

Cal City Wave Camp 2009
By Dave Raspet

The highlights of our 2009 Cal City Wave Camp were two climbs for diamond altitude on 21 March. Jerry Snedden gained over 18,000 ft to easily meet the requirement and Mike Reid's logger trace shows that he met the requirement with 48 ft to spare. Final results for Mike depend on the logger calibration. Congratulations to Jerry, this flight finishes his diamond-the first new diamond for an Orange County Soaring Association member in over 6 years!

The camp started Saturday 14 March, with a wave day as Peter Kovari radioed in that he had wave at 11,000 ft by the middle of the afternoon. Ben Barrentine launched in his Stemme and Ben climbed to 17.8 k before impending sundown forced him to terminate his climb. (He landed 3 minutes before sundown.) Also launching late, Cindy Brickner gave Jerry Snedden a wave orientation flight. Sunday had mild wave that cut off at about 10 k due to a decrease in wind velocity at that level. Walt Rogers and Dan Rihn flew along with Ben in the Stemme.

Through the week we enjoyed thermal soaring with very mild winds and thermal tops between 13 k and 8.3k.

Saturday, 21 March, wave materialized in mid afternoon and a number of pilots went out to chase it. Jerry Snedden worked for a considerable time, first working thermals up from 1500 agl and then having to work the wave in several different locations to finally get his 18 k gain to 22 k msl. Mike Reid also had to work several locations to climb in the mild wave with climb rates often down to 1-2 knots. Ben Barrentine made two flights in the Stemme; one to 16 k that had to end to get his passenger back to the ground so the passenger could fly home and the second to 18.8 k that got curtailed by sunset again.

Sunday, 22 March, showed strong wave conditions but the winds were high and variable and the atmosphere contained a lot of moisture. These conditions combined to make the wave more dynamic than either of the two pilots there wanted to attempt.

Cindy Brickner of Caracole Soaring provided excellent instruction on the airspace and the air space control procedures with Joshua Approach. In all, nine pilots got training from Cindy. Cindy also arranged a tour of the TRACON facility at Edwards so that the sailplane pilots could better understand the Joshua facilities and the way the controllers see and control the sailplanes.

Two diamonds flights, nine pilots trained in wave flying, five good thermal days, three wave days and the 9th day that got passed on because the wave conditions looked too challenging for the pilots that were there. It was a very successful Camp. Many thanks to Cindy for all her hard work and excellent instruction.