



Pascal Hiel and Matthias Paul flew a selection of FW Models, demonstrating their performance and capabilities in the high alpine air. They were often the last pilots to leave, long after the last gondola ride.

FLYING CIRCUS 2025

Thorsten Häs reports from the Tirol in Austria on a weekend of high alpine model gliding from the top of Schönjoch in Fiss

Words & Photos: Thorsten Häs

More than 110 international pilots were welcomed by the organising team on the Schönjoch and all of them found their way from the valley via the Schönjochbahn cable car and a short 15-minute walk to the starting point. The walk can be done either via a mountain road or via the Kunstweg, a mountain hiking trail. For larger models there is also a shuttle service. At the top of the mountain the Flying Circus has a cordoned-off take-off and landing area, a meadow for pitting models and a registration/transmitter tent.

In principle model flying is also possible on the Schönjoch outside the Flying Circus, subject to Austrian legal regulations. However, for the event a separate ascent permit and a corresponding NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) are issued so that other aviation participants are also aware of the event's airspace restrictions. Flight operations start at 10:00 am and end around 4:00 pm at the latest so that you can still catch the last gondola ride into the valley at 4:30 pm. Alternatively, you can stay longer and make your own way down to the valley, e.g. with a mountain bike, which you can also take



CHAServo team flew various models from their CHADesign portfolio.



Matthias Paul carries the FW Models Libelle to the launch site on the Schönjoch. Aircraft is 1:3.5 scale with a wingspan of 3.28 m.



Werner Fehn and Sebastian Franken from Composite RC Gliders flew their new DG-808S (CRG entry-level model) with six-flap wings and 3.75 m wingspan.



Daniel Aeberli and Chocofly were also high up on the Schönjoch, seen here with the new Neukom AN-66D. The AN-66B has a V-tail (4.0 m wingspan) and the AN-66D (4.66 m wingspan) has a T-tail.

with you on the gondola in the morning for an additional fee.

As always, all model pilots who can fly are allowed to take part in the Flying Circus. It doesn't matter whether it's with a beginner or an expert model or whether it's made from foam, wood or high-end composite, scale or purpose built, small or large, old or new! All model pilots are welcome and will receive assistance from the team or other participating pilots. If there is one special feature that makes the Flying Circus so special it is the mix of participants: hobby pilots like you and me, but also team pilots from participating companies, all on an equal footing. A close exchange with team pilots or the manufacturers themselves is easy and informal, possibly much easier than at any other trade event, and at Schönjoch we are one big family.

In 2025, the companies CHAServo, Chocofly, CNC Luftsporttechnik, Composite RC Gliders,



One of the Rookie Day coaches, Jürgen Stropp-Kilian, prepares a student for a training flight. Many thanks for your commitment, Jürgen, to promoting our hobby.



Theo Arnold with his new 1:2.5 scale GP15 from Ceflix (6.0 m wingspan, 2.57 m length). Theo's GP15 is powered by a KTW Orbis 20 x 13 self-launching system on 12S.



Carsten Stumpf from CNC Luftsporttechnik displayed a large selection of different models powered with +Jet EDF power units, from 80 mm to 130 mm diameter.



Stefan Nam launches his the Táltos 'Pegasus' (3.5 m wingspan) from Paco Scale Models in Hungary. The model is built to order. Assembly uses furniture clamps so the large glider can be transported and stored in a small box.



Brand new from CHAServo was the Firlefan, now available as a ready-built RTF with 3 x DS06 CHAServos. 50 cm wingspan, approx. 155 g take-off weight.



The KST Team flew several models equipped with a selection of KST servos.



Raffle table in the Hexenalp with lots of choice thanks to the many donors and sponsors.



Vlastimil Vostřel showed the performance of Samba Model's F3x competition gliders, even when high alpine slope flying. Here is the Pike Paradigm for GPS with a 4.7 m wingspan.



