

Australian

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magazine



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FRONT COVER



Alex Aimard flying through formation, over the Funny Farm, QLD. Photographer: Jean-Phi Teffaud

BACK COVER



Dave Loncasty's "Stairstep & Diamonds" formation, over Picton, NSW. Photographer: Ken Stone

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EDITORIAL

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The information in this magazine was, to the best of our ability, correct at the time of going to press. Production and mailing takes a total of five weeks, so some information may be out of date or superseded.

Photos submitted will be returned if supplied with a self-addressed stamped envelope. The parameters of the Australian Parachute Federation lie in sport parachuting operations from aircraft and while the APF is aware that parachuting descents are being made from other than aircraft, APF rules do not cover these descents and the APF are not in a position to control them.

Note: The ASM may include BASE jumping, providing the APF does not appear to condone the activity.

Pursuant to my contract with the APF in relation to the publication of Australian Skydiver Magazine, I am required to make a general statement about the nature of any pecuniary interest that I have in a particular brand of parachuting equipment, service or event being promoted in ASM. I am a Director of Toogoolawah Drop Zone Pty Ltd and I am a part-time employee of Ramblers Parachute Centre which organises various events and is a dealer for various equipment, some of which companies advertise in the ASM from time to time.

What's your freefall face?

Mine's a big fat smile. A silly yet sincere smile. I can't help it. It's all too fun, or funny. Even in stressful situations I have the same silly grin, albeit with the addition of a pumping vertical vein up my forehead! Jumping is such an escape from reality. Every skydive, regardless of type, is an experience – it always seems to blow me away. I guess I'm easily pleased or haven't yet taken it for granted, or both!

Over the years I've noticed that most people seem to have their serious or concentrating faces on and hardly ever smile except when smiled at. Obviously people are always trying hard to improve their skills or just not to stuff up. That's human nature and probably comes from being competitive, either with other people or just themselves. It's a shame when people's time and money constraints all too often translate into jumpers getting the most out of their skydives by only doing specific jumps with specific people rather than jumping with whoever, whenever and for whatever reason. My romantic ideals aren't overly realistic these days!

I'm no great skydiving talent and I have no super skydiving ambitions. I am not competitive, not even with myself, so I think I'm destined to continue along my path as a happy-go-lucky, fair-weather, smiley-faced, fun jumper and that's OK!



Susie McLachlan smiling at Smiley, aka Lucas Yo, over Ayr drop zone. Photo: Wayne McLachlan.

The Freely images from Farm and the Arizona Challenge are outstanding in anybody's skydiving language; these fast-speed disciplines are pushing their own boundaries so hard and fast it's mind-boggling to imagine the extent of their future! It's also great to see that Big-way formation flying is as strong as ever; Sydney's Diamonds and Stairsteps event was a sold-out hit. Bring on more formation loads, Big-ways and technical skydives!

The long-awaited, much-anticipated, Cutaway! video of skydiving malfunctions has been released in Australia and has quickly gone viral on YouTube! The making of the now famous blockbuster is featured in this issue. Well done to Michael Vaughan for braving intentional Horseshoe malfunctions and the like, Shane Sparkes for capturing the calculated horror on video and Steve Forsythe for producing the somewhat challenging video for a critical crowd. Serious kudos!

Susie EDITOR

[WANTED FOR NEXT ISSUES]

- Profile of yourself, your mate, your hero or a 10,000 Jump Pig
- No Shit There I Was stories • Ouch photos • Happy Snaps • Wild New GoPro Angles

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[Next Deadlines] Issue 67 Deadline 25th August, 2013 Mag Out 29th Sept, 2013
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Message from the Chief Executive Officer

At the recent APF Conference I presented the 2012 Australian Parachute Federation Annual Report and I was delighted to be able to reflect upon and report on the many successes that we have achieved as an industry over the past twelve months and, of course, touch upon the challenges that we face moving forward.

In competition the Australian Parachute Team that attended the WPC in Dubai was the largest contingency ever to attend a World Parachuting Championships. This is another indicator of the health of the sport with the apparent revival of interest in competitive skydiving in all disciplines.

APF's commitment to development does not stop with coaching and competition but extends to supporting and enhancing safety and training initiatives in order to provide a safer environment for all members to enjoy their chosen sport and pastime. The successes of the past twelve months have been overshadowed by the tragic deaths of seven of our fellow skydivers and whilst we accept there are risks, this number of fatalities raises concerns.

It is every member's responsibility to not only abide by the Regulations but to use common sense and show a duty of care for others. It is also every member's right to expect a safe environment in which to carry out their skydiving activities! The APF can write and enforce rules, it can ensure operators have proper safety systems in place to manage their risks, it can assist industry with safety education and information, however at the end of the day it is up to each and every individual to help make our skydiving environment as safe as it can practicably be.

There were critical goals that were set soon after my appointment as CEO which have involved major changes to our geographic location, our structure and the way we conduct business in our day-to-day operations across the Federation. We have also strived for the APF to have a closer operational engagement with the industry for which we have safety oversight responsibility.

In listening to member feedback the APF has been revising the Operational Regulations and the existing disciplinary system, with the two needing to work side by side. As always the task of ensuring the APF's regulations are relevant, effective and aligned with international best practice is an enduring and challenging responsibility. The goal in this project has been to develop a better defined, simpler system, easier to manage and understand, and reflective of a fair and just culture, that is transparent, has clarity and defines all accountabilities and responsibilities.

This has been and continues to be a huge project which has involved considerable industry consultation for which the APF is grateful. Industry consultation is identified as being crucial to the success of all major initiatives that the APF drives, and we are keen to engage industry consultative bodies, industry experts, operators and committees in a variety of forums such as the recent APF Technical Conference at Seaworld, to discuss sport, safety, training and operational issues. It is fair to say that we are a very different organisation from the APF of past years, and I have no doubt that the APF will be an even more effective organisation this time next year. It will continue its commitment to making further improvements to the way it operates and will strive to achieve high-level objectives.

Brad Turner Chief Executive Officer



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I believe that inspiration and explanations often strike at random times. It was during my Risk Management Presentation at the APF Conference this year that I realised the essence of Decision Making and Risk Assessment. What occurred to me, while speaking at the conference, was every skydiver has a *built-in* system of assessing risks and making decisions to ensure their own safety. The longer that any skydiver is actively involved in skydiving, the more information and experience they acquire, and as a result, the better, more informed and quicker these decisions occur. This is Risk Assessment and Decision Making.

I presented a simple Risk Assessment Matrix Tool at the Conference that is used to give a formal process to the Risk Assessment and Decision Making process. This Matrix is nothing more than a tool that allows us to follow a consistent procedure for making decisions. This is what we must do, and teach, to skydivers in the sport. This is another valuable tool in our toolbox for reducing the risk that we all face while skydiving. Because, as we all know, we aren't going to live long enough to make all the mistakes ourselves.

During discussions with a Senior Instructor recently, I said, "Jim, you and I know how to make decisions, but what we must do is preserve our honed decision making processes for the next generation of skydivers. We need to teach to jumpers a process of making decisions to enhance their safety."

By taking the thought processes from the heads of experienced jumpers and formalising it (i.e. writing it down), we can begin to give jumpers the tools that they require to make good decisions while skydiving. This is nothing more

Since the last issue of the ASM, we've run the 2013 Nationals in Wingsuiting, 10-way and 16-ways at Toogoolawah, and also the 2013 Nationals for Canopy Piloting at the Funny Farm.

With only two 10-way teams (Get Down and Race to Base) and one 16-way team (Hakuna Matata) entering the big way Nationals, this didn't seem to be the best supported event we've run, but everyone had a good time!

The Wingsuiting 2-way test event ran well, with both the jumpers and judges gaining some valuable experience in this new competition discipline. Things are looking good for this event, with it on the schedule for upcoming State Meets around the country as well.

The Canopy Piloting Nationals ran well, with twenty Open and five Intermediate competitors entering. The event ran safely (a good thing since we were at the Farm!) and the

than a formalisation of the mentoring system that already exists between Students/Novices and their Instructors/Tutors. We already teach survival skills to new jumpers so, in essence, we are "giving them a fish". Teaching a decision making process will be giving them the fishing pole and "teaching them to fish."

This process of formalisation is part of the APF's Focus on Risk Assessment and Safety Management. We know there is a wealth of knowledge within our sport and industry, and it is time to gather that knowledge and distribute it to all members. The Drop Zone SMS Template is still being developed, but when it is complete it will offer a collection of the sport and industry's knowledge. This collection of knowledge will easily be modified and implemented at each drop zone to standardise procedures.

Flowing on from the implementation of the SMS, we should also incorporate a "decision-making process" procedure. Such a procedure can be used to teach Students and Novices the correct way to assess the risks and make their own quality decisions. Safety can be taught, and with the correct tools, it becomes easier for all jumpers to make their own decisions safely. By doing this we will be heading towards an increase in the level of personal responsibility and hopefully a reduction of the workload of our DZSOs and CIs.

As usual, I am happy to receive any questions or comments on this or other Safety related topics. Please email me on safety@apf.asn.au.

Safe Blue Skies.

Stephen Fickling
APF Director Safety



Aussies showed the Kiwi and Japanese guys how to do it. Rumour has it that next year's Nationals are going to be a MultiNational event.... The 2013 Aussie team was selected and we already have several new faces going to the World Meet in Russia to represent (I'm sure it's not just because they heard how cheap the Vodka is, and that the Russian girls frolic in the pond between rounds over there!). Best of luck guys!

Boogies, 4W4E events and State Meets are coming up all around the country, so get your teams together, get training and we'll see you all on a podium at next years Nationals!

Craig "Crash" Bennett
Director Competition



There are ten organisations that administer the various disciplines of sport and recreational aviation under an arrangement with CASA. These cover gliding, hang gliding, home-built aircraft, war birds, ballooning, ultralight aircraft, gyrocopters, model aircraft and parachuting.

APF, along with all the others, self-administer under an arrangement with CASA that is formalised through a Deed of Agreement. Our deed allows the APF to set, monitor and enforce standards for, and on behalf of, CASA for a small, but important, financial consideration of around \$110,000. I say small because this amount goes no way near compensating the APF for the cost of undertaking the work involved but it does help, and, we chose to set, monitor and enforce standards for our own purposes anyway. If the APF did not do this voluntarily CASA would!

Each June, CASA holds a Sport Aviation Forum where two or three representatives of these ten organisations get together to share information, review arrangements and plan for the future. One such plan for the future is the introduction of Civil Aviation Safety Regulation CASR 149; being especially developed for recreational aviation administration organisations termed RAAOs. Too many acronyms, I know, but that's aviation!

CASR Part 149 has been in the pipeline for many years but has been held up through other government legislation taking a higher priority. We all continue to press for 149 to be given a high priority because it will give added legitimacy and legal certainty to all forms of sport and recreational aviation. The APF is alone in that it operates under, an old but still current, regulation CAR 152 covering parachuting specifically whereas all the others operate under an exemption to the regulations.

Exemptions can be cancelled or varied by CASA directly whereas regulations can only be cancelled or varied by federal parliament. Operating under a regulation is important for public acceptance that the activity is considered legitimate. Parachuting's CAR 152 will be repealed at some point so, we are just as anxious as everyone else to see Part 149 come into force.

I mention the Sport Aviation Forum and our Deed of Agreement not because it is important to the average jumper but rather to point out that while you go about enjoying skydiving, or running a skydiving business, or working in the skydiving industry, there are people in the background making sure your rights to enjoy your chosen sport, or profession, are not eroded or taken away. All this happens because your APF has representatives diligently working in the background to protect your right to: skydive without undue restriction and, gain reasonable access to Australian airspace.

Dave Smith
APF President



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The making of... Cutaway!

By Andrew Forsyth
& Don Cross

The Australian Parachute Federation's
Malfunction Training Video

Video Grabs by
Shane Sparkes

Can you remember your first jump? We all can, clear as day. It's one of the most amazing experiences of our lives, yet, as we progress in the sport our knowledge and experience changes our perceptions dramatically. Where once you were swimming in pure existential dread, overwhelmed by the unknown and in awe of the alien sky gods around you; *now you are a skydiver*. With a 'B' Licence under your belt, a little experience and a growing sense of confidence, your magical journey has begun. Maybe one day you'll be a Michael Vaughan.

Watching the new First Jump Course students fumbling through their first exit, it's easy to forget that their courage and commitment is as huge as any experienced jumper's – if not more so. Not only are they leaping into clear open space from 14,000ft, they are jumping into the *absolute unknown*. It's a complete leap of faith. They must have faith in their instructors, in their equipment and in themselves.

This is why instructors are some of the most important people in our skydiving community – they are the ones who equip students with the knowledge, skills and confidence required to take that first great leap.

So, you're sitting in your First Jump class and your instructor tells you that when everything goes according to plan, it's the ride of your life. OK, we are all on board with that. Let's go. But now we are going to talk about what could go wrong.

What could go wrong?

The question reverberates around the room. Mouths tighten and eyes widen at the sight of photographs depicting distorted, tangled canopies above. Suddenly those handles have a rather more ominous, frightening meaning.

But it's pretty safe right? Well, yes. Malfunctions occur one in a thousand jumps on average. You have an emergency Reserve and an Automatic Activation Device. Trouble is, it can all be perfectly fine one minute – the most exhilarating experience of your life with a smooth, stable deployment; the next you're facing a *Line-over*.

A what?!

As instructors around the country explain the difference between high-speed and low-speed malfunctions, showing photographs of mangled messes above; un-asked questions race through students' minds: "How will I be able to handle this situation?", "What if I freeze up?", "How do I know the Reserve will really work?", and "Now you're telling me both parachutes can come out at the same time and dive straight at the ground?"

If a picture tells a thousand words, a video tells a million. The science shows that a student's ability to learn in new

situations is greatly enhanced when the brain's audio and visual processing systems are engaged in a well-crafted multimedia presentation.

For over a year, former Director Instructors, Don Cross, had been planning to bring a new malfunction training video to life. Working closely with CEO, Brad Turner; Director Instructors, Ralf Jaeger; and Manager Training, Gary Myors, he set the filming dates for January 18-22, 2012 at Skydive Nagambie. With Andrew Forsyth from Pemberton Productions leading the production team, Cutaway! was then one step closer to being a reality.

The video was commissioned to aid instructors in their vital task of explaining the different kinds of malfunctions that can occur and how to deal with them effectively using emergency procedures. Cutaway! has been designed to be integrated within the lesson plan for the First Jump Course, with eight sections totalling 40 minutes, which can be presented by the instructor as they see fit. During the full day course, they might show the *Good Canopy Identification* section and *Routine Opening Problems* mid-morning, then the *Decision-Making Process and Emergency Procedures* before lunch, followed by *Low-speed, High-speed and Two Canopies Out Malfunctions* early afternoon. The confidence-building *Conclusion* section has been crafted to come just before students sit the exam and make their first skydive.

Glenn Singleman

As a veteran keynote speaker on the topic of overcoming fear and a world-record holding climber and Wingsuit pilot, Dr. Glenn Singleman was a top choice for the role of host presenter. His clear, easy manner and depth of experience in the air and on camera were an ideal combination.



Michael Vaughan

Fresh off the back of the new Australian record of 150 jumps in a day, "Ookoonono" team member, Michael Vaughan leapt at the opportunity to play the starring role in the video, performing 26 jumps for the cameras including fifteen actual cutaways from staged malfunctions



Don - Rob - Shane - Sas - Nigel - Jo

Headed up by Don as Chief Instructor at Skydive Nagambie, the team was joined by veteran skydiving videographer, Shane Sparkes, with safety skydiver, Rob Douthat as his wingman and understudy. Simon "Sas" DiSciasio signed up for the role of understudy for Michael, with Deputy Director Safety, Nigel Brennan and former Director Riggers, Jo Chitty performing the all-important "Malfunction Rigger" roles.



The making of... Cutaway!

While the planning was meticulous and the team was upbeat and confident, there were definitely some strained nerves at times, especially on some of the more complicated malfunctions



such as the dreaded Horseshoe. So how does a tertiary Reserve work anyway? That's right, Michael required a third parachute in case of a Main Reserve entanglement during one of the demonstrations. In Michael's interview after the event, he admitted this was his biggest fear. "I trust my Reserve implicitly, but if it becomes fouled through an entanglement, that's my last chance... and my last hope."



A tertiary Reserve offers one more chance, but there were no guarantees. Mounted on the chest, the container housed a round parachute which could be deployed in case the staged malfunction went out of control.

To capture the action and give students the clearest possible visual depiction, Andrew and Shane decided on a four camera set up for the outside camera view and a three camera setup on the inside view; shooting in various frame sizes, fields of view, frame rates and codecs.



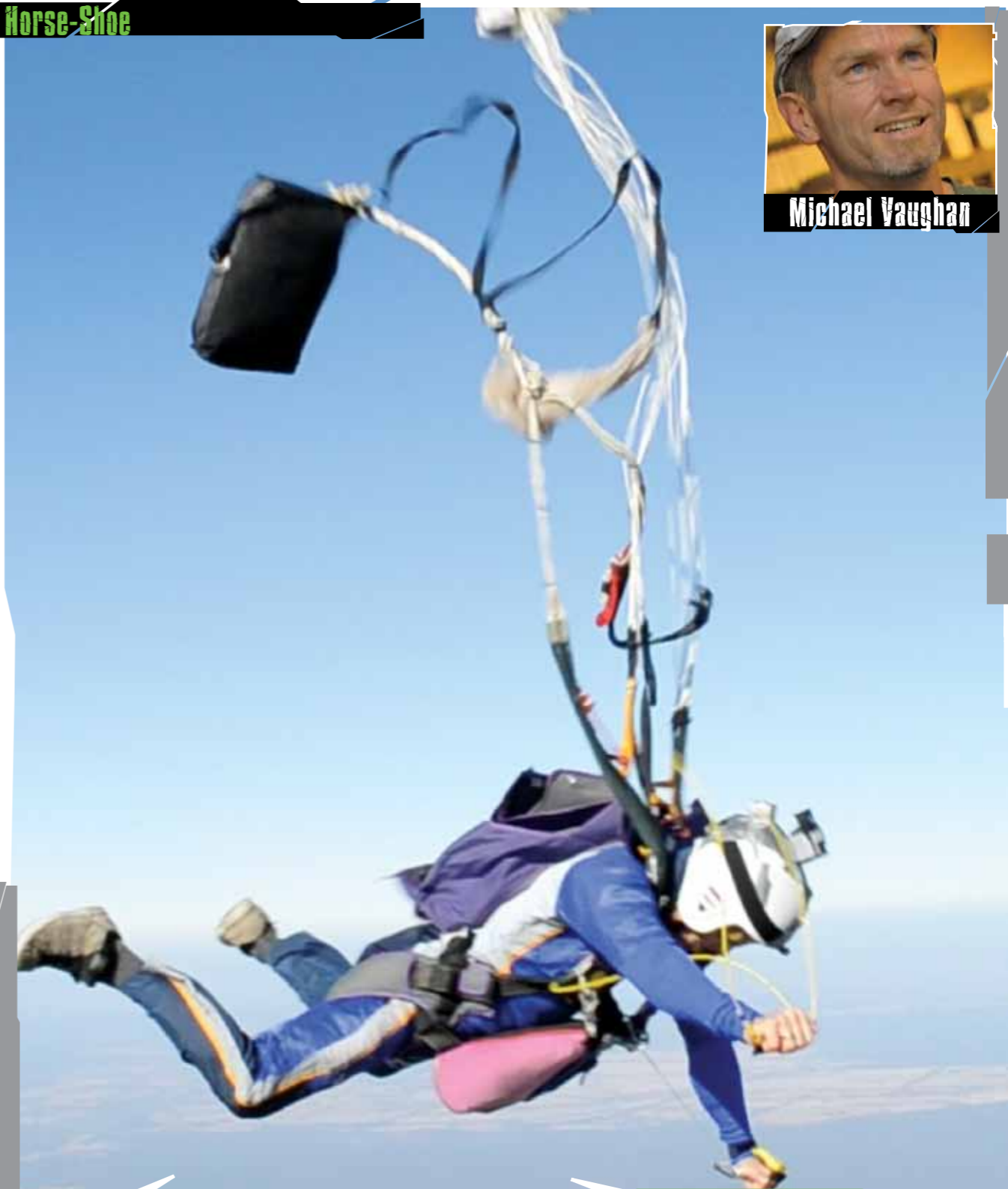
Slider Hang-Up

With the cameras rolling, the first jump simulated a Slider Hang-up which unfortunately showed us all just how difficult rigging a malfunction can be. The slider worked perfectly when it wasn't meant to. Damn!

