

Cuban Girls Worry About Snow

By HAZEL BARNES

The girls keep talking about snow even though they admit they're "afraid" of it and despite temperatures in the high 90s.

Snow is their main concern because these girls—refugees from Cuba—never have seen snow.

They're "afraid" of it, the sisters at Holy Names College explain, because they think it will be terribly cold.

Even though warm temperatures have prevailed most of the time since the 24 girls at Holy Names and 20 boys, who are housed at Bishop White Preparatory Seminary, E429 Sharp, arrived in Spokane the first week in June, they have shivered much of the time.

The Cuban boys aren't worried about snow; they had a snowball fight on Mt. Spokane about three weeks ago, explained Arturo Rodriguez, Cuban college student who serves as their "house father."

Rodriguez came to the United States four years ago. He is a senior at Carroll College, Helena, Mont.

Since then the young folks, who range in age from 10 to 18, have become somewhat accustomed to Spokane's weather. Thursday some of the girls, clad in shorts and blouses, lounged on the breeze-swept Holy Names campus, on the Ft. Wright grounds. About half the girls had their turn earlier going for a swim at the Shadle Park pool.

Music Mixed

Record players—with American music mixed with Spanish—may be heard in the living quarters at both the seminary and the college.

Yesterday some of the boys

were busy getting the gym at Bishop White Prep School ready for a dance last night at which the girls were guests.

And as they worked, Spanish music filled the air.

"I've never worked with a more cooperative, happy and courteous group," said Sister Marion Mark, who directs the work with the 24 girls at Holy Names. "They are peculiarly unified, despite the range in age. The older girls are wonderful about helping the younger ones."

It was amazing to see how well some of the girls spoke English and of how proud they were to answer questions, or give their names in English.

Saint's Day Observed

With Vicky, 16, as she relaxed on the lawn, was her 10-year-old sister, Ana Marguerite. Ana didn't know it yesterday afternoon, but there was a special cake for her that night since it was St. Ann's Day, her saint's day. A large decorated cake bore the words, "Feliz Dia del Sancto Ana," which translated read "Happy day of the Saint, Ana."

Vicky and Ana, two of five children in their family, are daughters of a lawyer. Their older brother is in Miami, Fla., but the rest of the family is in Cuba. Vicky was wearing a silver bracelet bearing a single charm with the name, "Manel," her Cuban friend, she explained, who is studying medicine at the University of Miami.

Zeida (pronounced Sada), 17, who plans to study science when she enters college this fall, explained with a smile that she planned to "teach the American girls Spanish," rather than speaking English all the time when classes start.

Her 12-year-old sister, Mirta, is on the campus with her. Their father, who formerly had a cookie and cracker factory in Cuba, has been out of work since the government took over his factory and he hopes eventually to come to the United States.

Elsa, also 17, is the daughter of a mineral water office worker. She's very proud of her older sister, 22, who recently entered a Catholic convent in Barcelona, Spain.

College Planned

Miriam, 18, who plans to study science and art when she begins her college work this fall, said her father works at the American navy base in Cuba. Her younger sister and her parents are in Cuba.

Obdulia, 17, another freshman, daughter of a medical doctor, also plans to study science.

At the front door of Durocher Hall, where the girls are living this summer (the high school girls will go to Holy Names Academy this fall) are the words:

"Por favor cierra la puerta. Gracias! (Please close the door. Thank you!)"

Ex-Spokane Assists

One of the sisters helping with the Cuban girls this summer is Sister Catherine Joan, the former Dixie Crosby, daughter of E. J. (Ted) Crosby and Mrs. Hazel Crosby and a niece of Bing Crosby. Her mother teaches Spanish at Rogers.

In the classroom at the seminary one sees the Spanish words, "Favor de cuidar limpio" (Please keep clean).

Both groups have a rigid class and study schedule of English and religion, and the girls have typing. Each evening the rosary is said, usually in Spanish.

Teaching religion at the prep school is Mr. Jose Borges, a Jesuit from Mount St. Michael's scholasticate who originally is from Puerto Rico.

The boys will have nearly a month of "outdoor living" in Northern Idaho and Eastern Montana before school begins, explained the Rev. Bernard L. Schiller, director of Catholic Charities.

Arrangements are nearly complete for placing the boys in foster homes this fall, Father Schiller said. The girls will be at Holy Names Academy or College.

Fifty more younger Cuban refugees are scheduled to arrive next week, 25 on Wednesday and 25 on Thursday. All will be housed in Colfax, Father Schiller said.