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FOR RELEASE AT WILL

FLYING IS ALL IN A DAY'S WORK
TO SPECTACULAR TOTONAC TROUPE

Would you climb a pole 114 feet in the air, dance on a twenty-inch disk, then lunge into space and "fly" to the ground -- all for \$30 a day?

It's all in a day's work to the Totonac Indians -- performing their high-flying feats four times a day on weekdays and five times daily on weekends in a ritual that is easily the most spectacular event at HemisFair '68.

Appropriately enough for a World's Fair that offers a trip into the colorful past of the cultures that created America, the Indians are actually recreating a pre-Columbian rite that began in Aztec times and has been celebrated ever since.

For more than 400 years, the tribal home in Papantla, Mexico, has been the scene of the colorful ceremony -- designed to bring the need of an agricultural people for rain to the attention of the gods.

Whether it's an accident of geography or the product of oft-repeated prayers, Vera Cruz -- where Papantla is located -- has plenty of rain today.

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Flying is All in Day's Work to Totonacs -- 2.

As a result, the Totonac ceremony -- a free HemisFair '68 attraction sponsored by Frito-Lay, Inc., and Pepsi-Cola Co. -- survives as a ritual game for the young daredevils of the tribe.

They need all their nerve to play a part, too. No modern safety measures are used in the ceremonial -- which climaxes when each Los Voladores makes a series of spectacular swings around the towering pole, in the course of a flying descent to the ground. Held only by a waist rope, each flyer revolves around the pole 32 times -- flying through space to a radius of 30 feet.

The Indians themselves -- representatives of a tribe that still has 13,000 members living in the old way in Papantla -- treat their impressive performance as an everyday affair. It's the blasé HemisFairgoers -- kept outdoors and on the go by the attractions of the exposition -- who are keeping their fingers crossed.

After all, the Totonac performance is a rain dance -- and if it works.....