

## Visions of the Future

submitted by Pete Keane, 2002

We were all pretty blown away the first time someone left Pine Mountain in a paraglider. I'll never forget Luke Madsen's flight from the west side of Pine to Millican. Watching him spin circles high above the desert floor in light conditions, proved that it could be done. It forever changed my perceptions of the boundaries of what was possible, and even though it was a small step, it was a giant leap into the unknown.

A year or so later, Phil Pohl's flight to Millican and then to Brothers left my jaw hitting the ground in amazement. Wow, I thought, this is only the tip of the iceberg. Over the course of a few hours Phil had redefined yet again what was possible and lit the torch that lead down the trail that we would all try to follow.

After a few more attempts by pilots to fly to Brothers had all come up short. Then in fine "splat" style Bill Gordon upped the ante and pushed way out there and flew a 68 miler to Summer Lake. This record stayed for quite a few years until Nate Scales spent a year in Bend, flying a 70 miler and showing us locals what it meant to thermal with a high bank angle and how to really use the speedbar.

These flights are all visionary, stretching way out of bounds of the traditional framework and clearly ahead of their time. It is with this spirit in mind that I have a few big flights that I'm sure will go in the next few years.

***Bachelor to Sisters:*** This flight will go on a day when the winds are southwest aloft and it'll be made in the spring. The prospective successful pilot will climb out over Bachelor and fly to Moon Mountain, then Ball Butte, climb again and then into the crater of Broken Top. Here she will climb again over the massive south-facing cliff below the summit of Broken Top and have to make a decision on whether or not to make the final glide to Sisters, which doesn't have many bailout options. The fields that are outside Sisters are a solid glide from Broken Top. Cloud support would be good as well as being at about 14k over Broken Top. Minimum number of big thermals required: 5.

***Bachelor to Pine:*** This flight will be made on a west wind day in the spring. The best, most direct out of the Bachelor area will be to climb out over Tumalo and glide to the Tumalo Falls area, where there are a lot of south facing cliffs and numerous small peaks. The Bridge Creek burn has left a lot of hillsides bare and the potential for getting up really exists. The glide between Tumalo Mt and Tumalo Falls has one bail out option in the Swampy Lakes area. The hike out from there will be about 2 hours if snow conditions are good. It is also possible to land on the road to Tumalo falls below the cliffs and get a ride to town. Next, after climbing here, the best choice would be to go up and over Bear Wallow Butte and glide out to the Tumalo Reservoir where there are big landing options. From here, fly to Awbrey Butte and over town to Pilot Butte. The remaining distance to Pine is about 25 miles, but all over the flats and many landing options. Total flight distance: about 46 miles. [Note: On May 1, 2003, Jeff Huey flew from Bachelor to the Millican Valley]

**Haystack Butte to Pine:** This route seems perfect for the typical northwest flow that we get here a lot. This flight could happen in the fall or the spring. My vision is to climb out over Haystack and glide to Gray Butte, where undoubtedly, it'll be going up. From here it's a quick jump to Smith Rock State Park. From here, you'll have to get really high and head for Powell Butte. It seems likely that there will be a few thermals needed on the way to get there, but its not that out of the question. Once at Powell, it seems possible to get up again and strike out for Pine, arriving there at glassoff. Again a few thermals will be needed over the flats to get to the features just northwest of Pine. Another good option is to get the journey underway by hiking up Gray Butte and starting from there.

**The 100 Miler:** This flight is possible in Central Oregon, on the right day. The right day will be in June, a day or so after a front has passed, with cumulous in the sky and the winds westerly aloft. The successful pilot will launch from the top of Pine and climb out. Next, he'll fly to the Moffit Ranch area and stay on the hills just south of the ranch. This will bring him into Brothers south of the highway, crossing Fredrick Butte Road. Then he'll cross the highway angling towards Hampton Butte and go up and over it north of the highway across Misery Flats. At the east side of Misery Flats, he'll work some small buttes and hill staying north of the highway. There are many small features in this area. After the features run out it'll flat land flying to Riley and beyond to Burns. After a flight like this, he'll probably want to land near the McDonald's and order a vanilla milkshake.