

Studios Rush Techniques To Win Back Film Fans

By BOB THOMAS

HOLLYWOOD (AP) — The battle of the dimensions still rages.

This week saw much activity in behalf of new movie techniques.

Paramount's deluxe huckster, William Holden, was circling the globe to sell the studio's process, Vistavision.

RKO was demonstrating its Superscope throughout the United States.

IT'S MIGHTY GOOD

And in Hollywood, the press trooped out to see two new developments. One was the long-awaited Todd-AO process, in which "Oklahoma!" will be filmed.

It's good. Mighty good. In fact, it may be the best. The screen is broad, slightly curved and taller than the ribbon-like Cinemascope. It excels in clarity.

The film is 65mm, instead of the normal 35mm. And the film runs through the carema at 30 frames per second, instead of the usual 24.

These factors, plus a great bug-eye lens, give a picture that seems as close to real life as anything I've seen on a movie screen.

The other showing was the improved methods of Cinemascope. Its parent, 20th Century-

Fox, showed some film using a new lens that seems to eliminate the fuzziness that plagued early Cinemascope films. The depth of focus is pleasing to the eye.

REFRESHER COURSE

Twentieth-Fox, the first big firm to bring out a new technique, is attempting to win back some of the play stolen by the newer developments.

Some impetus was lost because the studio put out such claptrap as "Hell and High Water," "12-Mile Reef" and "King of the Khyber Rifles." The list of new Cinemascope films looks much more impressive.

It's time for our semi-annual refresher course on new dimensions and what is happening to them. Pay attention now!

CINEMASCOPE — It squeezes a wide scene onto normal film. A special lens projects the result on a broad screen. It is still the most used of the new techniques.

CINERAMA — Three projectors throw a continuous scene on a huge, semi-circular screen, giving the audience a sense of being in the picture. It is doing great business in a dozen cities, but is limited to a roadshow operation.

VISTAVISION — The image is received on two frames of normal film. The bigger negative can be blown up to fit any size screen and still retain clarity. This has not yet been seen by the public.

SUPERSCOPE — A trick lens can convert any kind of film to fit all screen sizes. It is still unseen by the public.

TODD-AO — A mammoth lens, 65mm film and big screen combine for utmost clarity. This also appears destined for limited, road-show use.

3D — The viewer looks through polarized glasses at two images, achieving an illusion of depth. Not much life left in 3D.