

## SMQ Landing Patterns on Google Earth

I've found that most of our first time pilots have a very hard time trying to keep track of every thing that goes on during the first few flights. There is allot to see and learn but much of it goes by so fast that they just can't take it all in. We talk allot, look at pictures of the airport and landing patterns but when you're in the air it's all a blur. This website contains a video Bill and I did while flying the pattern for RW26 but you can't get the perspective or big picture of the patterns.

Let me first point out that a landing pattern is only a planned means to an end. It's an organized, learned, safe way to get back on the ground. It is something that others are "expecting" you to do and you are "expecting" others to do. But, by no means is it cast in stone or something that you "must" do. There will be times that you just can't do it the planned way. Remember that we are flying gliders, no engines. It is your responsibility to get the glider "safely" back on the ground whatever way you can. Unlike our powered friends we only get one try.

With all that being said I spent some time with Google Earth to make a movie like way to see the patterns. You can see the big picture and "fly" the patterns as many times as you like. The sooner that you learn the patterns and can fly them well, the more comfortable you will feel with learning other phases of flying.

To see the patterns you must have GE loaded on your computer. It's a free download. When you click on the pattern files it will start GE and load the patterns in a temporary folder.

When in GE make sure the box to the left of the pattern name is checked and all the boxes for the waypoints are checked. Click once on the pattern name then click on the "play" button, at the bottom, to start the animation. If you have both patterns loaded into GE be sure that only one pattern is checked at a time. Or both will show up.

Please let me know if this is helpful and if you have any ideas for other training aids.

Ron

Play button

