glenn Martin, Blanche Scott, Farnum Fish, Weldon Cooke, Horace Kearney and Phil Parmelee. There Hoff had a very serious smashup in a speed event on February 17th before thousands of spectators. The participants had started from the center of the track, Lincoln Beachey taking off first, then Parmelee, with Hoff next. Hoff's 80 ~~horsepower~~ Model D Curtiss was much faster than Parmelee's Wright and before Hoff realized it he was immediately behind and dangerously close to Parmelee. Both planes were too low for him to go under Parmelee. Hoff attempted to go over, but stalled and mashed back into Parmelee's wake, lost control and crashed, hitting on the right lower wing, rolling over several times. He certainly would have been killed had it not been for his crash helmet. As it was he suffered a mild concussion, his jaw was broken in two places, and he had a dislocated shoulder, broken nose and pelvis.

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