On the second jump, we were all reminded of how serious the risks were and how Michael's biggest fear could indeed become a reality. This time the slider hung up as hoped, producing a spinning and uncontrollable canopy, with some brilliant footage captured by Mr. Sparkes at very close quarters. When it was time to cut away however, there was an unexpected surprise... the left riser was not connected to the cutaway handle. Peel, punch, spin! Michael was now spinning on his back under a partially inflated Main canopy, with one riser attached in a violent, unplanned malfunction. The inside camera view was absolutely remarkable as we later watched Michael meticulously run through his options: touching and verifying each of his handles and assessing his chances of releasing the riser. Finally he opted to pull the Reserve handle on the DOS container, which released the riser and allowed a clean deployment of the Reserve. In the end, it was determined that the risers used on the student rig were the reason for the Riser Hang-up.



Horseshoe



Michael Vaughan

The filming of the Horseshoe malfunction was extremely nerve-wracking and challenging. At first, the pilot chute would not stay in the pouch. When it worked on the second attempt, the Reserve pilot chute came very close to entangling with the Main risers, bouncing off the "V" created in the horseshoe with the Reserve bridle catching air and dragging the Reserve pilot chute out. The Reserve D-bag then hit the "V" and cartwheeled out and up into a clean deployment of the Reserve canopy. The footage is outstanding and shows very clearly what can happen in the situation of

a Horseshoe malfunction. It also makes it easy to see why the Reserve bridle is longer and wider than a Main bridle.

We all breathed a sigh of relief when that one was in the can. Michael displayed absolute nerves of steel under incredible pressure. Shane delivered beyond expectation, expertly providing the vision we needed right across the shot list. He demonstrated a mastery of his profession in all aspects of freefall and canopy flight.

Streamer

The Streamer also proved difficult to manufacture. Despite having an old canopy with a fearsome reputation and the best efforts of our intrepid riggers on different canopies, the classic streamer was challenging to reproduce with Zero P material making it a less common malfunction these days. Nevertheless, some excellent footage was produced which illustrates the role of the slider in an entanglement. Jo and Nigel worked tirelessly day after day, overcoming the complexities of the job and managing the risks to achieve an excellent result.



Line-over

Safety Skydiver, Rob Douthat joined Michael and Shane on several of the jumps, providing additional footage from an outside-outside camera point of view. Shane shot some incredible footage of Michael spinning under a Line-over, however, when the time came for Michael to cut away, Shane had to turn away to avoid a collision and missed the shot. You can see the depth of his passion for his craft in the photo (below), having missed only one shot on this, the last of the 26 jumps. He was deeply disappointed, but harboured a glimmer of hope as we waited for Rob to get back to the drop zone after landing out to chase down the freebag.



Wingtip

With his helmet under one arm and the freebag in the other, Rob strode up with a wry grin and we all dashed straight into the dubbing room. Not only did Rob save the day, capturing an amazing shot of the Line-over cutaway, he also produced several additional unique shots including the vision used for the DVD splash screen, showing two parachutes wingtip to wingtip, before one cuts away.



Not to be outdone, Sparkesy had managed to dodge a number of floating Mains after they were released, snagging several of them uneventfully. After getting closer and closer each time he finally found himself gift wrapped across the suspension lines with yards of red fabric and line restricting his control. Again, Douthat's outside-outside angle captured the action as Shane cut away, with Michael's Main risers snagging his rig as he fell away, flipping him onto his back momentarily. Shane's Reserve opened cleanly and no doubt he contemplated a two-stack with Michael, both on Reserve. Ah, perhaps not!



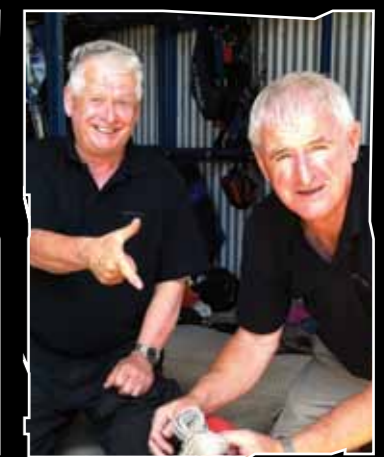
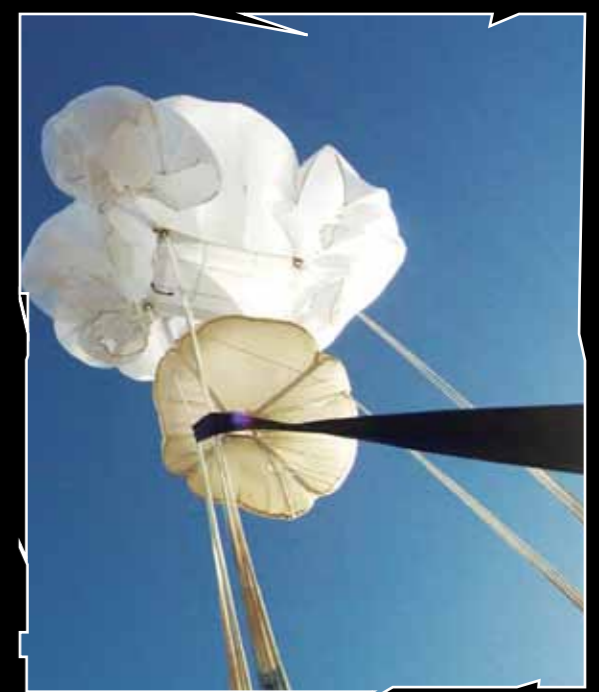
The making of... Cutaway!



Insurance anyone? Thanks to the efforts of Brad Turner and Ian Chamberlain of Insuranet, with Don directing operations, all aspects of the production were conducted under the auspices of the APF and within the Operational Regulations. In all, the production was a success thanks to the planning, dedication and expert execution of an elite team of skydivers. The team delivered all the material we needed and then some. Additional footage including some Two-out scenarios and Low-speed malfunctions was provided by Skydive University out of Deland, Florida, from the 90s production, Breakaway.

- Twelve people
- Twenty-six jumps
- Up to eleven cameras on each jump
- Two Rigs with tertiary Reserves
- Fifteen cutaways
- Five days of filming
- No lost canopies
- No lost freebags

While experienced jumpers may find some of the procedures in Cutaway! different from what they might choose with the benefit of their experience, it has been designed specifically for the First Jump Course using the APF Training Operation Manual. Nevertheless, we hope every skydiver will be able to benefit from reviewing the different malfunctions that can occur and considering their options.



WEST COAST SUNDOWNER

YORK, WESTERN AUSTRALIA OCTOBER 12th - 20th 2013

BIGGEST SKYDIVING EVENT SEEN ON THE WEST COAST



COACHES

MIKEY CARPENTER (VOLARE) · MATT HILL (KRISTAL)
 PETE ALLUM (SINAPSI) · KRISTIAN MOXNES (SKYWALKERS)
 MICHAEL VAUGHAN · LEIGH MCCORMACK · KIM HOPWOOD
 KIEREN JAMES · SCOTT PATERSON

AIRCRAFT

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DON'T BE A F@#*ING BABY!

by Christine Clarke

FLOATING AROUND IN A HOT AIR BALLOON EARLY SUNDAY MORNING IS SERENE. QUIET. PEACEFUL. THE VIEW ACROSS THE HINTERLAND TO BYRON BAY IS BEAUTIFUL. NOT A SOUND TO BE HEARD OTHER THAN THE OCCASIONAL BURST OF FLAME INTO THE BALLOON ABOVE.

THEN OUR PILOT THOMAS CALMLY SAYS, "OK WHENEVER YOU ARE READY YOU CAN GO". SUDDENLY THE SILENCE IS BROKEN WITH EXCLAMATIONS OF FEAR AND PROFANITY.

'WHOS IDEA WAS THIS!'

'I'M PACKING IT!'

'I'M UTTERLY SCARED!'

'OMG I DON'T WANT TO DO THIS!'

'I'M REALLY SCARED!'

NO, I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT A CONSERVATIVE OLD GUY OR NERVOUS YOUNG GIRLS WITH LOW JUMP NUMBERS. I'M TALKING THE TOUGH DUDES, THE KAMIKAZE BOYS... EVEN ALAN DEADMAN WONDERED IF HE WAS A BASKET CASE FOR JUMPING OUT OF THE BASKET.

BOTTOM LINE? JUMPING OUT OF A BALLOON FOR THE FIRST TIME IS ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU TOTALLY FREAK OUT.

THEY SAY, THE GREATER THE FEAR, THE BETTER THE HIGH. JUDGING BY THE SMILES AND EUPHORIA ON LANDING, I GUESS THEY ARE RIGHT.



Photo by Darren Harvey



ALAN TOTALLY SCARED PRE-JUMP



Photo by Christine Clarke

ALAN WITH POST-JUMP ORGASMIC GLOW

Photo by David Schmuttermaker



Photo by Kayla Greenhalgh

I don't remember why we decided it would be a good idea. Maybe because it was something different. Intriguing. Unknown. Unique. Whatever the reason, after five cancellations due to weather, we finally found ourselves at the offices of Byron Bay Ballooning at 5am on a Sunday morning in April. Everyone was groggy and in various states of comatose numbness as they signed the forms; listened to the pilot's briefing; prepped cameras, rig and other gear; and piled into the convoy vehicles.

An hour later and the sun was up. We were feeling a little more awake. We were in a field somewhere near Lismore watching Thomas and his crew inflate the balloon. It was teamwork and professionalism at its best. It happened very quickly and suddenly it was time to climb into the basket. I learned after the first one I did that I needed to plan the individual basket positions ahead of time... that balloon does not want to wait for anyone. We climbed in and were off!

"EVERY SO OFTEN YOU COME ACROSS PEOPLE THAT ARE JUST DOING WHAT THEY ARE MEANT TO BE DOING."

Thomas Dattler, Chief Pilot and Owner of Byron Bay Ballooning, is one of those people. He has a beautiful vibe about him. Calm. Knowledgeable. Likeable. It appeared that nothing stresses this man. I dare say he is at his happiest when flying his balloon; that is certainly the feeling I get from him every time. As far as skydivers go, he tells us all we need to know about winds, best places to land, cues the exits and calmly asks us not to take his ropes with us when we jump. He is easy going. I doubt I could shock him with any jump suggestion although I may have come close with my dirty jokes on route! The general belief is that you can not steer a balloon; that it is at the mercy of the winds. Clearly, no one has told Thomas this. He controls that thing, pure and simple.

Except for odd bursts of the burner there was no noise. No door to shut. No engine. One minute you are on the ground, the next you are 20 metres in the air. The ride to height was swift. By height I mean HEIGHT. The lowest altitude I have exited a balloon was at 7,500ft. The highest was 10,000ft. My expectation of 3,000ft was inaccurate to say the least. The thing that is most interesting about the ride to height is that it is just so quiet. It is strange being in an open container at exit height, suspended by a balloon. I am still not used to that. I try not to look over the edge. It scares the life out of me.



Photo by Kayla Greenhalgh



Photo by Darren Harvey



Photo by Owen Roberts

The set-up usually goes like this: The balloon basket is divided into four quadrants. Three people in each. Eight to jump, four to stay in. There are two exits, four at a time: one off each corner. This is not set in stone and there may be more than four who stay in as passengers. Maybe instead of individual corners, two people may exit as a 2-way off their end. Rodeo exits are a popular example.

Whatever you are going to do, work it out before you get in the basket. You arrive at height so quickly, and suddenly, it's showtime.

'YOU CAN GET READY ANYTIME,' SAYS THOMAS.

'CUE FREAK-OUT!'

The climb up onto the basket edge is slightly challenging with a rig on your back, especially if you are first out and have two other people in your quadrant and worse still if you are in a Freely suit. It's a tight fit but we managed. Once we were all set, Thomas began to count down...



Photo by Alan Deadman

5, 4, 3, 2, 1, IT'S SHOWTIME... GO!



Photo by Clay Anderson



Photo by Owen Roberts



Photo by Niall Manning



Photo by Darren Harvey

I am not particularly new age, but the exit and first few seconds of freefall are as close to a spiritual experience as I will ever get. As Dave Girvin says, "the jump can be summed up in one word ... tranquil."

The sensation of dropping off into quiet, dead air is unique. You have to wait to build speed before you have any sense of control. No point fighting it. I honestly don't know how to describe those first few seconds of freefall in one of the most beautiful locations on earth. It is just so addictive.

Darren Kellet says, "this is as close as we can come to a BASE jump". Elise Rogers describes it as, "essentially a BASE jump from 8,000ft." Alan Deadman agrees, except he adds, "it's not a BASE jump as there is no stuff to hit". Glass half empty, Alan!

"THE JUMP CAN BE SUMMED UP IN ONE WORD... TRANQUIL."

Dave Girvin

"THIS IS AS CLOSE AS WE CAN COME TO A BASE-JUMP."

Darren Kellet



Photo by David Schmuttermaier

I have organised five of these groups and we have another four ready to book. We will continue to organise them as long as people continue to ask us. I've seen all kinds of exits and have personally tried Rodeo. Sit, leaping forward and falling back. Most people choose falling back. You end up doing a gainer as you watch the balloon disappear. That is the most fun in my experience.

You listen as the airspeed builds up, gain control, then typically pitch at 4,000ft. Off drop zone landings and eight people in close proximity means safe, rather than sorry, tends to be the order of the day. From the balloon we usually pick a landing paddock and then follow each other down under canopy.

THE RULES ARE SIMPLE. AVOID COWS, RIVERS, TREES, FENCES, POWER LINES, SHEDS AND HOUSES.

To date we have been spoiled for choice regarding landing areas, and touch wood, all landings have been good. Our biggest hazards have been cow manure or swampy mud from heavy rains.

The weather dictates the launch point. We've taken off from golf courses, airports and random paddocks. Once we are all down safely, the chaser vehicles pick us up and we follow the balloon and watch it land.

Packing up a balloon is 'all hands on deck' and quite a process. The newest canopy is child's play compared to this thing. Then back into the vehicles and we return to the offices. There is no chance to pack your rig on site, and the canopies are wet from the early morning dew on the ground. If I could make one suggestion it would be to bring a stash bag for your canopy. All those canopies and lines in the backs of trucks are hard to wrangle.



Photo by Niall Manning



Photo by Si Elliot

Photo by Darren Harvey



Photo by Darren Harvey



Typically, we get back at 9am though it is not an exact science. Tracey Ruttan knows this only too well. She endured cancellations due to weather, and had to ride as a stay-in before she finally logged a balloon jump. It is worth hanging in there. Tracey says, "when the weather and winds cooperate, it makes for one memorable skydive".

I remember on the morning of one good weather forecast Sunday, we arrived at the office of Byron Bay Ballooning to find heavy rain. Cloud was thick. Only an experienced pilot could work out that we had a 30 minute window, and only an experienced pilot could work out where to launch from to take advantage of that. Thomas is a freak of nature. He knows his stuff. We got up, out and down without getting wet. Rain all the way to launch and rain all through the pack up. The actual ascent and descent? Perfectly clear.

So far no one has hated it. People are mostly ecstatic or at least, very happy. The only negative comment I have received has been, "it's a lot of effort for just that". That's skydiving; at the end of the day the majority reaction in my experience has been huge smiles and massive highs that rival AFF Stage One. This is followed by an excited flurry of Facebook activity. For days afterwards there is constant posting of cool videos and photos from all kinds of creative camera anchor points. Even the stay-ins have a great time. Michael Kilcullen says,

"amazing views... watching eight people jump from a balloon is pretty thrilling and landing with the balloon was a lot of fun too".

To do a balloon jump is reasonably easy. You need a 'B' license, a Display 'D' and a competent DZSO to sign as the person responsible for the group. Darren Harvey has been DZSO for three jumps. He says, "what a blast... every jumper should have this on their To Do list". You need to be comfortable with off drop zone landings and you need to be able to get up when the alarm goes off. You can't pull out without affecting the rest of the group. For balloon jumping, nothing is worse than a twelve person group having only eleven present participants at 5am on jump day. Be prepared for weather. As an organiser, I still find it funny that people want guarantees from me on weather; sometimes weeks out!

It is an unique experience. Regardless of fear, it's worth doing at least once. I see it as a nice segway to BASE. I can't wait to Wingsuit off a balloon. I expect that to reach a whole other level of awesome. Will it be scary? For sure. At exit when I hear all the jumpers freaking out, I just remember the words of Geoff Stillman, who has stood amongst the scared and the fearful twice now, and reacted to their nerves with the supportive and encouraging statement, 'don't be a f@#*ing baby!!!'

"AMAZING VIEWS... WATCHING EIGHT PEOPLE JUMP FROM A BALLOON IS PRETTY THRILLING, AND LANDING WITH THE BALLOON WAS A LOT OF FUN TOO"

Michael Kilcullen



Photo by Byron Bay Ballooning



TALON FS

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Main seat covers - designed for maximum seating power. The backpad is shaped and contoured to fit the shoulders and upper body and stay in place.



