



FLIGHTLINE



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Evan Cohen at Mission Peak - Photo by Mike Kellogg

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Fall 2015 Flying Rumors and Stuff

WOR meeting Nov. 17 at:
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Murphy Street Sunnyvale
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WOR Member Database
<http://wingsofrogallo.org/memberdb>

Sept. 2015 Meeting Minutes

New Members and Guests

Rainer Hessmer
Mike Vergalla

Great Flights

None noted, although there was some discussion of what a Golden Eagle flight is, and the importance of replacing flying wires at appropriate intervals.

.President:
Robert Booth

Robert noted that pilots who fly at Mt Diablo should read and follow the site protocols.

Vice President:
Patrick Pannese
Nothing to report.

Treasurer: Don Herrick
Income exceeded expenses in the in August . The club's balances are stable.

Member Services:
Phyl Hamby
No mention in minutes. -ed-

Flight Director:
Paul Gazis - None

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Secretary's Report:

Thanks to Don Herrick, who took notes at the August meeting when I was in the Owens Valley.

Ed Levin:

Phyl Hamby
The road still needs work; a good 4WD vehicle is a must for driving to the upper launches. Work on the road will need to wait for wet weather. There have been rivalries between pilots. Any conflicts among pilots should be resolved privately, without involving or disturbing others present in the Park.

Mission:

Chris Valley

The Environmental Impact Report for the proposed parking lots is due next month. A public comment period will follow. The keyholder application will be on the WOR bulletin board on November 1st. The east side launch is closed. Chris received an e-mail from ranger Gordon Willey to that effect.

3 4 5 6 7 8

Chris -
Given the increased quantity of hikers on Mission Peak and subsequent increase in responses from the EBRPD helicopter, I am removing the eastern launch area as an option. It would be much safer for everybody. There should be an expectation from helicopter pilots that gliders are launching only from the primary west facing location (attached map). Sorry Chris but this is a definite safety issue. Please know that this decision was made after considerable discussion among our group. Please notify your members that only the primary west facing launch area is available and to suspend launches from the secondary east facing site. Thank you for your understanding, -Gordon

It was also noted that there are other East Bay Regional Parks sites that have flying potential. Robert Booth suggested that pilots who want to see the east launch re-opened should discuss the matter with Chris Valley.

Hello Flightline Readers

In this issue

Evan Cohen treats us to a story about his epic flight from the D to Mission an beyond.

Photo provided by Mike Kellogg.

Thank you Evan.
Thank you Mike.

If you want to appear in print, send me some idea or content.

Diablo – Robert Moore by e-mail
Nothing to report

Site Acquisition Coyote Lake – Ben Dunn

Ben had nothing new to report. Robert Booth requested an update at the October meeting.

Old Business

An informal vote was taken and it was decided that the October 20th meeting will be at the Firehouse Grill in Sunnyvale. Robert Booth stated that the November meeting will probably be at Summit Pointe.

Ben Dunn mentioned that temporary stickers are needed for visiting pilots at Ed Levin.

There was a discussion of the Facebook group that has been established for use by WOR members. An informal poll was taken as to whether the Facebook group should be an official WOR communication medium.

The consensus was that it shouldn't, partly because anyone who wants to view it needs to have a Facebook account, and also because Facebook lacks threading and search capabilities.

Roy Spencer noted that all members, and anyone else, can read the WOR bulletin board, unlike Facebook. Don Herrick noted that a responsible party must be designated for a Facebook page. Wayne Michelson noted that meeting notices and other announcements would need to be posted to Facebook as well as to the WOR website. Robert Booth stated that he will remove the WOR logo, and that the Facebook group will remain an un-official communication channel..

New Business

Eric Hinrichs related his concerns about instruction at Ed Levin. There was a lively discussion of procedures, rules, equipment maintenance, etc, involving Rich Palmon, Robert Booth and others. It was suggested that gliders used for instruction at Ed Levin should be subject to inspection by the site committee, similar to the way instructors are certified. No vote was taken on the subject [probably a matter for the site committee – PC]. No motions were made on any of the topics discussed.

