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The Mag



The British Parachute
Association Magazine



www.bpa.org.uk
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April 2007

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The FFU Ocaña is the home of the Madrid Skydivers. It is also host to turbine aircraft, the Swiss national teams and some of the best facilities a skydiving centre can offer, of note is a 30km² landing area, swimming pool, onsite hotel and bar/restaurant.

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The Mag

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My editorials in recent years have been pretty 'fluffy-la-la' – mainly because it's too easy to unwittingly upset somebody! Yet this time I would be shirking my editorial responsibilities if I failed to comment on the Letters page. At the eleventh hour the BPA Council voted to withdraw two letters from the February Mag. In an exceptional event Council had an email vote outside of official meetings in order to potentially include in this next magazine. The two letters are now in print.

I applaud Council for being open and recognising the right of Members to voice opinions in the official BPA publication, communicating them to the Membership. I also appreciate there is a valid viewpoint that disputes between or about Council members and other sensitive topics should not sully our magazine, the international flagship of the BPA.

The role of the magazine has been the subject of wide discussion on newsgroups and face-to-face debate. Historically the magazine has always been the forum for Members' opinions. Yet it should evolve with the times. There is a good argument that the web is now a better place for debate than a bimonthly journal, allowing for instant in depth discussion, when the essential nature of an issue is that it has immediate relevance. At present there is no official internet forum for BPA issues, although there are many unofficial sites where Members and Council members debate areas of concern to our sport. Some feel it may be time for the BPA to create, adopt or link to an internet forum, always bearing in mind that this brings its own problems and any move should not be rushed. We welcome your opinion.



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Lesley

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The Mag
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We have lots of overseas subscribers, non BPA members who get The Mag because they like it.

If you're interested in skydiving, whatever nation you're from whether a first jump student, an adventure sports enthusiast, or you jump abroad, you'll enjoy The Mag.

If you subsequently join the BPA as a full member (after six jumps or when you progress to freefall) your magazine subscription amount is deducted from your BPA membership fee so, in all, you don't pay any extra.

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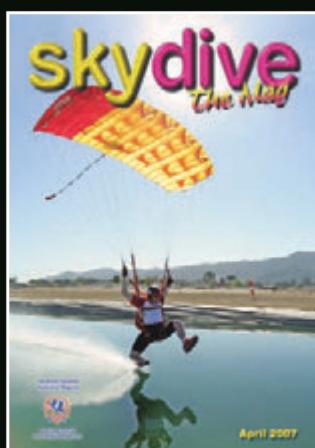
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Cover man Andy Ford's self portrait over Skydive Spain, Seville



Cover

Andy Ford by
Steph Delaney

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NOTE: Some of the photos in this magazine may show skydivers without helmets or altimeters, or otherwise not obeying the BPA Operations Manual, in which case they were taken abroad. In the UK it is mandatory to wear a helmet and alti for obvious safety reasons. Students within The Mag are complying with BPA regulations.

Skydiving training and systems vary in different countries. If you are considering taking a skydiving course or qualification abroad, we recommend you first establish its relevance in the UK, through your CCI.

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The information in this magazine was, to the best of our ability, correct at the time of going to press. Reproduction, printing and mailing take a total of ten days so some information may be out of date, or superseded.

features

Wingsuit Acrobatics	4
<i>Loops, rolls & backflying by Scott Campos</i>	
Building Blocks	14
<i>Steve Hamilton on basic principles</i>	
Tunnel Readies	16
<i>Spend wisely by Chris Hollis</i>	
Kate Cooper's Big-way Basics	20
<i>Everything you ever wanted to know</i>	
Flight Plan	30
<i>Kaz Sheekey explains what it's all about</i>	
Wannabe a Judge?	34
<i>Sue Skull explains how</i>	
Weekend Team	40
<i>Rolls of Hayabusa on efficiency</i>	
Simon Hepple	49
<i>Remembered by his friends</i>	

regulars

Subscribe to The Mag	1
JM's Newsround	9
People in the Sport	27
BPA Matters	37
Kit News	45
Letters	52
Puzzle	55
Dive Doctor	55
Club News	58
BPA Affiliated Drop Zones	74
Parachuting Societies	77
Classified Adverts	77
Diary	79
Advertisers Index	80

Wingsuit Acrobatics

Most people are familiar with doing acrobatics while skydiving and flying in three dimensions. Skills learned while flying on your belly or head-down can all be applied in the wingsuit, the only limit is your imagination.

Before attempting acrobatic flight it is essential that you know the basic position to recover from instability as some manoeuvres could potentially put you into a spin or tumble. **Do not attempt acrobatics if you do not know the correct procedure to**

handle a flat spin. Master all of the moves described here before trying them in a wingsuit, as it will save you some frustration! Besides being fun to do, they build flying skills essential in dealing with instability issues that could arise on exit or while flying with others.

It is possible to freefly in a wingsuit but it is not recommended as it puts an extreme amount of stress on the seams and can cause irreparable damage.



Frontloop

Probably the first trick you learned how to do on the ground as a child, the simple somersault or frontloop is carried out in a similar fashion in a wingsuit. The tricky part is that there is no ground to place your hands on. Combined with a wingsuit, good technique and flexibility come into play. If you become unstable or spin, adopt the cannonball or foetal position until spinning or rotation stops. Reorient to the ground and open first the arm wings and then the leg wing. Leaving all wings or one wing surface exposed to the wind will keep you spinning despite any attempt to arch or roll over.

The frontloop is fairly easy but the key is to do it smoothly so as not to lose too much altitude during the move. Often people rush the move and what they get is a sloppy, inefficient semi-loop. While it may feel alright it looks like a duck being shot!

To start, fly with a designated heading as a visual reference point. From the full flight position, close the leg wing while bringing both knees towards the chest. Arm wings and head remain in their normal position. You should be able to quickly and cleanly bring your knees to your chest and

return to normal flight with no heading or stability issues before trying the loop itself.

When you feel ready to attempt the loop, with your knees tucked to the chest, fold in your arm wings from the elbow towards your chest; elbows are alongside the torso and hands over the chest, effectively closing the arm wings down. The head leads the move – where the head goes, the body will follow. With all wings shut down begin the roll, leading with the head in that familiar somersault motion. The momentum from bringing the knees to the chest gives the force to start the move and the crunching action from the torso carries the move to rotation – at this point you should be in a cannonball position.

The rotation needs to stop approximately three quarters of the way through the move. At this point the focus is transitioning to normal flight as smoothly as possible. Now everything is done in reverse order; straighten the torso and return the arms to full flight, stopping the rotation. Open wings evenly; extending them unsymmetrically can cause a spin. You should be level now and flying on the original heading; extend your legs while simultaneously opening your leg wing. The loop should only take a few seconds, once the legs start moving it's one continuous fluid movement.



Frontloop





Photos show Duncan Wright by Mark Harris



Barrel Roll

Backloop

The backloop is exactly the same as the front except for the muscle movements to start rotation. It requires a bit more muscle and momentum is important to prevent stalling mid-rotation on your back. From the cannonball position the head leads the move, looking back as far as possible while arching the torso to start backwards movement. It helps to imagine the knees shooting to the chest and hitting your chin, causing the head and body to rotate backwards.

Three quarters of the way through the move the ground should be coming back into view. Pick up your visual reference on the ground and reverse the process; simultaneously open the arms to stop rotation and begin flying; extend the legs and leg wing in one fluid motion. This move is harder! If you stall somewhere during the rotation, rolling over by leaning to one side will return you belly to earth. Opening your wings will probably only make things worse.



Backloop

Barrel Roll

The barrel roll is fairly easy and little altitude is lost when done quickly. From the full flight position, pick up a visual reference. Execute the roll by dropping the shoulder and looking in the direction you wish to go while collapsing the wing towards the chest. It doesn't have to collapse completely but bring it in enough to allow rotation. Simultaneously partially collapse the leg wing by bringing the ankles toward one another, similar to rolling out of bed. Halfway through the rotation, when you should have rotated 180° and are oriented back to earth, bring the opposite arm wing towards the chest. Doing the move quickly allows momentum to continue the rotation. Keep looking where you want to go or you will stall out on your back. As the ground comes into sight, extend the same wing you started the roll with, to stop the rotation. You should now be belly to earth with all wings open. The move takes a split second and is done very quickly. Doing it slowly will result in a stall or instability.





Backflying

There are several ways to get into the backflying position. While in full flight, the easiest are a partial barrel roll or a partial frontloop, the mechanics of which were covered earlier. The trick is to stop the rotation when you are back to earth and assume the proper backflying position.

Exiting from a tailgate aircraft, you can dive out and rotate into a backflying position. This is an advanced move and is quite difficult to do smoothly; you should already be proficient at backflying before trying this! Facing outward on the ramp, with arm wings a quarter open, dive out as normal, feet on your butt. As you clear the aircraft and are on top of the hill fully extend your leg wing followed by the arm wings. The leg wing will catch the aircraft propwash and push you over onto your back. The trick is being able to control the rotation and assume the proper backflying position rather than continuing to tumble.

From a side door use a reverse front float position. Launch sideways away from the aircraft strongly opening all wings, this will put you directly in the propwash on your back. It is possible to fly this position from launch until time to roll over and pull.

Backflying done correctly will allow a fall rate that's comparable to normal flight, so others should be able to fly with you on their fronts. However, simply rolling over onto your back is not sufficient to fly efficiently!

As you transition onto your back the focus is on assuming the proper body position so that the suit can generate lift. Spreading your arms and legs will not be enough. With the added pressure on the wings, there is a tendency for the arms and legs to naturally want to rise above the torso. If you allow this pressure to shape your body position you will bend at the waist. To present an efficient profile you must exaggerate your body position, push the arms and legs down as hard as possible against the pressure, enough that the arms and legs are lower than the torso. While doing this, arch the hips as much as possible. Using the hips alone in an up and down motion will change your lift or fall rate as needed. The head remains in a neutral position. Looking at your toes or at other wingsuits by bending the neck will make you pike at the hips and fly less efficiently (as in main photo). The key is to over-exaggerate the position, arching the hips as forcibly as possible while pushing limbs down hard against the pressure.

On larger suits it will be impossible to completely tension the leg wing so the trailing edge will flap. Since the leg wing presents a very large surface, there is a lot of pressure on it. You have to maintain tension by pointing the toes and spreading the legs as much as possible. If left on its own, the leg wing will fly you all over the sky – another reason why the leg wing must constantly be tensioned and the muscles flexed.

Navigating while on your back is an essential part of the flight. Often another wingsuit can point you in the right direction. You can turn with the arms or legs, the arms make flatter turns. Turning is very easy and



Looking at other wingsuits by bending the neck will make you pike at the hips and fly less efficiently. Photo shows Duncan Wright by Mark Harris



Navigating on your back is essential, turn by pushing down slightly on the relevant wing. Photo by Perry Trowbridge



less is actually more when on your back; too much input can result in a diving turn. Push down harder in the direction you want to go and let up slightly on the opposite wing, to turn easily.

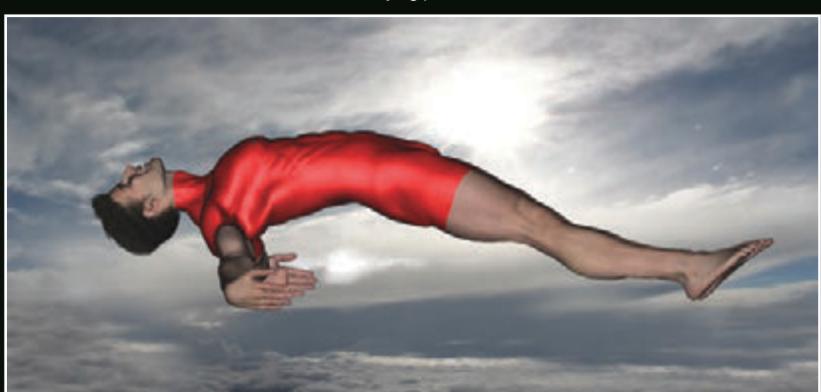
To return to normal flight simply roll over. Allow the hips to come back to a neutral position, slightly close the leg wing and bring the arm wing in to your chest, in the direction you want to roll. Backflying takes practice and patience, some find it easy to learn and for others it is more difficult.

In all acrobatic moves there is a degree of relaxing needed. Rigid body positions and slowly executed moves often end in failure; try to maintain a firm but flexible body position and moves will come easier. The most important thing is to have fun and enjoy the challenge.

Scott Campos
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World Team Lotus Flower



Photo by Andrey Veselov

Skydivers from World Team built a Royal Lotus Flower 98-way over Prachuap Khiri Khan in Thailand on March 16, 2007. The event honoured His Majesty Bhumibhol Adulyadej, the King of Thailand and the world's longest reigning monarch, for his 80th birthday later this year.

www.thaiskyfestival.com

Elan in Seville



Photo by Jonno Home

Last year's FS Nationals winners and World Champions *Team Airkix* have a new name, *Elan*, and line up of Julia Foxwell, Emma Beyer, Amanda Kemp with new members Tarn Hollis formerly of *Bodyflight*

Rage and Rob Stevenson (*Connexion & Sebastian XL*) on camera. They will train at Skydive Spain in Seville, with Gary Beyer as their coach. They are available to provide free online coaching

through the BPA website, or contact them directly. Target Skyports are sponsoring *Team Elan* to help the team achieve their goals in 2007. After two successful years in the USA, the team had very specific training needs, *Team Elan* has chosen Skydive Spain, sister DZ to Target Skyports as their home drop zone for completing their strenuous training. At the end of their third day of training, the team completed 46 jumps from altitude with ease (10, 16, 20 jumps respectively). If you want to do a lot of training jumps, Skydive Spain say "We are the fastest growing DZ in the world and will take care of your team."

www.skydivespain.com
www.skydiving.co.uk
www.teameelan4way.com

Aerodyne Tour

Aerodyne will bring their demo canopies to the UK for numerous British events this season. They will be at Hinton 21-22 April, Langar 12-20 May for Boogie I and Brit Chicks, Hib 15-17 June for the UKS Boogie and Jump your Reserve weekend, Weston 14-15 June for the Boxer Short Skydives and then at Nethers, 6-12 August for the Military Championships. Aerodyne now sponsor 4-way ladies team *Bodyflight Storm*, as well as Milko and Brian Vacher. Brian's Safe Flight School is doing a UK tour, dates in the diary.

www.flyaerodyne.com
www.safeflightschool.com



JM's Newsround

Save the Red Arrows

The Red Arrows, the aerobatic squadron of the RAF, are under threat from the withdrawal of Government funding. To register your support to keep the team flying sign the online petition, closing date 24 July.

[http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/
SaveTheReds](http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/SaveTheReds)

PD Tour

Performance Designs is planning to visit some drop zones in the UK this summer with their wide selection of demo canopies. They are at Brid 4-7 May, Hinton 11-13 May, Langar 14-20 May, Old Buck 15-17 June, Hib for the 4-way Nationals, 16-19 August, and Langar again for Boogie II during 8-16 September.

www.performancedesigns.com

Bodyflight Storm

Former Airkix member Claire (Sparky) Scott, has joined *Bodyflight Storm* with Kate Stephens, Hannah Betts and Sarah Smith with Gary Wainwright (Swoop) on camera. *Bodyflight Storm* won the AA category at the 4-way Nationals in 2006, they will enter the AAA (senior) category this year. They started their training in the Bodyflight tunnel doing several hours as a team before finally jumping together in Perris with Dan BC as their coach.

