

## Chapter 648 Trip Report – Kremmling Camping

Looking for something to do locally (I have done more traveling outside of Colorado than inside so I decided to concentrate on Colorado backcountry flying this Fall) I saw a post on Facebook's Airplane Camping page about Kremmling, Colorado Airport (20V). We decided to check it out. We loaded up the Cub with our camping gear and dog. Completed a weight and balance calculation and was within the envelope and 300 pounds under gross. Looks good so here we go. Well, the first thing I noticed on our early morning departure was that the 65 F temperature we left on the KLMO runway started to climb and before I was at 1,500 feet AGL it was 80 F. Great, an inversion, and with inversions you have a good chance of a mountain wave or strong winds. The next thing I notice is that the barometric pressure at Kremmling is 30.48, KLMO was 30.17, a 0.31 difference. Guess what goes from high to low pressure. We continued on to Rolling Pass with the headwinds slowly building 20, 30 until up to 40 mph. I considered turning around but the wind flow was laminar, no turbulence. About 75% of the way up to Rollings Pass we were only climbing about 200 feet per minute because I had the power pulled back to keep the CHT's at 400 F. As a side bar: the Cub dose not fly fast enough to cool the 180 hp engine so in reality you only get to use full power on take-off. As we approached the pass it was obvious that I needed to execute some climbing circles. The first circle didn't yield much altitude gain so I remembered what Billy Mitchel taught me in mountain flying training, sometimes you need to find a thermal. I decided to go ridge to ridge to see if I could find an up-thermal, I have a variometer in the Cub for this purpose. We were soon rewarded with a nice 600 fpm updraft along a ridge that launched us up to about 12,500 MSL and 15,000 DA. With that gain we pointed our nose to Rollings Pass and rode the ridge updraft with just a little sink before going over the pass. We still had the 40 mph headwind and 56 mph ground speed over the pass. We dropped down into the Frasier Valley, the rest of the trip was a smooth ride following the Colorado River with about a 10 mph headwind. We circled the Kremmling area to see what we could see. The town is maybe 2 miles long and was basically inside the landing pattern.

We landed on a grass strip next to the main runway and were greeted by local electricians working on the fuel pump. After a nice visit and Q&A we got fuel and tied down. We were greeted by Keith and Joanna Whitemarsh, enthusiastic FBO proprietors of Grand River Aviation. We walked into town with our dog to Big Shooter Coffee (ice cream and smoothies too). We were told the owner was an alternate on the US Olympic Biathlon Team. Saw some interesting old cars in town. Took the courtesy car out to the Wolford Mountain Reservoir for a refreshing swim. On the way back we stopped by The Dean West for dinner. Spent the evening watching big storm cells roll past the airport like we were sitting at a drive-in movie. Pitched our tent next to the FBO and awoke to a beautiful sunrise.

### Side notes

We met a pilot from Vail with a Husky. He was based at Kremmling due to the hangar shortage at Rifle and Eagle. Joanna later told me that there are a lot of airplane owners from Vail and Steamboat Springs based at Kremmling.

A Colorado Wildlife Ranger stopped by in a chartered Super Cub. She was out counting antelope which I found interesting because I have never seen any animals from my airplane. I guess you have to know where to look and have a sharp eye.

Kremmling has plans to expand the airport to accommodate the growing aviation demand particularly jets. Some of the "Gentlemen ranchers" fly jets now plus the overflow aircraft from Vail and Steamboat Springs communities.

Joanna told us that they received funds from RAF to construct a camp ground on the airport grounds. They are also working with local ranchers to obtain grass strip landing privileges. That should appeal to backcountry pilots.

The trip back was straight forward but we still needed to S-turn a bit to gain enough altitude to clear Rollings Pass. As soon as we cleared the pass we entered the fire smoke that has been plaguing the front range most of the summer.

Stop by Kremmling if you get a chance.

More trip reports to come.

Mike Duggan  
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Big thunder cells passing by.



Lima likes to go with us but does not like the flight too much. Always ready to get out.







Lima preferred sleeping on the FBO couch instead of the tent.