When he said "mark," the airliner almost stopped climbing and settled at about 500 feet for 10 seconds. The pilot, on Mr. Hall's command, had reduced his engines' power and the noise.

During those 10 seconds, the plane passed over Mr. Hall's truck and a noise-measuring box attached to the top of a telephone pole about 40 feet away. The box is one of five placed at the edge of communities around Kennedy by the Port of New York Authority to measure the noise made by planes taking off from the airport. There are two simliar boxes at La Guardia and three at Newark Airports.

"BEATING THE BOX"

The maneuver is officially called Test Able. However, what Mr. Hall and the pilot did is less officially known as "beating the box."

The box was beaten 1,686 times in September. Mr. Hall said, by his giving instructions to crews in planes taking off from Kennedy.

Some of these planes wore the blue and white of Pan American World Airways. So does Mr. Hall's truck, because he has been employed by the line for five years to keep its planes, and those of some other lines, from breaking through the Port Authority's noise barrier.

When the plane that Mr. Hall had been directing passed the vicinity of the box, and had begun flying directly over Inwood, the pilot added power and resumed his climb. Residents of the village might have said the noise was objectionable, but the box did not.

The box is part of the world's first automatic aircraft noise monitoring system. The ones around Kennedy were set up in the winter and spring of 1960 at Inwood, Meadowmere, Laurelton, South Ozone Park and Howard Beach—communities whose residents had voiced strong objections to jet noise from Kennedy.

Airplane noise is measured in Perceived Noise decibels, or PNdbs, which represent the noises people can hear and which are weighted toward the higher frequencies associated with jets.

The Port Authority, which operates Kennedy, La Guardia, Newark and Teterboro Airports, in 1951 set 112 PNdbs, as the maximum allowable noise a plane taking off from Kennedy could make. The boxes will record any noise made by a plane that is greater than 103 PNdb. The impulse is then recorded in a special Noise Room run by the Port Authority under the Kennedy Control Tower.

An authority spokesman said that of 98,443 take-offs from Kennedy during the first eight months of this year, only 690 involved noise violations. No measurements were made from the center of the communities, however.

All planes do not use Test Able, Mr. Hall said. Only the larger, four-engine planes that cannot climb as quickly as the two- and three-engine variety are in the Test Able class, he said, and some of these beat the box in other ways.

COUNT OFF SECONDS

One of the other ways, Mr. Hall said, is the seconds from brake-release method. Here, the pilot counts off the seconds from when he releases his plane's brakes at the beginning of the take-off roll, to when his airborne plane comes close to the box.

There is nothing dangerous in reducing power for the four engines, he said, because even if one of them should fail altogether, the other three could keep the plane in a gradual climb until full power in the three was restored.

Mr. Hall, said he also advised pilots for T.W.A., Delta, Alitalia, El Al, Olympic, Seaboard World, and other airlines how they, too, could beat the box.

Mr. OTTINGER. If the airlines invested half the ingenuity in solving the noise problem that they expend evading the Port of New York's monitoring system, we might have had the problem licked by now.

How is the FAA working on jet noise?

I have been corresponding with them about the problem in metropolitan New York for about 3 years. First, they promised relief from new approaches and new minimum altitudes. Then they promised relief from new runways at LaGuardia.

In the end, what did they accomplish?

Last April 24, they finally notified me, and I quote,