Airspeed Odyssey

Airspeed Odyssey won with an average of 23 at the Shamrock Showdown in Florida. This year's all-star line up is Craig Girard (Outside Centre), Andy Delk (Inside Centre), Mark Kirkby (Tail), Eliana Rodriguez (Point) and Will Pesek (Video). 23 is the highest ever *Airspeed* 4-way average.

www.airspeed.org

Insurance Deal

A new insurance product has come on the market through Finch Insurance Brokers, who have had a long association with skydiving. Their new Extreme Plus Personal Accident Insurance provides comprehensive insurance specifically for skydivers, regardless of experience. The premium is £20 for a single jump or £60 a year for unlimited jumps. Other personal accident insurers are available – see the BPA website for details. Always check cover to make sure it suits your needs.

www.extremeplus.co.uk
0845 676 0700
www.bpa.org.uk/insurance.htm

Supporting



Red Cross Week 2007

Red Cross Fundraising

The Brit Chicks attempt to break the women's skydiving record with a 64-way red cross is to publicise the Red Cross National Appeal week – which will also be kicked off by a demo jump into Hyde Park, 11am on Saturday 5 May. Martin Harris of London Parachute School, Lewknor, set up the sponsorship and is the link between Brit Chicks, the Red Cross and Frank PR agency, who are all working together on publicity. Brit Chicks record is open (till 20 April) to any female skydiver in the UK with over 200 jumps.

Brit Chicks and LPS want to support the Red Cross with a giant fundraising effort. Each lady has a link on the Brit Chicks website so you can make a personal donation. They are running a raffle with the top prize of a brand new Aerodyne rig with custom-made Icon, Pilot or Vision main canopy. A Symbiosis made-to-measure jumpsuit is also up for grabs. The raffle will be drawn at Langar during Boogie I, tickets are £10 from the website or Brit Chicks accosting you! All products, services and costs are being donated so 100% of ticket sales and donations go directly to the British Red Cross to support their fantastic humanitarian aid work.

britchicks@skydivemag.com
www.britchicks.org
[www.redcross.org.uk/
appealweek](http://www.redcross.org.uk/appealweek)



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www.skydiveukltd.com

Trip to Russia



Aerograd Boogie by Matt Abram

Matt Abram is organising a trip to Aerograd Kolomna in Russia, 14-28 July. The price includes flights, accommodation and 50 jumps. There will be a couple of Let 410s and a Mi-8 helicopter to play with and the Russian wind tunnel is just half an hour away.

mattnomoremals@hotmail.com



Tracking at Weston by Rob Silver

GPS Tracking at Weston

After the success of last year's event Skydive Weston will run a Tracking weekend, 30 June – 1 July. All disciplines and levels of experience are welcome. It will include the UK's first Tracking Derby, designed by Claude Tzifkansky. Using GPS units to track time and distance you can compete with skydivers all around the world, all scores are added to the global ranking. There will also be a Chicks Freefly event on the same weekend, with coaching from Yoko Okazaki, freestyle World Champion.

www.skydiveweston.com
www.trackingderby.com



Photo: Nigel Holland

Boxer Short Skydive

Skydive Weston will once again hold a Boxer Short Skydive weekend, 14-15 July, to raise money for Everyman. This is a charity that supports men with testicular cancer. Last time the group raised over £7,500 and aim to smash this total. Their celebrity guest will be JK from Radio 1's JK and Joel show.

www.boxershortsskydive.com



JK is Weston's celebrity guest



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14th & 15th May

Fabian Raidel

He ain't bad!

29th – 31st May

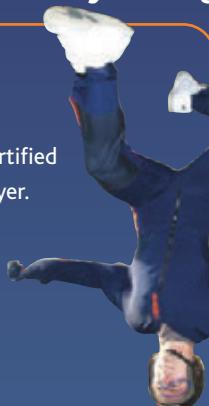
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Bookings & more information

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Turbolet Returns to Sibson!

Skydive Sibson will have a Turbolet 410 for the summer, from April. A Turbolet is booked for the Easter long weekend, Good Friday to Easter Monday inclusive. It then changes places with another Turbolet, which should be there in the week, ready for the Brit Chicks warm-up weekend, 14-15 April. Peterborough also has a Skyvan booked, 30 June to 1 July, and their boogie is 25 August to 2 September where they should have a Skyvan as well as the Let 410.

www.skydivesibson.com

Judging Seminar

Kate Charters, BPA Judges' Co-ordinator runs a training seminar at the start of each year where the judges of each discipline go through all the rules and then practise together. Last year's seminar was at Empuriabrava, this year's is at JSPC, Bad Lippspringe, 27-30 April. If anyone is thinking of taking up judging and would like to attend, contact Kate Charters. There is an article by Sue Skull, FAI Artistics Judge on page 34, which describes the way to become a judge.

Kate commented "Judges have to be able to work to a very high standard because our competitors put so much time, effort and money into their training so it is only fair to give them the best judging team possible. Judging in any discipline takes a lot of dedication and hard work but, as Sue says, can be very rewarding. In this country we have some of the best judges in the world – a reputation we aim to keep. Thanks to Sue for writing the article and all the judging team for their support."

Kate Charters

charters@ingliston.fsnet.co.uk



Kate Charters at Cark GP
by Michelle Meakin

Island Boogie



Photo over Texel by Jay Southall

Andy Lovemore of islandboogie.com is once again organising various all-inclusive events to Texel, Holland. Jan Boyen Reinks, from Texel Paracentrum DZ, will fly over to the UK in his Cessna Caravan and pick groups up who then jump in to the island drop zone. The Freefly Extravaganza, 6-8 July, includes free coaching from Outbreak, the Wingsuit Boogie, 3-5 August sees coaching by Andy Ford and there is a 10-way Speed Star competition, 14-16 September.

www.islandboogie.com

Christmas Flag Jumps

Atlantic adventurer Rich Molloy chose an unusual way to celebrate Christmas, starting with a flag jump over Rio de Janeiro, then 22 days across the South Atlantic on a 67' yacht, topping it off with another flag jump at Skydive Cape Town! Apparently changing sails on deck in gale force conditions has made him consider Empuria for this Christmas! Rich jumps at Netheravon.

www.netheravon.com



Rich Molloy over Rio de Janeiro by Sabia

Tunnel World Record

Skydivers Andy Scott, Sparky and tunnel flyer Richard Falconer set a Guinness World Record for the longest freefall duration at the Airkix tunnel in March. The rules included not touching the net or sides. They flew together constantly for well over an hour, with Andy remaining in the longest for one hour, 18 minutes and 22 seconds (in a belly only position).

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Photo: Airkix

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Building BLOCKS

Steve Hamilton gives some great advice to help every single block move

The 4-way dive-pool has 16 randoms and 22 blocks, so blocks take up most of the scoring skydive. It's therefore important for teams wanting to improve their average to invest a substantial amount in becoming consistent in these moves.

This article is not a technical guide for every block. More and more lately I've come to realise that a lot of the input I give when coaching teams is not always specific to that block but merely a reminder of the basics that can easily be forgotten when learning new information. For example, probably the most common phrase I use when debriefing blocks is '*arch and keep flying!*' Simple, right? However, it's a recurring theme that when we pick up grips on our teammates we can become very focussed on physically moving each other around using upper body strength. This focus is often accompanied by getting lazy with our hips, allowing our butts to come up and balancing on our knees. This naturally affects our own flying ability and reduces the efficiency of the move we're trying to make.

Very often, if we freeze-frame the video and check out an individual's body language we will see that what they're physically doing does not really contribute to the intention of the move and can be counterproductive. A common example is someone who is trying to go underneath during a vertical transition but, rather than arching and keeping their head up, they end up ducking their head down in an attempt to take avoiding action – resulting in a dearch and actually causing the collision they were trying to avert.



It's important that we have a freeze at the top of a block

THE PRE-KEY CHECKLIST

We see a lot of block moves executed where a little investment of time before the key comes would have given a much better result in terms of efficiency and consistency. Here are some boxes that need to be ticked before starting the block:

Balance

This refers to each flyer's own physical balance as well as being mentally ready when the key comes. It's important that we have a 'freeze' at the top of the block, a point where there is no energy being put into the formation and everyone is arching, their backs are straight and they can mentally take a breath to be ready for the start of the move. If you watch top teams performing it may look as if there is not this freeze at the top of the block but it's just that, over time, they have learned to reduce the waiting time to an absolute minimum. I recommend building in an exaggerated freeze when learning new blocks to ensure that everyone is ready.

Shape

A consistent shape to the first formation of a block is essential if you want a consistent finish. If the start shape is different each time then you will always

have an element of ad-libbing when the key comes, forcing you to constantly fix things during the move as your starting position is not constant.

Communication

We need everyone's attention to be towards the centre of the formation before we key it. If we're looking away from our teammates it's hard for them to be sure whether we're ready to go or not, so make sure there is very clear communication with a look on your face that says '*Let's go!*'. Also, if we're not looking it can become easy to miss the key. This means that the timing will be off between subgroups, thus reducing the chances of a good move. A 4-way textbook might designate certain positions in the team to have the key for certain blocks but it's a good idea to build the communication to a level where we are all responsible for the key, even if you're out-facing!

So, to sum up, if any of these boxes are not ticked **don't key it!** Without a little investment in the checklist we're really not doing ourselves any favours in terms of learning consistency. A second's pause before the key could save you several seconds of grief trying to fix an ugly move.

DURING THE MOVE

Most blocks have some very definite pictures and checkpoints along the way that, if we're disciplined and see them each time through, will improve our chances of making a nice finish. We also need to make sure we use only the amount of physical effort needed for our individual moves.

Targeting

If a block has a definite halfway picture we all need to work hard at getting to this target at the right time and holding the picture before finishing off the move. If we have a good, consistent target we're actually a lot more than 50% of the way towards making a nice finish. By having a good look during the target phase of the move we can also get an idea of what we need to do to make the finish happen, eg, if we see that there is more discrepancy with the levels than we need, we can make adjustments during the second phase to fix it. Strict targeting should reduce the need for too much fixing but having the ability to react to the pictures will naturally improve our efficiency – and we don't have much control over the other piece. When we're planning a dive it's a good idea to 'walk and talk' each block move so we know that we're all on the same page in terms of the targets and timing.

Keep Skydiving

Don't forget to fly! This is the most common issue I've seen recently; once we pick up the grips our legs and booties become redundant and it's 'all biceps'! For a lot of teams, there's way too much physical effort from the arms and upper body and not enough actual flying from the control surfaces. Remember that, when we pick up grips, we can isolate the arms and reduce their ability to provide input to the moves. Therefore it's really important that we develop the ability to produce power with our legs and to drive our mass (hips) in the direction needed for the move. Practising this first with 2-way drills is a great way to develop leg power. Try the 'push-drill', where a coach or teammate applies force to the hip/thigh area in an effort to push you sideways. Your job is to resist by

Because we pick up grips with the arms we must develop power with our legs



applying power with the legs in the opposite direction in order to hold your ground. This is the same input you'll need to push your hips sideways for a block move.

No-contact block moves are an awesome (if initially frustrating) way to learn our moves for each block. Without the reliance on grips they will soon highlight any areas where we are weak, eg, not travelling in the correct direction or stopping in the right place. Most likely it will also feel effortless in comparison to what we've become used to. Being aware of what's going on with our body positions during a move is extremely important. It's very common, for example, to see people trying to go backwards on a block move whilst derailed, twisted at the waist and with shoulders rolled over to one side. Ask yourself '*If I was performing this move solo with no grips would the position I'm in actually help?*'. In this case the answer, hopefully, would be a resounding 'No'.

TIMING OF ENERGY

We've talked about timing between subgroups but the timing of turning the power on and off within a group or for an individual is extremely important. I often use the analogy of driving your car towards a wall to explain this; you need to know when to take your foot off the gas, coast for a while and slowly apply the brakes to avoid your insurance premium going through the roof. It's the same if you're flying solo making a 360° or in a 2-way piece during a block move, if the power comes on too late or there is too much to handle at the end of the move then your stop will not be very pretty or in the place you want. In 4-way we should be able to absorb a little impact



between the pieces but overdo it and that extra energy will cost you time with the rock 'n' roll you have to deal with at the finish.

If I was to distill these thoughts into a couple of nuggets of advice that would help most teams then I would say '**Take your time in the builds and use 50% of the power you think you need**'.

These points can be really valuable for A & AA teams, especially if you're moving up a category and learning new blocks. Some wise words that I remember from a sports psychology book suggested that, whenever we're trying to learn a new skill, we should apply 'P-S-P'. That's PRECISION first, then SPEED, then POWER. We often see individuals or teams go leapfrogging straight over the precision part of it then finding it very difficult to go back and fix things later on as they didn't take time to build the foundation of good technique first. So take it slow, learn the pictures and go easy on the bicep curls!

Steve Hamilton

steve@flightschooluk.com



For Starters Tunnel Readies

Spending dosh on tunnel time can be the best investment you can make to improve skills. Yet if you don't prepare you might as well throw twenty pound notes into the wind!

Make the most of YOUR money!



Booking your time

Tunnels are very busy places. Try and book as early as possible. Weekends and evenings are obviously the most popular so you may find some time if you can make midweek daytime slots. If you haven't flown in a tunnel before, or are fairly low experience, do not book a lot of flying in one go. Tunnel fitness is acquired; if you overdo it, you will just waste your time as you will be too shattered to fly properly. 10 minutes is a good starting point, build up the duration gradually each visit. Take your own suit and equipment if you want and make sure the tunnel staff are happy with what you want to fly in.

Remember that you just buy blocks of time. If you book 30 minutes, that's what you get – in one big lump! Unless you are a masochist, you will want to split the session up! For example, two minutes in, two minutes out. Rotations such as these are the most common way of getting the most out of your time but it's your responsibility to tell the tunnel you'd like to rotate. They will do what they can to accommodate you but, if they don't know beforehand, then it can be tricky to organise the manifest at the last minute. The best way to sort out rotations is to find someone who wants to fly the same amount as you on the same day, and book together.

Allow lots of time. At Bodyflight students are briefed to arrive an hour before they fly. As a skydiver, this is also a good guide. It gives you plenty of time to get kitted up and plan the session. If you arrive later than your flight booking you will lose your time.

Coaching

The single most important factor in learning to fly is coaching. As a beginner, the tunnel will be able to provide basic coaching, just ask. For more advanced techniques, ask them for names of coaches, you pay extra on top of your flight time but the benefits are huge.

Talk to your coach about what you want to achieve. Think about your goals before you get to the tunnel. Be realistic and pick one or two areas you would like to improve. This can be anything from increased leg awareness to better in-place turns. Make sure that you understand fully what you have been briefed to do then, when the session is over, review your flight picking out two things you really liked and two things you want to improve on. This will help your progression and give you some guidelines for future sessions or jumps.

