

Euroglide 2022 – the fate of D-9972

The team around the glider Duo Discus D-9972 will have the abbreviation DNF instead of a number placed in front or after the team in the final ranking. DNF means “did not finish”. But are we disappointed or sad? Did we really lose the race? Here is some background of our story that answers the question, how we managed to gain the most experience out of our first Euroglide!

Success might be hampered by one of the following possibilities:

1. You need to start with an outlanding right next to Venlo
2. You need an unexpectedly broken trailer
3. A club colleague has to roll into your glider and break your winglet
4. Difficult or even bad weather

We managed to succeed in all 4 categories in the span of one week leaving us – from our humble point of view – no chance to finish the race.

When we started on Monday, 20. June, in Venlo, we were extremely excited. We were so excited that we did not park the bug wipers properly and thus flew with a loud clapping noise on the right side of the plane. Not knowing what it was and with a seriously decrease concentration span while at the same time making the mistake of flying too far away from the airfield, we landed our glider in an organic pumpkin field some 11 km north of Venlo. Being determined to restart at Venlo, we rushed out trailer man to pick us up quickly only to discover that the winglet mount in the trailer had fallen off – lucky that it happened without a winglet in it but bad for us because it took an hour to repair. We did not manage to restart that day and relocated to Borkenberge to re-start the race from there on Tuesday.

This initially bad start meant that we keep flying behind the good weather window and had to fight our way out of tough situations every morning. Nonetheless, we made it through Nienburg to Szczecin to Pasewalk, to Laucha and even close to the black forest, Haiterbach-Nagold, close to Stuttgart when fate tested us again. A broken brake on a H-301 Libelle of a club colleague of ours, who had just before been really happy to meet us in Haiterbach, resulted in a (not so serious) crash into our Duo Discus and a nearby parked car which broke off the tip of our left winglet – as if fate told us that repairing the trailer had been against it and it needed to brake the winglet some other way!

Unbelievably, the son of the instructor at Haiterbach is an aviation engineer who fixed the winglet tip over night so that we could take off the next morning at 11 o'clock. But now, it was the weather's turn to play tricks, nicely looking cumulus clouds with no thermals. Our final trial ended 75 km down to road in Schwenningen, where we decided – after a serious analysis of the weather forecast – to call it a day, pack the glider and go home.

This leads us back to the initial question: Are we disappointed or sad?

Of course, we would have liked to finish. Of course, we would have like not to be last. However, we had some great flights, a lot of fun, met incredibly friendly people all over the country and learnt a lot.

For us, Euroglide 2022 was a training of perseverance, of keeping a good mood, of learning to fight and keeping the faith in yourself. We did not win or even finish the race, but we gained an awful lot. Let's hope we'll be back next time when we learnt from our mistakes and might even cheat fate.

Stefan & Jochen & Hajo – Team 72



