

Pilot report free three turn points – World record 15m on January the first 2002

It's quite difficult to start very early in the morning on new years day. Especially when windmaps of the argentinian weatherserver shows very weak conditions. And you will trust on your own weather experience.

But my friend Mauro, an argentinian pilot helped me on this morning, the logger was sealed the evening before in the Ventus 2 CM in 15m configuration by the official observer, Ruben Mora, commercial pilot and instructor of the club San Martin de los Andes.

In fact, the first light this morning showed rotorclouds where they used to be and I started the engine at 06 :30 am local time to take the Chapelco-wave ten minutes later. After a climb to 4000 m NN, I took the departure point and soon I was once again on my way down to the little lake « Lago Olnie », my turning point in the wild south of Patagonia, 860km far from homebase. A huge lenticularis cloud marked the course, but whatever I tried, I could not get the light to his icy edge formed by the western wind. In 4'500m, I surfed along the usual way down to the Manzanas, the last lift before the jump over the Nahel Huapi, big lake in the north of Bariloche. The Sierra de la Ventana worked very well and I continued along the lines of rotors in direction El Maiten. The wave above the little airfield gave the usual lift and I continued in the lee of the Cordon of Esquel. The big lenticularis cloud moved meanwhile at least 50km to the east and there seemed no more relation between the mountains and this high wave. But now there was an almost closed field of stratus clouds on my way and even when I climbed high I saw no chance to continue to the south.

So I abandoned my southern turnpoint and 340km from home, I switched to the three turn points task, the only chance to make another record on this day. I felt a little bit tired with my three hours sleep and it is really not easy to remotivate yourself on such long days. Some « lennies » very far in the north helped me to rebuild my belief on the days possibilities. Back on my traces I arrived round about 12 :00 local an San Martin de la Andes, 680 flown. The « lenniestreet » belonged to the Catanilil-mountains and went as far as I could see, will say at least 300km to the north. Not far from the little village of Las Coloradas I got the lift up to 7'000m, the base of my wonderful guide. Now it was very easy, groundspeed went often above 300km/h. In no time I was west of the Cordillera del Viento where the powerful wave of Chos Malal is home. Perhaps it was possible to go again more to the north but I thought about the weak wind forecast in the north, one time in lower layers it's not easy to reach again these thin highlevel-lentis. In the west of Las Ovejas, a big runway beside a little village I took the decision to go southwards again. Following again the edge of the silver-fish cloud I was very fast back to San Martin de los Andes after 670km run without a circle. There was enough time to try again the south and now, highly motivated, I felt no more tiredness. Now I want to make more than 2000km today. Again at Esquel, there were no more stratus clouds and the best climbings rates went up to 6,5 m/s. Now it would be easy to continue to the south but at 7 :00 pm local time, 330km from home, I felt it would be fine to spend the evening with my patient wife and my little son, waiting for me in the « Cabanas del Bosques » and I turned my little dreamship to the north. For the last time this day I asked the permission to cross the terminal of Bariloche. One hour later, after a final point 25km north of Chapelco I landed on the big runway of my homebase feeling tired but fine. A 2030km cross country flight, not bad for the first day of the year...

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