

Saturday August 14, 2010

326th Cobra flight, 336th PIC, 2 landings

Calm Flight over the Manzanos

Paul arrived at the hangar about 30 minutes before I did. I would not be able to fly with him anyway because I needed to check on a leak in my oil sump. Paul said the winds aloft forecast was for calm winds and he was heading for Sandia Airpark on the east side of the Sandia Mountains.

I noticed a slow leak after the NM backcountry trip. The bumpy dirt fields had dislodged some padding material I placed between a bolt and the oil sump, and contact from further bumps had made a small hole.

Belen Takeoff: 7:40am Belen Landing 9:54am

Trip Airtime 2.2hrs

Total PIC Time: 860.7 Total Logged Time: 881.9



I replaced the padding, toppled off my oil and cleaned up the mess, then took off and departed the pattern for the Manzano Mountains to the east.

I headed for Comanche Canyon, a wedge-like cut near the center of the Manzanos (left). I circled my way up to in the still air.





These were probably the best conditions I have ever flown in over the Manzanos. The experience is usually tainted with fear of the rotor. I wasn't complacent, but the zero wind made for a very relaxing flight. I headed towards the flat mesa at Bosque Peak.

I circled around the Guadalupe and Mosca Peak at the north end, then headed south.



Right: Looking south from the center of Manzanos.



Left: I flew all the way down to South Manzano peak (the far summit in the picture above) then turned around to the north again. You can clearly see the wedge shaped cut of Comanche Canyon from here. I flew back towards the center again, then left the mountain.

I headed towards Mid-Valley Airpark. I wanted give Mike a copy of LSULF that featured my article on Utah Backcountry Flying. I landed and taxied over to Mike's house, but he was not home. I headed back to Belen and landed. I drained the oil sump and removed it from my trike. I could see a small crack. The next week I took it to a weld shop for repair. I'll reinstall it next week. Paul showed up at Belen later on. He had a great flight to Sandia Park and back, experiencing the same perfect no wind conditions. Below is my GPS tracklog.

