

Friday was a good ridge day and, since I was to tow for the operation on Saturday, I went over early to fly. After about 45 minutes I was flying along the ridge when I came upon two large birds thermalling. One of the rules of ridge flying is to not turn towards the ridge as the tailwind can push you into the ridge in a way you cannot avoid hitting it. For whatever reason, I thought I was higher or further away from the ridge than I was or the sink I encountered was not what I expected. Either way, when I hit the air that the birds were in, the vario went to about 8 kts and, as the birds were circling towards the ridge at that moment, I made the error to turn towards the ridge. Although the turn was tight it carried me out into the area of sinking air and so in the trees I ended up, being unable to clear the ridge top as I turn back into the wind.

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