Low stress

As a student parachutist, it's easy to put yourself under pressure on your early jumps. You have a limited time to learn the skill you've been briefed on and you're also dealing with the whole 'jumping out of a plane' thing. The tunnel provides a low stress environment of concentrated time for you to hone your skills enabling you to perform better when you go skydiving again.



Body position

Get in the tunnel and have your body position analysed. Correct it and really lock the feeling into your muscle memory. This may mean unlearning bad habits but this is why you're here! Once in a better position, note how little you need to do to sit still. The best way to describe the feeling of control you should have is like the steering wheel grip required whilst driving. Not so tight that movement is awkward and erratic; not so loose you are weaving all over the place. Practising this skill alone will help your flying hugely.

Lay solid foundations

Skydiving is the art of deflecting the air to achieve your aim. When learning a move watch what is being demonstrated and try to understand what is going on. When it's your go, emulate as closely as possible. You won't get everything right first time, it's a fact! So persevere – watch what feedback you are being given and act upon it as best you can. If you don't crack something then repeat it on your next go. A common mistake is to move onto the second drill when the first wasn't exactly great. The foundations laid by solid flying skills pay dividends many times over for more advanced stuff like 4-way, so put in the time now and get the basics right. It's better to learn one thing really well, than cover five things and perfect none of them.





Respect the tunnel

At the risk of stating the bleedin' obvious, the sky is big, the tunnel is small! I know the UK tunnels are different sizes but, compared to what mother nature has to offer, both are minuscule. When experienced skydivers try tunnel flying for the first time, some are amazed that the flying position they've had for years does not actually fall straight down. They can skid around the tunnel trying hard not to bounce off the walls! Respecting the tunnel means just that. Realise you aren't in the sky and calm your flying down accordingly. Leave the powerful big moves until next time you're at altitude. It will save you a lot of aches and pains, and stop the tunnel instructor having a heart attack trying to save you.



Focus

Both tunnels have viewing galleries that enable pretty much anyone to come and watch. When you are learning, there is a certain sense of pride that most people have that can make them feel awkward about making mistakes for all to see. You aren't going to do everything perfectly first time. Just concentrate on what you and your coach are doing, block out everything else. Non-skydivers don't really know what you're trying to do anyway, and your fellow flyers waiting to have their go are more concerned about their own turn. Whilst learning to backfly, I have had some useless sessions in front of some really experienced freeflyers! Far from being an object of ridicule, I've found that fellow flyers are more than keen to offer you tips and, when you finally crack something, they are just as pleased as you!



Reset switch

Somewhere in your skydiving career, an instructor will have told you to relax, I absolutely guarantee it. The tunnel is the perfect place to practise this. Free from the stresses of parachutes, aircraft and all that goes with an actual skydive, all your brain power can be focussed on your flying. Your mental state plays a big part in this. The late, great Adrian Nicholas

used to get his freefly students doing breathing exercises and working on their sense of calm all the way to altitude. Approach your tunnel time in the same way. Relax, control your breathing and smile. If one specific move isn't going well, the reaction of most people is to start to try harder, they get frustrated and it just gets worse. Learn to recognise the symptoms of tension and combat them by having a reset switch. If you're the sort of person to spend valuable tunnel time in a frustrated state that leaves you feeling wound up when the time-up lights come on, then this is the technique for you.

Your reset switch can be triggered most effectively by a big deep breath. Feel the previous frustration ebb away and tell yourself you are calmer and going to start again. Smile at yourself and banish that sense of anger. Sitting still and taking a breath can be as effective as starting from scratch – that's the point! Tunnel time is not cheap. The quicker you can get back into your relaxed state the sooner you can resume learning and banish those red mist sessions forever! This technique can also be used highly effectively in the air, even during competition dives where things do not go exactly as expected. Practice now, it will become your secret weapon and pay you back one day, I assure you.

With the right planning and attitude, tunnel flying is a brilliant learning tool for skydivers of any ability. I hope you enjoy your time and it makes your skydives all the more successful and fun.

Chris Hollis
hollisc@tint.com

Thanks to Airkix FS coach Phil Hartree and Bodyflight Instructor/FS coach Tanya Hollis for their input

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May 19-20
Jun 9-10

Jun 15-17
Jun 16-17

Jun 23-24
Jun 30-Jul 1
Jul 7-8
July 14-15

Jul 21-22
Jul 28-29
Aug 18-20
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Top Gun Wingsuit Weekend
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Jump your reserve weekend (PD and Aerodyne attending)
1st UK Skydiver Boogie also LO with Caroline Hughes
POPS weekend
28-way competition
Grand Prix - FS 4-way
Big Way skills and Fun Skydives with Caroline Hughes
Grand Prix - Canopy Formation
Grand Prix - FS 8-way & Freefly
Nationals - FS 4-way
Nationals - FS 4-way & 8-way
Nationals - Artistic & Speed
Nationals - FS 8-way reserve
Nationals - Artistic & Speed reserve
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Photo: Jonno Horne

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Kate Cooper's

BIG-WAY BASICS

Adapted from her World Team presentation

Exit Position

There are three options: floater, in the door, and diver.

1 Floater

Floater refers to any person – regardless of exit position – who exits before and therefore below the base piece.

2 In the Door

This position is the most challenging slot on a multi plane formation. The timing is often very difficult and you aren't quite sure whether you'll be diving, floating, or going straight across. Add to that in a trail aircraft position the above can easily change from one dive to the next – be prepared for it!

3 Diver

A diver exits later. While this position requires a certain amount of skill and timing, it tends to be one of the more simple tasks on a big-way because it is usually a straight line from exit to formation with little need for decision-making en route.

Present, Identify & Intercept

These words describe what you must do on any skydive where you are not physically attached to the base.

1 Present

In any exit you need to present your torso to the relative wind. During a high speed exit, presentation can be difficult but you **must** do it. There is **no** skipping this step.

Failing to present your torso to the relative wind will, at best, result in losing eye contact with the base. At worst, the result will be a tumbled exit or even an injury. Proper presentation saves time by allowing you to take the cleanest line to your slot.



"I will not be asking for your very best effort on these skydives. I will not be asking anything. I and the other World Team leaders will be expecting perfection and the only way that can possibly happen is if you expect it of yourself."

Kate Cooper
400-way World Team brief, February 2006



In a stadium set-up, each row of non-docked people sets up approximately at a 30° angle, the rows progressively move down and forward until they are part of the formation. Photo by Hans Berggren



Quadrants

As you dirt dive identify the quadrant your slot belongs to and design your dive and approach so that you enter in a straight line to your slot. Break the base into four 'pieces of the pie' when viewed as the full formation. Find your quarter, then eighth and follow a vector from the centre of your pie directly into your slot. If your slot does not face straight in, then treat it as if it is straight in, in terms of quadrant approaches. Make the final heading change once you are **stopped** and in your slot.

When diving down or floating up towards the base, **do not dive blindly**. The **fastest** way to the formation is **always** a straight line. Too many people confuse a perceived fast 'down and over' line with a straight line. Identify your diving line upon exit and follow it to your quadrant to set up in your approach. It is always quicker to your slot this way even if it seems slower on a personal basis. You are only as fast as your teammates. There is no benefit in your being the fastest diver or floater. We are a **team** and as such we are as good as the sum of our abilities and talents.

Stadium

Large formation approaches are often compared to a stadium or 'tea cup' set-up. Each ring of non-docked people sets up approximately at a 30° angle. As the row in front of you moves down and forward toward their place in the formation, your row takes its place. This continues until your row is in the formation.

The size of the stadium varies. In a 400-way, the stadium can easily occupy 100 metres or more – up and out – from the base. The important thing is that the rows are clearly defined and follow each other down in an orderly fashion.

Visualisation

There are various aids to help you remember your approach line and slot in the formation

1 Memory

It is easier to remember two-word descriptions than longer ones. As you dirdive notice and remember things that may stand out in freefall. Matching jumpsuits makes this procedure **far** more important than in 'normal' skydives. Use short descriptive terms that use differences in the containers or helmets of the jumpers on the load, eg 'red Javelin', 'yellow stripes' or 'green Z1'. Sometimes brightly coloured tape is used to identify helmets for critical slots. If you choose something common like 'blue helmet' or 'red suit' then you may find that there are more red suits in your approach pattern than you anticipated!! Body positions can also be used as descriptive terms. You can recognise people by their mantis or boxman positions on approach.

2 Locations

Choose markers in the base and throughout the formation. Have at least one from a line docking behind you – then if you have a horrible exit and are late you can identify the strange people ahead of you! If you are in a trail plane some of your identifiers should be from a different aircraft so you can identify the line between the two aeroplanes. Six markers is probably about right.

3 Checklist

Take these identifiers and place them on a mental checklist in the order that you anticipate seeing them in freefall. The base marker may not be, and often is not, the first thing you will see on exit. Quite often it will be the marker from a different aircraft. Recite the mental checklist and make it part of your visualised dirdives. If in freefall your first marker is not there, simply move to the next one on the list. Don't fall into the trap of knowing you dock on a 'red suit' and making that your only visual reference – you will regret it when that red suit goes low or is lost.

4 Identify People

It is easy to know that you are docking on a specific person if you have many jumps with them but they may look different in freefall. If your teammate has made even minor changes in equipment then you may find them difficult to identify. Finding out the names of those around you helps, remember them.

5 Visualise Perfection

Visualise your perfect skydive, from exit to canopy, then make it happen. Have the composure and ability to close your eyes and **know** who and what you expect to see in freefall throughout the jump. Visualising perfection is possibly the most important tool available to any skydiver, regardless of chosen discipline. **Do it.**

Identify your quadrant and design your dive and approach so that you enter in a straight line to your slot. Photo by Bruno Brokken





Choose as markers the white suit/red rig in the 8-way base, not Milko the tempting red-suited organiser as there is a lookalike suit opposite. The white suit with yellow grips is a good marker, as is the white suit and jade/grey Voodoo.



See how well the white suited markers stand out in freefall against the dark team suits and realise how you could go to the wrong side of the formation if you choose a red base marker (viewpoint of original photo is at 9 o'clock)



Photos: Tony Danbury

Fall Rate

How to identify fall rates to your advantage:

1 Going Low

Going low is the phrase used when a person cannot match the fall rate of the formation prior to docking. The place to go low is 10 metres (or more) **above** the formation. On a large formation do a fall rate check midway through your approach. You don't need to come out of your dive – simply look at the building formation and note the body positions of those who are waiting ahead of you. Are they in tight, fast-falling body positions or are they stretched out? If the former, you know you can continue on an aggressive line; the latter tells you to come out of your approach earlier. Don't be afraid to extend your body into a slow fall position above the formation, it looks much less silly than the same body position 10 metres below the formation. Make the appropriate equipment change for the next skydive.

2 Assess the Formation

Different formations will fall at varying speeds due to design. Recognise this at the dirt dive and make your equipment decisions accordingly. Larger bases (6/8-way) will fall faster than smaller 4-way bases, which fall faster than intricate set-ups such as donuts or compressed accordions.

3 Dress for Success

Choose the equipment to place you in the **middle of your fall rate comfort zone**. This may mean wearing extra weights, taping up your booties, choosing a larger suit or even wearing a T-shirt or sweatshirt over your jumpsuit. No-one looks silly in a completed formation!

4 Floating

This is a worse problem in big-ways than going low, as the latter is easier to recognise and address. As above, choose your equipment so that you are in the middle of your fall rate. You may have the luxury of being in a slot that matches your optimal fall rate. For smaller, lighter people this often means wearing lead and sometimes taping up the booties to reduce drag. There is **no danger** in this – you can **still track safely**. If an organiser recommends that you do this there is a reason. If you cannot stick your legs out and engage your booties to push towards the formation without lifting up on it then **you are floating**. Remember that adding a significant amount of weight alters the wing loading of your canopy so it is advisable to have experience with this prior to being in the formation.

Red Zone

The red zone is the area around a large formation where most problems occur. It is the approach area in the stadium and is easily seen by video. Red zone violations consist of either lateral movement or a too steep stadium approach – either which can result in freefall collisions. Virtually all large formations are hampered by red zone violations and this is the area to place greatest effort.

1 Lateral Violations

No lateral, or sideways movement is acceptable in the red zone. Once jumpers enter the stadium any lateral movement causes problems. If you find yourself in a position where this is necessary, be super aware of the people in your general area and, if possible, make eye contact with them (perhaps even with calm hand gestures) before making the move.

2 Altitude Violations

It is common to see jumpers who are uncomfortable with larger formations pad their approach altitudes by being too high in their stadium set-up. It is important that all jumpers in the red zone be on the same stadium approach. A simple altitude difference of one metre can be catastrophic when two bodies attempt to share the same place in freefall. If jumpers are on the same level it's just easily absorbed incidental contact. If you are uncomfortable maintaining the altitude approach that is set by the stadium then make the appropriate equipment change on the ground.

3 Responsibility

You are responsible for knowing the placement of all the people between you and the base. If you have an excellent dive and/or they have a poor exit, it is still your responsibility to make sure they have an approach available to their quadrant and slot. **Know the people around you and know where they dock.**



When you enter the red zone you must be in the same stadium approach as your comrades to avoid a dramatic loss in altitude in the event of a collision. Photo by Willy Boeykens

Docking

1 Acceptable Docks

Only perfect docks are acceptable. The way to make every dock perfect is to arrive at your slot, assess and match the fall rate, come to a **complete stop and only then pick up your grips.** Make the taking of the grips secondary to the actual placement of your torso in the correct position.

2 In the Formation

Make sure you match the fall rate of the formation prior to docking. Be prepared to change the fall rate afterwards if needed, this may mean altering your body position. Be aware of this and if you are in the middle of your fall rate range then a slight increase or decrease should not be an issue

3 Fly Light on Grips

This is not permission to float, or put forward pressure into the centre, but at the same time do not drag your line down and away from the centre placing tension on the formation. As you fly your slot in the formation try and be in a body position that would allow you to release grips and stay exactly where you are.

4 Improve the Situation

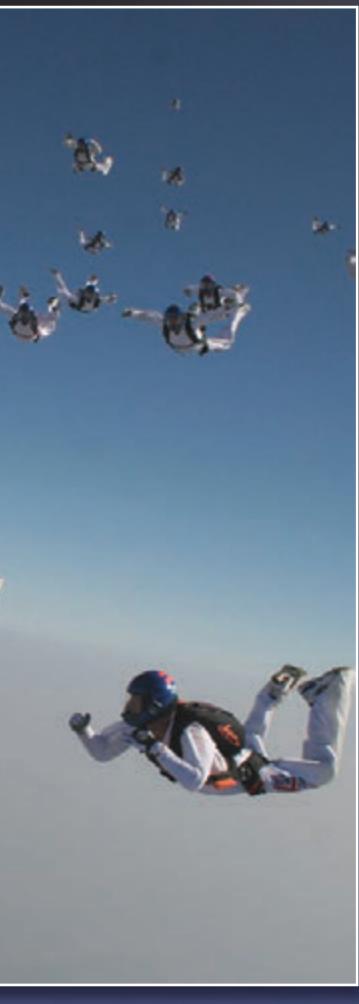
Make every dock with the idea that your dock can and will improve the formation. If you are not sure of that, then take your time and wait until you can make the perfect dock.