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2013

Australian CANOPY

Piloting Nationals

In 2004 the very first **Australian Canopy Piloting Nationals** were held at Funny Farm and after seemingly becoming a permanent fixture at Picton in the ensuing years they finally returned to the Farm this year, nine years after that inaugural competition. From that ground breaking competition only Robbie McMillian and Drew Lipinski returned this year but with regulars from the last few years, some CP Nationals debutants, Yoshi from Japan and four of our Kiwi brothers, the scene was set for a great training camp and competition.

By Brad Jones Photos by Kev Walters, Jimmy Cooper and Rhys Kempen

Swoopers started to show up six days before the start of the competition to get current, dial-in the Funny Farm pond and prepare them to give the best performance they could whilst staying safe. With winds picking up from mid-morning through to the early afternoon the pattern was to get up early, do a few jumps before the wind arrived, then chill out until it dropped to get a few more in the afternoon before sunset and a well-deserved cold beer. The only people to break this routine were those who had a cutaway (we had a lot this year: eight in total) who spent the wind holds recovering canopies and free-bags or the poor suckers with a 'Packer A' rating who then got them repacked to get them back in the air.

Usually we have a coach for Nationals but with the late change in venue this year we went without an official coach. With everyone taking turns videoing landings there was plenty of footage to review and everyone was happy to give some tips to other competitors even if it meant that it could eventually lead to them getting beat on the scoreboard, thanks Drew. As we were training the actual event started to take place as the judges, volunteers, other meet officials and a second C-182 showed up to ensure a smooth running competition. As the sun set on the Thursday evening everything was ready to go for the 2013 Australian Canopy Piloting Nationals with twenty Open and five Intermediate competitors registered.

Day one started with Speed and it was up to the Intermediate competitors to get the show on the road. With the air feeling slow, the times weren't as fast as most people would have liked but in Intermediate Wade Edwards ran away with the Speed title from Ray Worrall and Lucas "Smiley" Yeo. In Open the competition was much closer but Robbie McMillian secured the title with the only sub three second run of the meet in the last round from Andy "Angry" Woolf and Dan Smith. With the wind arriving like clockwork we went on hold whilst the course was rearranged for Zone Accuracy.

We resumed that afternoon with a couple of rounds before sunset and then completing Zone Accuracy at the start of day two. Zone Accuracy followed a similar pattern to Speed with Wade edging out Smiley and Curtis Morton to take the Intermediate title through a consistent scoring of all three rounds. In Open the placing didn't change with Robbie again securing the win on the last round from Angry and Dan.

On to Distance we went with it spread out between the usual wind hold. In Intermediate Ray turned the tables as he beat Wade and Curtis for the gold medal. Open also offered a new winner with the current Australian Distance record holder Angry showing why he is the Distance king as he took the title from Dan and Robbie.

Before Shane Price memorial jump. From left to right standing: Tom Gilmartin, Ben Lewis, Jimmy Cooper, Kev Walters, Brad Jones, Angry, Smiley, Dave Sirianni. Kneeling from left to right: Robbie McMillian, Dan Smith, Glenn Farrell, Drew Lipinski.



2013 Australian CANOPY Piloting Nationals



Ben Lewis



Brad Jones



Angry



Dan Smith

Overall placing:

Intermediate:

1. Wade Edwards
2. Ray Worrall
3. Lucas "Smiley" Yeo

Open:

1. Robbie McMillian
2. Andy "Angry" Woolf
3. Dan Smith

Usually the end of competition means some Freestyle fun for those who want to keep jumping or some cold beers for those who don't. This Nationals we finished with a memorial jump for Shane Price. Shane died tragically late last year and had been a regular at the Aussie swoop Nationals. Usually his parents, John and Leanne, would make the trip from Brisbane to cheer Shane on but this year they arrived with some of Shane's ashes and a chance for us to say goodbye to a good mate.

After an emotional gathering and talk from Robbie, the two C-182s took to the skies with a tribute to one of the most genuine blokes I've ever met. The first Cessna dropped Drew Lipinski, Smiley, Jimmy Cooper, Angry and Glenn Farrell off for a Hop 'n' Pop and fun on the pond, whilst Robbie piloted the other plane to height for a canopy flocking jump. Dan led the flock with Tom Gilmartin, Kev Walters, Ben Lewis and myself and when everyone was in position Dan let Pricey's ashes free to be spread over the Farm for an emotional farewell. After some more fun on the pond it was time for a beer to celebrate Pricey's life – even Ben Lewis drunk a XXXX Gold in his memory – as well as another fantastic and safe Nationals. All that was left now was the medal presentation to officially recognise our 2013 Champions and the announcement of the Australian team that has been invited to compete at the World Cup of Canopy Piloting in Russia later this year.

On behalf of all the competitors I would like to thank:

- The Mulckey family, Roger, John, Elaine, Brett, Tiz and the kids for the fantastic pond and facilities, for the awesome food, and for generally looking after us. You are fantastic people.
- The APF for organising this event and supporting the Australian canopy piloting scene; and Rob from the APF for bringing out the medals.
- The Judges and their helpers, Craig "Crash" Bennett, Sheena Simmonds, Ray Williams, Bruce Towers, Michael Vaughan, Col Ruthenberg, Clay Anderson and Adele.
- Irish who was always ready to get his Hasselhoff on and save a Swooper.
- The pilots, Dave and Archie.
- Meet Director, Joe Stein.
- Robbie McMillian, who without his drive and passion for canopy piloting I believe this event would never have happened. You're awesome mate.

We're going to Russia baby!



Dan Smith and Glenn Farrell with Leanne and John Price



Ben Lewis



Tom Gilmartin



Kev Walters



Brad Jones



Dan Smith



Michael Rogers



Drew Lipinski



Kev Walters

"It was awesome to get back to the pond at the Farm again, was a really good turnout. Was good to see a safe meet and with Irish acting as lifeguard, we were in safe hands... when he's not getting lost in the outback. Would like to thank the Mulckey's for doing a fantastic job looking after everyone as usual; Chief Judge, Crash – loving your work mate; all the judges and volunteers; Joe for Meet Director; the APF for the on-going support in CP; the NQPC; NZ Aerosports; Phill at HD-Xposure; and Kras at GLH Systems for all the help. Next up, Columbia and Russia!" – **Angry**

2013

Australian CANOPY

Piloting Nationals



Dan Smith (blind man)



Lee Barraclough



Drew Lipinski



Angry



Drew Lipinski/Robbie McMillian/Smiley setting up the course



Robbie McMillian



Lee Barclough



Robbie McMillian



Ben Lewis



Kev Walters/Tom Gilmartin the 2-way sloop

FLIGHT PERFORMANCE

FELIX BAUMGÄRTNER
10.14.12

SPEED
1,342.8 KM/H (833.9 MPH | MACH 1.24)

HEIGHT
39,045 METERS (128,100 FEET)

ALTIMETER
ALTITRACK



L&B IS PROUD TO HAVE BEEN A PART OF THE EPIC QUEST TO JUMP FROM THE EDGE OF SPACE. MANY THANKS TO LUKE AIKINS, FELIX BAUMGÄRTNER & REDBULL STRATOS FOR CHOOSING L&B AND THE ALTITRACK OVER ANY OTHER ALTIMETER.

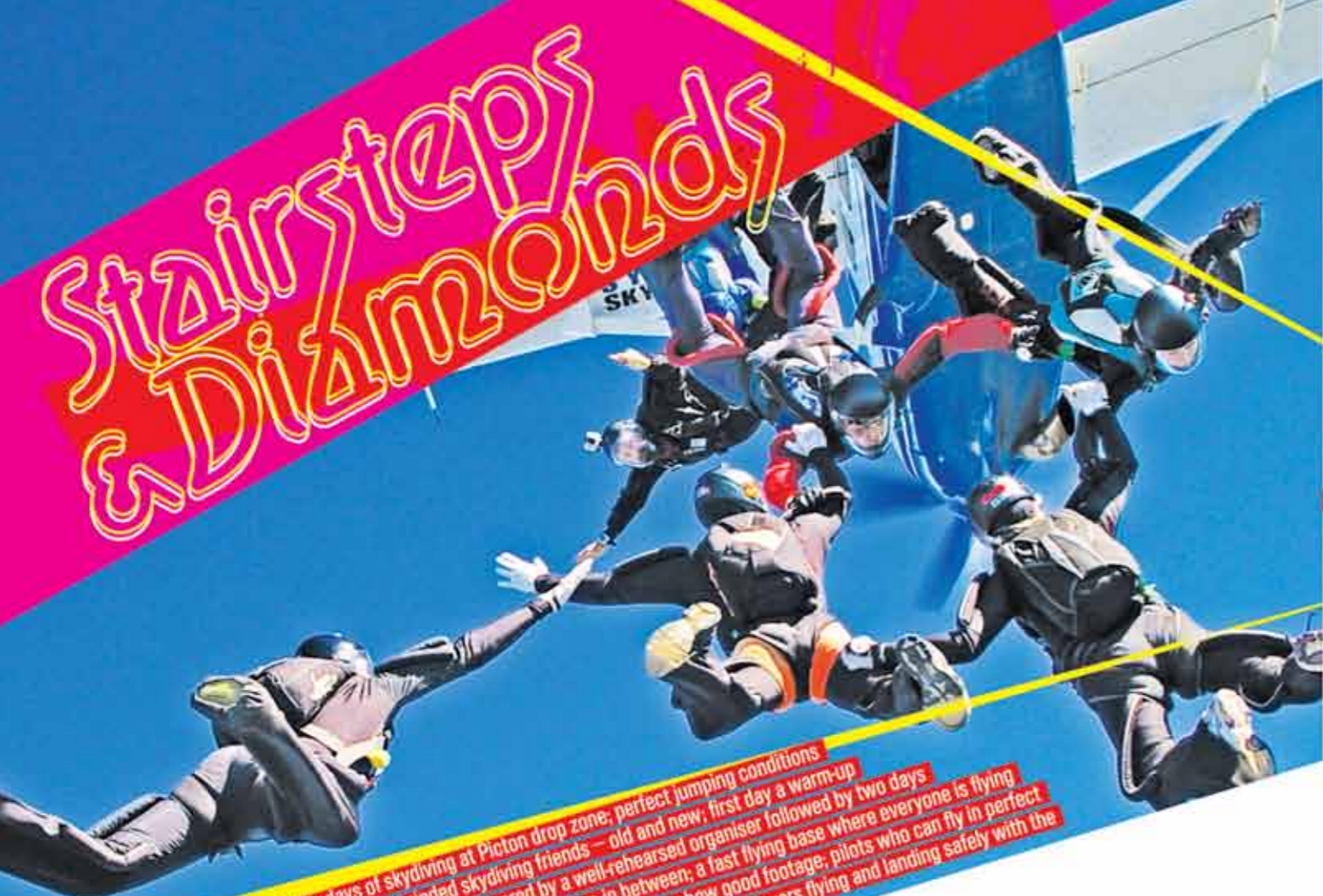


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Stairsteps & Diamonds



Imagine... (thought bubble)... three days of skydiving at Picton drop zone, perfect jumping conditions with big, blue sky days, catching up with like-minded skydiving friends - old and new; first day a warm-up with interesting multiple point 16-ways seamlessly engineered by a well-rehearsed organiser followed by two days of back-to-back formation loads, five loads per day with no waiting time in between; a fast flying base where everyone is flying comfortably; no noise jumps; a cameraman who knows what he is doing and can show good footage; pilots who can fly in perfect formation, who get height or close enough to; a free beer ticket each day after jumping; all players flying and landing safely with the drop zone buzzing for the entire three days.

**By Tracey Basman
Photos by Ken Stone**

Skydiver Dreaming? You would think so but this actually took place at Sydney Skydivers Picton on the 26th - 28th April. Expectations from out-of-towners for this time of year in Sydney would be rain and low cloud with time passed on the ground and a bar opened by lunchtime. Ben, Andy and John were pleasantly surprised and certainly not disappointed fulfilling that drinking quota after jumping each day.

The event was the creation of David Loncasty, who considered just about every skydiver in Australia attending the upcoming Perris 100-way camp, 100-ways and Spring Fling in May, would have been jumping linked exits for the past year and some good old fashion diving practice and fun was in order. Based on the Spring Fling format of Stairsteps and Diamonds, Davey busily engineered (composed) 14 - 26-way dives based on just that - Stairsteps and Diamonds.

The invites went out with the slots filling fast, overflowing to a reserve list. Davey desired some diving practice too (also known as the Red Baron) so quickly employed the expert services of Simone Bambach to fly a solid centre and to be the conductor for the formation load days. Jon Mac was busily working behind the scenes to deliver two operational planes on the day, the Super Caravan (that is in fact Super, thanks Rodney) and that lightning speed Beaver.

Once the planes were confirmed, the email went out to the players, "Be ready to dirt dive with jumpsuits on by 8:00am according

to Dave's watch, 8:01am and you're late, you'll be replaced by someone on the reserve list!" Well, that set the scene of discipline along with Simone's "shape up or ship out" attitude in her debriefs after each load.

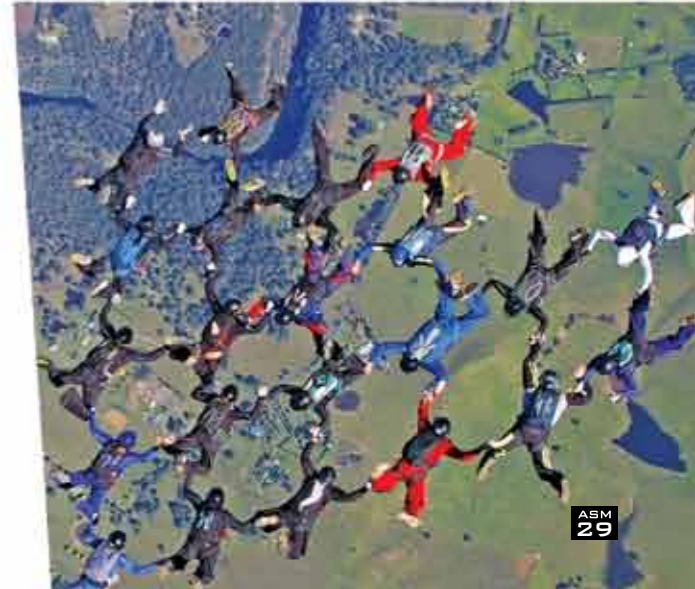
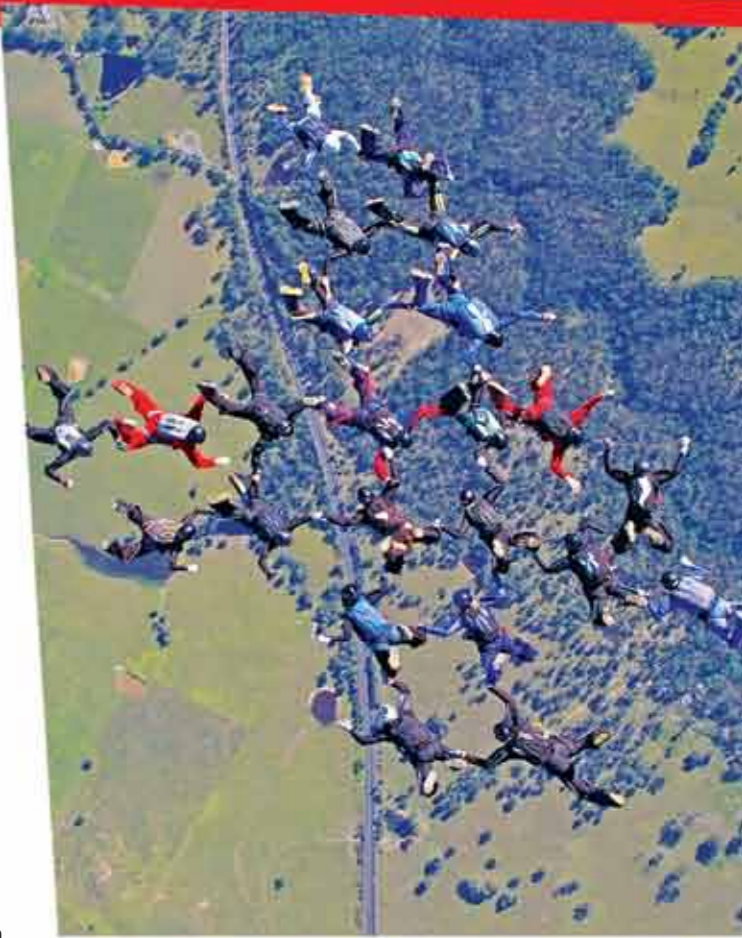
Some interesting multiple point formation loads were completed, including some Helixes and a Stairstep Norgy Box just to name a few. Let's have the centre group fly to form a 10-way round for our second or third point, add some pods and zippers gripped off the base, then let's have that 10-way centre drop grips! It worked; it all worked thanks to the talented Composer (DL), Conductor (SB) and Musicians (players).

There were a few memorable moments that should not go unmentioned, such as Mikey Vaughan's new front floater position hanging off the Beaver Strut waiting for the Caravan lead plane to exit (arms of steel!); and that towering Dave Bakkers exiting Front Floater position from the Caravan with a cheesy grin waving to Ken on camera then over the top of the fuselage to the Beaver trail plane before exit; and those exiting last from the Caravan practicing their 'diving for Perris' racing that Red Baron who was zooming at high speed having the time of his life.

The infamous Beaver Butt flying incident orchestrated by Andrew Barker will go down in the Picton history books. Nearing jump run AB tried some aerobatics in the Beaver using his Big Butt only, much to the surprise of the load now stuck to the ceiling of the plane. It was some adept flying by Jon Mac along with some vigorous butt smacking of AB that brought the load back on track quick smart with a 'Three Minutes' given to the now seated and relieved Beaver load. This jump was another successful formation with Chris flying the lead Caravan plane and Jon flying the Beaver. The Beaver exits were a mere hop, skip and a jump to the formation. Those planes were flying close. Excellent flying!

Skydiving doesn't get much better than this. The combined skills of David Loncasty, Simone Bambach and Jon Mac are unsurpassed. Geez, I don't want to blow the whistle on your ages but it must be 90+ years of combined skydiving experience that culminated into a very successful skydiving event. One can only hope we get another taste of this trio in action. A seamless three days and we all thank you. If another invite goes out, all I can suggest is you get your reply in quick smart so you don't miss out!

A big thank you also to the staff of Sydney Skydivers and to Phil Onis, who of course was the silent one working in the background, as usual, keeping an operational and safe drop zone environment for us all. It was a bonus that Cindi and Phil did manage to grab slots for that last formation load on Sunday, which was a near completed, very smooth 26-way Open Accordion as the second point and this was exiting from 11,500ft! GO TEAM!





