

## The Wonderful Vintage Mooney Group Fly-In to Lake Tahoe - June 2008

This is a story about what I expected would be a wonderful weekend with the Vintage Mooney Group (VMG) at Lake Tahoe (TVL) CA, with Kim A-Z as my flying partner. This fly-in was hosted by Michael Golden, owner of Mountain West Aviation, the FBO there, and by Top Gun Aviation in Stockton CA. We usually get between 20 and 35 Mooneys at a VMG fly in. The VMG online reservations hit an all-time high of 78, which was more than twice the number of the most attended of any of our previous fly-ins. Mooney # 79 arrived later Sat. afternoon. They came from as far north as Everett WA and as far southeast as Kilgore TX , 1481 miles away.

A weekend trip implies staying overnight somewhere. My wife Sue, and Kim have met each other and Kim was concerned about Sue's thoughts, so Kim wrote Sue an e-mail, and my wife wrote back that she was fine with Kim going with me. Once that was clear, the planning to Lake Tahoe was underway.

Kim took care of all of the destination stuff; she secured us a couple of rooms at the Lakeside Hotel and Casino in the city of Stateline just a few miles away from the South Lake Tahoe airport, and rented us a Dodge van for transportation. I did all of the airplane planning including keeping tabs on the weather, the flight plan, and checking in with Flight Service. Kim had to work Friday morning, so I did also. Kim's desk is no more than 20 feet away from mine. We finally got out of work around 12:30 and we both drove our cars to my hangar at Corona's airport. Due to the traffic, we probably didn't get to the airport until after 1:15.

Mooney out, luggage loaded, cars in, hangar doors closed and locked, we probably left the ground around 2:00. Kim is a shorter gal, and so I gave her a pillow and cranked up the seat another inch so she could see out of the front window. When she was all done getting settled in, she was taller than I was and smiling at me.

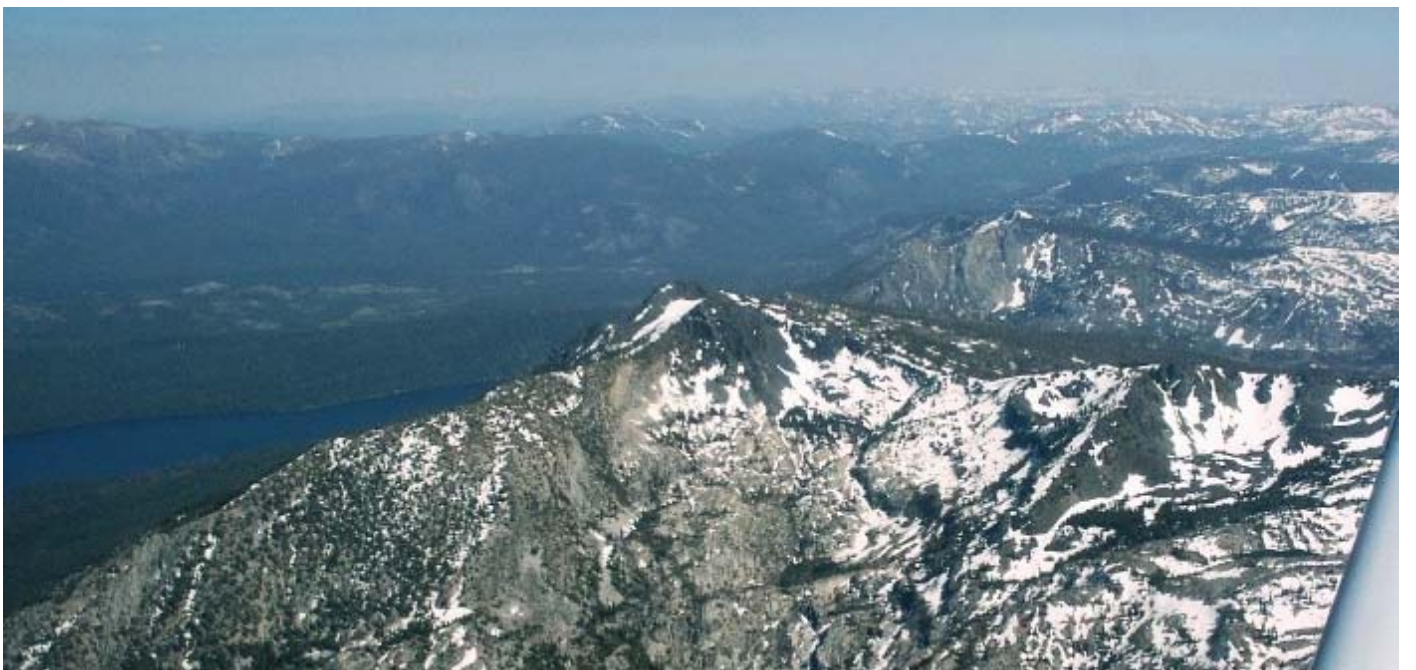
The takeoff seemed a bit shallow due to the heat but we did fine. I called up SoCal on the radio about 4 miles out and they put us 'in the system'. There were a couple of jiggles in the first two or three minutes after we left Corona, but after that, all was pretty smooth for a while as we climbed northwest toward the San Gabriel Mountains and Mount Baldy just north of Pomona. My climb out was a tad shallow due to the very warm weather and so we arrived a tad low as we came within 10 miles of the crest. It was higher than we were. So I started a series of two 360° turns to gain altitude before we got to the hills. It worked out great, and there we were sliding 1000' over the top. It got a little bit jiggley right then, but soon it settled down again a few minutes later.

