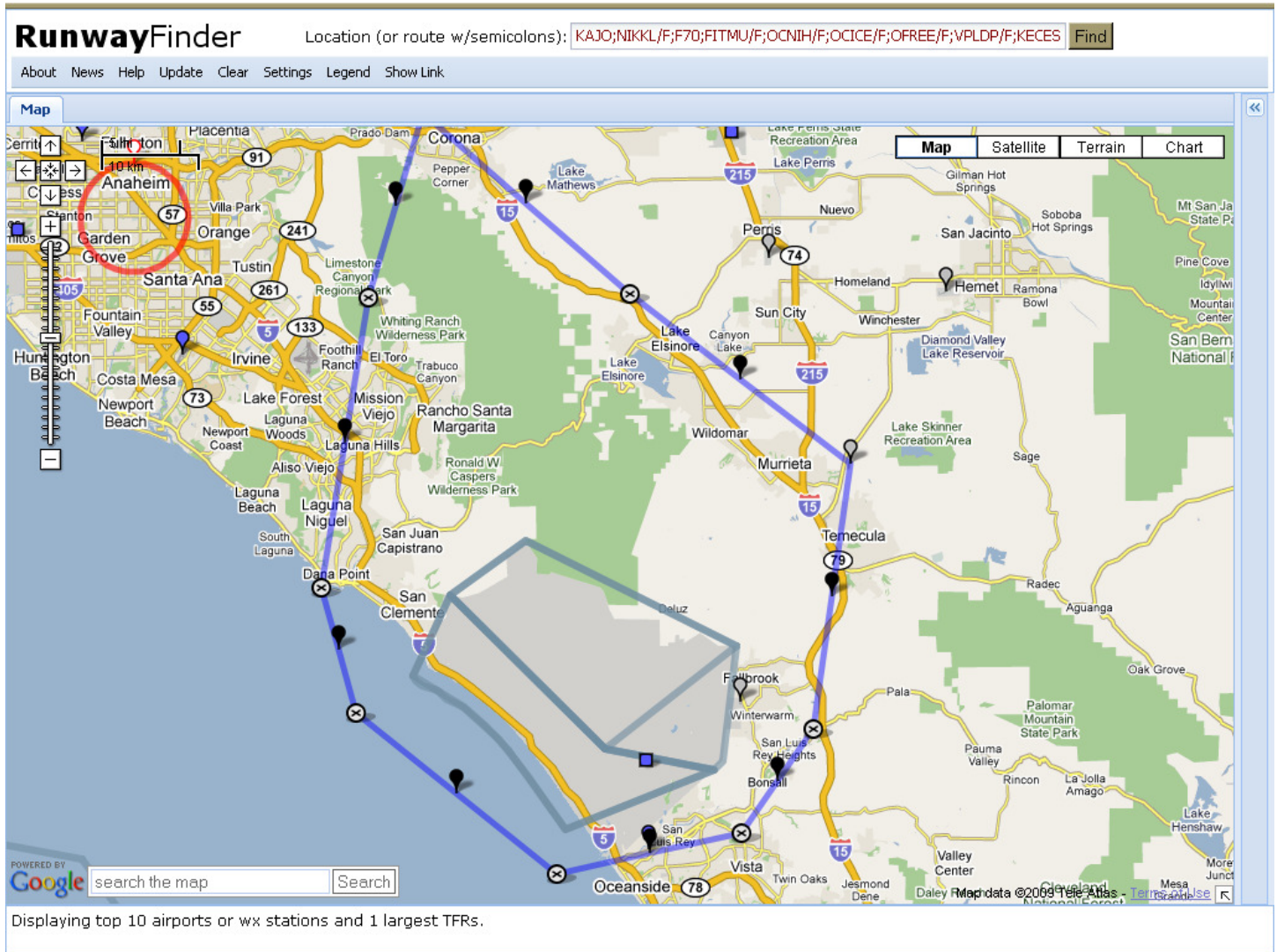


The Southern California (So Cal) Tour

This is going to be a very short story. I had put together a flight plan, and I wanted to see how it actually played out. I met my buddy Charles, who is a student pilot and a very good one at that. I like to give him the opportunity to fly my airplane when I can. We met today after work at 6:30, and we went flying. We checked out that flight plan (route) that I had put together a few days before.



The So Cal route for today's flight

The plan was to leave Corona heading Southeast, pass by Lake Elsinore, and then over to French Valley airport, which is by Temecula. From there my flight plan indicated to fly SSW for five or 10 minutes, and then make another right turn and head west to the Pacific Ocean, right by the city of Oceanside. After going 2 miles off shore, it was time for another right turn - following the coastline but staying outside of Camp Pendleton's restricted airspace, (that yucky gray part of the map). Right about Dana Point, we turned right again. This trip leg was on a magnetic bearing of 356°. The true bearing was 9°. You pilots know what I'm talking about. It's pretty much a straight shot right back to Corona on this heading. Once you skim over a low 'saddle' in the Santa Anna mountains, you just dump power and settle down to 1500 feet MSL to enter the landing pattern. Nothing to it.



The weather was perfect. Why not go flying?



I filled out my log info noting exactly how much fuel and oil were onboard



Yes, I have some of that high-tech stuff in my airplane, and I know how to use it



Once we got to Oceanside I remembered to take a picture.



Looking offshore, it was so peaceful - we were just sitting there and enjoying



In the shade, the colors are muted - but the fun wasn't



On the way back north - is that point Dana Point?



The sunshine finally prevailed.

And finally, the nicest gift presented to us today -



Just awesome, read into it what you want to

San Clemente Island on the left, Santa Catalina Island on the right,
and majestic beauty right in the middle.

And so there you have it. 125 miles in 45 - 50 minutes. A bit of desert, a bit of lakes, a bit of hills, a bit of Oceanside urban area, a bit of Pacific Ocean, a bit of serene vistas, a bit of Charles' piloting skills, a bit of my Mooney airplane's quality, a bit of quality Lycoming engine performance, a bit of Dave's superb maintenance skills, and a bit of Ben's Corona Cylinder shop's engine overhaul, all coming together in one sweet symphony. And I got to sit there and experience it front row. Oh', yes, I got to land the airplane.

May God Bless you Krystal, wherever you are. I dedicate this little short story to you.

I *am* the luckiest kid on the block.

Ed Shreffler
Late on 08/04/2009
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