5 Stick your Legs Out

Many big-way slots are part of a line of some fashion. The biomechanics of docking with two arm grips **by definition** sits you slightly chest high, which puts you automatically in a very slight backsitting position. If you are floating at all this position is magnified as you will float up if you do stick out your legs. It is **imperative** that you have the ability to be docked in the middle of your fall rate range so you **do** have the ability to push your line forward by sticking your legs out. This fact is probably the least understood yet simplest mechanic of large formation skydiving.

Only perfect docks are acceptable. Make the taking of the grips secondary to the placement of your torso in the correct position. Photo by Wendy Smith





Eye Contact

1 Eyes to the Centre

Your eye contact is always to the centre no matter what direction your body is placed. Do not fall into the trap of missing a key or other important information because you were not giving 100% attention to the base.

2 Fight to Hold Position

Be aware of the correct relation of your piece to the base and do everything needed to keep it in the right place after you dock.

3 Keep Skydiving

Do not give up on the skydive if you notice a person low. Give them the same courtesy of keeping the fall rate going and the formation strong that you would want, if you were in the same position. These people can make it back into the formation if the fall rate is consistent and all people continue to concentrate on the centre.

Give 110% for the entire dive

Don't get lazy. It is easy to fall into a trap of complacency when performing the same slot on a one point skydive jump after jump. This leads most often to brain locks or personal errors in judgement. Don't be a victim. Yes, things will happen. You may have a bad exit. Someone might fly underneath you, or land on you. You may feel push, lift or drag after you are docked. Skydive as if you are the only person who can save the formation. Be a hero. If more people took this proactive approach to skydiving we would be in more completed formations. Trust me on that.

Set Personal Goals Every Jump

They should be small achievable goals but something that allows you to land from and take pride on having accomplished exactly what you set out to do.

Learn

Watch video and learn from your own performance and from others. Take what you like from the debrief, learn from it, and discard the rest. Listen to those around you. There is most likely a wealth of information on the same plane with you. **Ask questions.** Don't think it's a 'stupid' question. Trust me – others will want to know the answer too.

Safety

Your dive is over when you are **back at the dropzone**. Do not give up, relax or be complacent under canopy or even walking back from the landing area. And finally do not forget to enjoy the journey. Set goals and work to complete them, but do not bank your pleasure in skydiving solely on completions. The joy in large formation skydiving is the journey of bringing many individuals – whether 40 or 400 – together and making them into a team. Not all who try will be on a record. For those who are, history awaits you. For those who are not, if you do your best and improve your skills then accept the event as a success regardless of the formal outcome and you will enjoy your big-way adventures as you progress.

Visualise perfection, stick your legs out and **smile!**

Red, White and Royal Blue Skies

Kate Cooper
katejumps@earthlink.net

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People in the Sport

Andy Scott



Photo: Gary Wainwright

Ooh Sailor! Andy celebrates VNE's sixth Nationals 8-way gold, by Gary Wainwright



How many jumps and ratings do you have?

I started on a military course in 1989. Since then I have done 4,200+ jumps and got AFFI/CSI and some coaches' tickets.

Tell me about your 8-way experiences

8-way started me off at the Nationals with our first outing as *Army 9* getting bronze in 1995 (we had about 500 jumps each then) – then going on to gold for 1996 which sent us on our way to the World Air Games in Turkey 1997. We had a poor Nationals just before the World Meet finishing well out of it and I think that helped us concentrate and come seventh. VNE started in 2000, we won the Nationals every year and hopefully helped plenty of others get medals too. We set some records in the UK like an 18 in time and we finally in Gap had a 100% meet with no nightmare busts coming fifth after a great fourth placed Italian team

What was your biggest success with Army 9?

Winning the 8-way Nationals at Hibaldstow in 1996 beating *Large!* which was more or less reigning champions *Ricoh*, featuring *Team 97 (XL)* plus other top names. That one went to a round 11 jump-off on the Saturday – scary stuff!

What was your biggest achievement with VNE?

Apart from surviving the tequila frenzy, I reckon VNE restored 8-way competition in the UK – there were three teams in the 2000 Nationals and there are now normally a dozen. VNE had a huge hand in all the coaching and Grand Prix support that sees free help for all of the BPA Membership – it has been a great ride!

What personal jumping are you doing?

A lot of AFF (love it!) and now I have joined *Connexion* 8-way team who have some great talent on board. Apart from that I do anything from hop 'n' pop to wingsuits.

What do you enjoy most about AFF?

Seeing the newbies stay in the sport – most people who can pay for an AFF course can afford to skydive. It's great to have a programme that's got a degree of flexibility so a student can progress in some aspects and revisit areas of improvement without feeling like a failure.

How has the FS Nationals changed in the last decade?

The old week-long Nationals saw about twenty teams enter across 4- and 8-way and now we have that many in rookie 4-way! We have evolved to a very successful format of weekends which minimises time off work and allows the teams to train more. We have seen standards and scores rocket, we have the second biggest Nationals in the world – and we still have time to party each year!

How has coaching changed?

The enthusiasm and support of John Smyth as Competitions Chairman has seen over the last few years a dramatic increase in free coaching for all disciplines at BPA Roadshow events, Grand Prix and Nationals. This grass roots coaching has helped the Membership no end. Use of the wind tunnel as a tool allows coaches to get a third view and confirm technique improvements that were harder to spot from video. We can take the fixes into the air or tunnel drill them till they bleed!

How important is tunnel coaching?

Vital! I have got AFF students who are super confident at 4-way tunnel skydives, so this reduces the gap of 'who can I jump with post FS1' we have all experienced. There is still plenty to learn but, if people get to jump with others sooner, retention should be up. For the teams we have seen the way we have kicked it up at Nationals, ESL and world level – it's so much easier to make a big step forward now.

What do you like about coaching?

Seeing the light go on and great feedback from the recipient – and beer of course! I think part of the reward is that you add to the retention in the membership by building confidence and encouraging participation at all levels.

What did you achieve on Comps Committee?

Fighting hard to get the fairest deal possible for our competitors at all levels be it for funding; coaching; the right to represent the UK; changes of competition categories and rules – lots of great improvements and the results show it was worth it.

What would you say to anyone wanting to stand for Council?

Go for it! Stay objective – if you have a view try and see all angles and think through your reasons to support your view, this will help when it comes to being challenged – which you will be. Above all be open and honest. Some things need discretion but most issues are easy to address via good communication to the Membership you work for.

Do the Membership care about Council activities?

Some members really do follow what goes on but sadly there is general apathy about most issues unless they touch them personally, such as insurance.

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What's it like competing at a World Meet?

Kind of first jump scary nerves in round one, after that it settles down. It can be a little sad if it's the last part of a team project but overall it's a great mix of patience, focus, fun... and apparently we need to channel our energy more effectively – so I keep getting told!

How about when your partner's competing?

I have been to World Meets both as a competitor and as a non-competitor when Sparky [Andy's wife] has been competing. When I was in VNE and she was in VMax it was odd – you pass like ships in the night on alternate schedules, both focussed and essentially ignoring the other as a source of noise. When your wife is on screen it adds a bit of spice to the mix watching the other events and it's easy to get carried away when they kick butt! When we both had a bad round (Grenada 2001) it was good to have each other there to add to the team support bit to pick ourselves back up.

Which was worse?

Gera was the first World Meet I had been to without actually competing. I was alternate for Connexion plus Delegation Manager to support John Smyth as Head of Delegation. That week was a tester for everyone's patience and I was kept busy with revised schedules for all our teams while John was dealing with higher level issues and IPC work. It was a good week but overall it made me want to get back into competing at National level again.

Any thoughts about Team Airkix and their success?

They worked hard and were rewarded for it – good effort! A lesson to **all** Brits that a little self-belief and hard work can pay off big time.

What's it like being married to a driven world champion?

Not bad – but she ain't no driving world champion!!

Fluffy-la-la is what you might think but she's a little devil – with a big heart of course!

How have World Meets changed in the last decade?

The dive pool has been altered a bit but not much really, they are still great fun – and the French still cheat!

How does the UK compare to the rest of the world?

Better by the year! We are becoming consistent medal-winners which is not bad when you look at the level of support and facilities available to the top three [USA/Russia/France]. The improvements will keep coming while we see our teams and individuals adequately supported by the BPA, drop zones and tunnel operators. The funding support from the BPA has been hotly debated over a number of years, at least recently with clear criteria it's been easy to understand. Also Smyffy [John Smyth] has helped in the off years with schemes to support where potential is there to be harnessed – not always financially but in other ways.

How would you like to see our sport develop?

Nationally, it would be great to see more positive press and we have the ability to make that happen with good safety records and positive public events, perhaps even swooping in a public area?

Internationally I want us to have as wide a Mag readership as possible, and continued growth and dominance at international competitions. I would also like us to stay high up the food chain in the governing bodies like IPC.

What do you do when not skydiving?

Tunnel coaching is great fun and a good way of staying fit and in tip-top skydiving form. Then there is, of course, the Arsenal! I'm a season ticket holder, it's great to break up the non summer months with a different sport.

What winds you up?

People with a negative view or that cannot be bothered to pursue an opinion.

Whom do you admire?

Dan BC. About 12 years ago Chris Allen said that too so that's a great testament to still cutting it at the top!

Tell me a quirky fact about you

I have got some webbed toes on my left foot.

Any advice for new skydivers?

Relax and listen to your instructors' advice, try to get good coaching and make use of the tools available, tunnels included.

What's your idea of a perfect day?

Arriving back early morning from a victorious Champion's League final, cracking a few great AFF levels in, wingsuiting past a tandem and then heading via the tunnel to the airport to go team training with Connexion – get in!!

What was it like on World Team?

Outstanding – great fun, like a World Cup but with the difference that we were **all** going to either win or lose and you were really part of one giant team – that included the ground contingent as ever.

How did it feel when you built the 400-way?

As I tracked off I felt certain I had spotted nobody low, nobody out and was waiting to see the reactions of those who were behind me – everybody twigged within minutes that nobody had a hand up saying "Sorry I was out". The way Dane told us with 'White smoke for yes' in papal style was excellent and the place erupted into party time! Giddyup!

Andy Scott
after the
400-way by
Nick Lupton



SIZE DOES MATTER

Flight PLAN

By Kaz Sheekley

I love flying my canopy!
Most of my jumps are hop 'n' pops.
In watching a lot of landings and coaching others in canopy flight, one thing that I consistently see is the lack of a predictable flight plan.

Today's parachutes come in many different shapes and sizes, and each needs to get to the ground safely. There are many more small canopies out there than there were just a few years ago, and a lot of pilots are flying more aggressively. With these big variables in vertical descent rates and speeds, it is more important than ever that we all follow a predictable flight plan.

It's a rare weekend that I don't cringe because of seeing a near collision under canopy. And when I do see a collision or near miss, I know that most or all of them would have been avoided if both pilots had just followed a predictable flight plan.

Other common landing accidents we see and read about are the results of a low turn. A lot of these are caused by avoiding an obstacle or by trying to turn into wind. By getting coaching and following a correct flight plan we can educate ourselves to avoid these situations. Knowledge and practice will give you confidence to safely deal with any situations that may arise! Remember, it is more important to land safely than to land into the wind. With coaching you will learn all of these skills.

Flight plans are a very powerful tool for improving canopy piloting. The best pilots in the world all use a very similar flight plan – why wouldn't you?

Benefits of a Flight Plan

- It helps improve your canopy skills – including your accuracy.
- It gives you confidence. For a lot of people, a canopy ride can be quite scary, so knowing your plan and other people's plans takes some fear out of it. You will be amazed at how much you will enjoy flying your parachute.
- It avoids low turns and collisions!

Making a Flight Plan

A flight plan (or landing pattern) is a plan for flying your parachute. This includes being in the holding area and having predetermined checkpoints on your downwind, crosswind and final legs.

Before each jump, assess the current winds and work out your flight plan. Prior to jumping, familiarise yourself with the aerial of the drop zone, your landmarks and the outs. If for some reason you can't make it back to the DZ to land, your plan can still be the same, as you can easily adjust it to a different landing location if needed.

Check the predetermined landing direction before boarding the aircraft. This is particularly important on low or nil wind days. Maybe your drop zone has a rule to follow the landing direction of the first person down. Maybe your load agrees on a direction before boarding. Perhaps the drop zone has a rule of landing in one particular direction if there are low or nil winds. Whatever it is, know the DZ rules, including how the landing direction is decided. Remember, it is much better to land downwind or crosswind than to turn too low to face into the wind!

Holding Area

The holding area is a large predetermined area that the pilot can use to safely fly their canopy until it is time to enter the downwind leg of their pattern. Once open, the pilot should proceed directly there. This area is picked beforehand – upwind of the landing target – and allows for a safe entry into the downwind leg of the flight plan.

There aren't any exact altitudes for the following checkpoints, approach it as a science project from the beginning.

Downwind Leg

This leg is parallel in the opposite direction to the landing direction. The starting point should be predetermined by the current winds aloft or a jump made just shortly before this one. You should have heights picked out for the starting of the downwind leg and assess them as you make your way to your crosswind leg.

You can adjust this part of your pattern. If you are getting there too quickly, make it wider, almost like a bow (green dotted line). If you are finding that you are taking too long then you can slightly move on the inside of your line so that you will be at a closer point to your crosswind entry (blue line). Of course, look both ways before doing this.

Crosswind Leg

This follows the downwind leg. You should have your predetermined checkpoints and assess how your flight plan is going. These checkpoints throughout your flight plan allow you to make small changes early on in the flight to prevent larger ones closer to touchdown. If you realise that you're getting there too early, widen this 90° angle on your turn. If you are to your crosswind point too late, slightly cut the corner. Remember to always check first for traffic, as you should do before making any turn.

