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# Skyraider Sentinel

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## Skyraider Aviation Welcomes New Club Members!

- Walter Ashley
- Pam Busboom
- Rich Busboom
- Glenn Crowder
- Tom Owens
- Robert Rowley

## This Month in Aviation History



Sheila Scott

**May 18th, 1966...** On this date, British aviator Sheila Scott became the first woman to fly solo around the world. She completed the 31,000 mile trip in her Piper Comanche over the course of 33 days.

It was not until 1959 that Sheila, then 37, suddenly took to flying. She shocked her friends one Sunday after lunch by announcing "I'm going to learn to fly" - and so she did, to such great success that she went on to win one trophy after another and to break no fewer than 104 flying records during the 1960s and early 1970s.

"Real flight and dreams of flight go together. Both are part of the same movement. Not A before B, but all together."

— Thomas Pynchon, 'Gravity's Rainbow'

## Two Aviation Firsts

**May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009...** on this date Skyraider club member, Jon Pickett, soloed an airplane for the first time. While a remarkable accomplishment in and of itself, this solo was doubly special, as it was the first time his instructor, Chris Dillis had signed off a student for solo flight.



Solo student, Jon Pickett (right) getting a congratulatory handshake from his flight instructor Chris Dillis (left) upon completion of his first solo flight

While the weather was less than ideal for a first solo, Jon demonstrated he could easily handle the turbulent thermals typical of a summer afternoon in Colorado. After performing a few confidence-instilling touch-and-goes with his instructor, Jon was on his own. He flew three more times around the pattern, performing full-stop landings each time. Way to go, Jon!

## Calendar of Events

- June 20<sup>th</sup> – Boulder Airport Open House, Boulder, CO (KBDU)
- August 22-23<sup>rd</sup> - Colorado Sport International Air Show and 30th Annual Rocky Mountain Regional Fly-In, Broomfield, CO (KBJC)
- September 5-6<sup>th</sup> - 5th Annual Wild West Air Fest and Labor Day Weekend Celebration, Steamboat Springs, CO (KSBS)

## Colorado's Newest Sport Pilot

On Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup> Bill Boerder became the latest Skyraider to earn his Sport Pilot license. Under the expert tutelage of flight instructor Dennis Moss, Bill went into his practical test extremely well prepared. Piloting the Gobosh 700, Bill easily handled everything his examiner threw at him. It's a good thing too... Bill's buying an airplane, and will definitely need a pilot license soon!



Newly licensed sport pilot, Bill Boerder (right) with his instructor, Dennis Moss (left)

## Goboshing across Kansas

- By Chris Dillis

Having driven across Kansas several times, I knew it was a big state. Somehow though, that didn't cross my mind when I agreed to bring our Gobosh 700 to the New Century Air Center (KIXD) in Olathe, Kansas (just outside Kansas City) for Flying Magazine's *Parade of Planes*. This show is geared toward people in the market for new airplanes. As the Gobosh dealer for Colorado and Kansas, I jumped at the opportunity to show off the Gobosh to hundreds of potential airplane buyers. With the show running from May 14<sup>th</sup> through 16<sup>th</sup>, I had to have the airplane in position by Wednesday the 13<sup>th</sup> no later than 2pm. Not wanting to be late, my plan was to leave Erie, Colorado by noon on Tuesday the 12<sup>th</sup>. That would give me plenty of time to dodge weather if need be. As it turns out... I needed that extra day.

The weather in Colorado on Tuesday the 12<sup>th</sup> was pretty marginal early on, but by mid morning things had cleared pretty well. All the clouds had blown east... just where I was heading. Still, when I called for a weather briefing, I found I could make it at least part of the way toward my destination. Sure, there was an AIRMET out for moderate turbulence along my entire route, but nothing too serious. So at just before noon, I hopped in the Gobosh and headed east. I had originally planned to go non-stop from Erie to Hays, Kansas 275nm away, but the weather briefer warned of low clouds and poor visibility just inside Kansas. So I changed my first stop to Goodland, Kansas, just 20 miles across the Colorado/Kansas border. I approached Goodland under clear skies and calm winds. Having been moderately bumped around for the

previous hour and a half, I was quite surprised to find calm winds at the surface.

Upon landing in Goodland, I had the good folks at Butterfly Aviation top off my tank while I went inside to check the weather. Sure enough, Hays was still under instrument meteorological conditions (IMC), but it was projected to clear within a few hours. So I hung out at Butterfly Aviation for an hour or so before setting out towards Hays.

The Gobosh covered the 120nm between Goodland and Hays in just over an hour's flight time. I arrived at Hays Regional Airport with the skies clearing, and the winds gusting out of the south at about 20kts. After landing on runway 16 and taxiing to the ramp, I was surprised to see a group of three US Air Force Academy Cessna 150s. The Air Force Academy flying team had these same airplanes at Erie the previous month practicing for a competition. I tied up next to the Cessnas, and went inside to assess my chances of making it to Olathe. They weren't good. By now it was 5pm, and with the weather up ahead not expected to clear for some time, I called for the Ramada Inn's Airport Shuttle.

