

So I finally got to do the trip to Sankt Johann Austria – LOIJ – this summer and so I thought I'd share a little info about the trip and flying there.

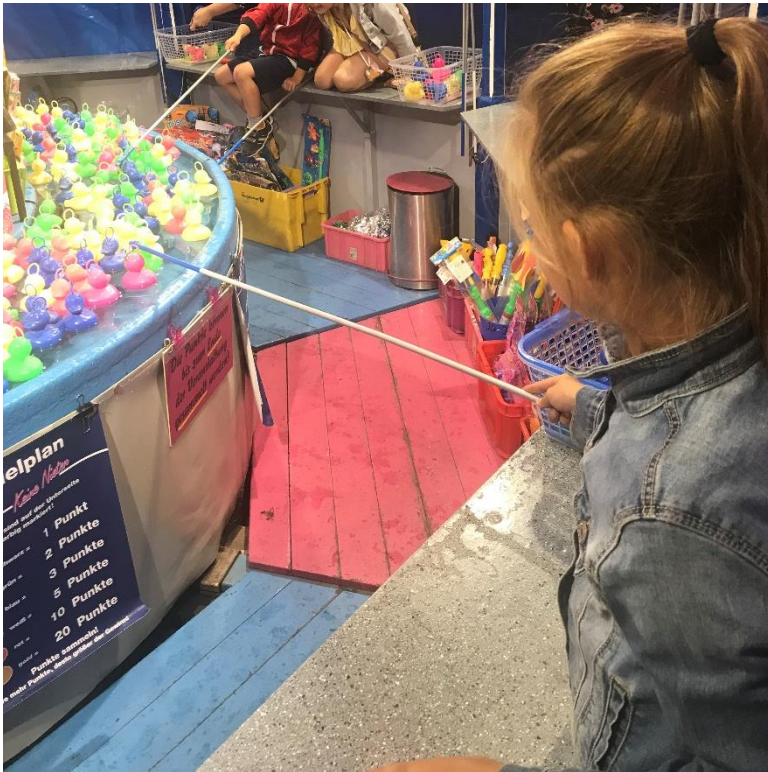
As a family we have been coming to Sankt Johann to ski every winter for the past 4 years so I know only the area in winter time. I have stood on the mountain side, looking down at the airfield in the valley and thinking it would be great to fly there. So in the past summer, the moon and stars finally aligned ... a weekend free of various other things to do and weather that was great, not only in Sankt Johann but all the way from Denmark across Germany into Austria, stable hot air. Perfect for the RV8 going VFR. It can just cope the distance of approx. 500 NM in one stretch from EKRK – our home airport. It's 3 hour flight with the RV8 cruising around 170 KTAS @ FL085 using 36 L/H. My daughter Emilia, 9 years old joining in the backseat.

We initially planned the flight Friday around noon but due to a work related delay we were not able to go until the afternoon. LOIJ closes at 1900 LT in summer so we could not make it there in time Friday. Then instead of waiting until the morning on Saturday we decided to start the trip by flying to Lübeck – EDHL Friday evening and then continue the trip Saturday morning. Filed a flight plan, then departed EKRK south.



[Emilia just after departure at Roskilde -EKRK]

Lübeck has an uncomplicated airport and worth a visit in itself. A taxi to the old town is approx. 20 EUR where we stayed at an older hotel. As luck had it a small Tivoli was setup by the canal. We ended up spending the rest of the evening there and did not see much else of the city before going back to the hotel as it was getting late.



[Tivoli in Lübeck]

Next morning filled the flight plan to from EDHL to LOIJ and after a taxi back to the airport where we decided to refuel the aircraft as we had spent a little extra fuel on the small detour, approach and departure at Lübeck.



