



**Wings
of Rogallo**

FLIGHTLINE

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**WOR NEWS & A NOTE FROM MEMBER SERVICES
ED LEVIN 1750' ROAD UPDATE
DIABLO E-SIGN IN
SUSPENSION REPORT
WRITE UP: JUSTIN CANNON'S WINDY HILL RECORD**

PHOTO FROM ENES MENTESE



WOR NEWS

PHOTO FROM JULIE SPIEGLER

Unless you chucked your phone off a cliff or never once happened to glance up in the sky this month, you've undoubtedly been astounded by the successes of WOR pilots of all kinds in April.

Peak XC season has produced not one, but two site record-breaking flights in the Bay Area and is still delivering. Operations at nearby Lake Berryessa have roared to a start for all manners of post-pin-off maneuvering. The NorCal Sprint and XC Leagues have finally been granted weather windows and brought pilots together for friendly competition.

If you're like me, you spent a lot of weekdays banging your head against your desk with flyxc.app open in a browser window alongside your boss's email asking to schedule more meetings. But as usual, there's been something for everyone in April - WOR members always seem to come together to make the Bay Area what it is: an excellent community of people of all skill levels playing together in the sky and on the ground.

FROM MEMBER SERVICES DIRECTOR, JENN LAURITZEN

On a rainy April 13th, WOR members gathered at Drake's Brewery in Oakland to share paragliding and hang-gliding stories and talk about future flight goals. We plan to schedule informal get-togethers every few months, rotating regions, so our membership can connect, build relationships, tell stories and share information. Watch the Telegram SF Bay Area Para/Hang+ waiting channel for notification of the next one, probably June or July.



Our variety of sites offer great flight opportunities whether you're getting started with lessons at Ed Levin, building your XC skills from Mission Peak, interested in a scenic, coastal soaring session at The Stables, or looking to break site records from Windy Hill, like Justin Cannon on Jan. 4 with his 96.84 km 5-point distance record, or Diablo like Lynsey Haynes on Feb. 28 with 31.95k FAI triangle, our club sites offer a variety of opportunities to enjoy our sport.

During the winter and spring months we had 39 new members join WOR looking to expand their site access or perhaps just getting started in paragliding altogether. Please join us in welcoming our new pilots, and introduce yourself to them if you bump into them.

Bram Augat
Subarno Banerjee
Jim Blair
Lisa Bredenkamp
Rick Brown
Karsten Bruening
Abhijith Byrappa
Alexander Dmitriev
Kay Eun Yu
John Gallagher
YYen Gallup
Andrew Gilligan
Nachuan You

Sean Glang
Ankit Goyal
Garrison Hoe
Taylyn Hulse
Tammie Kin
Nicholai Lidow
Charles lin
Danielle Lyons
Christopher Lyons
Michael Mathai-Jackson
Brian Outhwaite
Guillaume Plassan
Jeff Zerger

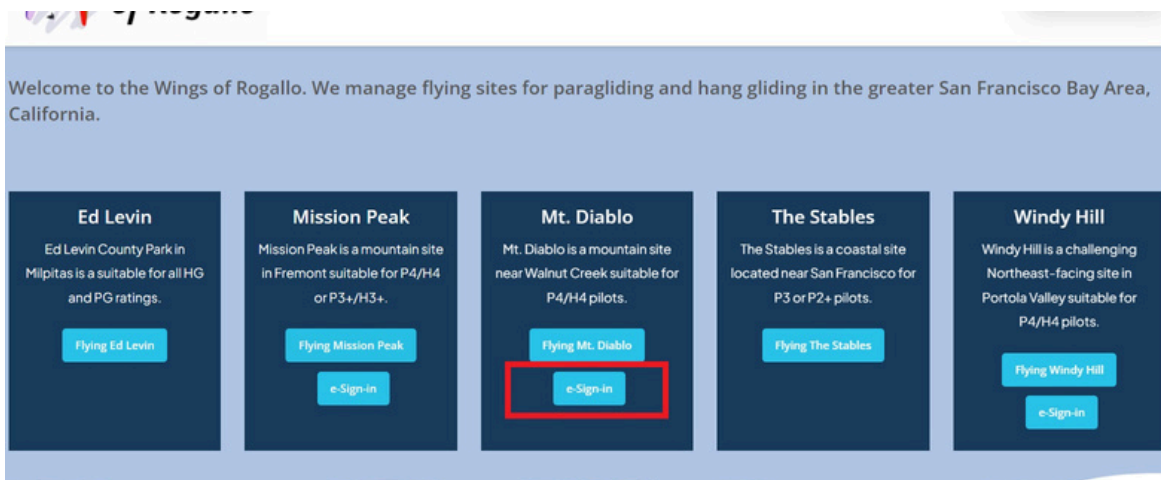
Rikke Rasmussen
Jeff Schmelter
Christopher Segler
Michael Shapira
Robert Skinner
Logan Torrence
Adriano Triches M Silva
Alexander Wallace
Yunhan Wen
Joshua Wiese
Mary Wilcox
Nicole Williams
Jiayi Zhao