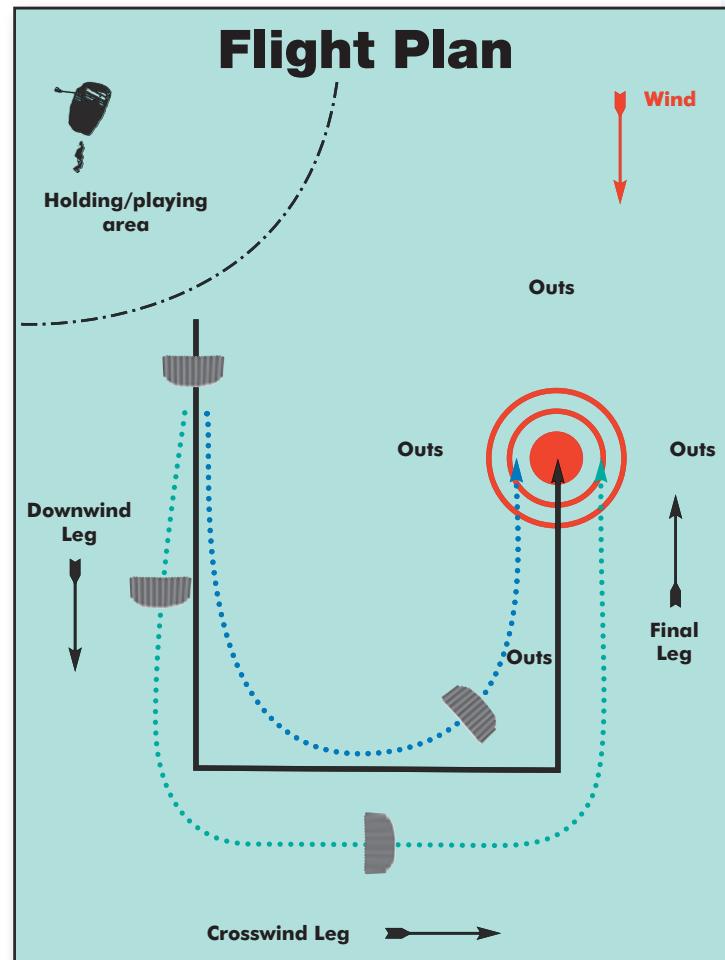
Final Leg

The final leg is your direction for landing. If it looks like you will overshoot your target and that it is clear of obstacles, stay on that flight path and land past your target. By doing this, you are not only making it safe for yourself and everyone else around you, but you are also improving your accuracy. By assessing your last pattern, learning from your mistakes and making the proper adjustments, your target landing accuracy will improve greatly.

When choosing a target always make it where there is a lot of room to both overshoot and undershoot.

Assess & Adjust Plan

When learning this manoeuvre try to do a couple of jumps, follow your exact flight plan for each jump and see where this puts you. You can learn a lot by simply assessing and not adjusting to make it to the target on your first jump. On the next jump you can make a new, improved flight plan from what you have just learned. When trying this, take a separate pass and make sure you have a large area to land in without obstacles.



A flight plan (black line) will help you land safely and accurately. Assess your progress and adopt a shorter course (blue line) or longer course (green) as needed.



High Speed Landings

If you are hoping to increase your speed by making a turn before landing, it is important that you also land in the same direction as everyone else around you, follow predictable downwind and crosswind legs and be extra aware of any other canopies around you. **You do not have right of way!** Try to account for the other canopies on your load (an easy way to do this is to fly an extra wide pattern so most people are on one side of you) and look for other canopies your whole flight, paying extra attention to your pattern. If there is too much traffic around you and there is a risk of not knowing where another canopy is going, abort your turn and choose to land safely. Most high level canopy pilots choose to do hop 'n' pops so they will have a clear traffic pattern. Take extra care not to hinder the safety of others – there will always be another time for you to swoop if you're smart about it!

If you are flying a different canopy or simply want to try something new, including your experiment with your pattern, give yourself the room to do it. You can either do a hop 'n' pop on a lower pass or open at a much higher altitude without all the traffic. It is far too often that we find ourselves with poor situational awareness when we are trying a new skill set; we are so focussed on learning one thing that we can't take it all in. But we are fortunate now to have more canopy instructors available than ever. Please go to them with any of your questions or concerns, no matter how silly you think they may be. Better still, invest in some coaching – it is your life after all!

Enjoy your journey! Enjoy your flight!

Kaz Sheekey, PD Pilot

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Photo: Mark Harris

Other Events

Large Formation Skills 21/22 April

Big Way Weekend 5/6/7 May

4 way FS Grand Prix: 2/3 June

8 way FS Grand Prix: 23/24 June

Large Formation Skills 11/12 August

CF Grand Prix: 6/7 October

A Week in the Life of a Trainee Judge...

Gera - World Championships 06

Finally I got to go to a World Meet! The BPA had put me forward and were covering costs for me to attend and train for my FAI judges licence in artistics. No pressure then! With trepidation and excitement I boarded my plane for Leipzig feeling like a child on her first day at big school. I was collected and whizzed to the DZ where I met my teachers and the Brits already there practising. It was a hive of activity with final preparations still under way and a buzz of excitement.

Training

Training began the next day at 10am with Klaus Rheinwald, understanding the Sports Code and General Section of the FAI Sporting Code. There were nine of us with two Brits (one defected to France), a Lithuanian, a German, an Austrian, a Slovenian, a Brazilian, a Dane and an

Australian. It was superb to meet people from so many different cultures and we all got on splendidly, helping each other to learn and understand the rules. We studied these for a day and a half and then went into our practical classes, split into FS and Artistic. I met the lovely Florian, a very relaxed and knowledgeable man, our artistic teacher.

Social interaction

Every evening we trainee judges would dine together nattering about our experiences. Competitors filed in as and when they were released, the hotel was constantly active. All the qualified judges were very friendly, supportive and always happy to help.

Practical sessions

Our practical sessions were intense, watching footage from previous competitions, scoring and then justifying your scores and thoughts to Florian. It was hard work but I learnt so much and thoroughly enjoyed picking Florian's brains! It has to be said, lesson structure and time were a little disrupted due to Florian's commitment to judging but it gave us time to cruise around poking our heads into the different countries' tents, making yet more friends.

Atmosphere

It's fantastic to be part of the Brit delegation, to walk to the plane with your teams waving the Union Flag and generally being as supportive and noisy as possible! (The Brits were the loudest!) It was wonderful to share in the teams' experiences, to see them land whooping with joy, even sometimes to see them saddened by a not so good round. Watching Team Airkix dirtdiving & mentally preparing was awesome.

Written exam

A written test took place on Tuesday morning, happily we weren't forewarned (although we knew it was coming) so the nerves were kept at bay. It's a long time since I've taken a written exam! It was multiple choice with about 30 questions.

Practical exam

For the practical exam, the Chief Artistic Judge (Ray Williams from Australia) sat in. The nerves got to me a little at this point but I'm happy to say that I passed. Again, we watched footage from previous competitions and had to score and justify said scores. We judged one round from each artistic discipline. 'Phew, it's all over', I thought!

I passed!

I was told I'd passed at 1pm on the last day, I was so pleased and so proud and excited! I made my way ecstatically to the lovely German beer tent where my new friend Lutz supplied me with so much beer my legs were a tad wobbly for the closing ceremony!

Fantastic experience

The opening and closing ceremonies were fantastic with many locals and dignitaries attending. There were TV cameras everywhere! It was amazing to be at a World Championships. It was awesome to see Team Airkix win the 4-way and our artistic entrants did the best they ever had! I felt very proud, especially as I worked with them helping them to improve their routines from a judging perspective, a very nice feeling indeed. The biggest thanks go to Florian who taught me so much – the learning curve continues!

What's next?

Stupino, Russia for the 2007 FAI European Artistic Skydiving Championships, fingers crossed I'll be selected to judge. Kate Charters submits your request and the Chief Judge for that competition chooses. They have a duty to rotate the attending judges and give everyone a crack at each different discipline. I cannot wait – more to learn, more friends to make and, if you knock about drop zones yourself, you'll know that the experiences to be had are unique and unmissable!

Sue Skell
FAI Judge – Artistics

Judges seminar, JSPC, Bad Lippspringe, 27-30 April
Anyone interested contact Kate Charters
charters@ingliston.fsnet.co.uk

Judging at a World Meet by Willy Boeykens



Background image
by Andy Wright



35 **skydive** Apr 07

When I grow up I wannabe... ...a BPA JUDGE

Fancy it?

- getting to know **all** the competitors at a Nationals?
- going to a World Meet?
- helping skydivers improve?
- making a difference?
- free associate BPA membership or reduced full membership?

It really doesn't matter which discipline you choose to specialise in as a judge, it's all the same:

- a whole heap of fun
- giving something back to the sport
- the opportunity to meet lots of people
- heaps of satisfaction
- and, of course, good old hard work!

There are many disciplines to choose from

- Artistic – Freefly, Freestyle & Skysurf
- Formation Skydiving (FS)
- Canopy Formation (CF)
- Canopy Piloting
- Classics – Style & Accuracy
- Speed Skydiving
- 8-way Speed

How do I become a judge?

Contact Kate Charters via the BPA. Kate is the Judges Co-ordinator and organises which judges go where for various events, and she approves any expenses paid. Kate will organise for you to begin your training with a judge or judges already qualified in the discipline you've selected. Should you be unsure as to which area you'd like to judge then feel free to sit in at each competition to get a flavour.

Am I limited to just one discipline?

No! Not at all! Whilst it's firmly recommended that you pursue each discipline separately it is encouraged to be qualified in as many as you wish.

Do I need to be a jumper?

No, all you need is an interest in the sport and the people. You can learn the rest!

What do I need to learn?

At national level you need to learn the rules for that particular competition to a level where you can answer all competitors' questions. Each discipline has a different set of requirements and scoring systems, these take time to completely

understand. You will also need to learn the time frames of each discipline and what to expect to see from the camera or the ground. If working with disciplines with cameraflyers on the team you will learn an awful lot about camera work which can be very interesting.

You will be asked, at some point, to sit alongside the 'real' judges and complete your own scoring, this is great fun! Your scores will then be compared with the real judges and in some cases (especially Artistic) you will be asked to justify your scores. This is a fantastic way to learn.

How long will it take?

This could take a minimum of three years dependant on how many competitions you can attend to increase your learning.

Is there an exam?

Not at national level – the judge or judges who have been teaching you will know whether you are competent from the events they have attended with you and your previous work. During training, you are evaluated by a written assessment by the Chief Judge at each competition you attend; these are passed to Kate Charters. Any National Judge may recommend that you receive your national rating and the Judges Co-ordinator will validate this.

How do I become an International Judge?

You need to have served as a National Judge for a minimum of two national events to attend a world event as a trainee judge. The BPA must submit you. Your costs will be covered by the BPA should you be successful. The training course at international level is much more intense, and there is a written and a practical exam.

I can only speak for my own experiences in my disciplines but, despite the long hours and sometimes grumpy competitors, I find it thoroughly rewarding every time and now have friends right across the world!

Sue Skull

skully70@yahoo.com

Sue Skull by Simon Ward



EDDIE JONES

The new Chairman of the BPA, elected at the inaugural Council meeting 2007, is Eddie Jones. Eddie's pay-the-bills job is as an electrical engineer, for which he travels on contracts across the UK – allowing him to visit drop zones whenever he can. He's best known for his passion for skydiving – his local centre is Skydive Strathallan in Scotland – and as a BPA Council Member for four years, the last three as Communications Chairman.



Eddie Jones by Kieran Brady

Eddie has a wealth of experience in all aspects of the sport. Since his first jump in 1992, he has made over 3,000 jumps and is a category system instructor, tandem instructor and FS coach. Eddie is dedicated to providing viable solutions to the challenges facing the sport and spends much of his available time working behind the scenes, only ever missing one Council meeting in four years, despite having a round trip of over 600 miles – just one measure of his dedication and commitment to our sport.

In recent years, Eddie has led the BPA's communications team which has overseen not only *Skydive The Mag*, the world's best and brightest skydiving magazine, but has formulated policy on a variety of other projects successfully completed by Editor Lesley Gale and her *Skydive Mag* team. These have included production of the eagerly-anticipated calendar each year, and updating the Starter Magazine and the Freedom of the Skies brochure to keep pace with the rapid development of our sport. In addition, an attractive and informative new handbill and posters to promote skydiving to the public and encourage more first-time jumpers, were successfully launched at the AGM. The Communications Committee has also compiled the last two membership survey questionnaires which help the Council know what the Membership wants.

On his election to the top office in the BPA, Eddie said *"I'm delighted to have been given this opportunity to lead our sport during what promises to be another challenging year. It got off to an excellent start with Peterlee Parachute Centre's well-earned victory over the threat of a planning application for a nearby wind turbine that, had it gone ahead, would have closed them down and left us with no home for our sport across the northeast of England. I was delighted to have spearheaded the BPA's campaign as one of several organisations including Sport England and the Campaign to Protect Rural England, supporting Peterlee's DZ Operator Ian Rosenvinge. I'm doing all I can to see if we can help to safeguard other centres for the future. It was heart-warming to see the spirit of our skydiving community supporting Ian at Peterlee. We not only enjoy a great sport, but have a fantastic bunch of people in it."*

Eddie has helped to coach and teach at Wild Geese in Northern Ireland and at Target Skysports, Hibaldstow where he was pleased to meet BCPA jumpers. He's keen to preserve and enhance provision for our sport throughout the UK, and says *"We've had the welcome news of skydiving returning to Wales with the opening of Skydive Swansea. The geographic provision for our sport in both in the English Regions and in the home countries of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and in Jersey, is now better than it has been for many years."*

Eddie is keen to hear from Members and can be contacted at chairman@bpa.org.uk

Eddie was talking to Martin Shuttleworth



INSURANCE

The account on the BPA third party public liability policy from April '94 to March '07, as above is not, by any stretch of the imagination, in equilibrium. The insurer is not a charity and over the last 13 years has not achieved the level of profit that any commercial insurer might reasonably expect.

One reason is that during the nineties the BPA became arguably too good at negotiating premium levels, so there were relatively small year-on-year increases in the insurance premium. These small increments came almost to be taken as the norm. But then came 9/11, consolidation of the insurance industry, additional costs for the new financial legislation that gave birth to the Financial Services Authority – a whole host of external factors that bit hard on the insurance market in general. And then there were payouts and costs from claims on our own policy. It's easy to rue the significant increases in premium in recent years compared with the nineties. Golden days, you may think, but they have bitten us back! The policy simply didn't build up enough fat to weather the years ahead. It's needed significant injections of cash in the form of higher premiums to keep going. The policy's finances are still far from equilibrium, which led to doubt at the turn of this year about whether the insurers would stick with us but they have – in the hope of better days to come.

To the credit of STC, BPA Clubs & Centres and the Membership, the insurers have recognised the positive effect on the bottom line of the culture of proactive risk management in the sport, which has helped to reduce the number of claims. The trend is for claims to be fewer in number but higher in severity.

February Council Meeting

At the Council meeting on 13 February, despite trawls of the insurance market by the BPA and an independent broker, the only quotation on the table was from the existing insurers. Had the Council decided to hold an EGM for the Membership to accept or decline this quotation, it would have cost around £2K to have posted a call notice of an EGM to all Members (at the

required 21 days' notice). If Council had used the February Mag to call an EGM, it would still have cost around £2K for a subsequent mailing of the renewal form (actually issued in the February Mag at no cost), which would have been too late in March to cope with renewals for the new Membership year, 1 April.

The insurance element of full Membership now costs £99.78 (of a total subscription of £152.10). The insurance component is less than the cost of a TV licence, and considerably less than motor or home insurance policies.

The Future

The BPA Insurance Subcommittee, under the Chairmanship of David Hickling, is continuing to investigate other options for this highly specialised risk that, sadly, very few insurers are prepared to take on.