[Topping up the 2 x 75 Liter fuel tanks in the RV8]

Route would be MAG EDQM RDG STAUB EDME TITIG PITAR, keeping us clear of almost all airspace issues. Most of the time long VFR flight planning is much more difficult than IFR but this trip was straight forward. Going VFR across large distances at a typical non-turbo cruising level of FL85 is easy in German airspace considering the number of people living there. Some clever people has made a lot of the medium airport class C or D terminal airspaces stop at FL75 or below which leaves some upper space up till FL95 as class E airspace and thus a VFR transit is possible without asking for clearance. Only Munich on the route goes all the way up and we went just east and below the TMA. Langen information providing traffic information as we went along, but only one time saw another aircraft – as is common at piston GA flight levels.

Two uneventful hours from Lübeck until reaching the northside of the Alps. LOIJ has a few visual reporting points and we called up LOIJ a few minutes before reaching the reporting point GRIESENAU. English was no problem, and got advised runway 31 in use. Then its just to follow the arrival route from the reporting point til active runway. It's a spectacular approach descending in the valley.



[Approaching Sankt Johann we passed some spectacular mountains up close]



[Runway just visible at 11 o'clock]

After landing we taxied to the parking on the grass and tied the aircraft down. Had some lunch and cold drinks at the restaurant at the airfield which is a great feature of the LOIJ.



[View to our RV8 from the restaurant at the airfield]

Taxi to Sankt Johann town is only a few minutes taxi ride.

We immediately set off to go with the cable car to Kitzbüler horn. It funny to see the area if you have only seen it with snow before. The skislopes now with grass and cows.



[Cable car to the top station]

It must have been one of the warmest days of the year in that area with top station reporting 30C.
Before hiking down we watched a few paragliders take off.



[Short field takeoff procedure 😊]

We hiked a few hours down one of the slopes we normally ski on. Emilia complained a little with all the hiking but stopping at a small hut to get some cold drinks made the mood better again.



[Cooling off after hiking in the sun]



[A selfie from one of our favorite winter spots overlooking the valley below]

After spending time hiking we went down with the cablecar again and then to the public pool which is another great feature of Sankt Johann if you visit with kids. Three different outdoor pools, a water slide and lots of grass areas to relax.



[Afternoon at the public outdoor pool]

The hotels in Austria is generally good quality and reasonably priced. I especially enjoy the older alpine style hotels. Also good choices of restaurants.

Next day we decided to give the Hornpark a try. It's a pacour course next to the middle station. After some instruction which is both in English and German, we climbed the trees and it was great fun. It will definitely test your mobility skills. We could not do all parts of the courses since you have to be above 140 cm and 40 kgs for part of it which Emilia did not quite match. But it was fun nevertheless. There is also a mountain cart that you can drive down from the middle station to the valley only using gravity. But since you had to be 12 years older or below 120 kg total we could not go together nor separate so that we couldn't do either but it looked fun.



[Start of the Hornpark climbing route]

When finished with the Hornpark we had some food at the restaurant by the topstation which is also great with fantastic view to the top of the mountain.