END of Meeting Minutes
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Oct. 2015 Meeting Minutes

New Members and Guests

Tom Low, attending his first meeting in 35 yrs.; has been flying for 42 yrs.; flies a T2C.

Ed, a returning pilot who flew between '89 and '96 and is taking lessons on his Falcon.

Az, an H2 who took lessons in '93 and '04.

Peter, an H3; has been flying since 2007; flies a Falcon.

Evan, a PG pilot since '09; flies Mission

Great Flights

Isiah flew for 3 hours at Funston on Sunday.

Pedro flew in Spain, near his hometown, which is near Valencia. He also bought a glider to keep there.

Chris Carrillo flew Miriam Crater and Mingus in AZ.

Colin Perry and Chris flew Mission on Monday.

Wayne Michelson flew south from Goat and landed 2 miles from Tres Pinos.

President:

Robert Booth
Updated e-mail addresses and phone numbers should be entered at wingsofrogallo.org/memberdb. A login is required. Drivers at Ed Levin need to sign waivers; write "driver" in the space for USHPA# on the form. The rangers at Ed have been writing speeding tickets; up to 90 days suspension from the site for pilots who get speeding tickets. Parking is not allowed adjacent to the breakdown area at Ed Levin. There may be a work party at Ed Levin, to remove weeds from the LZ/breakdown area. Officer nominations are being accepted tonight.

Vice President:

Patrick Pannese

-Patrick questioned the reasoning behind the rule requiring free flyers to vacate Ed Levin 1 hour before sunset.

Treasurer: Don Herrick

Expenses exceeded income in September and balances are stable. Income should start to rise soon as membership renewals start to come in. There were some unpaid food and drink tabs after last month's meeting at the Firehouse Grill, and club funds were used to pay them.

Member Services:

Phyl Hamby
There are 376 paid members for 2015.

Flight Director:

Paul Gazis
- No incidents to report but there have been a lot of fires in CA this year. An observer clinic will be held in November or December. The details will be on the WOR bulletin board. This is for HG only; Juan Laos is the PG observer coordinator. Observers are appointed by the regional Examiner, currently Paul Gazis. There was an instructor's meeting today. An Ed Levin Instruction Committee will be organized between now and the next WOR meeting.

Secretary's Report:

Paul Clayton
None

Diablo – Robert Moore

Nothing to report

Ed Levin:

Stan Boehm has done 115 hours of work on the site. This may be his last year of working on the site. Pull out stinkwort if any is seen. The rangers want WOR to document the hours spent by volunteers on site maintenance.

-

Mission:

Chris Valley

Key applications for the 2016 season are being accepted. Parks officials have released the Environmental Impact Report for the proposed parking lots. There are two options, designated A and B. The club prefers option B. Individuals may contact the Parks officials and express a preference. There is a public meeting in Fremont on November 9th. The period for public comment ends on November 30th. [Details on public meetings and comment are on the discussion board under "Mission Parking Lot EIR"]. Chris also contacted ranger Gordon Willey regarding the east side launch. The rangers are not willing to discuss the issue; they consider it closed. A possible future site is Pleasanton Ridge. Chris proposed that a committee be formed to look into the possibility of the Ridge being opened as a WOR flying site.

Site Acquisition Coyote Lake – Ben Dunn

-The engineering study is reportedly ready although it has not been turned in. The \$1200 fee due with the engineering report has been approved by the club. Tom Rudolf volunteered to serve on the site committee

Old Business

None..

From Mount Diablo to Mission Peak, and Beyond

New Business

- Chris Valley named possible members of the Pleasanton Ridge committee including Evan, Mike, Colin Perry, Ben Dunn and Lauren. Lauren mentioned that her parents live near the potential launch. It was also noted that the potential LZs are controlled by the City of Pleasanton. Ben Dunn mentioned 2 other potential sites; one a west facing site near the Concord Weapons Depot, and another known as Brushy Peak, 6 miles SE of Diablo. Both are on East Bay Regional Parks land. It was mentioned that the Mission windsock webcam has been out of order for 6 months. Several members volunteered to contact Alan Deikman and help get the camera working again.