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FUNNY FARM

By Ryan "Joorj" Mair Photos by Jean-Phi Teffaud

FARM LITE WAS A TRIAL EVENT AIMED AT CATERING FOR THE INTERMEDIATE LEVEL IN THE VERTICAL AND TRACKING (MOVING) DISCIPLINES, AND CANOPY CONTROL BOTH IN THE SKY AND ON THE POND.

The Farm is in the middle of nowhere and finding it, especially at night, can prove difficult. With a few detours here and there, everyone arrived and Funny Farm Lite was born. Those who were there for the Friday night experienced more rain in a few hours in the very early morning than we did at the whole of Farm 2012 when we had two rain days, so there were a few wet farmers when the sun came up. Costa found out the hard way that his tent was a big titty with absolutely no water proofing ability. It was also at this point that Roger seemed pleased with himself that he'd just put in better drainage: "Just paid for itself", he said to me as we rode the quad bike around to watch the drainage in action. Phil Onis' beast of a plane arrived from Sydney after lunch and it was "Game On."





The Coaches were Havard Flaar, Pony, Blakey, Longy, Cath Comyns, Macca, Noodle and myself. We also had Alex Aimard on camera. There was one coach to every eight people. So everyone there got to do nearly all, if not all, of their lobs with a coach. The result was really fast progression. We had 65 paying farmers who came from all over Australia and NZ and we did 135 loads. We had three

coaches on every load, organised into small groups concentrating on doing smaller, quality skydives. You could almost even call it a training camp. The groups really dialled into what was going on and progressed at a super fast level. It was a lot a fun to be a coach at this event. We did a bunch of tracking working on going faster, flying tighter and turning in formation. We also did heaps of vertical lobs too. With having so many coaches available we also put time into getting a lot of people's Freefly Crests signed off. Ding, Ding, Ding.

After a fair bit of rain in the months leading up to Farm it was looking the best it's ever been. The place was green and not it's trademark brown-red. Two weeks prior the place was flooded and the Mulckey family had had to do a lot of work to get the place back together in time. Roger said his Mum was out driving the front-end loader putting all the bark back! The place was looking great and the pond was beautiful with lots of nice green grass. The yabbys were not safe! Macca warmed up the pond on day two with a nice little spanking and nearly bounced out. Robbie then told us all, "If you wanna run the pond hit it down the middle and Yes, you will get wet." ... and wet we got! As the week progressed there were a lot of people touching the pond for the first time and others getting some awesome swooping in and running well!

No farmer gets into farming more than Robbie McMillian; who does so much for the Farm. He is the Voice of the Farm, Canopy Coach, the Cow, the DZSO, the MC and a whole bunch of other stuff. Even with all that, he still manages time to get some badass swoops in. The information he shared during the week was unreal and we had a couple of really good seminars. Havard gave a seminar on knowing your ability and decision making in freefall. It was some of the best information on Skydiving I've ever heard. He also presented us with a completely different way of exiting the aircraft while tracking which was a lot of fun to play with. The Wednesday night talent quest was the best talent show on the Farm with some awesome acts. Notable mention to Luke for taking over the crown from Gazley (2012) for the best talent performance on the Farm to date (in my opinion).

The Funny Farm bar is like no other. Other than the characters you find around the place, you can't buy single beers, only cartons. The bell was rung by some more than others, but a big ups to Mike Salvesson for equalling the Farm record of ten cartons.

Overall it was an awesome bunch of new faces, wicked skydiving and nothing short of a great success. I'm pretty sure this event is here to stay.



“ ALL THE FARMS HAVE BEEN FREAKING AWESOME BUT FARM 2013 TAKES THE CAKE, FOR SURE! I'M PRETTY SURE EVERYONE THERE WAS DOING THE BEST SKYDIVES THEY HAD EVER DONE. I KNOW I WAS. AWESOME COACHES, AWESOME PEOPLE AND AWESOME FAMILY! SO MUCH LOVE AND RESPECT FOR ROGER AND ALL THE MULKEYS. THANKS SO MUCH TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED TO MAKE THIS EVENT HAPPEN AGAIN. THE BEST FUNNY FARM BOOGIE EVER! ”

CHRIS "CRIKEY" COSGROVE



“ I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE A COACH AT FARM LITE AND IT WAS AMAZING. THE VIBE WAS AWESOME AND EVERYONE JUST WANTED TO LEARN AS MUCH AS THEY COULD. THE PROGRESSION OVER THE WEEK WAS THE BEST I HAVE EVER SEEN AT A BOOGIE. ”

CATH COMYNS



“ AS ONE OF THE FEW FUNNY FARM TRIFECTARIANS (LITE, HEAVY AND CP NATIONALS) THIS YEAR, I WOULD LIKE TO SAY A HUGE THANKS TO THE MULCKEY FAMILY FOR LETTING US RUN ON THEIR FARM. WE COULDN'T HAVE SO MUCH FUN WITHOUT YOUR HELP. I REALLY FEEL AT HOME ON THE FARM AND ALWAYS LOOK FORWARD TO GOING BACK. IT'S AMAZING TO SEE THE QUALITY OF SKYDIVING IMPROVING EVERY YEAR, ESPECIALLY AT THE FUNNY FARM LITE. A BIG THANKS TO ALL THE FARMERS WHO MADE ALL THREE EVENTS SUCH A HUGE SUCCESS. I CAN'T WAIT TO RUN AGAIN ”

ROBBIE MCMILLAN



FARM HEAVY

There were two weeks in between Farm Lite and Heavy. When we arrived back on the Farm I was quick to notice that the long drops were smelling superb. Farm Heavy, as it is now called, was the next level – the most advanced skydiving Australia has ever seen and I feel privileged to be a part of it.

Day 1 we saw the first rescue chopper on the Farm and, believe it or not, it was for the pilot. With the news that the new pilot wouldn't be there until the following morning, well, needless to say that afternoon got fairly messy as everyone reunited.

Roger does an outstanding job in choosing first class coaches. We had five international coaches: Havard Flaot (Skywalkers), Vince Reffett (Soul Flyers), Fred Fugan (Soul Flyers), Petter Johnson (Swedish Freely Mafia), Domitille Kiger (Kristal); and three international camera: Alex Aimard, Jeah-Phi (Soul Flyers) and Jon King. What a line-up! We knew we were in for a sick week! We did 175 loads with 75 paying Farmers.

As it does every year at Farm, the skill level increased – the lobs became tighter, faster, more complex and just SICK! This event is also very

much like a training camp, as we like to stay in groups due to the faster progression. There were heaps of Vertical lobs, big and small Calving lobs, crazy card shuffling things, multi-group stuff and heaps of Tracking where we really worked on flying the formations as tight as possible. This event is aimed at experienced skydivers and is the only event on home turf that gets such a high skill level in attendance. The combination of the calibre of the coaches and the skill level of the group made for some pretty mazing jumps. We are also definitely starting to see the effects of lots of people with tunnel training. Bring on the Aussie tunnel! The Pond also got a lot of use over the week with plenty of people getting wet and some awesome swooping plus a couple of good spanks! The Pond provided plenty of entertainment, especially in the late afternoon, and is also a good spot if you're waiting for a mate to go for a lob.

The vibe and feel of this boogie is unique. In the words of Vince, "There is no other event in the world that is quite like the Funny Farm" – the people, the atmosphere, the skydiving, the parties.

Elad was brought in again to make the day tape and, as always, he did an outstanding job. Watching the day tape and seeing all the sick lobs that happened during the day is always a pleasure. A couple of local hillbillies, Seano and Brit, dropped in for the event and were always entertaining. We also had the biggest Belissimo ever with everyone at the boogie Belissimoing Macca!

Funny Farm has always been an extremely safe boogie even though the most badass stuff happens there. There have been no serious accidents at Farm in the past but we had one this year - a high speed collision. With the direction that these Tracking and Calving disciplines are moving, unfortunately high speed collisions are likely to become more common. We had a large group discussion about the incident so as to learn how we can reduce the chances for collisions in the future.

Funny Farm is really gaining worldwide recognition as the Go To event in Australia. There were quite a few nationalities that came just for this event and made some big efforts getting here. It was also good to see some of the Aussies currently ripping it up in Europe come home for this event.

Funny Farm has always been my favourite boogie and 2013 was, I think, the best yet. Thanks for the lobs, FUNNY FARM!

“ THIS YEAR'S FARM PUSHED AUSSIE FREEFLYING FURTHER THAN IT'S EVER BEEN BEFORE. IT'S GREAT TO HAVE AN EVENT THAT IS DRIVING OUR SPORT, ON AND OFF THE FIELD, OR POND. ”

KIM "SCATTY" HOPWOOD





THANK YOU

It takes a lot of work to get all this to run as well as it does so a few notes of thanks are in order. The whole Mulkey family who do so much seen and unseen work; the sicko coaches and cameraman who UPT and Icarus N.Z. sent to us; Bowie and Phil Onis (nice plane!); SQPC and NSW State Parachute Councils for the rebates for jumpers from their areas; Robbie; Elad for the awesome video; and Christian at Lite, Sharny, Kenny, Ritchie and Dave; everyone else who helped out, but most of all to Roger, Lisa and the Kids.

VIDEO

Check out the Farm's videos (censored version) and details for Farm 2014 on the new website at www.funnyfarmaustralia.com



“ FARM THIS YEAR WAS SICK! PEOPLE WERE RUNNING UNBELIEVABLE JUMPS. 12-WAY ROUTINES NO PROBLEMS, TUBE CUTAWAYS AND WICKED TANDEM WITH BRIT AND SHAUN-O, THE LEGENDS, STAND OUT! MASSIVE CREDITS TO THE STAFF AND THE MULKEYS. EVEN SIR SUNSCREEN HAD IT SORTED. HOPE TO SEE ALL OF YOU SOON. I HEAR THERE IS A HURRICANE COMING! LONG LIVE THE BEERLYPMPICS! ” HAVARD FLAAT



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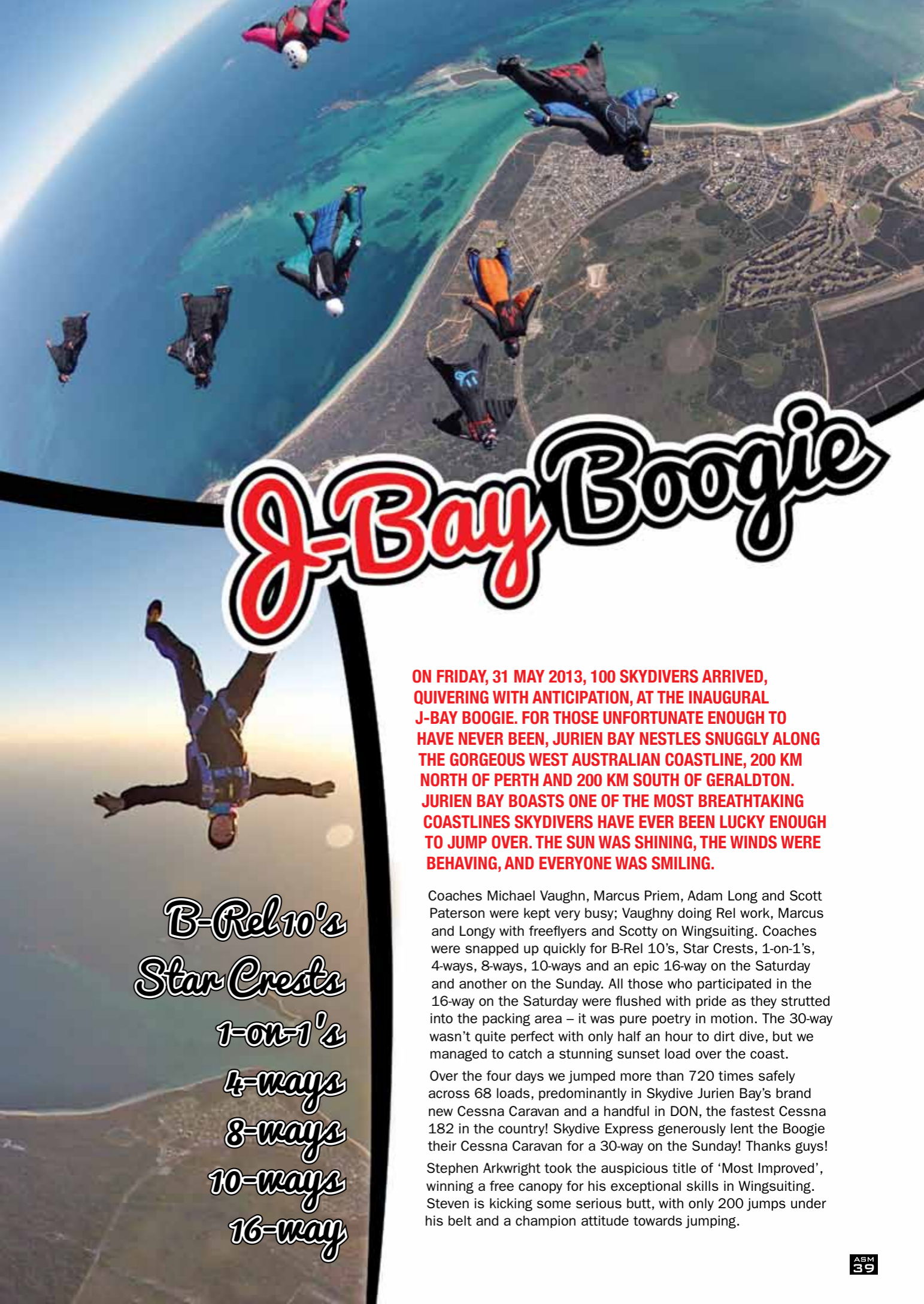
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J-Bay Boogie

ON FRIDAY, 31 MAY 2013, 100 SKYDIVERS ARRIVED, QUIVERING WITH ANTICIPATION, AT THE INAUGURAL J-BAY BOOGIE. FOR THOSE UNFORTUNATE ENOUGH TO HAVE NEVER BEEN, JURIEEN BAY NESTLES SNUGGLY ALONG THE GORGEOUS WEST AUSTRALIAN COASTLINE, 200 KM NORTH OF PERTH AND 200 KM SOUTH OF GERALDTON. JURIEEN BAY BOASTS ONE OF THE MOST BREATHTAKING COASTLINES SKYDIVERS HAVE EVER BEEN LUCKY ENOUGH TO JUMP OVER. THE SUN WAS SHINING, THE WINDS WERE BEHAVING, AND EVERYONE WAS SMILING.

Coaches Michael Vaughn, Marcus Priem, Adam Long and Scott Paterson were kept very busy; Vaughny doing Rel work, Marcus and Longy with freeflyers and Scotty on Wingsuiting. Coaches were snapped up quickly for B-Rel 10's, Star Crests, 1-on-1's, 4-ways, 8-ways, 10-ways and an epic 16-way on the Saturday and another on the Sunday. All those who participated in the 16-way on the Saturday were flushed with pride as they strutted into the packing area – it was pure poetry in motion. The 30-way wasn't quite perfect with only half an hour to dirt dive, but we managed to catch a stunning sunset load over the coast.

Over the four days we jumped more than 720 times safely across 68 loads, predominantly in Skydive Jurien Bay's brand new Cessna Caravan and a handful in DON, the fastest Cessna 182 in the country! Skydive Express generously lent the Boogie their Cessna Caravan for a 30-way on the Sunday! Thanks guys!

Stephen Arkwright took the auspicious title of 'Most Improved', winning a free canopy for his exceptional skills in Wingsuiting. Steven is kicking some serious butt, with only 200 jumps under his belt and a champion attitude towards jumping.

- B-Rel 10's
- Star Crests
- 1-on-1's
- 4-ways
- 8-ways
- 10-ways
- 16-way

J-Bay Boogie

Other milestones included a handful of 100's, 200's, 300's, some 'B' Licenses and Star Crests. Needless to say, the bar ran wild with cases and congratulations.

It would be safe to say that everyone had a preposterously fun time. Jurien Bay was as proud as Punch and Judy to see so many happy, shining faces grace their drop zone, and is excited to be expanding rapidly enough to provide some excellent coaching to novice and experienced fun jumpers on a regular basis. The drop zone now has its very own fun jumper accommodation next door to the office for sleeping, eating, partying and bonfire requirements.

Thanks to all the coaches for being so awesome. Thank you to all the sponsors: W.A. Parachute Council, Vigil, Downward Trend, Cookie, The Shire of Dandaragan and the Jurien Bay Football Club. To all the jumpers who came out and made the very first J-Bay Boogie such an epic success, thank you so much! We can't wait to see you again next year.

"Thanks to Pete Lonnon, Skydive Jurien Bay, Icarus and Scott Paterson for putting on an awesome Boogie and giving me the awesome prize of a free canopy from Icarus Canopies by NZ Aerosports. Thanks Scotty for nominating me and jumping with us all weekend, and all the crew at Jurien who put a lot of time and hard work into making the weekend such a success. I can't forget to thank Mavs for letting me steal his Wingsuit for the weekend."

– **Stephen Arkwright**





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Article and Photos by Niklas Daniel

THE ARIZONA VERTICAL CHALLENGE, RUN ALONGSIDE THE CELEBRATED BELLY VERSION, THE ARIZONA CHALLENGE, WAS HELD THIS YEAR 24-27 MAY 2013. THE EVENT WAS HOSTED BY SKYDIVE ARIZONA AND ORGANISED BY ARIZONA ARSENAL. THE PURPOSE WAS TO BRING PARTICIPANTS TOGETHER TO PERFORM UNIQUE VERTICAL FORMATIONS WITH MULTIPLE POINTS.

All fourteen jumps went to 16,500ft and were between 23 to 32-ways, twelve formation jumps, and two full Skyvan loads. Registered participants paid the Memorial Day Boogie price of US\$21.00 per jump plus US\$5.50 for extra altitude with oxygen.

The goal was multiple point Head-down Big-ways, with some upright bonus points. An awesome mixed group of flyers showed up including experienced locals such as former Arsenal member, Jason Peters; PD Flight-1 Coach, Travis Mills; Kim Winslow and Friday Friedman of Arizona Drive. The group also included accomplished visitors like tunnel instructors Aaron Necessary and Antonio Arias; and Paul Cooper and Dafi Filipowski coming all the way from the U.K. and Eastern Europe. Enthusiastic new talent like locals Paige Milligan and Melissa Zender got in there on some tough slots and rocked it. Fun was had by all!

There was also an impromptu smaller Skills Camp group of between four and eight people working on VFS core fundamentals such as launching bases, diving, floating, stinging and break-offs.

Some of the cool jumps were the Fountain with several concentric rings breaking-off from the centre, and the Three Eyed Monkey where the 28-way built then became seven different pieces with translation, rotation and vertical movement in relation to the base.

There were two Huck Jams at the tunnel, one hour each night organised by Ty Losey, Brandon Atwood, Steve Curtis, Sara Curtis and Jason Peters. Participants worked on VFS, dynamic, and multi-dimensional flying.

