

Flying Ed and Tom's update on their recent Malibu trip from Chiangmai – 18th Feb 2010

We have stopped long enough to record some of the memories from this remarkable trip.



Our route is Chiang Mai, Bangkok, Phuket, Singapore, Kota Kinabalu (Borneo), Puerto Princessa (Philippines), Clark Airbase (Philippines) Hualian (Taiwan), Taipei, Macao, Bangkok.

Total distance: 5,900 Nm

Fuel Stops: 10

Flying hours: 25



Seeing the wildlife, especially the Orang-utan's in Borneo was very special, and something I have wanted to do for a long time. The rehabilitation centre where this picture was taken dedicates itself to re-educating and releasing orphans back to the wild.



From Borneo we headed up to the Philippines, to Palawan region. Breathtaking azure waters and unspoilt islands greeted us, where we had a few days R&R before heading up to the Balloon Fiesta at Clark Airbase.



Busuanga Island, where we stayed, is refreshingly unspoiled, and underdeveloped.





The other striking thing about the Philippines, is how active General Aviation is here.

This wonderful Beech 18 was being loaded to the gunnels with local Grouper fish bound for Manila

On the nearby island of Caluit, is an African Style game reserve. An odd legacy from the deposed President Marcos.



The balloon fiesta was tremendous fun. We made lots of friends, and we were lucky enough to get taken up in a balloon owned by Hans Lauten. Ballooning is a lovely graceful activity. Hundreds of locals rushed on to the streets to cheer us on. For the local village children it was like Santa Claus arriving.



I was asked to participate with fly bys in the Malibu during the air show. A Special thank you to Joy Roa and his team, for making our stay and flight handling in the Philippines very smooth.

We have now just left the Philippines balloon fiesta, and leave with fond memories of hospitable people and many new friends.



The journey back will be via Taiwan, and Macao



Today we arrived in Hualian, a little known coastal town in Taiwan. Since the airport is predominantly military, we are the first foreign registered aircraft ever to be allowed to land here, which caused a lot of local interest. The provincial governor together with a tribal dance troop greeted our arrival much to our astonishment!

A special thanks to Shaun Huang, a GA enthusiast based in Taiwan who made our landings in Taiwan possible.

We plan to spend three days in Hualian, before setting off for Taipei, then Macao, and back home.



The weather here in Taiwan is IMC, and since we are very close to the jet stream, we have had 70-105 knot headwinds at FL270 to contend with, which has meant some pretty careful fuel planning.

Overall, the aircraft has performed flawlessly, and it has been a joy to travel in her.

As always, with a trip like this, many people worked behind the scenes to help make it possible. Special thanks to:-

- K. Manus and all the staff at Royal Group, Bangkok
- The mechanics at M-Jets, Bangkok who take care of HS-TOM
- The ops dept of WorldFuel Singapore, who coordinated all the fuel stops.
- K. Rojchai and his team at InsurExcellence, Bangkok, who arranged all the special insurance requirements.
- Joy Roa, and his team. Philippines.
- Shaun Huang, Taiwan.
- My backup team at Sun Aviation in Florida, and Jetprop/Rocket Engineering in Spokane. US.



...and to so many others who we have met along the way, you showed us many kindnesses, no matter how small, that made this journey so memorable. Thank you.