

July 2008

Volume 3, Issue 7

Skyraider Sentinel

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Skyraider Aviation Welcomes New Club Members!

- Mark Howard
- Don Poncelow

This Month in Aviation History



Solar Challenger

July 7th, 1981... On this date, the first solar-powered aircraft flight across the English Channel was made. The 163 mile flight took 5 hours, 23 minutes and was powered by at least 16,128 solar cells installed on the upper surfaces of the wing and tailplane. Steve Pfacek piloted the MacCready Solar Challenger from Corneille-en-Verin Airport, near Paris, to Manston Royal Air Force Base, England, near Dover.

The Solar Challenger laid the foundation for future designs which are expected to soar to heights of up to 100,000 feet. These new high-endurance designs will be used primarily for scientific missions.



Luxury Sport Aircraft

“Even before [we] . . . had reached 300 feet, I recognized that the sky would be my home. I tumbled out of the airplane with stars in my eyes.”

— *Geraldyn Cobb, regarding her first flight, piloted by her father when she was 12 years old.*

Skyraiders Descend On Oshkosh

Three members of the Skyraider clan ventured to Oshkosh for this year's EAA AirVenture, the world's premier aviation event. Skyraider president, Chris Dillis flew Skyraider Aviation's brand new Gobosh 700 light sport aircraft from Gobosh corporate HQ in Moline, IL to Oshkosh's Whitman Field. Fellow club member Don Smith drove out to the event, arriving several days before the show to volunteer his time in EAA's homebuilt registration office. Skyraider pilot Doug Hindman drove to the show with his two sons.

While Chris and Don were busy working the show, all three Skyraiders managed to get together for at least a short time to take in some world-class aerobatic performances.



Skyraiders Don Smith (L), Chris Dillis (C) and Doug Hindman (R) at the big show

Upcoming Events

- August 16th – Boulder Airport (KBDU) Open House
- August 23rd – Colorado Springs East (A50) Fly-In
- August 30th – 31st: Wild West Air Fest; Steamboat Springs Airport (KSBS)
- September 6th: *National Radial Engine Exhibition*, Akron, CO www.nationalradialengineexhibition.com
- September 20th: *Fly-In Breakfast, Sidney, NE*. Pilots eat for FREE!

A Trip Down South

By Ed Babovec

A couple of weeks ago, my wife, Cheryl, and I departed KEIK in our StingSport for a trip which would end the next day at West Houston Municipal, (KIWS). Leaving bright and early, we decided to head west to avoid any conflict, and to see the foothills up close. After turning south we made a beeline for Lamar Municipal, (KLAA), where we would make our first stop, to top off the tank, and just take a break. So far uneventful, but I was keeping an eye on a line of storms which extended from the New Mexico/Texas border, all the way to Oklahoma. Getting a weather briefing that morning, I was

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told that there would be possible heavy rain and lightning, so I knew there was a possibility that our trip might be interrupted with an overnight stay in north Texas.

Leaving Lamar, the air was still smooth with the coolness of the morning we had XM radio in our headsets, TPAS and XM weather on our panel and we were averaging about 100kts. All was right with the world. Ahead though, I could see the clouds, and we were soon into the edge of the disturbance, so I began to use the weather info, (Thank God for XM). The clouds became thicker, and I had to decide whether to scud run underneath them or go on top. I hate going on top because your options become limited, sometimes quicker than you expect. We decided to land at the nearest airport, and check the weather, via computer and cell phone. The nearest was Dalhart Municipal (KDHT), so I found a break in the clouds and descended for approach. Calling AWOS, the winds were 20kts, gusting 25, but right down the runway, so I entered the pattern for 17.

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After an uneventful, but slow landing we tied down and went into the FBO. After a call to the weather briefer, and a look at the computer, we decided to hang out for a while. While waiting, I began a conversation with a group of guys who were there for a sailplane competition, and a couple of them were from Boulder. They told me they had been grounded for two days because of the weather. Great, I thought, we might be spending part of our vacation in Dalhart, not exactly a holiday destination. (No offense Dalhart). Checking the weather a couple of hours later, there was a break in the storm maybe a few miles wide, so we decided to give it a try. To make a long story short, we ended up flying west to the border of New Mexico, before finding an opening to go through. Heading back east, and through numerous MOA's, we finally

were back on track. Landed at Muleshoe Municipal, (2T1), found that even though the GPS stated that there was fuel, well, there wasn't. Back in the air and pushing nearest, we found fuel at Levelland Municipal, (KLLN) and took a much needed break from the turbulence.

From that point to our first destination, it was uneventful, but enjoyable, seeing things from a perspective that only a lucky few can experience. I think we all start to take flying for granted, but you have to stop and appreciate what a privilege it is to do what we do, and to have the resources at our disposal, that we all pay for, but only a few actually use.

As the day started to cool off, the turbulence started to wane, and we were near our stop for the night. On approach to Gillespie County Airport, (T82), in Fredericksburg, AWOS revealed a 20kt crosswind, and with no one in the pattern, I extended my downwind for 14, so I could see if I had enough rudder on final. I've rarely had a problem keeping this plane lined up for landing.

Upon landing, we taxied to the front door of the Hangar Hotel, a reproduction of what a hotel might look like during WWII. Inside revealed a classy, well appointed interior, with circa furniture and appointments.



Ed's StingSport at the Hangar Hotel

If you are ever nearby, don't miss the opportunity to stay overnight. There is

a restaurant next door, but it happened to be closed, so after bringing in our luggage, (a toothbrush for me), we called a taxi and went to town for an authentic German dinner. (Great beer, by the way). Getting back to our room, I was asleep in less than 5 minutes, and did not wake until daybreak. I'm not exaggerating, that was the best nights sleep I've had in a while. After we had breakfast, I went over to the FBO for fuel. Talking to a couple of pilots, I discovered that once, back in the fifties, the winds were actually down the runway with no crosswind. Local joke.

After securing our luggage, (my toothbrush), we were off to San Marcos Municipal, (KHYI). San Marcos is a town both Cheryl and I hold dear, where we met, and graduated from college. The airport was a military airport with a triangular runway layout. To bad all airports can't be designed this way, but it does take up a lot of space. After borrowing their courtesy car, we went to see how things had changed. As you would expect in 30 years, most things had. Returning to the airport, we were off to our final destination, West Houston Municipal, (KIWS).

During our stay, were took numerous trips around the area, and to the coast. Went to Palacios, (KPSX), where we had lunch next to the ocean at the Outrigger Restaurant, which was highlighted in the July 2005 issue of "Pilot Getaways".

Flying your own personal plane to a destination produces many experiences you just can't get with any other form of travel. Freedom first, then a view that is unparalleled, no road rage, no traffic jams. And with a light sport aircraft, it is actually an economical mode of transportation.

So, start planning that next trip, there are airports all over our great country that are waiting for your arrival!



StingSport flying along the Rockies