



SWISS 
SLACKLINE

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Media release

SWISS SLACKLINE – Swiss Slackline Federation

Spectacular world record – The world's longest highline

- ***Julian Mittermaier (DE, 21) manages to walk the longest highline in the world on his first try***
- ***The 224 m (735 ft) long highline in Switzerland is the longest, ever walked, slackline high above ground***

Bern, August 2014: The highline world record is the Holy Grail amongst slackliners. No other discipline in slacklining delivers such a great mental challenge compared to this young mountain sport. The new record of 224 m (735 ft) by Julian Mittermaier is all the more spectacular, as he managed to walk the line on his first try, a so called 'onsight'. Calm and completely focused he crossed the 1 inch wide piece of webbing and despite pain in left knee he managed to muster a smile every so often.

Difficult circumstances

Imagine a 200 m (656 ft) high, slightly bent dam. Julian is currently located 10 m (32 ft) below the edge of the dam, his focus lies on the end of the highline. He is walking calm and completely focused, birds circle him and the noise of the nearby waterfall is the only sound. Passerby's stop in their tracks on the dam and can barely believe what they are witnessing; Julian can hardly be seen with the naked eye – a surreal picture. After some 40 minutes Julian reaches the opposite end of the line, he was blinded by the sun several times and shaken by gusts of wind, after two thirds of the 224 m (735 ft) long line there even was a five minute rain shower. "An indescribable feeling, many things were at work against me. That it worked out first try, surprised me" says a relieved Julian after his successful send.



A ,Onsight' for the history books

Just how spectacular this achievement is, can be shown in comparison to the last highline record. The American Jerry Miszewski needed around 76 tries before he could make more than two steps on his 214 m (702 ft) highline. After several days and 12 crossings with many falls he managed to send the line one way without falling in October 2013. With the successful send by Julian the highline world record returns to Europe. "There are only a few people in the world capable of walking highlines longer than 100 m (328 ft). Hence the old world record was said to be unbeatable. Nevertheless, I was convinced that it would be possible to do exactly that" said Julian filled with pride.

The Swiss organised the rigging

Everything had to fit together for this world record. The Slackline was custom made by the company Landcruising Slacklines from Dresden, Germany, the rest of the gear was provided by the Bernese Slackline association "SlackAttack". The location and logistics were organised by the Valais Slackline Association. Even the Vienna Slackliners were present with their best people. Altogether the rigging was simple and took two hours. "Everything ran like clockwork, the rigging went smoothly." Reports the president of the Swiss Slackline Federation Thomas Buckingham, who is present and helped with the rigging. "Julian likes his highlines to have low tension, the highline was basically only hung into the gap with a tension of 150 kg (330 lbs). This makes the rigging comparatively easy and extremely safe.

The athlete:

Julian Mittermaier is from Brannenburg close to Munich, Germany and is 21 years old

Infobox:

Highlining – Slacklining at heights

Highlining involves, in contrast to the classic highwire on a metal wire, which is stabilized on the sides, balancing on a one inch wide, flat piece of webbing. The lines are only slightly tensioned and are much more dynamic. This also is the reason why highliners do not use a pole to balance. Highlines are rigged with special slacklines and all safety relevant components are backed up. The highliner wears a climbing harness and is secured to the line itself with a safety leash. The entire pile of gear fits into a handful of backpacks, this enables highliners to push further and further into alpine terrain. Highlining has proven itself as a new mountain sport over the last few years.

The Swiss Slackline Federation publishes recommendations for highlining. Further information here:

www.swiss-slackline.ch/highline.html

Infobox:

Slacklining and Highlining in Switzerland

In 2006 the first slackline sets were sold in Switzerland. Together with Austria, Germany and Brazil one of the highest density of slackliners relative to the overall population can be found here. The sport was originally born in the climbing community in California. Over the course of the last few years, first slackline associations have formed in the urban centres of the country, which were combined to form Swiss Slackline, the Swiss Slackline Federation. Since 2012 Switzerland has developed a highline community, which has formed around the associations and visits the mountains on a regular basis. By now highlines can be found in Switzerland almost every weekend.

Basic Principles of Slacklining:

www.swiss-slackline.ch/grundsaeetze.html

Commonly asked questions concerning the sport of Slacklining (german):

<http://www.swiss-slackline.ch/flyer.html>

For further inquiries: Thomas Buckingham, Präsident Swiss Slackline, info@swiss-slackline.ch

Further information & links:

www.swiss-slackline.ch

Swiss Slackline – the Swiss Slackline Federation

www.slackattack.ch

Slackattack – Slackline Crew, Bernese Slackline Crew
Slackline Association Valais



Abb. 1: Julian Mittermeier during his 224 m (735 ft) onsight highline walk



Abb. 2: Julian Mittermeier 200 m (656 ft) high over ground. The company operating the dam and the police tolerated the temporary installation.



Abb. 3: Julian Mittermeier parallel to the dam in Mauvoisin, Val de Bagnes, Switzerland



Abb. 4: Julian Mittermeier shortly after sending the 224 m (735 ft) highline.

Picture-Downloadlink - free:

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