The rising cost of insurance is one of the most complex and seemingly intractable issues faced by the BPA. Your Council is concerned at the rise, its effect on the pockets of jumpers, and how that may feed through into the number of participants in our sport. Equally, Council recognises that the current, bespoke policy has evolved over many years to fit the sport's needs like a glove and that it might, if lost, never be resurrectable in its present form. Virtually every party in the sport is covered; it is unusually broad. The steady stream of other brokers the BPA has seen often comment favourably on the nature and scope of our policy. None of these brokers could deliver a better deal on insurance up to the February 2007 Council meeting.

It is worth remembering that, without the benefit of third party insurance protection, a parachute jump that caused damage or injury to a third party might just lead to the loss of the jumper's assets, including their home. This thought may help to assuage the pain of the rising insurance premium when paying your BPA subscription. It is tempered by the knowledge from the above figures on the BPA's insurance account that the Membership, far from being an exploited captive audience as some have suggested, is fortunate to have the present insurers stick with us.

*Martin Shuttleworth
Secretary-General*



BPA matters

By Martin Shuttleworth

www.bpa.org.uk

0116 278 5271

Minutes of BPA meetings can be downloaded from the BPA website once ratified

Photo taken at
Sibson Freestyle
Festival 2006 by
Mark Harris

New Ratings

CSI

Gerry Cepelak
Andy Pike
Noel Purcell
Daniel Schmidt
Pam Snow
Paul Gibbs
Jamie McNamee
Rod McCrory

CSBI

Alastair Milne
James Brittain
Ed Blakey
Pete Brown
Andy Brayne
Thea Follett
Anthony French
Genevieve Huntley
Duncan Murray
Jason Pocock
Phil Skelland
Simon Wilson
Darren Smith
Marcus Speed

AFF BI

Mike Hayes
Phil Hartree

Tandem BI

Rohan Beal
Andy Wesley

Advanced Packer

Constant Daniel De Wit (S)

Renewal Reminder

To those Members who have already renewed – thank you! To those who haven't, last year's subscriptions expired on 31 March 2007 and need to be renewed now. A renewal form was inserted in the February Mag. You also can get one from the BPA website, your DZ or the BPA Office. The June Mag will go **only** to those on the BPA membership database when we print the labels mid-May. Help us to help you and renew now!

One Good Turn

At this year's AGM, when it was announced that the BPA insurance would include provision for visiting Europeans, Jorg Rietz from Germany won the free BPA subscription drawn from voting member. He decided to hand his claim back to the BPA Office in order that another Member who voted will have a chance to win it. A new card was drawn on 6



March after a meeting of the Comps Committee – the lucky winner is Roger Flavell from Bucks, BPA 347964.

Stamp it Right!

The BPA Office is quids out from underpaid postage on incoming mail; we have to pay the postage plus a penalty. Please use the correct postage. With Royal Mail's Pricing in Proportion, the size and the thickness of the envelope count. Fold your renewal form twice and pop it in an ordinary envelope for the price of a standard letter – if you choose an A4 envelope, you're in large letter land. FAI licences always need a large letter stamp because of their thickness.

www.royalmail.com

100% Me!

'Me, me, me'... that's the message from UK Sport. '100% Me' is the campaign to make sure competitors understand that they are 100% responsible for everything inside their system. This includes prohibited substances, however unwittingly they may have been taken. Drug free sport is something about which UK Sport and the BPA make no compromise. Any competitor could be randomly selected by UK Sport for a doping test and the whole team could be disqualified if the test was positive. If in doubt, check it out. The Anti-Doping page on the BPA website has been updated and is a must for competitors.

www.bpa.org.uk/antidoping.htm

COMPETITIONS

The 2007 Nationals rules for various disciplines are now available on the BPA website. Funding of British teams will be based, as usual on the performance benchmark of the fourth place at last World Championships (precise scores included in the rules) – BUT – for teams invited to represent. The idea is to be more flexible if a first place team indicates no intent to represent but a lower placed team also is in a potentially international medal-winning position (based on fourth place benchmark).

Andy Scott

IPC

There is a new IPC President – Graeme Windsor from Australia.

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Team Airkix/Elan BPA coaching roadshow

25th - 27th May
Brian Vacher - safe flight school canopy training

30th June/1st July
Tracking and Freefly Weekend with OutBreak and Yoko Okazaki

14th/ 15th July
Boxer Short Skydives in aid of Testicular Cancer

4th/ 5th August
Mini 4-Way FS Competition

8th/ 9th September
4-Way FS Scrambles

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45?! NOT BAD for a WEEKEND Team!

Many times it happens that people step up to us and ask what the secret is of Hayabusa. What it takes to gain a 20+ average with a small amount of jumps compared to the professional teams. They ask what we do different than other weekend teams or how we fill in our training programme. I guess that one of the most important reasons is that we found a way to get a high efficiency out of our jumps. If you can't train much being very efficient is the only way to go into battle with those who can!

I will try to give some advice to get more efficiency out of your team training and some tips on forming a new team. Before starting I will tell something about myself and my team. This will allow you to see that, even if you're a weekend team, if you're using the right tools, you can reach a 20+ average. Because if we are able to do this, so are you!

Rolls' Story

First jump: 1995, Zwartberg Belgium, aged 16

Jumps: 3,100+

Tunnel: 100+ hours

Team experience: 5 years

After doing a static line course I chose to continue with AFF. Once I graduated I had many interests but never really focussed on one discipline, I did several things like freestyle, video, wingsuit and base. Inbetween I became an AFF instructor, mainly to survive skydiving financially.

In 2002 4-way FS got my attention. I decided to join a 4-way team and commit myself to them completely to become as good as I possibly could. This season with my first 4-way team didn't exactly go like I had in mind! We all had different expectations and the results were far less than what we were capable of.

After just one season we decided to stop training because we realised that this wasn't working at all. I guess we thought it would all be much easier and we didn't realise that, before forming a new team, we needed to make sure we all had the same goals and expectations from ourselves as well as from each other.

After the 2002 Nationals I was asked by Sven and David to join forces together with David's brother Andy. This was a new opportunity to chase my dream and become a National Champion! We asked Bruno to fill in the slot of video flyer. At that moment *Hayabusa* was born and there would rise a new kind of team in Belgium. We had to train with the same limitations as most people: not much money to spend, limited holidays, family, work and a country with generally bad weather.





Hayabusa Team History

2003

Training jumps: 150

Highest average: 15.8

Andy was doing his last year at school so budgets were very limited but we took a team approach, sharing funds. We competed in five different competitions with a highest average over ten rounds of 15.8.

2004

Training jumps: 200

Tunnel time: 6 hours

Highest average: 19.3

Now we added about 6 hours of team training in the wind tunnel. This was also the first year where we started to work with a coach. We attended six competitions including the World Meet in Croatia. Our highest average over ten rounds was 19.3, a new Belgian record, and we set a Belgian record for the highest score in one round: 32 points.

2005

Training jumps: 250

Tunnel time: 13 hours

Highest average: 20.0

We entered nine competitions and became, after a thrilling final against the Russian *Extreme.Ru* team, European Champions. We continued to work with our coach and our average peaked at 20.0 during the ESL Finals in Spa, again a new Belgian record. We also set another new Belgian highest score: 34 points.

2006

Training jumps: 350

Tunnel time: 15 hours

Highest average: 20.5

We competed at five events including the World Meet in Gera, still continuing with the same coach (Doug Park). We set once again a new Belgian record average (20.5). We made a 45 pointer during the Belgium Skydive Trophy. The ESL Finals in Spa was our last competition in this first *Hayabusa* line-up.

2007

At this moment we're busy with getting ourselves a new fourth member as Sven left the team after ESL.

Rolls, Bruno, Dave, Andy & Sven



Claudia Stratemans



Forming a New Team

Who never dreamed about having a 'kick-ass' team?! Flying like those guys you see on dvds, spinning the daylight out of their turns! Making those incredible jumps and having fun all the way! Well... unfortunately it ain't that simple. But still it's good to set yourself high goals, just make sure they stay realistic!

When forming a new team it is very helpful to find someone you have a good natural feeling with. They don't need to be necessarily already your friend, but hopefully they will become one! If you're putting yourself with a person that you already don't like, ask yourself if this is a smart thing to do, because you'll spend a lot of time together, and not just during the happy parts! Once you have your future team in mind, organise a meeting and start with talking about everyone's expectations. Then you can get an idea if this team is worth trying, or you may realise that you don't have a chance to achieve your goals.

One of the first things to become successful is that from the start you all should have the same goals! Here are some examples of what to talk about:

- What are your personal & team goals in the short and long term?
- How much money can you invest in your team?
- How much time are you able to commit?
- How many years are you planning to train together?
- Are you a team player??
- In which way do you want to, or can you, help your teammates if they struggle with their goals?
- What is your plan to ensure that the things you agree on will be done?

The answers to these questions can only be filled in by yourself. But by comparing the answers to the ones of your teammates, you can have an idea if you can be successful. And success is not only measured by numbers of medals!



Training

We can split training into two areas, one part that costs a lot of money and the other part that just costs time. With *Hayabusa* we invested as much as we could in both.

Concerning the part that doesn't cost money we are using DVDs, internet, magazines and everything else that can possibly provide us with more knowledge and understanding of skydiving. And then we compare it to ourselves and see what we can learn.

With movies look at the individual moves of all slots as well as the moves from the piece partners. Use it to learn and motivate yourself and your team to become better skydivers.

Also we spend a lot of time on the creepers, where we get familiar with our slots and try to improve our random and block work. It's important that everybody in the team tries to think how you can fly more efficiently. Travel less distances, make better axes, get a grip plan, train communication, respect keys, train memory and get a rhythm while you're rolling the dirt dive. The same applies for training exits at the mock-up. Compare your exits with others and use the elements that can improve your own. Really work as a team and don't let the same person always come up with the ideas.

The other part of training does cost money and we shouldn't be throwing that away. We must make sure that before we board, everybody knows exactly what to do during the jump. This means that we need to spend enough time on the creepers and at the mock-up. There shouldn't be any questions left because, if we're out there, we push ourself and our teammates 100%! After the skydive, go debrief! Watch the jump very carefully and compare it to what you have briefed and all the moves from yourself and the team. Try to find errors and room for improvements. Feel free to give comment but always in a stimulating way, and start first with yourself! Be open-minded towards comments from others and don't hide behind excuses.

Only by hard work, focus and determination will you achieve your dreams. If you are a weekend team with high ambitions, there ain't much time for fooling around. We need to try to get the maximum out of every skydive. While others will do fun jumps at the end of a tiring day, you'll be giving that last energy to your training. But we are weekend jumpers, limited with time and money, so this is the only option we have. We must try to train harder and with more efficiency than professional teams to compensate for their advantages.

Basically it's the same when we head off to the wind tunnel. Always make sure you're well prepared. Make a draw that will benefit your needs. The tunnel is a great tool to improve your individual skills and those of the team. Of course we can't train the exit, sub-terminal speed and the references around us like skydiving. But financially it is quite interesting and we can train there any time with great efficiency.

Coaching

What I recommend is to work with a coach. Your coach will help you with getting the puzzle right, and should be a time-saver, meaning that with his knowledge you will save loads of time and money finding out stuff that he already knows. Of course it's an investment that costs a lot of money if you look at it on a daily basis, but over a long period it should save you a lot of time and money and your learning curve should be going up steeply!



Willy Boeykens

But be aware that not all coaches will fit into your team style. Find a coach you feel confident with. He should be able to teach in a way that benefits the whole team and be patient as well. If they are too focussed on the money, you're dealing with the wrong guy.

When you work with a coach, be open-minded for his new ideas, and try them out. Give it a shot and see what works for you and what doesn't. Use the elements that are good and add them into your team continuity plan.

Last but not Least

I guess it's obvious that not all weekend teams will gain a 20+ average even if they train as efficiently as they can. It also takes enough talent and luck to reach this level. The hardest part will

be to get the right people together with the talent and the right motivation and who can work as one unit. But by trying as hard as you can, you'll find yourself flying much further than your current ability! Motivation, enthusiasm and determination are the keys to success, just as with any other sport! Aim for higher goals when you reached the first! Keep focussed on your target and get inspiration from others! Work as a team, support and stimulate each other instead of being jealous. Become a 'weekend warrior' and enjoy it as much as possible!

I wish you good luck with your kick-ass team!

'Rolls' Roy Janssen
roy@skydivehayabusa.com
www.skydivehayabusa.com



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Photo: Steve Hankay

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Taken to the Optimum



by
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Colpus

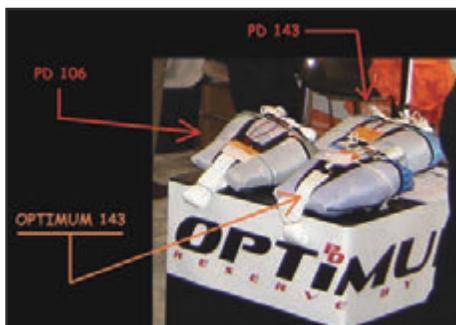
Kit News



Photo: Rickster Powell

Top canopy manufacturer Performance Designs (PD) of Florida have finally released onto the market their long awaited new reserve design incorporating a lightweight hi-tech fabric. Named the *Optimum*, the new reserve, at present available in five sizes from 99 to 143 sq ft, makes use of a proprietary fabric developed by PD and a partner company. The new fabric is similar in strength to that currently used on reserve canopies but is considerably lower bulk – according to PD an Optimum reserve of a given size will pack up similar to a current reserve of about one size smaller. The strength of the new lightweight fabric, and indeed the conventional fabric, is in excess of what is required by the testing standard TSOc23d – the latest, most stringent standard to date.

PD's promotional spiel states that they have "combined this new fabric with special aerodynamics and extensive reinforcing to create great strength, better performance and a smaller pack volume". Available in any colour as long as it's orange the Optimum is reported to possess a flatter glide angle and a better flare than current PD reserves; in fact they claim that the Optimum descent rate and glide angle more closely resembles that of a similar sized main canopy.



The pack volume of a 143 Optimum PD reserve is about one size smaller than usual

PD have no plans to use the new fabric on main canopies because the more durable coated zero-porosity fabric currently used for mains will provide a more consistent performance over a long lifespan of many jumps. At the moment the company has no plans to discontinue the current range of reserves, indeed sizes over 143 will still only be available in the current model.

www.performancedesigns.com

An Opening Gambit – Continued!

In the last issue of your fave column we reported on the work of Eric Fradet of the French Parachute Federation and the European Association for Safety Parachutes (EASP), in testing the opening speed of modern reserve containers. EASP and the European Academy of Parachute Rigging in Germany concluded that, due to the common practice of placing AAD loop cutters under reserve bags at the bottom of some reserve containers, retardation or impingement of the reserve container's opening performance may be experienced in some circumstances when an AAD is fired.

Well, the good news is that things have started to move in the harness/container/AAD market and some positive steps have started to appear. For one, Airtec, manufacturers of the popular Cypress AAD agree that, because the general direction towards smaller and harder reserve containers is still in progress, they feel "that it is necessary now to turn around and take a new step towards safety". They pointed out that they have been constantly working with harness/container manufacturers over the years to approve new designs and, if the chosen loop length is correct a container should open reliably, but the margin for error has been getting smaller and smaller.

