

24.06.2014 by David Seren

## Erwin Auer sets German Record for Swing



On June 18, Swing Team pilot [Erwin Auer](#) managed a flight from Hohen Bogen in the Bavarian Forest to the area of Bad Saulgau. With a [distance of 304.2 km](#) it is the longest free flight ever that was launched and flown in Germany.

In the following interview Erwin told us a lot about flying tactics, weather and what flying really is about for him.

### **Swing: How detailed have you planned the route for the flight in advance?**

Erwin Auer: Actually, not at all. Regarding flight prep I am a pretty lame duck. Otherwise I would probably not have flown straight towards the no fly zone at Biberach. When my GPS warned me, I had to turn away from the wind to avoid it. Then the flight unfortunately ended quite quickly. Otherwise, a lot more would have been possible on that day.

### **Your flight is not the first 300 this year. Why do you think this magic limit has been pushed more than once this year?**

It is not easy to answer this question. For a 300 everything must fit together. Wind direction and strength, thermal quality, position of cloud streets, etc. I really had to fight for example, at 200 km, simply because the thermals had made a break. I was barely able to survive in a zero lift. And also to get out of the Bavarian Forest was not easy. In Regensburg we have kind of weather divide. If it goes well where we are, it's often very stable out in the flats. But if it goes well there, we have to deal with over-development. That was also the situation on Wednesday. I had work my way out pretty low under 7/8 cloud cover.

### **At the moment you can get the impression that 300 km is not the limit. How do you see that?**

I think if the weather is right, you can do even more. Ideal for us are northwest and northeast wind directions. They bring cold air. If then post frontal weather brings the instability, the conditions are right. Such flights are only very rarely possible. On my [first 200km](#) in 2006, we had such a day. 400km would have been possible. Unfortunately I had to change cloud street to avoid the Nuremberg CTR. This would

actually have worked, but then it I got flushed down and was grounded in no time. Since then I have not experienced such kind of weather again.

**You fly typically high aspect ratio comp gliders. Why do you choose this category?**

I just feel better with the comp gliders. I need the feedback and thermal properties they offer. I have recently made a few flights on the EN-B glider [Mistral 7](#). A beautiful wing, but I do not feel so in tune under this type of glider. Above all, I fly less concentrated. And I have the feeling "with the Core I would be getting further now." That's a mental thing. Especially with a tailwind the intermediate-class gliders can keep up quite ok with me. The Core, however, is more direct and also lets me know what to do. Sometimes I have to change the turning direction or skip a thermal on course. Looking back, I'm always happy about this behavior, because it makes me speed up. It is simply like this: If I'm not the highest on the Core in a thermal, then I have made a mistake as a pilot. How well I can climb, that is the relevant performance for me.

**You flew with the SWING Core 2. A high performance glider, but not even the latest generation. What role does the material play on such flights?**

In any case you have to feel comfortable with the glider you fly. There are pilots, such as Armin Harich that feel better with intermediate gliders; I just prefer the high performance.

The glide performance is not so significant in the flatlands and downwind. Much more important for me is, that the glider tells me what's going on in the air. Once I have flown an intermediate wing that was very dampened. Nothing happened for a long time until I got a complete collapse without any warning. Thus I prefer direct gliders with little dampening. My competition glider is much better, direct and lets me know what is happening. And that's why I love the handling of the Swing gliders. They share what's happening above.

**Would you tell us something about your next goals?**

My biggest goal is to keep the joy of flying for a long time. That's more important to me than the long distances. Sure it would be nice to fly 350 or 400 km, but what really counts for me, is the pleasure of flight. If I can, for example, fly over my home and enjoy and absorb the scenery with full awareness, that is what makes me happy.

I'm always happy when on 15th September the points hunt is over and I just can go free flying again. But I also know that regarding point hunt it will start tingling again, as soon as spring comes. My role model is Sepp Gschwendtner, because he finds a really good balance. He likes to fly far, but not at any price. I believe it is the mix that makes it interesting. The hunt for points has as its attraction as has the pleasure flying. And that's also the beauty of our sport. It is so varied and diversified.

[Erwin's Flight on the DHV XC](#)

[More Information on the Core 3](#)