

## The tale of the flight from Bahnson to Harnett on Wednesday, June 25th, 2008, in pursuit of the Boomerang.

Didn't see any signs of CU until about 13:00 and decided to wait another half hour before launch. Tom Orrell put in me a good thermal at 2000' during climb out, but I stubbornly stayed on to 2500' and promptly lost 300' in the first few minutes after release and then connected with a reasonable cloud that really got things going. After about 10 minutes, I was at 5500' and headed out on course. Clouds to the SE generally looked good but some appeared to have the potential to overdevelop. As it turned out that never happened, and some of those bigger, darker CU's were sustaining 4-6K thermals around the entire circle and every once in a while you would see 8-9K for short periods. That's Way To Much Fun when it happens.

I was having trouble with my Glide Navigator program and couldn't get it to work, so I had to revert to pilotage for the flight. Yes, you heard that right, pilotage...for crying out loud. So while I'm doing the PDA thingy and the map thingy, the airplane was just sort of flying on its own and doing a right fine job of climbing in lift while going straight and with just a bit of rudder to start the turn when the vario started screaming, would soon find the center of the next thermal. I topped out at 7879' about the halfway point but never really tried to get to cloud base which was probably around 8500'.

Low point of the flight was somewhere around 4000', though I never even had to consider land out possibilities as the clouds were pretty evenly spaced along my direction of flight. I did a few turns away from the course line, but not many. I knew I had a ground crew preparing to head out for the retrieve so I didn't lollygag around too much. I did over climb in a few of the thermals just for fun and wasn't really trying to go fast, but as it turns out it was my highest average speed for a flight to date. I flew the 182K at an average speed of 100K in 1:49. Could have likely done it in 1:30 if I had really worked at it. It's a great feeling going 110 knots and watching the vario go UP, through no skill of your own.

Many thanks to Bill Bewley and son Michael for helping me rig, launch and retrieve. I couldn't have done it without them. Both of them most likely had much better things to do with their day instead of touring central Carolina in a 2000 Oldsmobile (affectionately known in our household as the Chick-mobile) with a long skinny trailer in tow. I owe you guys Big-time!

The FBO folks at Harnett were helpful as usual. When we couldn't find the Boomerang Trophy in the Conference Room, they dialed up Roger Fowler's number and handed me the phone. It was Roger's wife Tina that answered. When I told her who I was, she said, "Would you believe that I just now picked up the Trophy from the engravers shop." Roger had flown to VA to claim the Boomerang only a week ago. Tina agreed to meet us in Sanford on our way back to Bahnson and delivered the trophy to us at a Kangaroo Gas Station at the 421/NC1 intersection. Many thanks to Tina Fowler for being so gracious and kind and willing to drive from her home to Sanford, in order to make the exchange. Roger didn't get to see the engravers work so he relayed that he'll be gunnin' for the Boomerang again soon! Roger your name looks good on the trophy and my name should be on there by Friday afternoon, so you can come get it back anytime!

A nice dinner with Bill and Michael at Logan's Roadhouse Restaurant and a COLD brew sure was good at the end of a very good day.

God bless and Happy Soaring,

Gman

**Note:** The trophy remained at PSS for 3 days. Harnett County Marauder's led by Roger Fowler landed at Bahnson Field, June 6, after a 4 hour mission with two low altitude saves. He was followed closely by Ray Lovingood with a trailer in tow. They left the field with both the Boomerang, and the Kitty Hawk. We got to enjoy the Boomerang for a whole 3 days! Intelligence indicates the "PSS Air Force" is already planning the next raid on Harnett!