

# Mason-Dixon Sport Flyers USUA Club 20

[www.mdsfclub20.com](http://www.mdsfclub20.com)

## March 2010 Meeting

March 13, 2010

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Hi Folks,

Since we did not have a formal meeting this month, I guess our trip to the Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum will count as our meeting and this will count as the minutes:

As you all know the weather was absolutely terrible, and well below minimums at BVA when folks began to arrive for our trip. As of 0815, seven of the twelve folks who said they were going had arrived, and we decided to not wait any longer. Since Matt's van would only hold six comfortably, our two car convoy set out with my GPS doing the navigation. In "fastest time" mode, it took us over some back roads that I never even knew existed in an attempt to get us to Route 15 as quickly as possible. Once on Route 15, I was able to relax somewhat, as it was easier to follow the reasonably straight road through the thick mist that clouded the windshield, despite the defroster running at max afterburner. We all arrived safely at our first checkpoint - McDonald's in Thurmont, where bladders were relieved and breakfast was consumed.

Matt took the lead as we left this pit stop, because Don Fair (who has been to the museum numerous times) was riding with him and knew the way with his eyes closed. Thankfully, my GPS agreed with Don and we all arrived at the parking lot without any problem. Once inside, Don took us directly to the SR 71 Blackbird which is a very impressive piece of airplane. After a brief presentation on the Blackbird, Don led us to the Space Wing of the museum where we were introduced to the Space Shuttle Enterprise (a lot bigger than it looks in TV clips). Don then took us to the display of the Corona Project - the satellite imaging program that took over the majority of the US reconnaissance work after the Russians captured Gary Powers. Don worked on this project and is intimately familiar with the workings of this program. In fact, the recovery capsule that is on display at the museum was commanded by Don on its last flight. In the vein of 'small world' coincidences, the load master on the C119 that made the first successful catch of a returning capsule now lives in Chambersburg.

After Don's excellent presentation we all broke up and pursued our individual interests, agreeing to meet at the on site McDonald's for lunch at 1300. After locating a couple of Aeroncas and a number of Ultralight models, Judy, Jay and I happened upon an ex-B29 crewman who was giving a presentation on the Enola Gay. Again a most excellent presentation from someone who knew, from personal experience, what he was talking about. By some miracle, we were able to rejoin at a very crowded Micky D's for lunch (at a price not too much higher than it would be on 'the outside') and then off to our own individual interests again. Judy and I stood in line to go up in the mock tower they have there. The heavy fog, mist and overcast did not permit much 'viewing' (the real control tower at Dulles was almost invisible) but we were able to see a couple of passenger jets landing at eye level. After descending from the tower, I was able to give a hug and a "Thank you for your service" to a female major who flew recon for the Air Force and was there promoting women in aviation. (Old guys can get away with anything)

We all reassembled at 1500 for the trip home and departed in the rain and haze for BVA. In the limited visibility, I ended up on the wrong lane and was shunted off the highway at an unintended exit. With full faith in the ability of my GPS, we were directed into a dead end street, twice (some new construction had changed the road pattern that was not in my GPS's mapping system) and into a gated community, as the GPS tried to get us back on the correct highway the only way it knew. I finally ignored its directions and just kept driving to get away from the confusing new construction while John K, in the back seat, consulted his GPS for directions. By melding and consolidating the directions from the two GPS's we were able to find our way back to Route 7 and headed north. Matt, in the meantime, using Don as his human GPS, was well on his way home and beat us back to BVA by about a half hour.

Judy, Jay and I ended the day with dinner at Bakers in Dillsburg while the rest of the crew headed home to their families. It was a fun day and a great break from the winter doldrums. See you all at the next meeting.

All the best,  
Jerry