

Wednesday, June 23, 1954

## Move Over, All Scopes! Todd-AO Bigger and Wider

Wraps were finally taken off the new Todd-American Optical wide-screen process at a press demonstration at MGM yesterday, with the consensus being that only Cinerama, among the current techniques, can compare to its values in the audience participation sense. But it surpasses Cinerama in that it requires only one camera to photograph the subject; uses only one machine to project it; and gets around the "seamed" screen of Cinerama with a continuous, deep-curved screen.

The process utilizes a specially-cut 65mm film which travels through the camera in the conventional vertical method; and the prints, also 65mm in width, are projected at the rate of 30 frames a second, rather than the conventional 24 frames per second.

According to Dr. Brian O'Brien, who developed the process, the Todd-AO cameras will be comparative in price to regular 35mm equipment; the same applies to the projection machines.

However, exhibitors installing Todd-AO projection machines can use them for regular 35mm projection because the sprocket spools will have "wasp waists" which will permit their being narrowed down to the regular print width.

The screen used on MGM's Stage 2 was 51 feet across and 25 feet in height, with the depth of the curve 13 feet at the center. Total width of the screen along the curve is 60 feet. Footage shown included scenes of a roller coaster ride, a Madrid bull fight,

and the canals in Venice, Italy, as well as tests made for "Oklahoma!," Rodgers & Hammerstein musical, which will be the first production in the process.

They were filmed with lenses of 128, 64, 48 and 37 degrees. Magnetic sound with six and seven tracks was used.

The demonstration proved amazing full-screen clarity, which was not diminished from positions up close at the sides of the screen, indicating there will be little, if any, loss of seats in theatres showing Todd-AO productions.

This has strictly big-time roadshow possibilities for pictures having sufficient quality for long, long runs.

The cameras for the production of "Oklahoma!" have been completed and were exhibited; the projection machines are converted Ernemann equipment. New American Optical projectors made by the Philips Co. of Holland now are being service-tested at A-O plants in the East.