

Friday, February 20, 2009
256th Cobra flight, 265th PIC, 4 landings
Testflight of transponder install, Western
Escarpment, Observatory, Rio Grande Valley

Takeoff: 5:16pm Landing: 6:14pm
Today's Airtime: 1.0
Total PIC Time : 648.6 Total Logged Time 669.8



Ladron
Peak at
sunset

I spent all day on the mechanical installation of my transponder. Much time was spent on making an antenna ground plane / false floor out of an aluminum pizza pan. I had planned to mount the antenna under my feet in the storage compartment, but I wasn't quite satisfied with it. I set it aside and worked on mounting the encoding altimeter in the pod, next to my feet. The manual recommended I install a switch to isolate the transponder from glitches during engine start up. This took another hour. I was finally done around 4:30 and hurried to get my trike back into flying condition so I could grab a short sunset flight.

I headed northwest and reached the western escarpment of the mesa. It was almost sunset, so I hesitated heading out into the boonies. I turned left and followed the edge of the mesa all the way down to the observatory.

Conditions were calm and smooth, and the sky was clear but no one was at the observatory tonight.

I turned east, crossing the mesa and headed into the Rio Grande Valley.



I followed the river north towards Belen. Several large flocks of geese passed overhead.

It was 15 minutes after sunset by now, so I headed into the pattern at Belen and got in three landings in twilight.



Here is my GPS track.

