



FLIGHTLINE

The publication of the Wings of Rogallo
Volume 139, Number 7 July 2021



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In Lieu of Meeting Minutes

Wings of Rogallo General Notes

2021-7-1

- Diablo LZ Reminder: Please note that Arbolado Park is not an “official” LZ and that pilots should land in the official LZ next to it in Lime Ridge, per Robert Moore.
- See website for new Mission Rules
- No meeting occurred due to lack of discussion items.

END

WOR Hang Glider Pilots do the Owens Valley Milk Run



Dust cam facing Walt's Point early evening to show cloud profile



Launch with more hang gliders than some regulars have seen in ages

From Abhishek's YouTube:

Over Memorial Day weekend, a few of us from bay area headed over to Owen's valley. I had flown Owens before around 12yrs ago as an early H3 and always wanted to go back to attempt a real XC there. The idea of flying over 14k+ feet tall eastern Sierra mountains was awe inspiring, while extreme weather found in such a place was intimidating at the same time. We were guided by Peter Lawrence, who had explained the ins and outs of flying the 100+ mile course to the north end of the valley, especially how to avoid getting knocked around by the weather. In Owen's handling is more important than performance, so I chose to fly Wills Wing T3 over U2.

Several pilots from Reno and Santa Barbara joined in to make it a good pilot turnout. We had 20+ HGs at Walt's point. The day was looking good.

I launched fairly late around 12:20pm. Found a climb right off the launch to climb over Wonoga peak at 12k MSL. This may sound like a lot of altitude, but it is modest for Owens, where getting below 10k means making a run for landing options. The lift was peaking so I headed north along the Sierra range. There was relatively light lift along the range and I was not getting above 13.5k or so. However, the scenery was breathtaking with several mountain lakes, jagged peaks and canyons along the way. I flew right next to Mt. Whitney, which is the tallest mountain peak in contiguous US. I made modest progress along the route while taking in the views and playing with lift along the spines. This consumed a lot of time, but was super fun.

Around 20mi north I encountered turbulence, and realized that I was crossing Onion valley. It didn't last long as I crossed over to Kearsarge peak and climbed up to 15.5k at the next mountain. I felt getting light headed, and that's when I realized that something was wrong with the oxygen supply. It wasn't working at all. F@\$%#! But I continued north while maintaining between 12 - 15k and 3.5hrs into the flight reached the cross over point at Mt. Tinemaha. It was well past 3pm and lift over the Sierras was getting weaker. So I was not able to get high there and had to leave the mountain at ~12k.

Andy had landed a bit north around Big Pine, while Soham's location was unknown as his radio malfunctioned. Lionel stayed on Sierra's side and

landed near Bishop. I headed towards north end of Big Pine hoping to find a landing option there. There was some lift along the way so I was still at over 9k when reaching the highway. Alex (Lionel's wife) mentioned over the radio that Soham's location showed up on life360 app and he was over White Mountains.

I found more lift over the highway which took me to ~13k and now the Black mountain at other end of the valley was within reach. There was a nice landing option right below it. So I headed straight for it and reached there while still being over 10k. There is a canyon just north of it, where people have tumbled before. So I needed more altitude to cross it. Before long I found some strong lift near the peak which took me to 15k.

I headed north towards the White Mountain range. There was super strong lift on this path and at times I was climbing 1k+ ft / min while flying at dive speeds without even turning. This was the strongest lift I had ever encountered in my 16 years of hang gliding. Before long I hit 17.5k without even trying. Crossed the White Mountain at around 15k and now I really needed to get lower as signs of hypoxia were evident. I was able to get below 13k while continuing on course and soon reached Montgomery peak. Janie's was just around the corner and Peter, driving the chase vehicle, had already reached there. I flew a bit north of Janie's to tag my goal at farmhouse and turned around to find Janie's. It is an abandoned bordello with an airstrip, 103 miles from Walt's point. That makes it a perfect goal.

It was around 6:30pm. Soham had already landed there more than an hour ago. Andy started a smoke bomb and threw some dirt to show wind direction. The wind had picked up a bit making the landing conditions friendly. However, I had lost my depth perception after 6:18hrs in the air, so I flared a bit too high and belly landed. I was so happy to be on the ground, with the glory of having made the goal on the very first real flight at Owens.

Editorial July 2021

It was noted in the previous newsletter that June was starting off much cooler than May which was unseasonably warm. June continued the pleasant weather throughout if only in the Bay Area. The super good Bay Area flying conditions forecasted by your editor did not materialize as hyped although there were many good days.

Ed Levin was very active all month as could be expected. Gorgeous weather and the sense of a post-pandemic lifestyle brought many eager people out to one of the prettiest sites around. This is a place where you are bound to run into like-minded folks enjoying the views and the air.

Mission Peak had its share of the action as well with pilots raving about the cushy buoyant air on Telegram such as on the 11th. Steve Welch and the Wings of Rogallo Mission Ridge Site Committee did their thing again to make it even easier to fly at the legendary site with updated procedures that refreshed some outdated elements. Check out the website for a full list you may have already seen in your inbox.

Diablo was a great jumping off point again on the 10th as described in the Telegram chats with cross country all the way to Patterson! If you are not connected there then be sure to find the request link on the website to get invited to the Telegram group. Diablo has been a giver this year and it probably has an abundant well of cross country flights to grant for the rest of the year.

The local supporters of free-flight have been busy giving back to the sport. Susan has offered day after day of site intros and even on days she doesn't fly. Takeo has cranked out instructional content on YouTube inspiring people to be safer and try new techniques. Tom Lowe is making a realistic virtual reality hang glider simulator that includes the option to see thermals and fly local sites from the comfort of your own home.

June was big for Wings of Rogallo adjacent events. The paragliding distance record was broken in Texas with a 612 km flight as the first to break 600. Wills Wing revealed their affinity to the Monarch Butterfly as they cocoon to metamorphosis as a vibrant soaring resident of the mountains West of Mexico City. Countless cross country flights were experienced at sites all around the Bay Area like an incredible Slide paragliding flight of 260.76 km, a productive Woodrat comp with a site record on a memorably eventful day, good use of Mt Vaca and even a soaring day at Mt Tam just to name a few.

It is hard not to hype you up about free flight for July. We do not know if the record breaking temperatures June brought to the Northwest (122 degrees in Canada!) will find their way to us, or if the Delta variant of COVID-19 will be successful in shutting things down again, or if the wildfire season will make our skies red again. What is certain is the passion of Wings of Rogallo Pilots for getting airborne.

Skydancer

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To: