

PIREP: M9

by Matthew McDaniel



COS UUA /OV BRK 188009 /TM 1230 /FL 062 /TP SR22 /SK CLR /WV 14015 /TB NEG /RM CAUTION FOR MIGRATORY CIRRI

Decoded: Urgent Pilot Report from Colorado Springs, Colo., located on the 188° radial and nine nautical miles from the Black Forest VOR (BRK). Time 1230 Zulu, Flight Level 6,200 feet MSL. A Cirrus SR22 reported clear skies, with winds from 140° at 15 knots and negative turbulence. Remarks: The Cirrus Owners and Pilots Association Annual Fly-In and Symposium (“Migration”) is underway!



Pilot Seminars or the Colorado Pilots Association, held on Tuesday and Wednesday. Other CSIP/CPPP CFI's and I were also on hand to provide advanced one-on-one mountain flying instruction into the many beautiful and challenging mountain airports located in the rugged Rocky Mountains, west of Colorado Springs.

The ninth annual COPA Migration (a.k.a., Migration Rockies, M9 Rockies, or simply M9) was held in Colorado Springs, Colo. August 11-14, 2011. By all accounts, it was another wildly successful Migration and has established another bar by which all future Migrations will be judged.

As with M8-Dayton, this year's Migration unofficially started with a pre-game show. Early arrivals had the opportunity to attend seminars from either Advanced

Thursday's activities consisted of the arrival of approximately 150 Cirrus aircraft onto Colorado Jet Center's spacious ramp. Arriving COPA members could tour the trade show a bit before boarding the busses to the Cheyenne Mountain Resort (CMR). A Critical Decision Making course was held at CMR, followed by the official kickoff of M9, the Cowboy Cabana Party. For the serious night owls, the COPA Hangar opened at 10:00 p.m. and continued into the wee hours.





Airport Day (Friday)

Friday of M9 initiated a return to airport-based activities, similar to the earliest Migrations in Duluth. All vendors set up and displayed their products and services inside a sprawling hangar provided by Colorado Jet Center. As usual, vendors covered the whole spectrum, including insurance, flight training, avionics and all manner of aircraft enhancement options. Immediately outside the hangar, a variety of demonstrator aircraft were parked for static review, with some offering exciting flight demos. Of course, Cirrus had a variety of their current lineup front and center. Other companies hoping to convince attendees to “upgrade” were EADS (TBM 850), Eclipse (twin-engine VLJ), Extra (500 turboprop), Lancair (Evolution turboprop) and Piper (Malibu and Meridian). For those just wanting to ogle other interesting aircraft, Dr. Bruce Kaufman displayed his beautiful 1946 Globe Swift. Additionally, Pierre Redmond arrived in his newly acquired Kitfox amphibian, en route from Wisconsin to his home base in Lake Tahoe. There was even something

for the ground-pounders to drool over. The EarthRoamer Xpedition Vehicle is a motor home, SUV, and self-contained get-away machine that appeals to both the naturalist and technophile alike.

A delicious lunch buffet was served inside the vendor hangar and several speaker-presentations were given in conference rooms and via a stage set up at the back-center of the same facility. Col. Christopher Plamp pulled the post-lunch crowd in with his discussion of the U.S. Air Force T-53A (see article, page 24). LoPresti used this same pulpit to sing the praises of their new run-flat tires,

An Ode to Migration 9

by Marilyn Liang, first-time Migration attendee

From all corners and edges we came,
Quietly descending ...

from a cloudless August sky.
Wing in wing we stood on land,
A flock of well-trained snow geese
basking in the warm afternoon sun.

What a sight!
Ought to make all birds ogle
including the black one!

From all walks of life we gathered,
marbles and jacks in pockets.

Hands received by palms,
friendship sprouted.

Arms around shoulders,
memories renewed.

Faces after faces after faces
ignited by excitement.

Bursting into endless laughter and the most
spectacular fireworks in the night sky.

Speeches and seminars,
Ideas born and reborn,
Discussions and demonstrations,
Experiences shared,
Wisdom acquired.

Caves and horsebacks,
COPA children left their joyful voices.

When the night curtain covered the sky.
We sat by the fire pits,
burning marshmallows and roasting stories.
Alpine breeze brushed our illuminated faces.
We gingerly paddled
into the drunken state of real and unreal...

Then the clouds rolled, weather bells rang,
Soon, we are to spread our wings, soar into the sky
returning to familiar routes and routines.
Yet how can this night end, my dear friends,
when a four year old is eloquently telling
a tale of a zombie,
At the foot of the Cheyenne Mountain.

now available for all models of the Cirrus. Other exhibitors presented product seminars throughout the day to the many interested attendees.

By 6:00 p.m., all busses had returned to the CMR to get attendees to the annual Migration Banquet. As usual, the banquet began with a cocktail hour for socialization. A fine meal was served and the crowd was treated to a loosely aviation "flight" themed musical extravaganza that ranged from show tunes to Freebird (including a sea of lit cell phones waving in the crowd)! We then all had the pleasure of hearing about a fellow Cirrus pilot, whose wife, along with a skilled air traffic controller, was able to manage a critical flight situation during a period when the

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pilot became incapacitated. The pilot eventually regained enough awareness to safely land the airplane. COPA presented his brave wife and the controller with awards for their actions in the face of great stress and danger. The evening banquet was interspersed with a number of desirable door prize give-aways, but none were more coveted than the DFC-90 digital autopilot given away by Avidyne. The lucky winner was longtime COPA member and prolific COPA volunteer, Jerry Seckler.

Saturday and Sunday

The second full day of M9 was a flurry of activity from breakfast time until late into the evening. The morning was filled with updates; both COPA's and Cirrus' presidents gave status reports on their respective organizations. Then, COPA's unofficial accident statistician, Rick Beach, gave his most impassioned and compelling presentation yet on Cirrus safety, via his Annual Safety Review. After lunch, a series of short seminars gave attendees a choice of topics to mull over, including tech issues, landing techniques, NEXRAD, electrical systems reviews, etc. Each class was very well attended and provided subject matter for much hallway discussion later (links to view the seminars that were streamed live can be found on the COPA website under the COPA Media Gallery tab at <http://www.cirruspilots.org/media/g/m9/default.aspx>). Doug Ritter's traditional Water Survival Seminar (held poolside) flowed nicely into the Farewell and Fly Well Pool Party and buffet dinner. As usual, dinner groups lingered for hours of hangar talk and those who left early missed out on the roasting of S'mores over the open fire pits located poolside. Slowly the groupings separated and retired for the evening, in anticipation of early departures home on Sunday morning.

As one of the many late lingerers, I assumed I might be among one of the very few brave souls to be on the 5:30 a.m. shuttle to the airport. Challenging weather east of the Mississippi and morning calm for the mountain-crossing western departures obviously prompted the setting of many alarm clocks within the rooms of the Cheyenne Mountain Resort. I was only one of at least 30 pilots on the first airport bus and there were already

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many others at the airport pre-flighting when our bus arrived. The steady stream of departures from KCOS ensued, bringing another Migration to a close and scattering the gathered gaggle of Cirrus aircraft across the vast North American geography. 