In fact last year some rig manufacturers started to write maximum loop lengths in their manuals. But Airtec feel that it's now time to get back to a bigger safety margin. In specific, they would like to change the cutter position on all four or more flap, one pin reserve containers with an internal pilot chute (anything except a Pop Top in fact) that have the cutter mounted below the pilot chute to an above the pilot chute location. Airtec say that they talked to all affected harness/container manufacturers last year on this subject.

Indeed United Parachute Technologies (UPT) of Vector fame have recently stated that they are redesigning the metal pilot chute cap for their rigs to accommodate moving the AAD cutter from under the pilot chute to on top of it, directly under the four container flaps. They confirmed that one AAD manufacturer has been quietly pressuring them to do this. UPT said that the new pilot chute will eventually become standard on all Vectors and Microns and will be available for retrofitting to existing rigs. Bill Booth of UPT believes that other rig manufacturers are also studying similar changes. In fact Paratec of Germany have already issued a Service Bulletin in February which requires at the next repack the moving of the cutter to flap no 3 of their Next container system, thereby siting it above the pilot chute.

www.cypress.cc

www.unitedparachutetechnologies.com

www.paratec.de

Keeping Vigil

The Belgium manufacturers of the *Vigil AAD*, Advance Aerospace Designs, issued an advisory bulletin in February concerning the Vigil's cutter and its plastic inserts. The bulletin concerns all Vigils built before August 2006 and is concerned with damage found in the field to the plastic inserts which in turn may have damaged reserve closing loops. The bulletin recommends that at the next repack the Vigil's cutter inserts need to be inspected for any sign of damage and at the same time the rig's closing loop should be inspected for signs of wear or damage from the cutter frame. If damage is found, the cutter will need to be replaced. The Vigil must then be returned to the manufacturer at the owner's expense.

Advanced Aerospace Designs - www.vigil.aero
0032 2 732 6552

Hooked on Speed

United Parachute Technologies (UPT) until recently named the Relative Workshop have been offering their *Skyhook* reserve static line system as an option on their range of *Vector* harness/containers for some time.



The *Skyhook*, which acts as a reserve static line, is available on *Javelin Odysseys*, which come *Skyhook ready* as standard

Now Sunpath of *Javelin* fame have become the first company to be licensed by Bill Booth of UPT to fit the *Skyhook* system to their own product. While a standard RSL automatically pulls the reserve ripcord pin following a cutaway, the *Skyhook* also releases the non-RSL riser in case the RSL riser was released prematurely (ensuring the reserve will not deploy with half the main still attached). The *Skyhook* then uses the departing malfunctioned main canopy as a large pilot chute to deploy the reserve canopy, taking, according to UPT about half a second from cutaway to line stretch. This is about three or four times faster than a pilot chute can do alone, which means that the average reserve can be open in 75-80 feet after a cutaway.

Sunpath featured the addition of this new option to landmark the company's 20 year anniversary at the Parachute Industry Association's Symposium in Nevada this year. Once their production has been swapped over, all new *Javelin Odysseys* will come 'Skyhook ready' whether you choose the feature as an option or not. Sunpath tell us that it will not be possible to convert existing *Javelins* to *Skyhook*.

www.sunpath.com

www.unitedparachutetechnologies.com

Cool as a FreeZR



Those teutonic boffins at Paratec in Germany have released the latest model of their *FreeZR* onto the rapidly growing full-face helmet market. The new helmet is a huge improvement over the original *FreeZR*. While still maintaining the Mk1's curved visor, which is perfect for the wearer of spectacles, the new lighter weight *Mk2* features a smoothly operating and secure visor opening and closing system, plus an upgraded, very comfortable liner. The new *FreeZR* is available in three individual shell sizes, unlike other skydiving helmets on the market where a single shell size relies on the liner for size adjustment.

The new *FreeZR* is available in matt black or matt silver. There are two sizes per shell: Small shell: XS and S; Medium shell: M and L; Large shell: XL and XXL.

www.poratec.de

Altitude with Attitude

Never ones to rest on their laurels, Alt 2 Inc have now come up with a range of very funky coloured graphics for their *Neptune* audible and *Galaxy* visual altimeters. If the fancy takes you, you can now order your *Neptune* in a choice of graphic designs including Bubbles, Carbon, Leopard skin, Weave, Blue sky or Water. Likewise the *Galaxy* can be ordered in Marble, Carbon, Mosaic, Leopard skin, Zebra skin, Bubbles or Denim jeans. The *Neptune Armor* – a rubbery silicon jacket which protects the audible against knocks, has been superceded by *Armor II*, which has an additional toughened glass lens bonded into the silicon. The *Neptune* dressed in an *Armor II* was tested by dropping a large ball bearing on it from about a metre high.

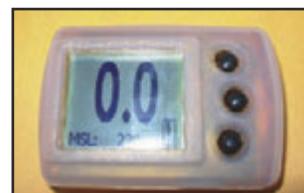
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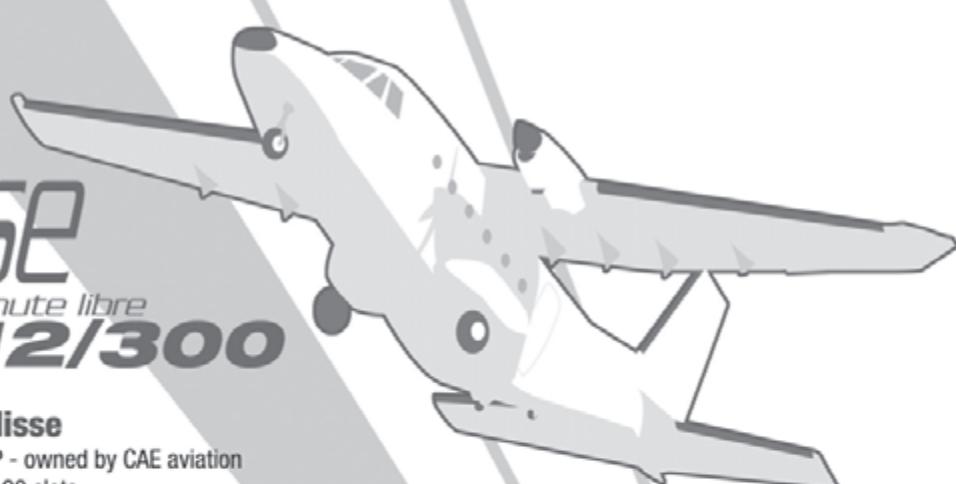
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Simon Hepple

In the pre millennium years there were not many people freeflying and even less you could trust in the air. Simon quickly became part of a hard core base of freeflyers at Langar and, though none of us knew it then, we were doing the groundwork for what would become one of the best freefly scenes (safety, instruction, groups and fun) anywhere in England.

Most of us will remember him for his quiet but determined persona and he always came across as someone who was very, very passionate about freeflying but super safety conscious as well.

Many of us from England will last remember seeing Simon (before he moved to New Zealand) at the Go Vertical '04 boogie in Norway where he was working on large formation VRW jumps. This is also one of the few times anyone remembers seeing him over the limit!

Blue skies Simon!

From Elliot, Jason, Al, Pixie, Steve, Simon (Tillyard) and everyone else at Langar



Photos by Ardmore Helicopters & Arata Shinohara



Simon came to New Zealand via Australia in November 2004. He left his factory job in the UK to train to become a professional helicopter pilot. Whilst studying for his private, then commercial, helicopter licence he worked at Skydive Auckland, living in a camper van. At the NZ Nationals 2005, after a challenge from local kiwi boys, Simon got together with some UK freeflyers and took gold in the freefly competition.

In December 2005 Simon gained his commercial helicopter licence and started flying part time for Ardmore Helicopters. Whilst in the UK Simon developed a keen interest in base jumping. He jumped in Norway and New Zealand as well as the UK. Simon gained his tandem rating in June 2006 and worked part time as a tandem instructor to fund his flying.

Tandem jumps would be the only time you'd see Simon fly on his belly. I doubt he has ever worn an FS suit! Simon will be greatly missed at the drop zone for his enthusiasm for freeflying, and friendly cheeky attitude. Simon was living a dream lifestyle when tragically a low turn proved fatal. Simon's ashes were scattered in freefall from a Eurocopter over Slipper Island in NZ.

To his family, myself and friends he is irreplaceable.

Jo Snodin

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LETTERS

The Airkix Fund

I have been following with much interest developments regarding The Airkix Fund and am becoming increasingly concerned with the BPA's support. While I applaud the owners of Airkix for coming up with a scheme to help bridge the gap in funding caused by the removal of UK sport funding, I feel that something is just not quite right about BPA involvement. I have a little experience in marketing and to me this is an absolutely fantastic marketing exercise by Airkix. I am deeply disturbed that the BPA is supporting a move by one of the wind tunnels to gain a competitive advantage over the other.

If this truly was in the interests of the BPA, and for the BPA to retain impartiality, all profits from this venture should be invested into the fund, with Airkix meeting their costs. At the moment it looks to me as if effectively the BPA is helping one wind tunnel gain competitive advantage over the other in return for £20 commission – even though the commission payment is used to bridge a funding gap. Weed very kindly directed me to the Council minutes when this matter was discussed and I must agree with Eddie Jones that the value of the free advertising that Airkix will gain from this scheme, plus the perceived endorsement by the BPA of Airkix, far outweighs any potential revenue that the BPA will gain.

I sincerely hope I'm wrong. If not I am very disappointed by the commercial naivety of the BPA. As a Member I would like to register my objection to the BPA backing of this scheme.

Kevin Dynan
kevin@gravity-rebels.com

Kevin's letter questions two things; The BPA's commercial wisdom in being involved with a scheme such as The Airkix Fund and the way in which profits should go to the Fund. Whilst I'm sure the BPA can respond to the first point I will add my comments here. To begin with, it was an idea that we thought of at Airkix and we put it to the BPA in much the same way as many other schemes are put to Council. It was conceived on the back of two thoughts; how can we, as skydivers, make our facility available to everyone in an effort to contribute to the betterment of skydiving standards in the UK (the same reason we sponsored Team Airkix) and, secondly, how can we get more UK skydivers to try Airkix and tunnel flying.

Our scheme does this and, as a later idea, adds funds to be spent promoting skydiving in the UK. I'm pretty sure that had any drop zone offered a large amount of free jumping to all members then the BPA would have ensured it was fully taken up as well. In no way can the BPA be accused of offering one wind tunnel a competitive edge over the other. Both tunnels are at liberty to come up with ideas and, interestingly, our scheme was 'leaked' to our competitors in any case. To accuse the BPA of commercial naivety is unfair. Both parties spent in excess of two years creating a scheme that offered something of value to every member. Airkix would happily have run the scheme in its original form without the BPA (that would have given completely free time to members but raised no funds).

It is hard to see how the BPA involvement can be seen as endorsement. It is simply our Association brokering something of benefit to members and the Association in much the same way that they are able to offer a credit card and other services. That would even include organising somewhere to hold the Nationals, or is that helping one DZ gain advantage over another? Neither is this scheme about free publicity, Airkix has committed to spending the same amount on advertising in the Magazine. Extra pages do not add great value to what we already purchase. On the financial side the maths are easy, we are able to fly three of these packages in an hour. That will offer revenue to Airkix of £218.77 after VAT and royalty. This is not a profit centre by any stretch of the imagination! On top of this, Airkix has invested a huge amount of time and considerable costs in setting up the scheme. Whilst both the BPA and Airkix can reclaim some costs we have agreed to minimise and cap them and our view is that we won't be reclaiming anything until there is a sizeable fund.

I would summarise by saying that anyone can approach the BPA with an idea and for support. The Airkix Fund does a lot for BPA members, it offers the equivalent of a minimum of ten jumps (up to 40 if a team wish to book together) and all for a small donation which goes straight back into promoting skydiving through your Association. I think it might also be helpful to look beyond the numbers and criticism of the BPA's commercial skills and ask if this is helpful to skydiving in ways that range from encouraging friends and family to try skydiving after a tunnel flight to improving one's skydiving skills with free tunnel time. Personally, I don't see many other businesses stepping up and offering very much to BPA Members!

Simon Ward, Airkix
simon@airkix.com

The Mag and Our Community

I moaned in the December Mag that there were not enough educative articles for us low jump weekend fun jumpers and I asked for contributions that might help us to learn more about performance, safety and fun. The response to my letter has been tremendous, with the February Mag being about the most interesting and enjoyable that I can remember. When you only get to go jumping once a month it's hard to feel part of the skydiving community. The response to my letter and the consequent (in my opinion) enrichment of the Mag, clearly demonstrates that I am indeed part of a real community. Thank you to everyone who has submitted articles to The Mag and I hope it continues in the same vein.

Darren Spooner
darren@stgilesclinic.co.uk

I suspect there are several who share your concern about the wisdom of becoming overtly involved with one of the two wind tunnels. However, the project was given a good deal of thought by Development Committee last year, and a mutually acceptable arrangement was reached. This year's Council agree it is a project worth pursuing. We will not know the true benefit of the scheme (or not) until the end of this season. We are then in a good position to make a reassessment. Hopefully we will be pleased and will choose to continue. In future we may even do a project with Bodyflight, who knows?

Reading between the lines of your email, it seems you feel the BPA might have been suckered into a clever marketing strategy. You are probably aware that I am new to Council, but I am hugely impressed with the work and energy that goes into Council meetings, and the follow-up work by the office. This was not a decision that was made lightly. Wind tunnels are here to stay, which is excellent news for skydivers, but possibly not such good news for DZ operators (depending on your view!). We collectively feel that embracing wind tunnels as a new and exciting part of our sport will benefit all in the long run. They certainly provide awareness of our sport to a wider audience which will hopefully generate increased interest. However, admittedly it is all new stuff to all of us and I think a year of The Airkix Fund project, will help us measure the benefits. I think we should all be pleased to have the opportunity to trial the scheme.

Robin Durie,
BPA Development Chairman
robin@robindurie.co.uk

Nice Mag! Another great one. You mentioned that you wanted more educational articles so I have kicked my arse and pulled the attached article out. [See next issue.] I think that you're right in that the educational articles are important and perhaps something will have to give to make way. However, education articles come from the experiences gained from the competitions and events that go on around the UK and the rest of the world. The people that respond to you, I'd guess, are primarily the up and coming jumpers and so you will get this demand for education, and rightly so. But I suspect you also have a large portion of readers that probably don't give their feedback, who are more interested in the boogies and comps and, even though some of them might need to learn, they pay little interest to the educational articles. In essence I'm agreeing with you that the educational thing is good but just asking you to strike the balance.

Al Macartney
alastair@macartney.co.uk

Inaugural Council Meeting

The two letters below were removed last issue by Council, who have now voted that they should be published, with an additional letter from Charlie Shea-Simonds (not originally included).

I am writing in the hope of uncensored publication to express how appalled I was when I attended the inaugural Council meeting, at the treatment of John Smyth by Eddie Jones. I was disappointed to hear Eddie Jones's speech to be elected Chairman of the BPA revolve around slighting the character of a man who has been not only an excellent Vice Chairman for a number of years but an excellent ambassador for the Association. I doubt a public servant of such rank and current employment would retain his position unless he was beyond reproach. I was angry that Tony Butler did not use his power as temporary chairman to stop Eddie's diatribe and instruct him to rethink and deliver a fact-based only submission.