There was some discussion of Ed Levin site protocols and it was noted that minors are required to have waivers signed by a parent or guardian before entering the LZ or other areas used for flight activities.

A motion was approved to hold the next meeting at the Firehouse Grill.

Ben Dunn mentioned that he would like to have soaring weather experts such as Matt Dillis, Rami Yanetz, or Gary Yosaba as speakers and proposed to reserve a venue. He asked for a show of hands of people willing to pay to hear such a talk. Most of the people present expressed interest.

END of Meeting Minutes

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Sh.

By Evan Cohen

October 5th, 2015. I remember the day fondly.

Summer was coming to a close, and the Bay Area was about to experience its second offshore wind event of the season. Inland high pressure had set up over the Great Basin, the prevailing wind was from the Northeast, and the omnipresent marine layer had been mostly wiped out. This setup typically brings some of the hottest weather of the year, and can also bring the best local flying conditions, and I was not going to miss it.

My "home" flying site is Mission Peak. It's a 30min drive from my house without traffic, a quick 45-50 minute hike up; I hike fly there at least a few times a week during the Summer, and know the place like the back of my hand.

But a few friends and I wanted to try something different that weekend. Top-of-lift was forecast to be around 6000ft further inland, and the wind direction appeared to be favourable for the North launch at Mt. Diablo; that seemed like the logical choice for the day.

I had only flown Diablo twice previously from Juniper launch, and had never gone XC there before: Once was a sled ride in stable, late autumn conditions, and the other time was a spectacular, cloud-flying flight almost a year prior.

I had heard stories and seen track logs of epic XC flights from Diablo, thus I had high expectations and high hopes for a great flight, but had no idea what the day would bring.

I got to the South Gate entrance pretty early, and hiked up the Summit Trail to the North launch. There were vultures soaring even at 10am in the oppressively hot, dry air, so I knew the day had great potential. When I arrived at the North launch, it was quite breezy. Borderline too windy to fly, but slowly trending downward, and still within my comfort zone. I had never flown from the North launch before, so waited for more of the local pilots to show up, who could give an introduction, and point out potential bail-outs and unknown hazards.

One of the local pilots launched first. The air looked somewhat turbulent, and his forward penetration wasn't very impressive, but eventually he pushed out in front, and got a really nice climb further away from the hill, and got up to about 5000 feet. I launched second, and was able to find a few nice climbs, and also topped out just over 5000 feet. I was ready to go XC to the South, but I decided to wait it out a little, to see if others would launch, and if we could go XC together. However, the air was nasty! Windy from the North, and turbulent.

All but the strongest climbs were disorganized and punchy, and I had one or two small tip collapses due to turbulence. The conditions were manageable, but unpleasant, and more than once, I considered landing, but decided to keep holding on.

Eventually a few others launched and got up, and there was finally a critical mass of 3 or 4 pilots around 5000 feet. It was time to go, and escape the Devil's Mountain. We all headed off together heading SSW downwind, roughly towards the ridge West of San Ramon. Within a minute of leaving the vicinity of Mt. Diablo, the air became smoother, calmer, and pleasant! As we were over the flat lands East of Hwy 680, we eventually found a slow, fat, flat-land thermal, that took us up to almost 6000 feet! From then on, it was smooth sailing.

The others, all flying high-performance D-class wings, managed to top out the thermal before I did, and continued South, heading roughly for the 580/680 junction near Dublin. I chased a red-tailed hawk, and topped out the thermal, and continued on my journey. I eventually caught up to the others in another flat-land thermal releasing directly over the Stoneridge Shopping Center. They managed to top out to almost 6000ft again, but I was too late! The thermal bubble had released, and I only managed to catch the tail-end of it before it fell apart. I still gained a reasonable amount of altitude, up to about 4500ft, but it was not nearly enough to clear the Sunol Grade further to the South, where the others were already headed on glide.

