Next program Monday Oct. 16th: Two related action/stunt films: "LET'S GO" (1923, directed by William K. Howard), a typical all-action comedy-melodrama starring Richard Taupitz; followed by a real rarity, never released in the U.S., "The Daredevil Reporter" (Germany, 1925, dir: Ernst Lubitsch) starring Eddie Polo; shot in and around Hamburg, written by Billy Wilder. French titles only, but easy to follow, synopsis provided. Music for this program played live by Stuart Oderman.

The Theodore Ruff Memorial Film Society September 18, 1978

THE ARIZONA KID (Fox, 1930) Directed by Alfred Santell; Story and screenplay: Ralph Breen; Camer: Glen MacWilliams; Art Direction: Joseph Wright; 8 reels.

Clearly this was originally intended to be a direct sequel to "In Old Arizona," until, at the last minute prior to shooting, Fox found that their rights to the Cisco Kid character did not extend beyond the one picture. While they were being renegotiated, this picture went ahead - the Cisco character re-named but unchanged, and the Edward Lowe cavalryman eliminated. Presumably much advance publicity was not recalled or changed, since many original reviews do refer to it as a Cisco Kid film! It's a big advance on the original, and also a spectacularly better film than the Baxter/Santell "Romance of the Rio Grande" (very dull, and an especial disappointment from Santell) which preceded it. However, "The Cisco Kid" - which followed in 1931, and which we showed earlier this year - was better still, shorter, and excellently photographed. However, considering the relative paucity of spectacular action, "The Arizona Kid" does keep nicely on the move. The outdoor locations are excellent, the saloon and other interiors big and colorful, and full of busy extras. Scenes never run too long so that the stress on dialogue doesn't slow it down, and it does move towards a good climax. It's a handsome film, and the only disappointing aspect is the miscasting of Carole Lombard.

--- intermission ---

HELL IN THE HEAVENS (Fox, 1934) Directed by John Blystone; Screenplay by Byron Morgan, Ted Parsons and Jack Yellen from "The Ace" by Herman Rosman; Camer: Henry Sharp; 8 reels.

Few actors seem to have been able to build a more prolific career on a fairly limited talent than Warner Baxter, who made so many "A"s, "B"s and programmers at Fox in the 30's that it is difficult to keep track of them. Especially many of them had interchangeable titles ("Wife Husband & Friend", "Wife, Doctor and Nurse", "Doctors' Wives") and he seemed to play a doctor in fully a third of them. Plus which he found time to be loaned out to MGM, Warners and Columbia as well. It's good to welcome this "lost" film back in possibly its only showing, but one must admit that its general lack of originality is stressed by its title - actually a very good title, but remarkably close to "Hell's Angels", from which, not unexpectedly, much of its aerial footage comes. By 1934, the aerial warfare genre had really shot its bolt through "Wings". "The Dawn Patrol" "The Eagle and the Hawk", "The Ace of Aces"; and so many others. It has nothing new to say, but tries to be fashionably anti-war and commercially satisfying at the same time. It has few surprises, and the aerial thrills are minimised, dictated by pre-existing footage and a few new matching shots, but there are good performances, excellent photography and efficient if superficial direction from a man more at home with Tom Mix (in the silent period) and Laurel & Hardy (four years hence). Miss Montenegro is so appealing it's a pity there isn't more of her. A forgettable film perhaps, but a most enjoyable one for the 80 minutes it is on screen.

--- W.K. Everson ---