The flight over the 'high desert' (Palmdale / Lancaster) was a whole 'nother story. It was jiggly, kind of like a jeep on a dirt road. It persisted for well over a half hour. I was fine, but those atmospheric conditions devastated Kim's tummy. Even when the air got really smooth, her tummy would not recover. I personally felt devastated too as there was nothing I could do except give her some gum to chew. The air was too smoky to take any pictures of the San Joaquin Valley. Finally, (from her perspective), 400 miles later, we got there. It was around 4:30.

When we got close to our destination, the air was cleaner, and Kim and I took these shots of the surrounding area.



Majestic and awesome



Yes, in the middle of June





The City of South Lake Tahoe and the airport in the distance



Out the front window in a left turn over Lake Tahoe while reducing altitude for landing



A serene scene

Fast forward for a while and we landed at Lake Tahoe (TVL). We all welcomed each other, as always. This was the day before the fly-in and we still had around 20 Mooneys snuggled together in sweet harmony. A bunch of us met for dinner at a nice Italian restaurant about 3 miles down the road. Here is where we can talk "flying" and "Mooney" for hours, and never get tired of it.







Some of the group found a nice table out on the patio



After dinner, a bunch of us who were staying at the Lakeside Hotel met at the pool for margaritas and other libations. All except for Kim who later said she went to her room, plopped on her bed, and decided that that was her best tummy remedy. It was. She was up the next morning way before I was, hiking down to water's edge and loving it. Going to the lake's edge was her main weekend goal and she did it several times.



As for the pool party: "You had to be there."



Saturday morning - Here come the Mooneys!!! The first one on the left is Joe's









Lots of Mooney tails



Another Mooney landing in the distance ☺



Mooney spinners and tails everywhere!!!





Cute!



N5807T is my babe!



I think Mitch and Jolie set this up



Joel helped all of us and with a smile - he is the General Manager at Mountain West





All of us - over \$5,000,000 worth of Mooneys



Same view zoomed in



All of us lucky Mooney drivers having a super catered lunch on Saturday,  
courtesy of Top Gun Aviation,  
and getting to listen to Phil Corman in the black T shirt explaining the meaning of life to all of us 😊

We kicked back for a while after lunch and just enjoyed being where we were for the moment. Ahh what weather! No sense being in a hurry when on vacation, right? Alas, all good things must come to an end

Kim had hydrated herself properly Saturday morning and she had purchased some accu-pressure wristbands to help alleviate tummy issues while aloft. I still do not know if these work on your body or on your mind, but whatever, they work great. So, it was time to go, and we walked out to the Mooney. Kim later said her highlight for the weekend was meeting the new found "Mooney Family and Friends". Kim was in good spirits and so I took her picture. This is one of my favorite pictures of Kim. You can tell by her smile, that she had put aside all of yesterday's concerns, and was having a blast.





Wristbands in place, Kim was ready to launch

I put the both of us on supplemental oxygen before I started up the engine. After all, the airport is 6200 feet above sea level, and so oxygen would not be a bad idea. My plan was to do anything I could to make sure Kim would be comfortable. After circling around to climb up high, we headed southwest for a while, and then south down the San Joaquin Valley. It was still smoky, due to the forest fires, but we were way up high. The trip was really uneventful and Kim had a comfortable ride.

Once we got back to Corona, we re-fueled the airplane and then taxied her back to her rightful place. We got the cars outside and then Kim helped me push 07T up the rise into hangar #32. I popped a Blue Can, Kim declined the one I offered to her, and we chatted for a while.

Time to go - it was time to go. These stories always end with time to go. Kim walked up to me, gave me a thank you hug, turned around, and walked to her car. Poof - she was gone. I sat on the wing of my airplane for a while, and I just reflected upon everything that had taken place over the weekend. I am a very lucky guy.

Ed Shreffler  
07/02/2008

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