UPDATE: REPAIR SCHEDULED FOR 1750' ROAD AT ED LEVIN

Santa Clara County Parks has notified WOR that a schedule for the repair of the road to the 1750' launch at Ed Levin has been tentatively established. The park reports that **the work will start the week of May 13, 2024 and is anticipated to take up to 6 weeks to complete.** The repairs will address the damage from last year's storm and rebuild the trail to better withstand future storms. We will share updates from park officials on the progress and schedule of the project as they come.

INTRODUCING: DIABLO E-SIGN IN

Thanks to the hard work of our Diablo site chair Robert Moore, we have officially implemented e-Sign-in for Mt. Diablo. You can find the link on the front page of the WOR website.



SUSPENSION REPORT

On April 4, 2024, a member was suspended from all WOR sites for 6 weeks after reports of behavior that created unsafe flying conditions for other pilots. Permission to fly Mission as a P3 was additionally revoked.

While it is not WOR's function to monitor each pilots' in-air activity, it is the responsibility of the board to follow up on complaints and take corrective action for the safety of all pilots. For questions, reach out to the board at worexec@wingsofrogallo.org.

MIRACLE AT WINDY HILL



BY JUSTIN CANNON

It was 8am on a Monday morning. I had assumed that, given we had flown cross-country four of the last five days, we were due a break. But my better half, Enes Mentese, and I had made a blood pact to neglect our jobs and go chase big flights as long as the unusually booming spring conditions kept providing.

On good flying days, the Bay Area XC illuminati begin poring over the most recent HRRR updates early. In addition to the official Telegram chat, there's a distributed federation of small, overlapping chat groups that start debating which site will provide the day's most epic flight. Messages get frantically criss-crossed as we convince ourselves that, yes, we are totally going to fly 200km from Diablo today. That WhatsApp group you threw together to manage the Valle de Bravo AirBnB two years ago suddenly becomes your fly-or-dies for the day.

Being a Monday, the excitement was limited to the typical collection of vagabonds that provide the work week's Flyxc.app entertainment. As usual, texts shot back and forth like World War II morse code: can Razi skip work? Where is Cooper going? Does Lynsey want to drive?

On that particular day, I had convinced myself that Mission was the place to be. Before setting off on our pilgrimage to South Bay, however, we did what every responsible Bay Area XC pilot should do: consult the weather oracle (né Evan Cohen). He predicted that Mission would be hopelessly OTB all day and that the sky gods were actually pointing the way to Windy Hill. I learned early on in my XC career to, one, fly when and where Josh Cohn does and, two, always do what Evan says.

Little did Evan know that he was writing his own Greek tragedy - that he had just sown the seeds for the destruction of his own Windy Hill distance record. Just as Enes and I parked the car at the Windy Hill staging area, Julian sent a picture of a fully erect wind-sock on Mission Peak - pointing in exactly the wrong direction. I thanked Evan for his divine guidance while Enes loaded up his thousand pounds of ballast (because he likes to cosplay as a comp pilot while flying locally).