At the drop zone, early start times allowed for getting the jumps in before temperatures became too hot and turbulent. Any summertime visitor to Skydive Arizona knows that the key to making the most of your day in the summer desert is to get going early and finish up early.

Many people travelled from as far away as Europe to jump with the Arizona crew. Thanks to you all for making this event such a great time. We hope to get things even bigger next year, as we've got the aircraft on hand to make it happen! Bring your friends and join us for dodging dust devils in the desert.

A special thanks to Mike Coffey, local Freely organiser who helped fill those early morning high-altitude loads with his groups of fun jumpers!

Challenge Participants

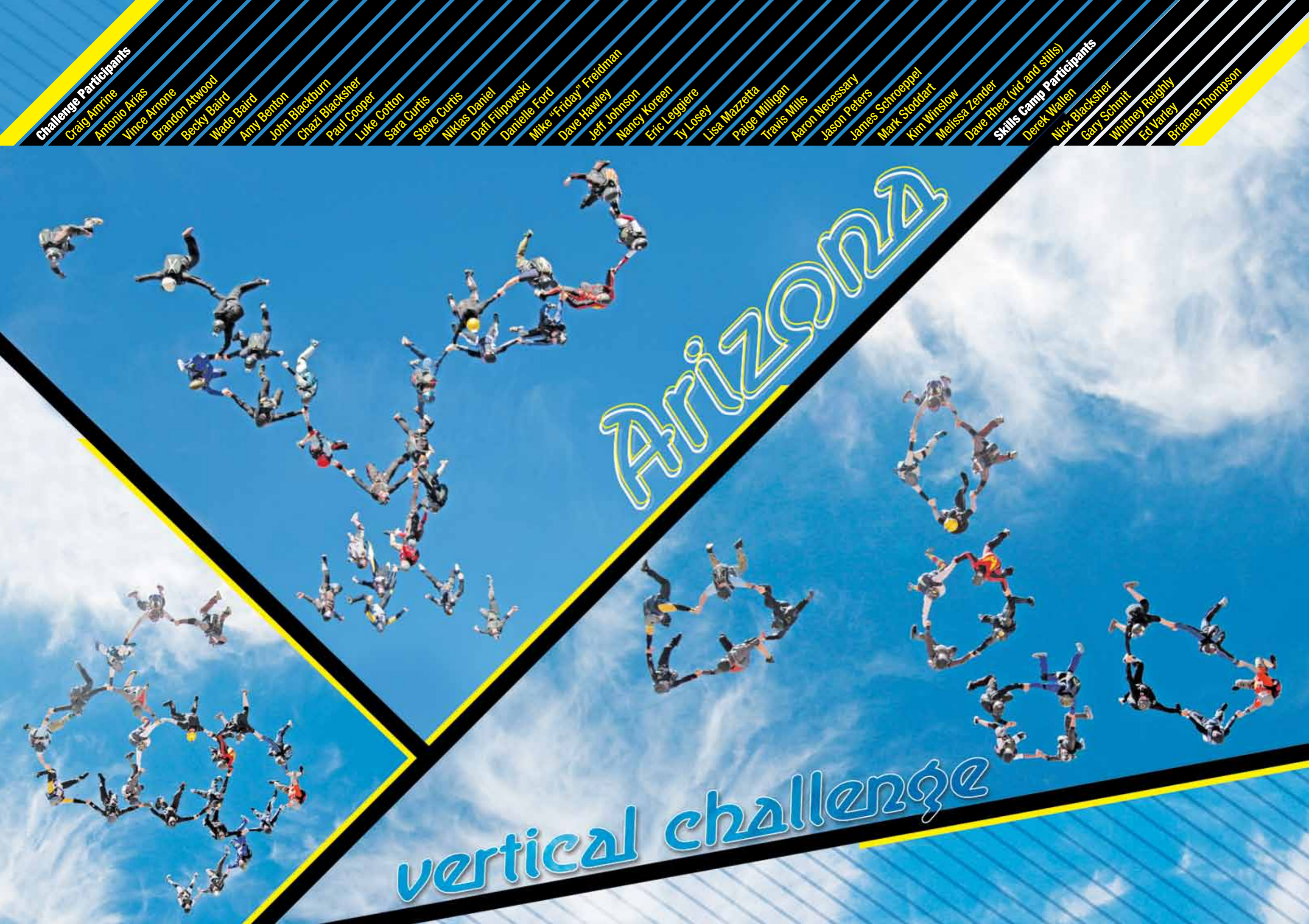
- Craig Amrine
- Antonio Arias
- Vince Amone
- Brandon Atwood
- Becky Baird
- Wade Baird
- Amy Benton
- John Blackburn
- Chazi Blacksher
- Paul Cooper
- Luke Cotton
- Sara Curtis
- Steve Curtis
- Niklas Daniel
- Dafi Filipowski
- Danielle Ford
- Mike "Friday" Freidman
- Dave Hawley
- Jeff Johnson
- Nancy Koreen
- Eric Leggere
- Ty Losey
- Lisa Mazzetta
- Paige Milligan
- Travis Mills
- Aaron Necessary
- Jason Peters
- James Schroepel
- Mark Stoddart
- Kim Winslow
- Melissa Zender
- Dave Rhea (vid and stills)

Skills Camp Participants

- Derek Wallen
- Nick Blacksher
- Gary Schmit
- Whitney Reighly
- Ed Varley
- Brianne Thompson

Arizona

vertical challenge





SKYSURFING IS BACK...

By Suiz Porter Photos by Tim Porter



DURING A LONG WEEKEND IN LATE APRIL 2013, OLIVER FURRER, MANY TIMES WORLD CHAMPION IN SKYSURFING, AND TIM PORTER, VIDEOFLYER 1999 U.K. CHAMPION WITH CHRIS GAUGE, TEAM 'VICE VERSA', MET AT THE DROP ZONE IN FANO, ITALY TO MAKE SOME FRESURFFAST JUMPS TOGETHER.

Thanks to Turbulenza, Daniele Fraternali, who supported the jumps to make a video/photo shoot. It was great to see Oliver and Tim re-discovering their currency again with skysurfing and filming the board above this beautiful drop zone, situated one kilometre from the lovely turquoise Adriatico Sea.

For the two jumpers, the aim was to promote what is an incredibly exciting discipline and encourage it back into the skydivers' vision as something they, with preparation and training, can also achieve. Skysurfing is seen much less nowadays due to lack of competitors causing it to fall out of the official competition events. As such, this sky sport is also out of the lime light with the media.

It takes a lot of effort to reach a high level of skill on the board and it also requires a very good camera flyer; but the experience as a team surfing the sky together is truly amazing!

During the coming summer time, Oliver and Tim will do more skysurfing jumps together at different locations. Therefore other jumpers will have the chance to fly next to the sky-board and see the team «live» in action. Stay tuned and see further schedule details at [www.OliverFurrer.com!](http://www.OliverFurrer.com)



Australian Parachute Federation NATIONAL TECHNICAL CONFERENCE

SEA WORLD RESORT, GOLD COAST 28-29 MAY 2013 **Leading from the top**

Article & photos by Rob Libeau



THE AUSTRALIAN PARACHUTE FEDERATION HELD THE 2013 NATIONAL TECHNICAL CONFERENCE ON THE GOLD COAST FROM 28-29 MAY AT SEA WORLD NARA RESORT.

NZ AEROSPORTS ADVERT TO COME

This was the first year for the new conference format, with the symposium style being run every two years, and the Technical Conference, focused on Instructors, being run every other year. This year was the Technical Conference with the theme "Leading from the Top". In keeping with the APF's commitment to maintaining high levels of safety in our industry, a strong safety focus pervaded all of the workshops and presentations. Additionally the focus was on operational and training matters and further explored the role our industry leaders play in identifying, creating and maximising opportunities, whilst minimising risk in both sporting and commercial fields to ensure positive outcomes for the Federation and its members.

As usual, the conference again provided the unique opportunity for delegates to network, exchange information and learn about leading edge skydiving practices. This year was also a platform for APF members to have their say in initiatives that were being presented by industry leaders.

Member Engagement

Interactive workshop sessions rather than presentations were the focus in 2013 with workshop sessions dedicated

to a particular discipline, and all were facilitated by local experts in the field. Based on positive member feedback, the APF considers the workshop theme to be a more successful format to adopt for future Conference agendas as it allows for discussion and debate of the real issues affecting skydivers in the field. It also provides a constructive forum for members to work together to forge real solutions to address these issues. For the APF to move in the right direction all members need to take part and contribute. There were a number of clear outcomes and recommendations from a lot of these workshops, which will now be put forward for consideration in the upcoming NPRM process.

Some of the highlights from the workshops and presentations include:

Student Training, AFF Safety and Training

Facilitated by Paul Smith, 60 delegates discussed ways that the AFF training table could be improved, and also came up with various initiatives for improving student retention for consideration.



Equipment Knowledge & Club Responsibility

Facilitated by APF Director Rigging, Brett Newman, this very informative workshop was well received and discussed various aspects of equipment usage, in particular the responsibilities of the club in relation to equipment. It also put forward positive initiatives for improving promulgation of information, which are to be further developed and implemented.

Tandem Workshop

Facilitated by C.I. Mark Gazley, this important workshop explored a number of issues affecting the Tandem Instructor including the requirement for using audible altimeters for Handcam, the use of Personal Floatation Devices, and the role of the Tandem Examiner.

B-Rel & Star Crest Safety Workshop

Facilitated by passionate Flatflyer and local jumper, John McMahon, this workshop reviewed the existing B-Rel table discussing issues and obstacles to progression, and suggesting ways to improve the program. Interest was so great in the B-Rel program that there was no time left to talk anything Star Crest!

Sports Medicine Australia

Sports Medicine Australia representative, Mark Brown, a Sport Physiotherapist with 30 years' experience in sports medicine, conducted a workshop on neuromuscular training and prevention of injuries to lower limbs which was very well received.

Chief Instructor Forum

The annual C.I. Forum is an opportunity for our industry leaders to come together to discuss any concerns they may have or issues facing the industry and to put

forward various suggestions for improvements. This year's C.I. Forum was a lively exchange and enabled all present the opportunity to have a say with some positive recommendations being carried forward for implementation or further consideration.

Static Line Safety & Training

Facilitated by Sam McKay, the Static Line safety and training session looked at the existing training table at length and discussed a number of subsequent changes and amendments. This workshop was very productive with a considerable number of recommendations as the final outcome.

Freefly Safety & Training

Kim 'Scatty' Hopwood conducted a very informative workshop session which put forward a number of ideas and initiatives for improvements to communications and retention. There was a strong focus on the role of the Freefly tutor and the part the APF can play in enhancing and further developing this aspect of the sport.

Wingsuit Workshop

Facilitated by Ben Nordkamp, this comprehensive workshop closely examined the regulations governing the Wingsuit discipline and came up with a number of recommendations for changes to both the Operational Regulations and the Training Operations Manual.

Presentation: A Kiwi Operators Story

Brendon McRae, a New Zealand Tandem Master/Examiner presented 'A Kiwi Operators Story' enlightening the APF on the events that have occurred in NZ over the past few years, and how the skydiving industry has been negatively affected by recent changes to how they operate under CAA.

Risk Management

Director Safety, Stephen Fickling presented a thought provoking and educational session on Risk Management, covering identification and assessment of risk, analysis tools and system requirements. Stephen highlighted the importance of aiming for best practice over minimum regulatory standards.

Aircraft Operations Forum

APF Director Aircraft, Grahame Hill delivered a presentation on a number of items pertaining to aircraft and pilot operations. Airspace issues were discussed along with the JPA renewal and Examiner requirements, multiple choice examinations and the new APF Instrument 244/12, issued in August last year, was touched on.

Op Reg Rewrite & Proposed Demerit Points Scheme

APF Operations Manager, Susan Bostock presented the work being done on the Operational Regulations including the deletion of all non-regulatory items (procedures and policies) and their development into subsidiary Regulatory Schedules, greatly reducing the size and content of the regulations. This draft also attempts to better define all APF positions of responsibility from the bottom up. Also presented was the proposed Demerit Points Scheme which will be defined in a new Infringement Manual. Delegates were advised that in this scheme, Demerit Points would be an outcome of a breach of the regulations. This scheme does not bring a whole new set of rules into play. Most members will never be affected – it is only going to concern those, particularly in positions of responsibility, who are in breach of the regulations. The goal of the scheme is to improve consistency and transparency and to give the APF a tool to more effectively manage the APF disciplinary system.

APF Professional Development Policy

John Meara, a HR and Learning and Development professional working with the National Office, delivered a two-part presentation: firstly, on a proposed "Continuing Professional Development" policy which was well received. The draft policy provides greater recognition for learning activities undertaken by our industry professionals and enables credit toward revalidation of instructor ratings. John also provided an update on course development towards the APF's move to become a Registered Training Organisation.

Industry & Operational SMS

APF Operations Manager, Susan Bostock delivered a presentation on where the APF is up to with development of the Industry SMS and the Club SMS. Delegates were advised that the Industry SMS is the bigger picture model that defines how the APF manages safety, and the Club SMS is being presented as a Generic Club Operations Manual for adaption by clubs. Designed as one-size-fits-all, the manual encompasses aircraft operations and parachuting operations and will also include various templates for use. The smaller club will only take on those components that fit their organisation with the end product being relevant to the size of the particular organisation.

Sports Psychologist

Due to popular demand Dr Clive Jones returned again this year to present to the APF Conference, examining ways to help APF instructors gain the edge, and in turn, how to impart that knowledge to the student and novice skydivers in their care and under their tuition.

Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport & Racing (NPRSR)

Neal Ames from NPRSR presented an informative session on Gen Y and X and the growing trend of younger people moving away from the structured sporting environments of older generations. Neal highlighted the motivations of different generations in their choosing to participate and what activity they choose to participate in. New generations have grown up in a fast moving, ever-changing society and consequently they place more value on speed than accuracy. The age of reason, debate and evidence has been replaced with one of perspective, perception, and experience. Neal went on to state that today's youth think in hyperlinks, they multi-task and they absorb information from multiple sources.

Cutaway! The Australian Parachute Federation's Malfunctions Training Video

Delegates were invited to Check out the NEW APF Training DVD. The DVD includes chapters: Good Canopy, Routine Opening Problems, Decision Making Process, Emergency Procedures, Low Speed Malfunctions, High Speed Malfunctions, Two-Out and The Journey Begins.

If you couldn't make it to the conference then, find it at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/APFSkydiver>

Cutaway! was produced, directed and edited by Andrew Forsyth and written by Don Cross, Ralf Jaeger and Gary Myers; the awesome Aerial Performances were by Michael Vaughan, plus there were many, many skydiving legends involved in the making of Cutaway! These people were:

Director of Aerial Photography, Shane Sparkes; Safety Skydiver and Hand Model, Rob Douthat; Director of Photography, Craig Hardiman; Sound Design by Andrew Forsyth and Post OP Group; and Graphics by Andy Eisenberg and Andrew Forsyth.

Cutaway! Is a great visual feast and should be a must on your "to watch" list.

For all their help in putting the DVD together the APF also wishes to thank the following for their generous support:

Glenn Singleman, Don Cross, Mike Carre, Michael Vaughan, Jules McConnel, Paul "Poo" Smith, Jai Champion, Jo Chitty, Nigel Brennan, Simon "Sas" DiSiascio and Executive Producer, Don Cross. Chief Instructor Skydive Nagambie.

Cutaway! Was produced by Pemberton Productions Pty. Ltd. 2013 and proudly presented by the Australian Parachute Federation.

Wind Tunnel Update

Delegates were given an insight in to the much anticipated wind tunnel by Danny Hogan, the Chief Operating Officer from the Indoor Skydive Australia (ISA) Group. Danny spoke of ISA's plans for this exciting endeavour including the many opportunities and benefits it will present for APF members and skydiving in Australia.

Other presentations included insightful and informative sessions from APF directors, instructors, and National Office staff and other industry veterans and leaders; the key focus being "safety and training".

Social Activities

This year's conference, being a two day event, commenced with a welcome Gourmet BBQ at Waterfall Café on the night BEFORE the conference kicked off! APF's very generous sponsor Insuranet came to the party again this year lending very valuable support to the evening; thus ensuring a great

night was had by all and the conference got off to a lively start!

Awards Night

The annual APF Awards night is an opportunity to come together to recognise our highest achievers – those members who showcase our sport and our organisation to the world. This was also an opportunity to present the 2012 Tim Bates Award to Frankie Molnar, the final winner of four nominees who were all worthy applicants and held in the highest of regard by their peers! This year this special event was hosted on board "Voyager" where delegates were treated to a sumptuous seafood buffet, unlimited selected beverages and a great live band whilst cruising the calm seas of the Gold Coast Broadwater.

What People Said

"It was a common sense approach to rule/content changes."
 "Overall, items presented were a highlight."
 "... B-Rel table review was of high importance to reduce the cost and simplify the process to retain novices."
 "Great location."
 "Love catching up with friends."
 Constructive Criticisms
 "... venue and accommodation was too expensive."
 "... workshop clashes – perhaps run each twice."
 "Not enough workshops."

Some Key Stats

Ninety percent of delegates rated this year's conference as good to excellent overall.
 AND
 Ninety-eight percent of delegates would recommend the APF conference to fellow members.

A Big Thank You

On behalf of the APF, we extend sincere appreciation to all those people who contributed to the 2013 Technical Conference, including all those delegates who attended. It is only through the input and professional contribution of our talented, well prepared presenters and workshop facilitators that this important event is possible and this year was no exception. The APF also takes this opportunity to thank our generous conference sponsors, particularly Insuranet, whose generous support makes this event possible. SeaWorld was once again a fabulous venue and Queensland turned on the sunny weather for our visitors. 2014 will see the format return to a symposium style and the APF looks forward to once again delivering an exciting, dynamic, effective and informative event for all parties with a venue yet to be advised.

See you next year!

APF Conference Coordination Team



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JUMP START

PROGRAM 2013

By Louise Cross

THE MORNING OF 23 FEBRUARY DAWNED AT SKYDIVE NAGAMBIE AND BROUGHT WITH IT PARTICIPANTS EAGER TO BEGIN THE FOURTEEN WEEK JOURNEY INTO FORGING A CAREER IN THE SPORT OF SKYDIVING UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF COURSE MANAGER, STEVE SMEDLEY, HIMSELF A HIGHLY EXPERIENCED INSTRUCTOR A. THIS WAS THE FIRST COURSE OF ITS KIND TO BE RUN IN AUSTRALIA WITH ITS PRIMARY FUNCTION TO PROVIDE A FAST TRACK OPTION FOR THOSE CANDIDATES WHO WISH TO GET INTO THE INDUSTRY IN A FAST PACED, PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT UTILISING THE BEST TRAINING TECHNIQUES, INSTRUCTION AND EQUIPMENT THAT IS AVAILABLE.

