

Hostage Safe as 2nd Hijack Fails

United Press

New York

An FBI agent armed with a high-powered rifle shot and killed the hijacker of a TWA jetliner yesterday on a Kennedy airport runway where the man expected to board a plane for Italy.

A hostess the man had taken hostage about two hours earlier—on a flight scheduled to Chicago — was about 20 feet away and was not injured.

Agent Kenneth W. Lovin shot the hijacker, who was tentatively identified from papers he carried as Richard Obergfell, 27, of Passaic, N.J.

The man, wounded in the stomach and shoulder, died in Jamaica Hospital about 25 minutes after he was shot.

The first fatal shooting of a hijacker in the United States ended a two - and - one - half hour drama which began shortly after TWA flight 335 left LaGuardia airport at 1:45 p.m., bound for Chicago.

About 20 minutes after the 727 jetliner left LaGuardia, the hijacker, armed with a pistol, grabbed hostess Idie Marie Concepcion, 21, of Burbank, Calif., around the neck and forced his way into the cockpit.

A few minutes later captain Albert R. Hawes, 42, announced over the plane's intercom, "we're going back to LaGuardia. We've got a gentleman who wants to go other places."

Obergfell reportedly told the pilot he wanted to fly to Milan, Italy. Hawes replied that the plane was incapable of transoceanic flights and persuaded Obergfell to return to New York for another plane.

The plane landed at LaGuardia at 2:28 p.m. While Obergfell held Miss Concepcion hostage in the cockpit, the 55 passengers and five crew members were evacuated from the rear hatch. About 10 minutes later the

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hijacker, pointing a gun at the stewardess, emerged from the aircraft and asked Frank Weaver, TWA manager of passenger services at LaGuardia, where the car was that would take him to Kennedy Airport for the flight to Italy.

A six-passenger panel truck, driven by maintenance man Jake Mernick, was provided and the three followed an unidentified black automobile to the end of runway 22 at Kennedy Airport, about one-half mile north of the TWA passenger terminal.

WAITING

Police and FBI agents were waiting for the hijacker behind metal "blast fences" at the end of the runway. Eyewitnesses said the hijacker, the stewardess and the maintenance worker got out of the truck, at which point the maintenance man was permitted to leave.

Obergfell and Miss Concepcion waited in front of the truck while a TWA Boeing 707 jetliner was towed to the location to prepare for a possible trip to Italy in case the FBI plan didn't work.

The stewardess, who remained composed throughout the harrowing incident, said



AP Wirephoto

IDIE MARIA CONCEPCION
Hostess held hostage

Obergfell was extremely nervous and seemed concerned whether there was anybody in the car which they had followed to Kennedy airport.

As a mobile stairway was being put in place at the airliner, Obergfell continued to worry about the black automobile, Miss Concepcion said, and at one point began

backing away from her in the direction of the car, apparently to satisfy himself that the vehicle was empty.

When Obergfell was about 20 feet away from the stewardess, Agent Lovin fired a shot which hit the hijacker in the stomach. Obergfell slumped to his knees, then started to get up. A second shot in the left shoulder felled him again.

A passenger on the hijacked plane said there was nothing about the man to attract attention when he took a seat.

NECK

"I didn't think anything about it," said James Massey of New York. "A little while later, he stood up just as a hostess walked by. He grabbed her around the neck and put a gun to her back."

Miss Concepcion joined TWA last April and has been flying only two months.

"Her lifetime dream was to be a stewardess, ever since she was a little girl," her mother said in California. "I asked her if she wasn't scared of hijackings and she told me, 'Well, it won't scare me because I'm very brave.'"

"I'm still not afraid," Miss Concepcion said after the hijacker had been killed, "but I don't really know why."