Unfortunately, we were out of sync with our gaggle's usual number three. Lynsey had arrived early and bombed at the bailout. While she hiked up, Enes and I unpacked and prepared to launch immediately. It was windy and cycles were strong.

This was my first time at Windy Hill. Enes quickly oriented me and gave a site intro. Pointing out the LZ in the distance, he added, **“But don't worry, dude - we're not going to land there.”**

I laid out the Omega X-Alps I had Venmo'ed Enes for less than 24 hours earlier. While I had flown others' D-gliders before, this was my first official flight with my own.

Enes was off first, with me following immediately after. After roaming around the terrain and frisbeeing back in high winds for a bit, I found a strong climb out front. Enes joined me, and we started our first transition early to escape the wind.

We team flew well together. The day was obviously working, with strong consistent climbs and the wind at our backs. Having never flown there, I was particularly struck by the beauty of the thickly wooded hills below, distant views of the Pacific Ocean on one side of us, and the forested neighborhoods of Silicon Valley on the other.

Since we had decided to go there at literally the last minute, I had had no time to study the route. Enes had flown an impressive flight here before, so I was very much reliant on following him for the first half.

Out of all the flights I've done in the Bay, this would be my most committing. For our first leg, we skirted the terrain deeply enough that our only judicious LZs were remote top landings. As we approached Los Gatos, the situation became even more dire, with hill-side estates of the well-to-do hogging perfectly good landing options.



Enes had pulled slightly ahead and dove deep into the terrain west of town, believing with absolute faith that the power lines back there would trigger. I was low and started to get jostled by rotor from the tailwind spilling over the hills behind me. As I scanned the ground beneath for any sliver of open space I could stuff a landing in, I heard Enes scream over the radio, “Get over here! It’s going to work back here!”

“No way! There’s nowhere to land!”

I saw him starting to climb, but worried I would arrive too low and miss his thermal.

“Dude, it’s going to work! Get back here!”

“Noooo! I’m too low! You’re crazy!”

(Fortunately, I have not landed in a tree so far in my paragliding career. When I do one day, it will be Enes’s fault.)

Enes was right. He enjoyed his strong climb to cloudbase while I clinged onto light, disheveled thermals out front. As soon as I had the altitude to make the move more confidently, I connected with Enes's power lines and pushed forward. Enes was gone, and I wouldn't see him again for the rest of the flight. A situation that I'm not unfamiliar with.

Continuing past Los Gatos, we flew a densely forested deep line without a lot of - sometimes virtually zero - options to glide out, but the route was undoubtedly working. I focused on the wild fun I was having without thinking too much about the four hour bushwhack I might be leading myself to.

As I reached a beautiful reservoir south-west of Morgan Hill, I heard Enes on radio saying he was getting low. I wasn't far behind him now, but was much higher. I followed the peaks west of the reservoir and transitioned to the terrain west of Gilroy - where I was surprised to find turbulent air. Rotor? Yep, the west wind had finally arrived and I was on the lee side.

Enes reported that he had landed and I figured my day was over. I pushed off the ridge toward Gilroy, eyeing various fields in which to end an amazing flight. But the town was buoyant - and I saw small, transient clouds popping in and out of the sky above. I was low enough to see students and park-goers pointing up and exclaiming, **"Wow, look at that guy's new D-wing. He must be really cool."**

I floated downwind over Gilroy, progressively moving my LZ farther in front of me as small thermic bubbles held me aloft. I eventually reached the edge of town and prepared to finally put it down in a large, brown field.