I was all alone, and needed to gain some more altitude, if my flight was to continue beyond Pleasanton.

I was too low to continue trying the flatlands, and was starting to get closer to Livermore airspace, so decided to try my luck over Pleasanton ridge. The sun angle was still high enough to heat the West side of the ridge, and the wind was Northeast in the valley, so I was hoping for some weak convergence to help me gain the altitude I needed to continue South. There were some weak thermals releasing from the front ridge, but nothing of significance. I knew the potential was still there to get up to about 6000 ft, as the others had done only a few minutes prior, so I continued further South over Pleasanton ridge, fishing for the big thermal that I needed to take me home to Mission.

I was almost ready to give up, after never getting much more than 500 feet over the ridge, when I saw a bird circling a bit to the West of me, over the deep, dark canyon in between the 2 ridges. I took a chance, and followed the bird far back over the canyon... and it worked! I finally found a solid climb, back to about 4500ft, 3000 feet over the ridge. I wasn't up at 6000 feet like I had wanted, but I was comfortably high, and I could now clearly see the East side of Mission Peak, and could faintly make out the vicinity of the LZ, far in the distance. I judged that I didn't quite have the LZ on glide, but figured that if I could catch a few scraps of lift along the way, and not hit any sink, I might be able to make it, or at least get close. The other factor that I knew I had working in my favour was the Bay breeze.

When I was high over Pleasanton, I could see that the typical afternoon breeze had filled into the Bay, based on the patterns on the water. I knew that somewhere between Pleasanton ridge and Mission peak, I would cross into the modified marine airmass, and that my tailwind would increase. I went for it.

I aimed my glider just North of the Mission Peak LZ, expecting to hit a stronger North wind once I crossed the ridge, that would help me drift in the direction I wanted towards the landslide. I sailed on glide over the town of Sunol, and eventually made my way towards the Sunol Grade. As I had accurately predicted, about halfway over the pass, there was a subtle but noticeable drop in temperature, and a faint salty smell, and an increase in humidity: I had crossed into the modified marine airmass of the Bay. My ground speed increased more than I had expected, and it now appeared that I was not only going to make the LZ, but that I would be to make it to the Mission Peak launch, and maybe to the peak!

I continued riding the tailwind, flying as efficiently as possible, and snuck around the small hills to the North, coming in to Mission right at the landslide, joining some of the pilots there. VICTORY! I had done it, the flight I had dreamed of for so long.

The other pilots were not too far ahead of me, soaring up by the peak and Mount Allison, and heading for Ed Levin and beyond, but I didn't bother trying to join them. I was too excited! I did a few victory laps and wing-overs along the landslide ridge, in awe of what had just happened, and thought about top-landing beside the windsock to take a selfie, but then caught a nice little climb beside the landslide, so figured I may as well continue! The wind had really started to pick up, and the thermals were mostly blown apart, thus I wasn't able to make it up over the peak, but was easily able to hop my way along the ridges of Mount Allison, and quickly make progress towards Ed Levin, and then out to the small foothills to the South. As I started to get closer to Alum Rock, I noticed that my ground speed had increased again - too much for my comfort level for traversing the challenging terrain before the Alum Rock canyon, so I decided to land in a small field with an unlocked gate, beside a cell tower, that I've landed in many times before.

I came down almost parked in fairly strong wind, balled up my glider, and breathed a sigh of relief, and joy.

This was one of my most memorable flights in the Bay Area, and was hopefully not a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

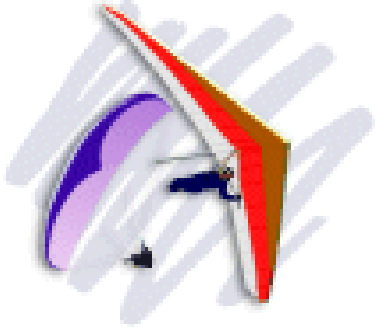
Evan

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To: