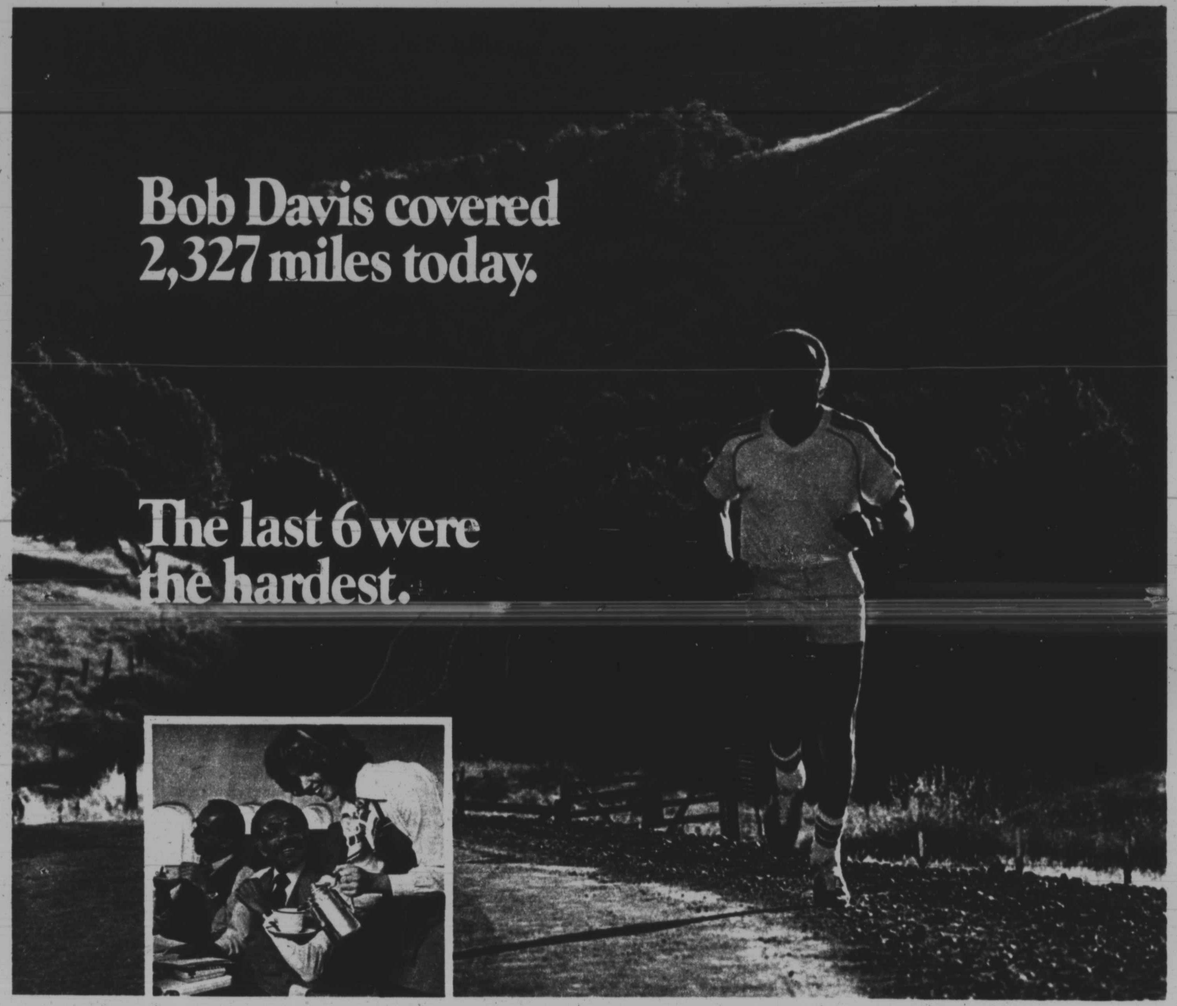

That long, cross-country flight didn't slow him down. Because Bob Davis flew United. Our convenient schedules kept pace with his schedule. Once on board, Bob sat back and enjoyed a meal, stereo entertainment, and the service and attention that have made United the front-running airline with business travelers.

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"That guy doesn't miss a step."

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—You CAN Drink The Water

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their's is the finest silver in all Mexico.

Count your pesos carefully, and, as a rule - of - thumb start by offering about half the asking price. Avoid credit card shopping when possible. Most bargains are had for cash.

For the serious shopper, the City Market on the Avenue Tulum in Cancun is a must stop. Here, the entire bazaar was designed to accommodate the tourist trade, more than 50 shops and outdoor stalls surround a shaded plaza. Everybody speaks English and if you can't buy it here you can't buy it in Mexico.