Even if part or full time employment is not on the agenda, the syllabus is designed to satisfy those candidates who may only wish to gain 200 jumps and experience in many aspects of the sport in a much shorter timeframe and with much less expense than by merely jumping over weekends.

A big thanks goes out to Cookie Helmets, Parachutes Australia and Icarus canopies who provided discounts to support the candidates. It's great to see these companies investing in the future of skydiving in Australia. This course is not for the faint hearted as it is pretty much non-stop with rest days factored in around bad weather – of which there was very little. The candidates were accommodated on site and got to jump from both turbine and piston aircraft.

The number of skydives for each week vary depending upon which of the five modules is being undertaken. The Rigging and Equipment module where the Packer B qualification is obtained gives almost a pleasant rest from the coached skydives. This particular week sees the participants only doing five jumps while other weeks later in the program has them challenged doing 25 coached 3 and 4-way Flat-fly jumps or camera flying air skills dives.

Week 1: AFF completed and 10 jumps

Week 3: A licence and 37 jumps

Week 4: B licence and 57 jumps

Week 5: Packer B, Water retrieval practical and 61 jumps

Week 6: Radio Operator Licence, First Aid Level 2 and 67 jumps

Week 7: Canopy Flying Course, Display jumps and 87 jumps

Week 8: C licence with Flat-fly coaching and 112 jumps

Week 12: Camera theory and flying techniques and 178 jumps

Week 14: Alternate drop zone tour/jumps, video editing and 200 jumps

Voilà, D licence in just 14 weeks!

Throughout the program each module was overseen by the course manager however the modules themselves were taught by highly experienced skydivers who are considered experts in their respective fields. Sam McKay taught the students all about packing parachutes, equipment maintenance and minor repairs which then enabled them to get their Packer B ratings. Next up was Michael Vaughan who took the participants through a highly intensive canopy course which culminated in Display licences and several Display jumps around the area. These guys had the honour of being the first landings on the new drop zone.

After the Canopy week, Simon "Sas" DiSciascio taught the finer art of Flat-flying for a week in preparation for the Camera Course module.

The Camera Course module was run over three weeks, the first week being headed up by Shane Sparkes who endeavoured to impart some of his wealth of knowledge upon the students in readiness for the outside world. Joey Sanza took over for the final two weeks of this module where the students practiced their new skills by taking turns in filming each other on their jumps. The course used this period to put into practice the lessons learnt to act as DZSO, Manifestor and GCA. The final part of the assessment for this module was the making of a DVD whereby footage collected over the fourteen week program was to be made into a viewable product and to showcase how far the students had come in such a short time.

As a respite from the non-stop program, the final week saw the troops head off in the drop zone bus to different drop zones in N.S.W. to see how other operations work. Skydive Nagambie would like to thank Sydney Skydivers, especially Russell Brown, Phil Onis and Jonny Mac; Skydive Oz and Poo Smith; and Adrenaline Skydives Goulburn and Matt Chambers for being so hospitable and helpful to the students with their myriad of questions. The students definitely benefited from seeing what other options are out there in terms of finding jobs in the industry.

This inaugural program saw Ian from Canberra Australia, Brad from Canada and Fergus from Ireland all complete the challenges head on. Despite their previous experience ranging from a couple of tandem skydives to ten static line descents a few years earlier, the skills displayed on the ground and in the air over the duration were a thing to behold.

So what now for these guys? You would have to ask them, but they could possibly get employment in the Industry working as a Packer, Manifestor, Camera Flyer, or valued member of a drop zone ground crew. The guys already have a reunion planned for Batchelor this year. With a little more time, general experience and jump numbers, these Jump Start Program Graduates are well underway in achieving future Tutor or Instructor ratings.

We are already excited about preparing for the next JSP in February 2014. There are limited positions still available, and we hope to have just as much fun next year as we did this year.





By Linda Iliste

Earlier this spring, the annual skills camp and Freely boogie, FlajFlaj, took place on Skydive Elsinore in Lake Elsinore, southern California. The event was created by Swedish national team member Peter Nilsson back in 2007, and has been hosted by the same ever since. Over the mere six years it's been around, FlajFlaj has grown from a Scandinavian Freely institution to attracting other European big-name coaches in 2012. This year's remarkable line-up saw its coaches literally hailing from all four corners of the world: from local super star team, SoCal Converge's Andy Malchiodi, to Matthew Hill and Domitille Kiger of France's Kristal, the 2012's World Champion gold medallists. Australia was put on the coach map by Chris Cosgrove from the Sunshine Coast.

Together with the hundred jumpers that participated, also flying in from as far away corners as Norway and New Zealand, marked down the 11th FlajFlaj as the best and biggest to date.

was back by popular demand, and each of the two boogie weeks got wrapped up by big drop zone parties that entailed videos screenings of boogie jumps, edited by the amazing Lika Borzova, and DJ sets.

FlajFlaj first-timer Georgia Roberts from the Sunshine Coast, points to the fact that compared to boogies in Australia, FlajFlaj is special because it bridges the gap found when people reach around 200-400 jumps, and 'flat line' in their progression. Georgia first heard of FlajFlaj through Peter Nilsson himself when Peter was coaching her and Chris Cosgrove at a tunnel camp in San Francisco in 2012. Living in a country that doesn't have a wind tunnel (yet), she says it can be easy to get discouraged when you are at this intermediate level, and there is not a whole lot of tools or events to continue getting better. "But boogies like this, that give structure to progressing, continue to prioritise safety, and have the necessary tools, i.e. a good student-coach ratio to achieve the goals definitely have the secret recipe", says Georgia. "FlajFlaj is friendly, well organised, and also very European for a boogie in the States. I'm stoked about it, and certainly hope to be back!"



Still, this quick and extraordinary growth of the boogie hasn't changed the original format and spirit. Going on for ten days with a wide range of skill level among the boogie-go'ers, some had just learnt to Freely while others were at the very top, the first five days had a focus on one-on-one coaching, and the second five days on group jumps. The organisers paid close attention to the participant's aspirations, making sure coaches were swapped among the groups, sometimes as often as every day, to allow individual requests to be met. This way a variety of teaching techniques and Freely movements were practiced, and many experienced an astonishing flying progression through the almost 2,000 coach jumps out of the total of 6,000 jumps that skydivers made at the boogie. Every day ended with the coaches getting together for special sunset load jumps, something that was highly appreciated.

"It is not often that you have so many great freeflyers together at the same time", said Finnish coach Mauri Väistö. "It makes those jumps very, very unique."

What also makes FlajFlaj unique is its happy and helpful atmosphere, with many pre-arranged activities such as morning yoga and evening dinners. A poker tournament



tunnel time

Getting the most from your tunnel time?

By Holly Kilham

Let's cut to the chase. Before you go spending your inheritance moving into the new iFly Indoor Skydive tunnel, let's have a chat about what you can expect to achieve with your tunnel time. To help us get to the detail, I have enlisted the assistance of our new Chief Flight Instructor, Kurmet, and some recent students to help me shed some words of wisdom on the subject.

When should someone first think about doing tunnel time?

Any time! It's a great pre-AFF introduction to the world of skydiving. It will give you a nice stable body position, stop any unwanted turns and take away the initial fear and surprise of the wind in your face. Doing over 30 minutes during or before your AFF will give you a good introduction to your B-Rel's. You should be able to control your fall rate, turn in place, take docks and start to learn to fly in the burble. The tunnel is great at any stage of learning, but be prepared to start from the basics again. Take time to explore each new skill you've mastered. Don't think because you can now Sit-fly it's time to move onto Head-down. You've got docks, carving, transitions and group flight to master first. I spent a lot of time flying Sit and for that I'm grateful. My favourite trick is to stand on the heads of other flyers (safely)!

Will it help if I skydive from a plane first?

Not at all. People spend their entire flying career indoor skydiving without jumping out of a plane. If you are a skydiver, it does take some time to adjust to flying next to the tunnel walls. If you've never tried something before ask the instructor how to start. If you're struggling, your instructor can probably teach you an easier way to do it. I often tell experienced skydivers to relax, forget about what they think they know and listen to your instructor. When asked if it's easier to teach a skydiver or non-skydiver to fly, Kurmet says, "The experience, knowledge and passion for flying that a skydiver has gathered in the sky will definitely help him to understand the process in the tunnel. However, they should also understand there will be a difference between the two and should not get frustrated because it feels new to begin with. It's easier to mould someone's skills who doesn't have any previous bad habits. In my eyes neither is easier than the other, it's just different. I enjoy teaching people who are passionate about what they are doing and just willing to learn and progress in the sport."

Would you recommend getting a coach?

For sure I would! That's the benefit of the tunnel – you get instant in-air feedback. The other option is to figure it

out for yourself, which I did with Sit flying in the sky. I now have a really bad habit of flying with my chest forwards and arms back! Kurmet says, "If you're learning something new, I recommend you get a coach. It will make a big difference to have someone guiding you through this. Essentially you are building new muscle memory. Trial and error is not the quickest way. Once the coach has taught you the new skill, you are then good to go and consolidate on your own or with your mates." I say grab a coach for at least 50% of your time and 100% once you start to try Head-down. When I was learning Head-down and about to take off the net, my coach was telling me to straighten my arms and I'm giving him evil eyes to say they are straight, when in reality we reviewed the video and I look like an upside down T-rex trying to fly!

What about Tunnel Camps and Competitions?

I advise anyone to jump at the chance of joining a tunnel camp, even if you've only just mastered the basics. Tunnel Camps are intensive group coaching sessions with a dedicated coach. Different coaches can often give a fresh approach to your flying and will tailor each flight to suit the level of the student. iFly Downunder will be hosting camps and competitions for all skill levels to enjoy. You can always ask an instructor to assess your ability before putting your name down for a competition or event. If anything, you're going to have so much fun at these events!

Would I learn more from short but intensive coaching sessions?

I've done my tunnel time in little bits on a regular basis, and while I stay current, I do get excited (and a tad jealous) when I see a new flyer coming to the tunnel with no experience and leave a week later with the same level of flight I've achieved over three years! Kurmet reckons there's no advantage to either. "It's really personal preference. Whether you like to keep yourself constantly current with small amounts and progressing a bit slower or doing a big chunk in one go and feel that you've taken a big step with just a long weekend. Flying is like riding a bike. Once you learn and get comfortable flying a certain move, you will not lose it."

Although everyone's learning curve is different I usually say to skydivers who are coming for an intense week of learning that you can achieve a nice stable, controlled Belly-fly position and the six points of motion in ten minutes. You will have a good grip of Back-fly after 40 minutes, can master the basics of Sit-fly in three to five hours, and start to take off the net Head-down after five to twelve hours.

Once you are starting to lift off the net Head-down, there is still a whole heap of things to learn. BIG disclaimer: everyone learns at different rates. Recent student, James Garnaut from W.A. first headed to the tunnel with 80 jumps and a basic grasp of Sit-fly in the sky, and he booked five hours (all coached) over six days. He says "80% of my time was learning Back-flying, Belly to Back transitions and Head-up flying. For the last hour I began learning Head-down but did not get off the net. I definitely would not recommend doing more than an hour a day as you get physically and mentally fatigued." Fellow student, Zev Freeman from S.A., went from having zero Freely jumps and zero tunnel time to being able to fly Head-down and transition from Sit to Head-down in just one trip.

Tunnel doesn't help with exits you say?

But, it does help you to understand how to fly your body, Kurmet says, "It's all about muscle memory and feel for the wind. If your body understands the relative wind, you will figure out those exits faster. Soul Flyers, Fred Fugen and Vince Reffet, have said in a recent interview that all the new Freely base stuff they are doing, has a lot to thank for the tunnel practice they have had." It does take time to adjust to the sky, flying with a rig and having a much shorter time to complete your dive. After James' first tunnel trip he said, "I went straight into the sky and the Head-up skills I had learnt in the tunnel translated immediately and I was a completely different skydiver. It was awesome." But, after a second trip of five hours learning to fly Head-down, there was more of an adjustment period taking his new skills back into the sky. "When I returned to the sky after my second tunnel trip I found it initially really difficult to fly Head-down. It was frustrating because I was flying fine in the tunnel but due to perhaps some initial sensory overload and also the absence of tunnel walls, I was struggling to fall straight down. After about fifteen jumps it began to click and I started 'feeling the wind' on my legs and body again which lead to me being able to fly vertically." Zev quickly got back in the sky after his tunnel trip. "When I got home I was aware that some people had trouble bringing the skills back to the sky. I was lucky not to have too much trouble with a rig on and I made the most of it doing 53 jumps in the three weeks after I got home to make sure I cemented everything I had learnt."

Get Ready!

Start saving now. To help make the most of your tunnel experience, iFly Downunder is likely to release an 'early bird' offer in the coming months to those registered on the website (www.iFlyDownunder.com.au). Next is to plan your goals before your trip, talk to others who've flown, find a coach to suit your needs, speak to the tunnel staff about making a schedule to suit your time and budget, get involved in events, competition and camps, fly with your friends, fly hard, have fun and go put it all into practise in the sky!

As James puts it, "It's super fun, really rewarding, your skills progression is really fast, and it becomes a fun hobby that you can enjoy with your friends once your skill levels permit you to fly with them. Be warned though, it's highly addictive." And my favourite quote, which I may have to steal for future use comes from Zev, "Imagine being able to learn a musical instrument in just a few weeks!"

INTRODUCING THE IFLY DOWNUNDER CHIEF INSTRUCTOR

Name: Kurmet Jaadla

Age: 34

From: Estonia (somewhere in Europe!)

First Skydive: Summer 2006. IAD (Instructor Assisted Deployment) course.

Favourite Jump: No particular one. I like to move around. Steep and fast. Visually being in the air with 142 people was pretty sweet as well.

How did you first get a job in a tunnel? I looked up tunnels in the U.K. on the internet, just to go and fly. They were hiring, so I applied. That was nearly eight years ago.

Where else have you worked? I have worked for three different companies. Sub-contracts have taken me other places besides those tunnels. Geographically I've worked in U.K., Singapore, Spain, Russia and Dubai.

What would you say to anyone considering tunnel time? Do it! You will learn a lot. And don't forget to have fun!



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BFX Body Flight Exercises

Fitness Program for Skydivers and Tunnel Flyers

By Sayuri Itikawa

This training fitness program has been developed especially to improve Body Flight Skills. It was created by Joao Tambor, the co-producer with Skydive University of the "Learning to Free Fly - DVD series".

The results achieved with this practice extend beyond improved flight performance, to achieving a better quality of life, body posture, muscle tone, body awareness, concentration, and a calm state of mind.

Body Flight is a sport that uses the body's aerodynamic form to fly around in freefall, or in a column of air. Each basic body position requires the action of a specific muscle group. The specific functional exercises of BFX use the conditioning and motor coordination applied in all basic flight positions in the context of visualisation exercises. "Fly with your imagination to a better quality of life, so you can fly better with your own body throughout the blue skies"

The type of muscle workout used in this new sport is very similar to aqua-gym practice. The wind has almost as much resistance to the body's motions as water does, but air is less dense, and body movements can be executed more dynamically, as well as performed in multiple directions. The main type of muscle contraction is isometric, the muscle group engages without resulting in movement. The muscle contractions alternate very quickly between the agonist and antagonist muscles; and the eccentric contraction is very intense.

The BFX training program is thematic, with visualisation techniques that use an action sport as motivation to execute physical exercises. It is a way of distracting your busy mind with the sensation of flying, while improving your state of calm.

WARNING

"The professionals involved in this production: developers, producers, production crew, performers, magazines, websites, and trainers are not responsible in any way whatsoever, for any injury that may result from practicing the techniques and/or following the instructions provided therein."

We strongly recommend that you get assistance from a qualified professional, especially if you are not used to any type of workout.

We recommend you seek professional feedback when you begin this type of exercise. Practicing on your own will be safer after you develop better body awareness during the exercises.

PARACHUTE OPENING – BODY POSITION – SAFETY

Before you start, get two flexible obstacles to simulate wind pressure, place one at each end of an exercise mat. You can use a rolled mat or a pillow.



Place one in front of your head, and the other below your feet.

To begin, lay face down on a mat. Your arms should be bent at about 90 degrees in front of you, and your legs should be pressing down slightly on the obstacle. This is the starting position.

Simulate the pull command of the main parachute by bringing your right hand down your side to your lower back, and placing your left hand in front of your head, while pressing down on the obstacle. Increase the pressure your feet exert on the obstacle while moving your arms.

BASIC BELLY FLY – ARM SYMMETRY – MIRROR

The goal of this exercise is to practice arm positioning for the Belly Fly position, and to improve peripheral visual orientation awareness.

Start position: stand up in front of a mirror with your arms bent at 90 degrees, elbows in line with shoulders, just like in the basic Belly Fly position.

Close your eyes and relax your arms down by the sides of your torso.

Keep your eyes closed and bring your arms back to the start position.

Open your eyes and check if your arms are actually in the right position. Repeat over and over again until your proprioception is well developed, so your arms are at the position for Belly Fly.



BELLY FLY – PERFORMING STABLE TURNS WITH ARMS

Get a stick about 5ft long to use as an alignment guide for the torso as you simulate a Belly Fly turn.

To begin, lie face down on a mat. Your arms should be bent at about 90 degrees with the stick placed behind your neck, and under your forearms.

Arch your spine and twist slightly, simulating the turn. Touch the end of the stick to the floor while maintaining the same shoulder alignment.



BELLY FLY – ISOMETRIC SPINAL EXERCISE

Positioned on the mat, on your hands and knees, lift your left arm and right leg. Hold them for thirty seconds while keeping your abdominal muscles firm.

Switch sides, and lift the right arm and the left leg, keeping your core muscles tight and holding the position for thirty seconds.

This exercise helps improve core strength, as well as stable turns while flying in the belly position.



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BE SMART, SHOW RESTRAINT & BUCKLE UP!

A Safety Message brought to you by the APF Safety Team



safety matters



Compiled by:
Kim Hardwick

The lessons of skydiving are written in the blood of our friends. Those who do not heed these lessons are destined to repeat them. There's no dishonour in falling victim to a truly unique accident. But to screw up in a way that that has been fatal many times before – well, that's just dumb.

Sometimes it's the Simplest Things

Sometimes we witness accidents in this sport that make ZERO sense to us. It's easy to sit at the computer and sip some coffee and Monday morning quarterback an incident. Skydivers get on forums and start to wildly speculate, bring up physics charts, call people dinosaurs and tell all sorts of "no shit, there I was stories".

When an incident happens, sometimes it's the simplest of answers as to why.