PS-Modell presented the new Kobuz 2.2 and Swift 2.2 version 2, developed in cooperation with Chocofly (Daniel Aeberli) and Migflight (Georg Schamberger). These models impress with their excellent flight characteristics and small storage size.

Flight-Composites, FW models, KST Servos, PS-Models, Samba Models and unilight at all took part in the Flying Circus as commercial participants and sponsors.

EVENT SCHEDULE

Here's the standard program of the Flying Circus:

- Thursday free flying.
- Friday free flying and pilots' dinner with a prize tombola at the Hexenalp at the Schönjochbahn valley cable car station, with many gifts from participating and supporting sponsors.
- Saturday free flying with twilight flying at the Perdatscher Bichl model airfield, with drinks and traditional Leberkäse sandwiches.
- Sunday free flying until the end of the event.

This year, once again in the program was Rookie Day. Rookie Day means that selected experts from the Flying Circus team and participating manufacturers are on hand to support any rookie pilots. A wide range of



Josef Leng releases his IS-A Salamandra. His replica of the Polish training single-seater has a wingspan of 4.2 m and is made of plywood covered with Oratex.



T-Max from Competition-Tools piloted by Rafael Schydlo. Wings come from the F3x Mamba series fitted to a scale-like, all-purpose fuselage. Offers performance of a competition model with a scale look.



Flight Composite presented a wide range of models for classic slope flying in Fiss, including the ICE-X of 3.77 m wingspan.



Our friends from Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland (left to right): Richard O'Brien, John Pearson, Bill Scott, David Stevenson and Ralph McCarthy. Unfortunately missing from the picture is Brendan Shelly.

options are available, starting with instructor-student flights with a standard beginner's model, instructor-student control with selected models from participating manufacturers, technical and/or active coaching, including the accompaniment of the rookie during take-off, flight and landing of his own model aircraft by a dedicated coach.

Some older spectators, not just children and young people, took the opportunity provided by the Rookie Day and registered for a teacher-student flight. Whether it was for their very first model flying lesson or even if they already had experience in model flying, anyone could register as a rookie. Rookie Day was also taken up by a few experienced model pilots who wanted to hear a few tips and tricks from the experts or who simply hadn't had the opportunity to do slope or alpine flying before and who wanted some support high on the Schöngjoch.

CHANGEABLE WIND

The weather conditions were once again such that a lot of flying was possible this year,



Steve Steff gets his Teufel safely away. Of wooden construction and fully aerobatic, it still flies well in thermals. Wingspan is approx. 2.2 m, with a modified MH 43 profile.

although the wind direction was changeable so that the take-off/landing direction had to be changed accordingly. But this is one of the unique things about the take-off point on the Schönjoch - it can be flown either to the south or to the north, as determined by the flight controller, which means that continuous flying is possible almost regardless of wind direction.

A SPECIAL MENTION

I would like to mention a very special group of travellers and participants to the 29th Flying Circus. Friends of model gliding from Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland visited us this year. Richard O'Brien (Cork), John Pearson (Armagh), Bill Scott (Scotland), David Stevenson (Northern Ireland), Ralph McCarthy (Cork) and Brendan Shelly (Cork) made the journey to the Flying Circus with their models. They all met up at Dublin airport and travelled from there by plane with their model flying luggage to Munich and then drove south to Fiss in two rental cars. They were impressed by the facilities and the hospitality of the many participants. Whether it was with flying tips, help with repairs on the mountain or simply socialising, the team were able to fly a lot and get to know the peculiarities of high alpine flying. We had a great time with them on the mountain and we would be very happy to welcome them again, and any more of their model flying friends, in the future.

NEXT YEAR

The date is set for the 30th Flying Circus from 25th to 28th June 2026. We are already looking forward to this very special anniversary and are sure that we will meet many of our international friends from the last few years on the Schönjoch at 2,500 metres in Serfaus-Fiss-Ladis! ■



Group picture of Flying Circus 2025 participants.