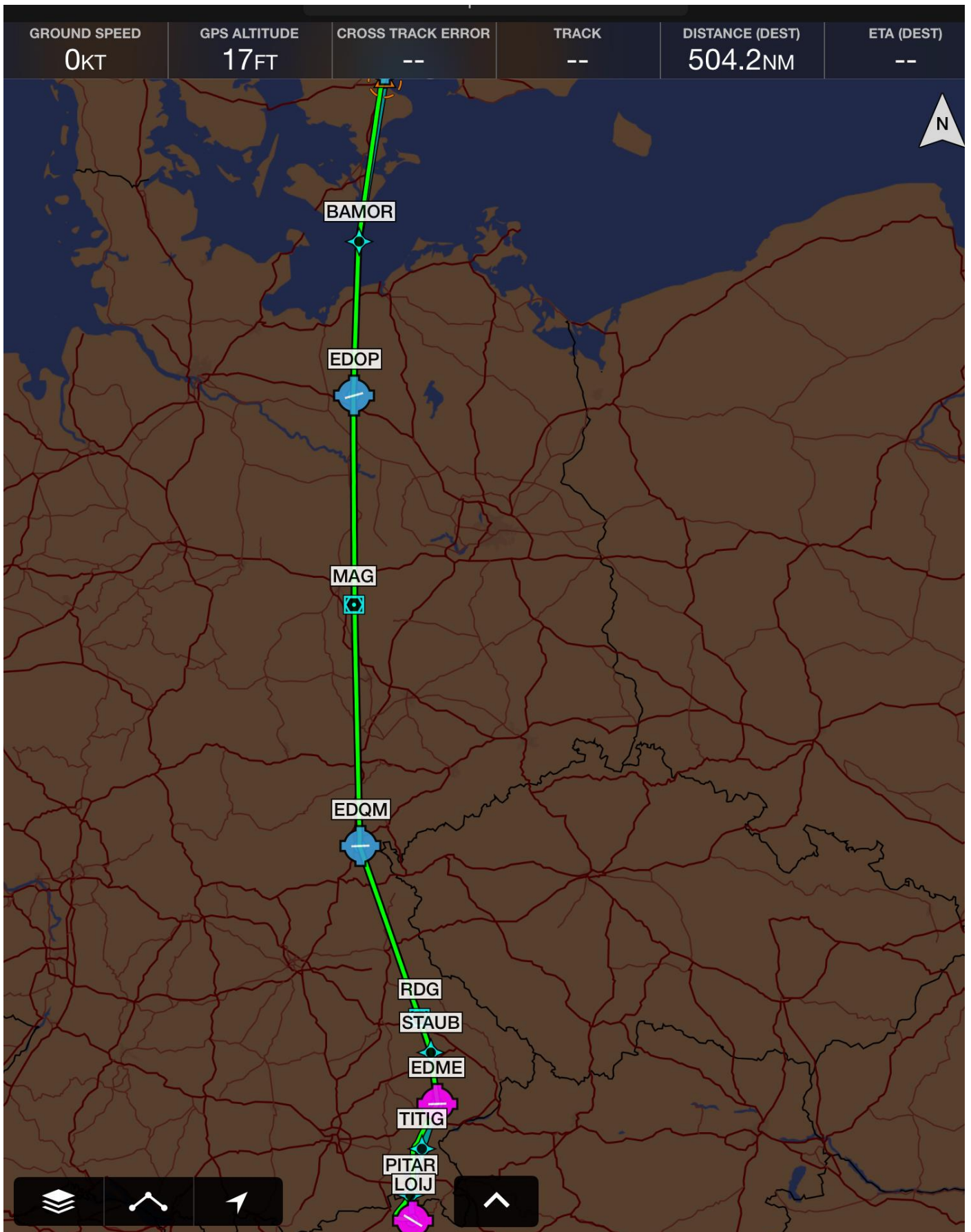


[View of kitzbuheler Horn in the background from the topstation]

In the afternoon we filed a new flight plan pretty much the reverse but all way to Denmark this time.

Refueling and payment (landing + parking one day about 30 €. Avgas was 2,3 €..) then we climbed into the RV8 and it was exceptionally hot below the bubble canopy with 35C outside. Luckily we got airborne quickly to cool a bit as there wasn't a lot of traffic. You have to follow the departure route due to noise restrictions but is not very difficult. The RV8 with 200HP and C/S prop climbs well for a small piston machine and within a few minutes where were back at FLO85 passing over the mountains and 15 minutes after we were out of the alps again. Had we had more time a local scenic flight would have been great.. The rest of the trip back was non-event and landed 3 hours after departure at EKRK.

Overall, we had a fantastic weekend at Sankt Johann, It's a great family destination and a spectacular approach with nice little airfield. It sure won't be the last time at LOIJ for us.



[LOIJ->EKRK route decluttered without airspace and terrain in Garmin pilot]