After an uneventful evening at the Ramada, I caught the shuttle back to the airport. The weather was rather dicey, but with plenty of airports on the 200nm route between Hays and Olathe, I knew I could at least make some progress toward my destination. So at about 8:00am I walked out to the plane. As I made my way toward the Gobosh, I noticed three Air Force officers pre-flighting the C-150s. Having graduated from the US Air Force Academy, I couldn't pass up the opportunity to meet some fellow Air Force types. After some brief introductions, I discovered we had more in common than just our Air Force heritage and a mutual friend or two... they were heading to the Kansas City area too. Their final destination was

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Saint Louis, but their next stop was Kansas City.

As the Air Force crew had a head start on their pre-flight inspections, they took off before me. After starting my engine and tuning my radio to the Hays CTAF frequency, I heard the Air Force flight of three announce they were returning for a landing... the ceilings had descended to only 900 feet. I shut down the engine and prepared for another weather delay.

When the Air Force Academy officers returned, we borrowed the less-than-luxurious Cadillac crew car from the FBO, and went and found some coffee. As we sipped our caffeinated beverages, we couldn't help but notice the sun peaking through increasingly large gaps in the clouds. We high tailed it back to the airport as quickly as the 1970s Cadillac could take us, only squealing the tires a couple times. We checked weather and departed Hays to the east.

Before leaving, we had agreed to an air-to-air frequency so we could communicate on our flight toward Kansas City. While I never actually saw the Air Force Academy Cessnas on my flight to Olathe, we updated each other along the way on our positions and weather. It really took a lot of the effort out of my flight, as one of their team members periodically checked weather up ahead, and then updated the rest of the flight. I was just along for the ride!

A couple hours after departing Hays, I radioed farewell to my Air Force comrades and contacted the tower at KIXD, my destination. I was cleared to land into a 25kt quartering headwind with gusts into the 30kt range. What fun! After getting on the ground, the crew from the *Parade of Planes* whisked the Gobosh away from the gusting winds and into the safety of a hangar. It was a good move... a few hours later some severe hail-producing thunderstorms ripped through the area.

The weather that day was repeated at various points throughout the show. The often strong, often cold winds, blowing over the course of the next 3 days kept away many, but those who did come to the show were truly motivated. In the end, it proved to be a good show.



Gobosh 700 on display at *Parade of Planes* in Olathe, KS

As things wrapped up on Saturday afternoon, I couldn't wait to set out toward home. I already had the airplane fueled and my bags loaded. As I waited for some ground crew to help move the airplane away from the show site, I got a call from my fellow Gobosh pilot. He was at an FBO down the way talking to maintenance personnel. It seems he had suffered a flat tire on his Gobosh, and would need a ride over to an airport 40 miles away to get a replacement. Aargh! So much for my imminent departure! So the two of us hopped in the Skyraider Aviation Gobosh and flew to Midwest National Airport on the other side of Kansas City where there was a replacement tire and tube waiting for us. We flew back to KIXD, where I dropped off my colleague with his new tire. I then took off on my way home. By now it was 6:45pm, and I figured there was no way I'd get back to Erie that day. I was wrong!

As I headed toward home, the sun was quickly getting lower on the horizon. I wasn't very current on my night flying, and so wanted to land someplace familiar. I set a course toward Hays,

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Kansas, and landed there while the sun was still up. The stop allowed me to get out, stretch, grab a quick bite to eat, and check weather. I had been enjoying a rare easterly tailwind, smooth air, and clear skies so far, and the outlook was for the same conditions to continue all the way to Erie. While I was a bit rusty on night flight, I couldn't pass up the opportunity to fly the rest of the way with perfect weather. So after a brief stop, I was back in the air heading toward Colorado.

I was quickly immersed in darkness, but was surprised at just how many lights there were on the Kansas prairie. I was also quite surprised at how quickly it seemed the lights of Denver replaced the glow of the sun on the horizon. Denver must have been visible from 100 miles away! With Denver in site, those last 100 miles seemed to just fly by. At 11:45pm Mountain Time, just 5 hours after departing the New Century Air Center in Olathe, Kansas, I touched down in Erie. Home at last!

## Facilities Upgrade

The town of Erie is notorious for ignoring its airport infrastructure. So when the businesses operating out of the airport terminal building need improvements done, we have to take matters into our own hands. Case in point... the upstairs bathroom.

Many of our customers found it a bit unnerving to see the lights from the downstairs offices shining through gaps in the bathroom floor. The aeronautical chart wallpaper peeling off the walls, inoperative leaking urinal, rotten subfloor, and nasty delaminating countertop also added to the ambience. So in conjunction with our neighbors, Rocky Mountain Rotorcraft, Skyraider Aviation undertook a bathroom remodel.

Operating on a tight budget, we performed most of the work ourselves. We re-used what we could, and removed or replaced what we couldn't. The results are nothing short of spectacular... worthy of a spread in the next issue of *Better Airports and Gardens!*



Erie Municipal Airport's newly remodeled bathroom