The following is a list of just some of the common traits that have been itemised during interviews after incidents from surviving jumpers:

- I thought I was higher.
- I thought I had more time.
- I thought I could fix it.
- I thought I could land it.
- I panicked.
- I was scared and froze up.
- I brain locked on my cutaway and Reserve handle, which was which.
- I heard my audible blasting in my ear and was distracted by it.
- I didn't do a canopy control check.
- I didn't look before I turned.
- I thought I tracked far enough.
- I looked at my canopy and didn't realise it was a step through and thought I could fix it.
- I froze up.
- I was told by a jumper once to... [insert bad advice here].
- I never had a cutaway before and was scared to chop.

Low cutaway incidents (including resulting in fatalities) seem to be on the increase in the worldwide stats. Do we have a training issue or a complacency issue?

Stay current, review your Emergency Procedures. Ask an instructor for advice if you're not sure. Know your gear!

Sometimes it's just the simple things...

The following are taken verbatim from a selection of incidents as reported to the APF and are published in the interest of safety education. (Note: In general, no tandem or student incidents are included.) While every effort is made to ensure accuracy, neither the APF nor ASM make any representations about their accuracy, as information is based on incident reports as received.

AIRCRAFT/EXITS

Certificate E, 794 jumps. Followed out 18-way as second last diver. Hit door with hand resulting in soft tissue injury.

Certificate E, 7,000 jumps. On exit jumper was positioned inside aircraft for a 6-way Flat RW launch. Mistimed exit, launched up and jumper's left ankle connected with inside of upper door frame, resulting in severe bruising. Immediate pain but continued with the jump. **Action:** More careful with set-up and exit procedures.

Certificate B, 130 jumps. Performed gear checks pre-flight as per normal with no fault appearing.

On ascent at the three minute light, felt Reserve pin pop and saw pilot chute beside container. Had felt no snag on the container prior. The Reserve was strategically extracted and smothered. Jumper was placed up the front next to the pilot and landed with the aircraft. **Action:** More care to be taken with protecting container when moving in aircraft.

FREEFALL

Certificate D, 599 jumps (J1) and E with 5,000 jumps (J2). J1 joined the group at the emplaning area (as did J2). J1 was a floater and planning on being on his belly with the group. J2 was one of the last divers and was aggressively diving towards the base, who was the Tutor and also one of the last divers. As J2 was approaching the base he collided with J1, his right shoulder and jaw impacting with J1's right arm and ribs. J1 suffering a broken wrist, chose to get away from jump run and deploy at 5,000ft. He first checked to see if he could reach his BOC handle. He landed safely without further incident.

J2 blacked out momentarily then remained conscious in freefall. With a broken right collarbone, he tracked off jump run and opted to deploy his Main. Under canopy he was in pain and drowsy. He opted to hold his toggles at shoulder height. Landed into wind. Landed heavily as he was unable to flare properly. No injuries were sustained on landing.

Action: The entire Boogie was completely debriefed by the tutors and DZSO. The debrief included:

- Flying within limits.
- Being part of the entire briefing process and not joining groups together at the emplaning area.
- Personal Responsibility. Flying with groups within your own limits.
- Choice of deploying Main or Reserve. At the end of the day they made the right decision because they both landed safely. However J2 was dizzy and nauseous throughout the descent and may have found it easier to land a Reserve.
- Not putting the base so far back in the stack-up so that everyone can see and work towards the base.
- The whole emergency plan worked well. Our own paramedics did an awesome job as did everyone else that helped.

Certificate F, 3,700 jumps. Shoulder had dislocated two days previously on a landing. Shoulder had relocated itself and despite advice to seek medical attention, jumper decided to continue to jump – participating in National Championships. Jump went as planned until break-off. On tracking, arm moved back and dislocation reoccurred.

Normal opening. Difficult half-flare landing with no further injury. **Action:** No jumping until cleared by Doctor.

Certificate F, 2,573 jumps. Participating in a Flat RW, jumper's arm was dislocated when another jumper docked hard, vertically on it. Landed in a lot of pain. **Action:** Shoulder relocated by medical staff at hospital. To wear a brace when continuing jumping.

Certificate E, 1,280 jumps. Freefall collision which dislodged cutaway handle. Tracked off as per normal. When jumper deployed the Main, it disconnected and Skyhook activated Reserve deployment. Jumper was under Reserve immediately. **Action:** More care in freefall.

DEPLOYMENTS / MALFUNCTIONS

Certificate E, 890 jumps. Excess line from stowed brake blew up over toggle. Jumper did not realise until went to release brakes. Left brake knotted up and couldn't move. Cutaway at 2,000ft. DZSO noted: Inspection of gear shows excessive line length between toggle and keeper – half hitch. **Action:** Pay attention to excess line in stowed brake before releasing brakes.

Certificate D, 234 jumps. Wingsuit jump went to plan. On deployment, unable to find handle. Saw 2,000ft on Alti, continued to search for Main handle. Deployed Main, fully opened. ~ three seconds later, Reserve opened – AAD activated. Two canopies out in bi-plane configuration, flying straight and in control. Landed biplane in safe area. Jumper advised he was using borrowed gear. Main handle was smaller than what he had used before, and the temp was very cold. **Action:** Jumper was counselled on going low and deploying Main, not Reserve. Will not use borrowed gear, and if in a low situation, will deploy Reserve, not Main.

Certificate D, 380 jumps. Jumper executing a Mr Bill exit with a Hop 'n' Pop deployment. Canopy opened with line twists, canopy diving, jumper spinning on back. Tried unsuccessfully to kick out the twists. Elected to cutaway at ~8,000ft due to starting to black out. Reserve opening and landing OK. Jumper landed back on the DZ. Main and Reserve freebag were not recovered. **Action:** Jumper advised against doing a Mr Bill on a Katana 150 with a wing loading of 1.4.

Certificate E, 1,900 jumps. On deployment (stable body position) at 3,200ft, Main canopy wound up, spiralling fast, clockwise. Held onto rear risers for <1 second, canopy continued to wind up faster. Decided to cutaway, very difficult to bring arms in – two attempts to bring hands onto handles. Cutaway Main and deployed Reserve. Reserve open at 1,700ft. Later inspection of the Main canopy found the magnetic D-bag was latched onto top skin of Main canopy. Looks like the magnetic D-bag launched, the canopy extracted, and then the empty D-bag bounced back onto the canopy during the opening sequence and latched back onto the canopy gathering an amount of fabric (top skin) – had a spinning malfunction.

The canopy was a JFX 124, the brakes were still both correctly stowed (inspected on landing). Looks like the 12 magnets all clustered together – the bridle section between the canopy and the D-bag was twisted up, with 3-4 twists (it had no twists when packed: "I am a little meticulous like that!"). The pilot chute was brand new Mirage, stock (three jumps) – F111. **Action:** Continue with established procedures. Notify magnetic D-bag manufacturers.

Certificate F, 4,200 jumps. At the end of 2-way Freefly jump, had planned to deploy from the back of a Rodeo. Rodeo was unstable but elected to commence Main deployment anyway resulting in a violent spinning malfunction. Unable to clear the malfunction – commenced Emergency Procedures at ~5,000ft. Regained stability, opened Reserve at ~4,200ft. Uneventful landing. **Action:** Deploy belly to earth and stable, especially on highly loaded cross brace canopy. Don't make stupid decisions.

Certificate C, 161 jumps. Camera taken off by the riser. Camera, still in the box was later found by a local farmer and returned to the owner. **Action:** From inspecting the camera box it was obvious that there was no backing washer on the attachment bolts and the box was easily ripped off. Had the

washers been installed the camera and box would not have become detached.

Certificate D, 476 jumps. Exited at 6,500ft, freefall went as planned and deployed Main at 4,000ft. When Main deployed the left hand toggle was dislodged so released the right hand toggle to stop the canopy turning. On further inspection the excess steering line on the left hand side was wrapped around the toggle and rear riser. Could not rectify and initiated Emergency Procedures at 3,000ft. Reserve opening was normal and landed approximately 500m off the drop zone without further incident.

Action: Take more care when setting brakes.

Certificate C, 191 jumps. Opened Main at ~3,000ft. Experienced spiralling malfunction caused by incorrectly stowed left brake. Experienced difficulty cutting away – attempted two handed pull (wasn't peeling). Due to getting lower fast, elected to deploy Reserve, resulting in two canopies out in a downplane configuration. Finally cutaway Main at ~900ft. **Action:** More care taken with brake stowage. Practice of peeling action on cutaway to perfect the drill.

Certificate A, 32 jumps. There were a couple of knots in the left-hand side lines. Tried a few flares and that didn't fix it so cutaway and deployed Reserve. Landing was good. Main recovered only a few hundred metres off drop zone.

Action: Look at packing procedures.

Certificate C, 161 jumps. Deployed Main at 3,000ft. Had tension knots on left from line group above the slider. Attempted to clear. Cutaway and deployed Reserve. Under Reserve by 1,800ft. **Action:** Extra care to be taken when placing the canopy on the ground when packing.

TENSION KNOTS

Reprinted with permission from the USPA 'Parachutist' May 2013 Issue 643

Q: What are tension knots, and how can I avoid them?

A: Tension knots occur when two or more of a canopy's lines tangle during deployment and then lock together when tension is applied (i.e., when the canopy starts to inflate and the lines are placed under a load). A tension knot most frequently involves a brake line. Because a brake line is free at the riser end, it is easy for it to twist up (particularly if the jumper is not in the habit of stowing his toggles back on the risers after landing). Jumpers need to periodically untwist their brake lines so that the twists don't become so severe that they cause the lines to loop and wrap around nearby suspension lines during deployment.

Image Right. This twisted brake line illustrates how tension knots can form.

John LeBlanc, Vice President of Performance Designs, offered these additional observations and some advice about tension knots gleaned from his more than 30 years in the parachute business:

- Use the same type and size stow bands. This helps to keep the tension on each line bight (the loop of line after each stow band) equal so that the lines unstow in an orderly fashion. A loose stow can lead to a premature release of the entire bight of suspension line during deployment. This out-of-sequence unstowing leaves a lot of slack in the lines and provides the lines more opportunity to wrap around each other and lock into a tension knot once they are pulled tight during canopy inflation.
- Old and fuzzy suspension lines have a greater chance of knotting than new, smooth lines.



- Pack by keeping even tension on the canopy, as well as the line stows. Sloppy and uneven cascade lines are actually caused by uneven tension throughout the canopy surfaces during packing, so sort out the sloppy lines by packing the canopy neatly. Trying to stuff loose lines up under the tail of the canopy or milking the loose lines down to the risers will lead to large loops of loose suspension line and a greater chance of experiencing a tension knot.

Image Right. Sloppy line bights such as these can lead to tension knots forming during deployment.



Tension knots have been around as long as there have been parachutes. Careful packing and regular maintenance are the keys to ensuring that you don't end up with a malfunction due to a tangled mess of lines.

Jim Crouch | D-16979 USPA Director of Safety & Training

CANOPY CONTROL/LANDINGS

Certificate F, 1,090 jumps. Third accuracy jump on this canopy in previous 24 hours, the previous jump safely onto Tuffet and Pad. Normal approach into wind, about half brakes, focused on centre of target. Forgot to fly a little more over top of target for finals, resulting in landing short a few metres. Let brakes up to recover approach at about 50ft, then threw legs forward in failed attempt to improve score. Landed with legs outstretched on edge of Tuffet, bouncing back off Tuffet onto ground, injuring lower back. 25% crush fracture of L2 and associated lower back muscle trauma. **Action:** Following incident, jumper spoke with judges present, other witnesses and experienced accuracy jumpers. He has reminded himself not to have target fixation at the expense of a safe landing. Also knows not to risk landing on edge of Tuffet – either centred or clear of the side.

Certificate D, 451 jumps. Jumper making first night jump. Exit and freefall uneventful, however canopy opened with line twists. He was unable to clear so initiated Emergency Procedure. On landing approach in the illuminated landing zone, he was observed by the CI to flare high (20ft) and induced a dynamic stall at ~10ft, landing very heavily on outstretched arms. Dislocated shoulder. **Action:** Reinforce importance in all jumpers of the need to practice flare/stalls at height when using Reserve parachute.

Certificate D, 553 jumps. The RW jump itself went well. Jumper setup for final landing approach and during the first stage of the flare the canopy appeared to (continue) to lose altitude and he landed heavily on his left wrist, breaking it. **Action:** Jumper should have performed a PLF. He had completed three jumps the previous day without incident. He is used to jumping at a DZ with a lower elevation AMSL and perhaps the higher elevation played a role in the bad landing.

Certificate C, 119 jumps. Participating in Sports Accuracy competition. Exit, opening and canopy control OK until set-up. On finals executed erratic toggle movements making a low turn with ¼ to ½ flare, landing downwind. Impacted ground on bottom and slid, suffering a broken coccyx and grazed leg. **Action:** Was reminded of the briefing made before the competition: "Nothing silly and no low turns" and the importance of these.

Certificate F, 6,000 jumps. Before exit, winds had been checked to be 16kts to occasional gusts to 20. Under canopy, jumper headed back to the DZ. There were four other canopies on Western side below and above, so approached from the East. Started turn for landing at ~800ft. About 1-2 seconds into the turn, strong wind picked up the canopy taking it towards the hangar. Jumper landed on the hangar (South side) ~1m from the edge. Picked up and thrown onto the top of the hangar a 9m distance. Canopy was still inflated and it dragged the jumper down the North side of the hangar (pm) to the edge. Managed

to cutaway with left hand as right shoulder was dislocated. **Action:** Winds were strongest below 1,000ft. Unforecast weather, hard to say what could be done to prevent freak gust coming from nowhere.

Certificate A, 45 jumps. On late final, jumper realised would not clear fence, so turned low to avoid and impacted while turning. Was a single toggle turn. Suffered sprained fingers/hand and a black eye. **Action:** Jumper counselled to: 1) Avoid at height, 2) Use a flat turn if low (and flat turns explained), 3) Do not turn low.

Certificate E, 891 jumps. Wingsuit jump. Jumper turned and got on front risers to land. Attempting to go from front to rears of the Crossfire 104, jumper's gloved hand got caught in the slider and he failed to flare. Landed heavily on backside. DZSO note: Front risers were released too late. Jumper had been told previously that he was letting up his front risers too low. Had also been told by an experienced (IB) skydiver to stow his slider behind his head to improve flight characteristics of the canopy. **Action:** Cause: Late release of front risers + unfamiliar slider stowage + gloves catching. Jumper to undertake some proper coaching and analysis with a CP coach.

New Vigil Service Bulletins

The following message was provided by AAD.

Advanced Aerospace Designs (AAD) has released two new Product Service Bulletins #9 and #10 regarding their Vigil AAD, plus their new "Multimode Vigil II User's Manual US v II.0.6" which is available to download at <http://www.vigil.aero/wp-content/uploads/Vigil-II-users-manual-II.0.6.pdf>

Please read both PSBs and the new manual carefully. Excerpts only below. Both SBs can be downloaded from the APF web site www.apf.asn.au

- **PSB 9, issued 14th June 2013** is regarding the waterproof of Vigil II. AFTER water immersion, it is now MANDATORY to send back the unit to A.A.D. for inspection. Vigils that have not been in contact with water, are not concerned with this PSB. The Vigil II is waterproof. This bulletin is a precautionary measure in case moisture penetrates the seal of the unit.

- **PSB 10, issued 14th June 2013** is regarding the 14 hour forced shut down for Vigil II units from S/N 26172 or higher. This Advisory is NOT MANDATORY. Customers who wish can have their Vigil II (S/N 11800 until S/N 26171) upgraded to main software 2.50 or higher, to avoid "Airborne" situations. For more info, please contact A.A.D. (Brussels, Belgium) or Vigil America (Deland, Florida).

- The "Multimode Vigil II User's Manual US v II.0.6" has some changes concerning water immersion and forced 14 hour shut down. Please read it carefully.

As always we stay at your disposal for your further questions.

Best regards,

Willy Boeykens willy@vigil.aero

New Sun Path Service Bulletin 009 Rev-0 Issued 23/05/13

Mandatory inspection (BEFORE NEXT JUMP) and replacement of recalled housings (as necessary at next repack cycle).

Identification: All JA101-XX harness container assemblies (Javelin Odyssey) with metal flex housing batch #33234A and 33277, .375ID PS70104 housings. (Serial Number list included in SB009 Rev-0)

Download the full SB from the APF web site at www.apf.asn.au for details on Background, Who can Inspect, Photos, What to Inspect, Procedure, Inspection Results and Resolution

When Gravity Attacks

By Terry Wahlen

This Sporting Life

"Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all" Helen Keller

My dictionary defines sport as "an athletic activity requiring skill or physical prowess and often of a competitive nature."

It follows therefore that some people would choose a sport based upon their innate physical abilities, perhaps deciding to use their muscular strength and agility to play rugby league or soccer. Others might employ their superior hand-eye coordination and play a game requiring a deft touch like tennis or golf.

Looking around the drop zone has me wondering what skill or physical attribute we bring to our chosen sport, because there certainly doesn't appear to be any obvious pattern lurking there. The fact that we tell our students that skydiving is 5% physical and 95% mental supports those findings.

I see tall people, short people, fat people and thin people. The young and the not so young. People shaped like cannonballs and some shaped like stick insects. It seems there's no pattern required where gravity's concerned.

Another thought sometimes enters my head too – why do these people skydive?

Often the first thing someone will say when they find out I'm a skydiver is "why would anyone jump out of a perfectly serviceable aeroplane?" My common response is that not all aeroplanes are perfect.

It's obviously not the real reason I choose to throw myself at the ground from a great height. No, for me it's something I've always wanted to do, ever since I first drew parachutes in my schoolbooks when I was a kid.

I now have the chance to discover why other people want to jump. For the last few months I've been running first jump courses, and as part of the introductions I ask my students why they want to jump.

I get some pretty good answers.

Some say it's for the sheer bloody thrill of falling, facing a basic fear all humans possess. Others reckon it's intended to be a stepping-stone, a way to move into more demanding areas such as BASE jumping or proximity flying. Many tell me they've seen "that bloke in

the bat suit" on television, and thought it looked like a cool thing to do.

For some it's on their bucket list.

There are a couple of other reasons to throw yourself out of a perfectly good aeroplane. Skydivers can have three-ways as often as they like – and no one judges them, and in freefall "head-down" with another bloke is an acceptable form of behaviour.

Everybody is affected by gravity - it's how you use it that matters.

Living the dream

I just had an excellent weekend.

I was down at Bridgewater drop zone in Victoria where I was the instructor for eight people intent on becoming part of a very select group – that group who find absolute bliss in falling towards the planet at high speed.

I take great delight in hearing why people want to skydive, and as part of the introduction to the course I try to get into the students heads to see how they tick. This group's reasons for considering skydiving as a form of relaxation were as varied as they were valid.

The Power of Advertising The cool, young dude who wore his pants down around his knees in the contemporary style and buried his head in a hoodie. He just wanted to experience something he'd seen on television.