There's Taxco silver and black coral jewelry, intricate pastel hand-painted or austere black Oaxacan pottery, hand woven blankets with bold geometric or fierce Mayan designs, and gold.

The crime rate in Cancun is zero (so far so good); the police station closes down at sunset; and, if you choose you may ride the bus to the market place and back to your hotel. Your hotel desk clerk will direct you to the *parada* (bus stop) located near the hotel and for 5 pesos (25 cents) you can get bounced around just like at home.

That first day I drove south along 307 towards Tulum. The history books said that it was here that the Mayans built their first seaport and it was to that port that the foraging Europeans came, bringing with them deceit, greed and smallpox.

Driving in the Yucatan is an experience. There are limited speed restrictions: whatever the traffic will bear in the city and up to 100 kilometers an hour on the highway. The land is flat and the road is, in some places, straight for miles.

The dense Yucatan jungle yielded but little space to the road builders; where there's mile after mile of paved road, there's, right up to the asphalt, shoulder-high lantana, koa, chiclet trees and vivid multi-colored crotons appearing in the thick brown underbrush like small explosions of brighh red, yellow and green.

The clerk at the hotel had suggested that we stop at Akumal for lunch since it is situated just about half the distance to Tulum. A two hour drive. We did.

The Hotel Club Akumal Caribe straddles the road to the beach and forms a court around which are small shops and parking spaces. We bought some beer, paid the 20 peso entrance fee, and walked into the breathtaking luxury of the Akumal Lagoon.

Two days passed before we continued to the ruins of the Mayan Seaport at Tulum. There we discovered a small circular parking area large enough for several tour buses and a few cars surrounded by shops where you can buy Mexican handicrafts and other products.

There is one shop operated by a shrewd leather craftsman who burns images of fierce Mayan Gods onto raw leather. The finish product is about 18 inches high and 10 inches wide, perfect for framing. It's priced at about 500 pesos but if you're smart you'll barter.

When we reached Chichen-Itza late the next afternoon after more than a two hour drive inland, I felt like a fish out of water but somewhat relieved to be on dry land.

The ruins of Chichen-Itza are most remarkable. The old city was totally destroyed by Franciscan Priests and Spanish soldiers. The Nunnery and the Observatory of the old city about 3,000 years old, are mostly rubble but the new city, only about 2,000 years old, where the mighty pyramid, El Castillo stands is more intact.

You can visit the Warrior's Temple where the God Chac Mool arrogantly blocks the corridor to the sacrificial table at an entrance which is on either side guarded by the mythical Feathered Serpent.

The restaurant at Chichen-Itza offers Mexican cuisine so mouth-wateringly good, it'll bring tears to your eyes. I had chicken barbeques in banana leaves and my companion, chicken in prickly black sauce. *Delicioso!* The price average about 200 pesos and the meal included soup, salad and desert. They prepare a surprisingly good French onion soup, not as robust, perhaps as I prefer but certainly as tasty as any I've had.

The experience taught me two things: 1. the highway warning signs called *preventivas* include one which looks much like two back-to-back Volkswagens. It means BUMP ahead. Believe it!

And 2. if you visit a native roadside food stand, and if you eat one of those hot, fried, greasy pork-filled tortillas you are not going to die, even though what may happen to you afterwards presents a convincing argument to the contrary.

Failure to slow down and approach the bump at a proper speed could be fatal but *Tourista* (that's what Mexicans call the savage attacks of diarrhea which *they* never get) can be relieved by a healthy dose of Streptomagma chased at any *farmacia* (drug store) and don't mind if the druggist snickers, he'll understand, and he'll hurry.

Some of the ruins at Chichen-Itza, Mexico. The old city was destroyed by Franciscan priests and Spanish soldiers. Parts of the old city are over 3,000 years old.

—Top Promoters

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The festival will be held at a more pretigious location, Schmidt's beer company is backing the concert 100 percent, and Atlantic City officials have realized that Street's program is a great thing to attract tourists.

Elzie Street is a talented black man whose abilities, are augmented by the skills of his wife, Estelle, who is supportive of his promotional activities.

A talented dancer, Estelle studied in New York under the tutelage of Martha Graham. Her diverse experiences as a terpsichorean includes work as a dancer and choreographer for Larry Steel at Club Harlem in Atlantic City and heading up several dance troupes in Baltimore.

Mrs. Street is also a licensed funeral director whose father is A. D. Price, owner of the oldest funeral home in Richmond, Va.

We are hearing so many stories these days about how black promoters are being forced out by greedy whites, especially, in the popular music field.

Considering the challenges and hurdles involved in promoting concerts it is incredible that Elzie Street continues to succeed.

But, succeed he does time and time again. The Atlantic City Jazz Festival will be a fitting tribute to his perservance.