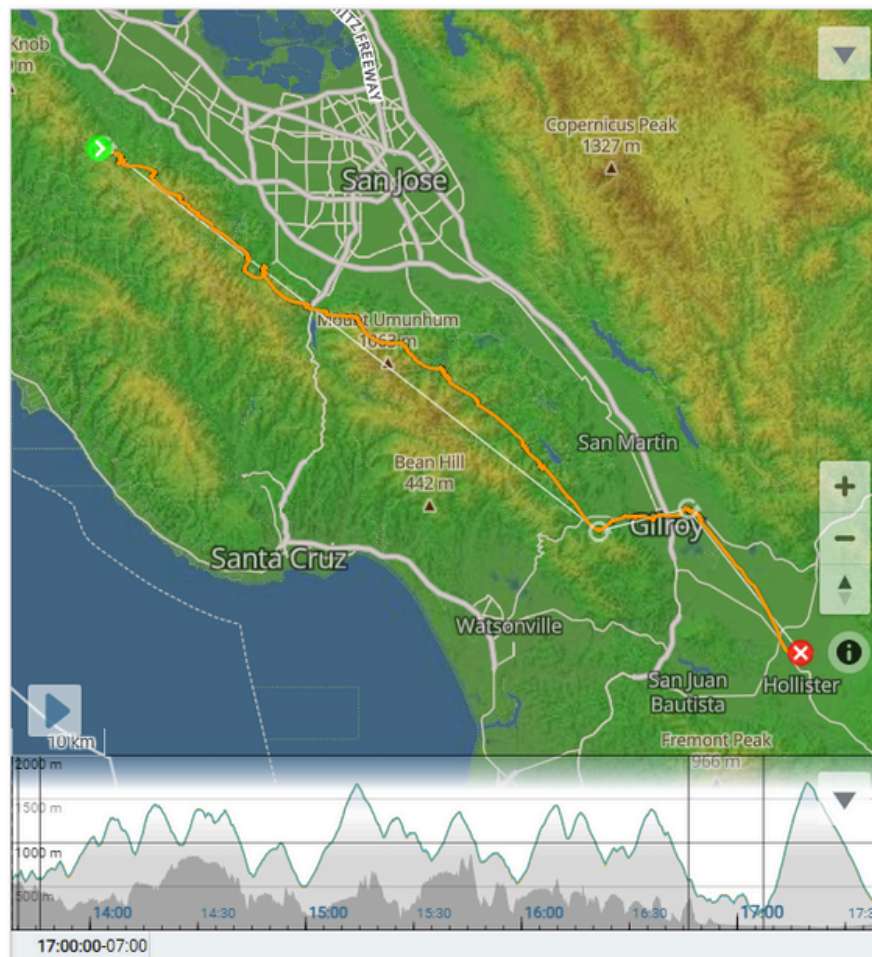
As I began to push my legs out of my pod, I suddenly felt the air swirl and fill with energy - not unlike the start of many booming low saves I've experienced in Chelan. I sniffed the air, releasing my brakes and hoping the Omega would be my divining rod for whatever scarce hope I had to stay in the air.

Whatever I found then was supernatural. It started as a murderous cyclone, but smoothed out into my best climb of the day. God had blessed my flight and provided me with the thermal transportation to join him in heaven. The blue sky above me had condensed into a wispy cloud, which I continued to climb through as I stared incredulously at my altitude ticking past 5500 feet.

I had two choices for what to do with my new height. The first was to complete my valley crossing and try to find more climbs in the terrain on the other side. I looked at the clock: 5:20pm. It was late, and the west wind had already begun to pour into the valley. I decided to pick the second option: point downwind to maximize distance and enjoy my 20km death glide.

I landed just outside Hollister airport and took a moment to sit in the grass and relish in what will certainly always be one of my favorite flights. I had never thought much about breaking any sort of record, and here I was plopped in the middle of nowhere having accidentally done just that. Maybe it was just the dopamine rush that comes after a 4 hour, 100km flight with no LZs, but I felt extremely satisfied and grateful for the experience. I also really enjoyed and am super thankful for all the celebration and nice-jobs on Telegram that I got to read on my ride home.

If I could break my imaginary trophy into imaginary parts, I would give Enes 45% of it and Evan 5%. I wouldn't have a record flight without either of them. But I'll enjoy it while I have it - and look forward to one day following someone on Flyxc as they blow past Hollister and take it from me.



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