Payback The older lady on the course just wanted to get back into it having already experienced two tandem skydives before she completed an AFF course and did her Stage 1 jump twelve years ago. She'd gone on to have children and do the domestic thing after that first free fall jump and thought it was now time to do something for herself.

Wait For Me! A group of three young blokes booked in together; two of them wanted to jump and eventually fly wingsuits, and the third decided he wouldn't be able to cope if they got to that stage and he was left behind to play catch-up.

Peer Pressure The young lady on the course who succumbed to continual badgering from two of her friends who were already accomplished skydivers.

What About Me? (perhaps a subset of the Mid Life Crisis group) - The forty-year old gentleman who decided that now was the right time to give it a go considering he'd done the "marry and have kids, get a mortgage and be a slave to The Man" part of life.

Fear No Evil (Kneivel?) The last member of the group who said he'd never found anything in life that scared him. He was hoping skydiving might be able to unclog his adrenal gland.

Eight souls from completely different walks of life, each looking for that certain, special something.

They handled the theory part of the course well, assimilating the information with interest and enthusiasm, and in the process asked some very good questions. There was none of the "how many people die" stuff I sometimes get asked by students.

They also coped well with the practical drills, especially the emergency procedures section. When you tell someone their Reserve parachute isn't their second chance it's their last chance it's amazing how quickly their ears prick up and their attention becomes focussed.

The overnight break from the classroom allowed their brains to analyse and sort all of the information they'd been given, and the next day they arrived eager and for the most part totally on top of their drills.

Some intense workouts in the training harnesses proved they had reached the required standard, and it was with a great deal of pride that I watched each of them being geared-up and escorted to the aircraft.

As each one landed their parachute I experienced that feeling I hope will never disappear. It's the reason I drive nearly two thousand kilometres on the second weekend of each month to run the AFF course.

Eight people just threw themselves at the ground from a great height and missed.

All walked away with a smile.

Living the Dream - The guy who gets to do this every month: me.

It's the best job in the world.



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DZ DAYZ



2013 VAUGHAN CUP: 4-WAY FS COMP

By Kate Leszyk

The 2013 "Vaughan Cup" held at Bridgewater in April, saw the face-off of two 4-way teams led by Australian 4-way FS team, Rotor Out's Craig Vaughan and Steph Vaughan, battling it out for the unquestionably priceless Vaughan Cup trophy and a grand cash prize of \$2 which was proudly donated by Little John. This spontaneously and ever so generously donated cash prize was just the cherry on top of the already enormous stakes at hand given the competition present between the two teams: Husband vs. Wife (Craig and Steph Vaughan), Father vs. Son (Bernie and Ash Armstrong), Brother vs. Sister (Mike and Kate Leszyk) and Friend vs. Friend (Drew Hullin and Ashlee Arnold).

We couldn't have asked for better weather for the day. Mother Nature really came out in her jump day best; the sun was shining and the winds were light. Wheels were off at 9:21am, much to the event organiser, Drew Hullin's dismay who had bet a slab that we'd have wheels off by 9:20am. Tough break, Drew... The sweet taste of beer put on by the Bridgy Slab-Nazi himself was savoured by all.

First to stack up for Round 1 was team "Hard Core Vaughan" (Craig, Bernie, Drew and Kate, Amanda Leckie on camera), followed by "The VaughanStars" (Steph, Ash, Mike and Ash, Cory Betts on camera). This exit order was then held for the day.

Bernie incurred a shoulder injury in Round 1 and had to graciously bow out. Matty Courtney (aka "Kiwi") valiantly stepped up to the plate and took Bernie's place on the team for the remainder of the day.

The competition was head-to-head. "Hard Core Vaughan" got off to a head start in the first round which was then overtaken by "The VaughanStars" in Round 2. "The VaughanStars" maintained the lead by a bee's dick through Round 3. The video debrief of the fourth and final round had everyone on the edge of their seats as we all envisioned how we were going to spend our share of the \$2 cash prize. "Hard Core Vaughan" stole the win from under "The VaughanStars" nose in the end with a smashing ten point jump on the final round.

The final score tally looked a little something like this:

Round 1 (H.M.B.P):

- The VaughanStars, 6 points
- Hard Core Vaughan, 7 points.

Round 2 (F.21.E):

- The VaughanStars, 7 points
- Hard Core Vaughan, 5 points.

Round 3 (19.6): Tied Round

- The VaughanStars, 6 points
- Hard Core Vaughan, 6 points

Round 4 (A.D.8):

- The VaughanStars, 5 points
- Hard Core Vaughan, stole the show with a smashing 10 points!

All in all, the event was not only great fun and a fantastic learning experience for all who participated, but also saw Mike signed off for his B-Rel 10s – Kudos Mike and thanks for the beer. The day also brought about some smooth exits, some stylish flying, some fast points and some interesting landings.

Big thanks to Drew and Bernie for organising the day, Ralph for hosting, Craig and Steph for their time and fantastic coaching, Jimmy Bawden for his piloting mastery as always, and to the camera flyers for capturing the event in all its awesomeness.

Let's all get training for the 2014 Vaughan Cup!



CANOPY ANTICS ON THE COAST

By Geri Huthison

Charades, spag' bol', Gordon Ramsay, fuel crisis, antique can openers, streamers, sucker holes, a typhoon and "Armageddon". This, plus some skydiving, were all part and parcel of the canopy course held at the Moruya drop zone on 20 and 21 April 2013, run by none other than Canopy Master herself, Jules McConnel.

While "typhoon" may be a slight exaggeration, the fifteen skydivers hopeful of becoming canopy rock stars were welcomed by a torrential downpour and strong winds. An overnight deluge, which started the day before the course, continued well past the 8am start on the Saturday. Undeterred however, we each reported our skydiving experience and what we were hoping to achieve from the course. The responses ranged from wanting to gain more confidence under canopy, to improving landing accuracy. For the more experienced jumpers, it was about learning how to smash out some high performance canopy manoeuvres. In addition to our own goals, Jules provided instruction to aid in refining our canopy skills: collapsing sliders, loosening chest straps, checking emergency handles, using our harnesses to turn and working our risers like a boss.

The skies didn't clear until well into the afternoon by which time we had strengthened our friendships over a pub meal by promising our first born to each other. With the winds no less than 25 knots from 1,000 feet upwards, only those with iron clad genitalia (also known as having a 'B' licence minimum) were keen to head up for a Hop'n'Pop. The first load was led by Phielix Huibert whose first attempt at a swoop was nothing short of sensational. The rest of the group executed landing circuits that would warm even Chuck Norris' heart of stone. Matter of fact, over the course of the entire weekend, aside from a handful of landings where



Dan

jumpers didn't finish their flare, resulting in impromptu Downward Dog stances, no one left any butt imprints while landing their jumps!

After a night of frivolity and frustration involving Gordon Ramsay cooking tips and a can opener that even a Google search failed to identify how to operate, Sunday morning arrived in bedazzling fashion: nothing but sunshine and close to nil ground winds. Still on a high from the previous day's success, Swoop-Master-in-the-making, Phielix, was frothing at the mouth to get back in the skies. Sadly, the petrol bowser at Moruya airport didn't share his enthusiasm. Embracing our inner drop zone meerkat, we would occasionally stand to attention and cast our eyes fervently towards the airport in the hopes of seeing our fearless leader, Plankton, come blazing across the airstrip in a streak of victorious blue and white after defeating the offending bowser. Alas, it was not to be. With both planes limited to Hop'n'Pop heights and quickly running out of fuel, only a handful of loads were carried out before lunch.



Eventually enough fuel was able to be siphoned from the bowser to get VH-OZA to Merimbula, and then later with VH-OZX. All the while, our manifesting maestro Shana Harris coordinated multiple tandem loads with Hop'n'Pops, so that by the last loads of the day, both planes were essentially run dry.

There was much excitement throughout the day! One particular load saw us packed in like sardines more than usual, resulting in a premature deployment, ARMAGEDDON!, of Scott Pierce's rig. "Hawkeye" Shane McKeon was all over it, and as graceful as a flamingo on roller skates, Scott turned himself around to smother his rig, allowing the rest of the load to exit safely. A few jumpers got to show off their cheerleading skills by gallivanting across the skies with streamers trailing behind them. Any spectator would have been forgiven for thinking that flatulence was part of the technique used to help us turn our canopies when coming in to land – who knew that the rather conspicuous lifting of one's hip would prove to be a rather effective alternative to toggles in turning in the opposite direction?

Nine of the fifteen participants popped their canopy course cherry, whilst the others had done at least one before, returning hungry for more enlightenment. Experience levels ranged from 'A' to 'E' licence and between them they managed 78 jumps – pretty good for one and a bit days of jumping!

Despite the obstacles which threatened to keep us grounded over the weekend, thanks to the efforts of the drop zone crew and the camaraderie of all involved, plus a little assistance from Mother Nature and the planets aligning, the canopy course was nothing short of a success. I'm certain that I can be forgiven for being so bold as to declare that, quite frankly, we were all pretty awesome. I know I walked away with a sense of pride and new found confidence in my flying skills, together with a warm fuzzy feeling in my nether regions that had absolutely nothing to do with a gerbil whatsoever. ARMAGEDDON!

Thank you to Skydive Oz, Jules McConnel and the N.S.W. Parachute Council for making this event a huge success!



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FREE FLY ON THE COAST

By *Matty Alison and Jules McConnell*

Ah, just another ripper weekend down in the moo! Arriving to the standard sound of Nugget's high pitched laugh on Friday is always a settling feeling. The caravan arrived the next morning packed to the brim with frothing jumpers keen to learn some Freefly skills from the two super coaches, Dan Smith and Jimmy Cooper.

A briefing and it was time to get the fun started. It was all about nailing some Head-up flying and running some Angles. Catering to all skill levels and debriefing with videos meant progression was quick during the day. Angles were tighter, points were quicker, and sit flying was steadier. Finishing off with a sunset Angle was a personal highlight along with Elliot's 200th. With everyone on the ground safely it was smiles and high fives all round.

A heap of milestones were reached:

- Elliot Parsons' 200th and 'D' Licence.
- Jess Ciocci's 100th and 'C' Licence.
- Adam Pank, Jarrod Norman and Ian Brooks' Undie 100th – all had their 'C' Licences signed off!
- Jimmy Paton's 200th and 'D' Licence.
- Jimmy Gordon and James Marshall had their 'B' Licence signed off.
- Ash Darby got his 'E' Licence.
- Nick Armstrong got his 'A' Licence.
- Candy Slatter finished her AFF jumps while James Sherrah and Harry Edwards, who were also on the course, had their 'A' Licence signed off.
- Nathan Hansar, Rob Spink, Dan Butcher, Gordon Reyburn, Scott Pierce, Adam Pank, Shana Harris and Dale Parsons were all signed off for Night Relative work.
- Tommer Vrdi and Jeremy Olexa got their Freefly crests.

Congratulations to them all. I'm sure we will share many, many more jumps in the future. The bell was rung more than any other weekend I have been down. The evening kicked off earlier for some who weren't fast enough to get their name down for night jumps a few weeks before.



Night jumps always get the nerves and excitement at a high level for everyone; even if you were like me and just watching landings. The expert and detailed briefing from Jules together with specific planning put everyone at ease. For some it was their first night jumps [= more beer], and for others there was some Relative work from height.

Sunday was another blue bird day and the first load was filled in no time. It was a diverse jumping day with Star Crest loads and Flat Flying being organised by the all energising Rod, Wingsuits, Angles, Head-up and B-Rels could all be on the same load. Again, progression was the aim of the game, and again under the expert eye of Jimmy and Dan, everyone got the job done. Personally I don't think there is a better feeling than getting down after nailing something that you have been working on all weekend. The crew was keen all day and loads were run up until the sun started going down and the Caravan had to head back to the Gong. Loaded up again with some of



the most content people in the world at that point, I think 'successful weekend' is an understatement.

Thanks everyone who I jumped with and everyone who made the weekend fun. None of this would ever happen without the constant work of all of the moo crew: Jules, Dan, Jimmy, Casey, Poo, Sharna (unlucky with the car), Bec, Nugget, Cam for running the Angles, and the pilots, Plankton and Nick. One last special thank you to the N.S.W. Parachute Council for their support of this event.

I'm sure everyone who was there will have no second thoughts about returning for the next one! Cheers!



Scott Perkins doing his 100th jump, a reversed tandem into Mr Bill, with TMBen Nordkamp.

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Photo by Belgium Steve

STAR CREST SUMMER

By Kelly Brennan, Organiser,
Skydive Nagambie's Star Crest Saturdays

A constellation of Star Crest'ers brightened up Nagambie's skies last summer. Some goodwill from the weather gods ensured a second successful series of the organised skydives.

The beer bell rang loud on the first Saturday of each month during daylight savings, with eighteen skydivers achieving their Australian Star Crest. The smiles weren't just confined to the Star Crest'ers though. Across the six months, forty-six jumpers came to play. Some of them were there to help their mates gather those important signatures, some were Big-way jumpers keeping their skills up, and some had important reasons of their own for getting back into larger Belly-flying formations.

Visitors joined us from Singapore, Sydney, Canberra, Adelaide and Gundagai over the course of the series. The town of Nagambie may well pride itself as the birthplace of Black Caviar, but the drop zone and its special events are also proving popular.

A couple of our players needed the ASC to pursue their instructor ratings. Others were hoping to chase Big-way achievements in Freeflying or Flocking. A handful were using the dives to practice formation skills for the Malaysian Boogie.

Just like any structured training program, the support of experienced skydivers was vital to our event. Without those people willing to invest their cash and time, the Star Crest



days could not have happened. Some of these experienced skydivers came to all six days, while some popped in for just one or two.

Camera jumpers and coaches volunteered their time and effort, many of them sacrificing a day's skydiving income to support the Star Crest program.

Also vital to our success was the sponsor support. Skydive Nagambie provided load organiser slots and manifest support to keep us in the sky, even on the busiest days. The APF's 'Fi Fund' and the Vic-Tas Parachute Council funded most of the camera slots, ensuring that every dive could be properly debriefed and every participant, beginner or experienced, could see ways to improve their skydiving. All of this helped keep the costs down. Participants paid, in addition to their jump tickets, a registration of just \$20 for all of the days, or \$10 per day.

The jumps themselves focussed on discipline and safety, with some excellent tracking. We varied the degree of difficulty according to each group's progress. There were a couple of 3-point 10-ways and we also had some fun with pretty streamer jumps. After sweltering through four terrific skydives on a forty-five degree day, we ditched our jumpsuits for the fifth jump and built a nice Star in our shorts and t-shirts. This was no easy feat with players of all shapes and sizes but it was a great reminder about how much the right Rel-suits normally help us.



Of course, structured events like this are not the only way to get your Star Crest. If you can gather eight to ten appropriately skilled jumpers at your drop zone, including at least two Star Crest holders – but preferably at least five of them – then you can do these jumps at any time. Therein lays the problem. Flatties just aren't that easy to round up nowadays, especially current and skilled ones. People who want their Star Crests often need to head off to boogies to take advantage of the coaching and extra crowds.

Big-way jumping has rewards of its own. It really is worth the time and effort to have a go at large formation skydiving. Nothing beats the sense of achievement when all members of the group perform at their best and nail that tricky 10-way.

Some of our Star Crest Saturday regulars are already dreaming really big. They're aiming to join the next Australian Large Formation Record attempt being planned for California in mid 2015. The current record is 112, so the mission will be to build perhaps a 120-way or maybe even 150. If the Big-way bug is as infectious as we hope, then there'll be many new faces there to make the dream a reality.



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SKYDIVE EXPRESS

By Krishna Strickland

Skydive Express has been buzzing with the word on the street that there will be a big new skydiving event happening at the drop zone in October; and the buzz is right! The very first, of hopefully many more to come, West Coast Sundowner is well under way in preparation; and a mighty preparation it is with a team organising to make this the hottest new skydiving event in the Asia-Pacific region.

More exciting changes have been happening at Skydive Express and mainly in time for the West Coast Sundowner. Most notable are the changes around the grounds. Additional permanent hot showers in the sauna room for staff and coaches, the camping area has been levelled and re-grassed, the student landing area has been enlarged (including new drain and earth works) and the experienced jumper landing area has been flattened and re-seeded! There are still many other projects on the go, including construction of a new toilet and shower block, new accommodation rooms to be constructed, rebuilding of the bar and kitchen area and most importantly, construction of an international competition standard Swoop Pond! So, a very busy drop zone.

In the middle of all of this, we would like to welcome Kenton Outtrim, who is here from the New Zealand Skydiving School as part of his placement training to become our next instructor – awesome!

There's plenty of jumping happening too. Most notably, we would like to congratulate Team Nemesis, John Rumbo and Chaps, who all took out gold at the Nationals – well done boys! We've held a very successful two day Canopy Coaching course in May, run by the one and only Michael Vaughan. The event was so popular that it was booked out well in advance and the feedback from participants was nothing short of glowing. Stay tuned for more courses. Instructors were not neglected either as we arranged for a separate training day for the staff!

Another notable event held recently was an Accuracy competition. With five teams of two competing (along



with individual placement), the jumpers had a fantastic time, particularly when an entire load followed the leader and landed down-wind! A special thanks to everyone who supported the event and to Nigel Gaylard for organising it. Our 8-way weekends are still cruising along and are only getting better, especially now that we have regular 4-way weekends dispersed amongst them. These weekends are proudly supported by the Australian Parachute Federation and the Western Australian Parachute Council Inc. Rel Work is back with a vengeance! It's a great time to get on board now and start training in preparation for the State Meet at the end of September.

And finally, Freely and Atmonauti coaching with our resident Team Nemesis, every second weekend, is still proving very popular. Jump, jump jump!

Students have also been tearing up the skies and jumping away, especially with the free rig hire; and this coupled with regular Friday night packing lessons for 'A' Licence candidates, run by our very own Jody Blunden, have proven a very popular combination.

Regular Star Crest weekends have been going off, thanks to the dedication of Shirley Cowcher. Need your Star Crest? Jump on board!

Special thanks, once again, must go to our coaches: Kieren "KJ" James, John Brown, Shirley Cowcher and Garry "GT"

Traynor, who go above and beyond to ensure that the skill level of jumpers is on the rise!

June 8 and 9 saw the launch of our new drop zone, Skydive Express, Perth city. Operating out of Jandakot Airport and landing into Langley Park, the new drop zone makes tandem skydiving an easy activity for Perth locals and tourists alike. With stunning views over the city of Perth, the Swan River, W.A.'s beautiful beaches and beyond, first time jumpers will now be able to experience Perth from a unique perspective and the staff are loving it too!

To stay informed of all the up-and-coming events and what's happening at the drop zone, "Like" our Facebook page and visit the "Events" page, or register for our newsletter at www.skydive.com.au. Don't forget to fill your diary!



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