I was also made aware on the preceding Thursday by a non BPA member that the election results were already leaked and I was made aware of one result in particular which proved correct. I am worried that this will weaken the strength of the BPA Council and its keenness to have a clear and transparent process of election to the membership. I hope this publication will lead to an apology from Eddie to John and that a more positive approach will be taken from now. Also a new approach needs to be taken before next year's election, starting with an investigation into the leaked 2007 results.

Andy Scott

andrew@ascott22.wanadoo.co.uk

As a member of the Association's employed staff, who are and must be seen to be entirely neutral in matters such as this, I was temporarily in the chair for the formal election of a Chairman. Had I sought to intervene during the personal statement of a candidate nominated for the chair, I believe I should have been open to possibly even stronger criticism than Andy is making now. Also, any Council member could have objected at any time.

Tony Butler

BPA Technical Officer
tony@bpa.org.uk

The Council, at its meeting on Tuesday 13 February, invited the Vice Presidents to conduct an Inquiry into the Council 2007 election, and this will no doubt include the issue that Andy mentions.

Martin Shuttleworth
BPA Secretary-General
martin@bpa.org.uk

I have been a member of the BPA continuously since 1976 and have represented the BPA at numerous World Championships and European competitions in Style & Accuracy, so I do honestly feel that I have a right to comment on what I witnessed at the inaugural Council meeting.

I have been married to John for nearly 21 years and have known him, through the sport, for many more years – so many of the newer members of that new Council who supported Eddie Jones after his attack on John will just say this is blind loyalty. Let me state that the words Eddie Jones uttered were the most deeply offensive possible to the man I have lived with for the last 20+ years. I have been through the most traumatic times you can imagine as he served as a Police Officer in various specialisations in the Met and then, for seven members of that Council to support those allegations by implication, is most offensive.

On the parachuting side, how memories are so short! John has been on Council for nearly 15 years and in the sport for 34. Does that count for nothing? I can remember when John first went on Council, attendance at our Nationals was at rock bottom; now, thanks to his initiatives, we have the second largest Nationals in the world. Have you all forgotten how John fought for funding for our top teams and, by promoting the coaching roadshow concept, he has brought us today to the admirable position we are in terms of our standing in the world?

About five years ago he was awarded an RAeC Bronze Medal for services to the promotion of competitive skydiving in the UK. The RAeC do not give out their medals lightly, have you all so easily forgotten that? John has served the BPA combining the roles of Head of Delegation and Team Manager at numerous multidisciplined World Championships. This entails very large delegations. For this work the BPA Council, including Eddie Jones, awarded him a Certificate of Appreciation, how does this reconcile with the allegations made by Eddie and supported by seven members of the new Council?

Have you all also forgotten his dedication after his skydiving accident in Empuriabrava when his leg was totally immobile for six months? John was in severe pain and on serious pain killers; I still drove him up to Leicester, laid out in the back of the car, so he could attend all Council and Competitions meetings, with our son, who was too young to be left on his own. He also did the same for the RAeC meetings, where during that period and indeed every year for the past 10+ years, he has fought robustly to ensure all our sporting heroes get the recognition they deserve from the Royal Aero Club. How quickly you forgot that!

This makes it all the more shameful for those who supported Eddie Jones after he uttered the words he did. I know some of you will probably dismiss this as the ranting of a loyal wife but I am a skydiver – and you seven and Eddie Jones should be ashamed of yourselves. I know John would have taken constructive observations about his ability to be Chairman on the chin and supported anybody who won the vote against him, based on constructive comments. But that was so deeply offensive to the person I know to be a 'good man' that I feel you, and the membership, should know. Believe me he has been deeply hurt by those comments and, more poignantly, your apparent support for them.

For those that supported John, I thank you because I certainly do know that serving on Council can be a thankless task, especially if you stick at it more than five years.

Cheryl Smyth

Charlie Shea-Simonds
charlie@parafotos.co.uk

Thank you Lesley for allowing a right to reply to these letters. In order to give a meaningful response I must divulge the way I voted at the inaugural meeting. It is suggested by Cheryl that a vote for Eddie Jones was shameful and, whilst I respect her right to hold this opinion, it is just that: an opinion. I voted for Eddie Jones and can categorically state I am not ashamed.

All three letters are submitted by John Smyth's loyal friends and loved ones and is the sort of response I think we would all wish to receive in such circumstances. Charlie Shea-Simonds letter of support merely gives a character reference and is based on his knowledge of a close friend. Andy Scott, unlike Charlie, attended the inaugural meeting and his observations are his perception. I personally think that only one person was in a position to stop Eddie speaking – and that was Eddie himself. Cheryl's letter, as Charlie suggests, is a very dignified one but could unintentionally mislead the membership.

I think it prudent to clarify that a vote for Eddie is not a vote against John but the expression of a preference for the nominee, in the view of a majority of Council members voting, who offered the best fit for the role of Chairman of our Association. Cheryl has stated that a vote for Eddie was supporting what he said – this is purely her own assumption. Council was asked to vote in a Chairman, not to vote as to whether they agreed with his statement. To suggest that it was only because of these statements that

newer members of Council were coerced is also an assumption because the only people who know which way they voted are the Council members themselves.

John Smyth has been a dedicated Council member. I have agreed or disagreed with him on many occasions. I think that John himself would accept that initiatives taken for coaching funding and attendance at our Nationals were not his alone but that of the Committee he chaired and it was the Teams themselves that fought hard for funding by attaining strict performance criteria. I do not wish to take anything away from John – he has worked hard and served the membership and as Cheryl has indicated been presented with awards to recognise his efforts. The position of Chairman is not a reward for good service.

I would like finally to say that I voted for Eddie Jones, not because of what he said, but in spite of what he said. I do not feel there is a place for American-style election tactics on Council. Both candidates for the Chair had pros and cons and, as a result of a fair vote, Eddie Jones was elected. This may not be each and every members' opinion but it is the opinion of a majority of the Council members you, the membership, have elected to make these decisions.

Geordie Page
BPA Vice Chairman
geordiepage@tesco.net

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Dear Dive Doctor

Large main, small reserve?

I've been offered a second hand rig at a very good price. My problem is that I'm still a novice (30 jumps) and the canopy which was in the rig was 150 sqft. Is it possible to have a smaller reserve and a larger main or are the containers set to one canopy size? I can jump a 180 sqft comfortably and would love to be able to fit one in the container.

It's unlikely that a 180 sqft canopy will safely and comfortably fit in a container built for a 150 main. It is okay for a reserve to be slightly smaller than the main providing that it is not too small for your weight and experience level.

My first thought is that a 150 is too small for someone with 30 jumps, whether a main or reserve. Do not accept a reserve which is smaller than you would be happy to jump as a main canopy. There is an excellent guide to canopy size based on wing loadings at: www.icaruscanopies.aero/choosing.htm

To calculate your wing loading, take your total exit weight (this includes a rig – add approx 20lbs to your normal weight fully dressed) then divide this total by the size of the canopy, eg, if you weigh 180lbs fully kitted up, then on a 150 sq ft canopy, you would have a wing loading of 1.2.

Talk to your instructor at your dropzone for advice on kit and what to choose. Do not be in a hurry to get a small canopy just because the price is appealing. You can learn plenty on a larger size which will be more forgiving should you make a few mistakes along the way, and you should be able to find a reasonable first kit without spending a fortune. You can find further advice at www.skydivemag.com using the search facility but there is no substitute for direct advice from a BPA instructor or rigger.

Medicine Maddy
sales@dzsports.com

Who Goes First?

Is there a BPA endorsed answer to the question of exit order for freefly and flatfly groups on the same load? Opinions vary considerably from DZ to DZ.

The simple answer is no. The BPA have no specific rule. Most CCIs will have some sort of opinion as to the exit order they require at their DZ but, as you have found, they vary quite a lot. At the end of the day it is horizontal separation at opening time that is important. This primarily relies on adequate separation when leaving the aircraft and the ability of groups to 'fall down the tube'. There are also lesser factors like drift in freefall and which way you fly once you deploy. Wingsuit and tracking jumps have significant drift factors however and so should be treated differently to freeflyers.

There is a reasonable amount of information that shows it can be better to put the freefly groups out after the flat flyers. The separation between groups increases during freefall between a flat and freefly group when exiting in this order. This is especially true when the upper winds are high so freefall drift becomes a larger influence. This however relies on each group 'going down the tube' and, whilst it is now accepted the headdown jumpers have improved to this level, it was not always the case. When freeflying started many of the jumpers were inexperienced and not capable of falling straight down. They were also often looked upon as less responsible skydivers. Using the flat flyers out first rule meant that the most experienced jumpers (and often the jumpmaster) got out first. If the inexperienced freefly group followed too quickly (quite common with inexperienced skydivers), they tend to want to get out of the aircraft plus they were moving around because they were still learning then this often lead to 'near misses'. Because of this several centres adopted a freefly out first rule allowing the more experienced flat flyers to ensure better separation on exit.

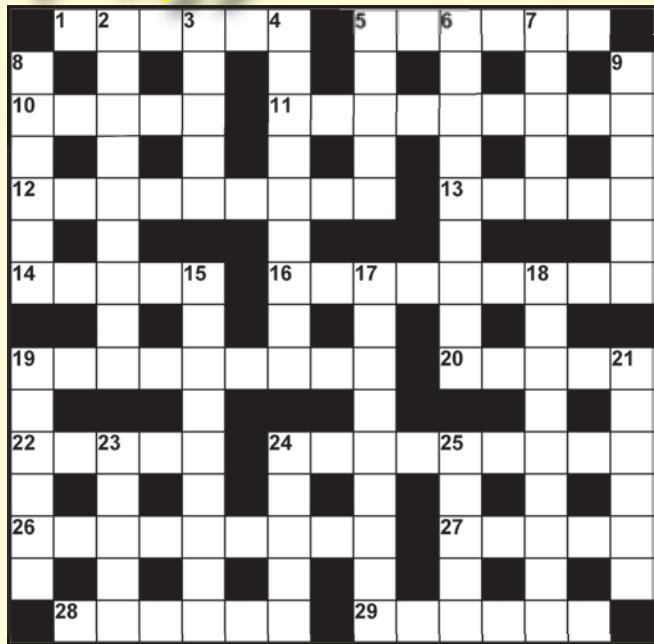
Both systems work well as long as the basics are observed:

- Always give enough separation when leaving the aircraft. On windy days that means more time between groups (do not rely on a 4 or 5 second rule – the only true way is to look out the door and watch the previous group – you will learn how far is enough).
- Make sure your group falls 'down the tube' rather than sliding across the sky.
- On opening your canopy never fly along line of flight – you are simply moving yourself closer to the previous/next groups from the aircraft.

There is an article *Figuring Out the Right Exit Interval* in the US Skydiving magazine issue 222, Jan 2000 which may be of interest along with *Optimising Exit Order* in issue 205, Aug 1998.

Dive Dr Rich
richard@ukrigging.co.uk

Puzzle by Paul Boorer



Main (Cryptic)

Across

- Follow pig round more than half of Hades (6)
- Icarus's wings make a splash when Daedalus's tail melts away (6)
- Trendy toilet, it's big, swimming in water and has four legs (5)
- Agree to charge the music maker (9)
- 12, 13, 24, 6 & 15
The European pronunciation of the 'g' in England (4,5,5,3,6,3,6,3,6)
- See 12
- Computer ad features little doggie chasing cut grass (3-2)
- Before hot potatoes are jugged he gives a massage (9)
- Extraordinarily powerful chap (9)
- Worse rider becomes unseated (5)
- Being a good learner, I would quickly start to explore coast (5)
- See 12
- Highly travelled man chewed roast tuna (9)
- B-break off (5)
- Sounding like the new wife's check (6)
- Troubled waters are most chilly (6)

Down

- Quick launch of beer ingredient with soda (3,3,3)
- Poor start to dive; backslicing. Bend! (5)
- Trying to correct armies' woe (9)
- Scruffy coats not allowed here (5)
- See 12
- A side engendering fear (5)
- Keep cheerful when china cup spills current contents (4,2)
- Rip off rousing chants (6)
- See 12
- Repack 24's wet tandem perhaps (3-6)
- Do they stop lorries flying? (3-6)
- Tell Albert to make his mark quickly (6)
- They get up the noses of royalty in Sweden's emergent republican system (6)
- Bury in terrace's extended opening (5)
- 'Utter traitor' in old English (5)
- Get rid of bowel troubles (5)

Reserve

Across

- Dark patch
- Icarus canopies
- African river mammal
- Musical instrument: skydiving formation (4,5,5,3,6,3,6,3,6)
- 12, 13, 24, 6 & 15
Metric acceleration due to gravity (4,5,5,3,6,3,6,3,6)
- See 12
- Internet advertising window (3-2)
- Bone manipulation therapist
- Batman, Spiderman etc.
- More terrible
- Fly without power
- See 12
- Spaceman
- Bread maker
- Pilot-chute connector
- Most harshly cold

Down

- Short skydive (3,3,3)
- Sag
- Causing tiredness
- Race course
- See 12
- Flying like a bird (1-4)
- Suggestion to keep cheerful (4,2)
- Deployment force
- See 12
- Aircraft for pilot and one other (3-6)
- Pneumatic stopping devices (3-6)
- Indicate
- Canopy connecting straps
- The bit between formations
- Speak formally
- Arm joint

1. Per second, 17. Two-second, 18. Air-breaks, 19. Signs, 21. Risers, 23. Lines, 25. Drag, 26. Snatch, 28. Brakes, 29. Ropes, 30. Solutions Down, 31. Supero, 32. Drop, 33. Weathersome, 34. Ascot, 35. Per second, 36. Meeters, 37. Astronauts, 38. Balloons, 39. Bridle, 40. Osteoporosis, 41. Shadow, 42. Hippo, 43. Accretion, 44. Nine point, 45. Eight, 46. Pop-up, 47. Osteoporosis, 48. Chin-up, 49. Snatch, 50. Solutions Down, 51. Hop and pop, 52. Drift, 53. Glide, 54. One metre, 55. Nine metres, 56. Astronauts, 57. Balloons, 58. Bridle, 59. Ropes, 60. Solutions Down, 61. Shadow, 62. Hippo, 63. Accretion, 64. Nine point, 65. Eight, 66. Pop-up, 67. Osteoporosis, 68. Chin-up, 69. Snatch, 70. Solutions Down, 71. Hop and pop, 72. Drift, 73. Glide, 74. One metre, 75. Nine metres, 76. Astronauts, 77. Balloons, 78. Bridle, 79. Ropes, 80. Solutions Down, 81. Shadow, 82. Hippo, 83. Accretion, 84. Nine point, 85. Eight, 86. Pop-up, 87. Osteoporosis, 88. Chin-up, 89. Snatch, 90. Solutions Down, 91. Hop and pop, 92. Drift, 93. Glide, 94. One metre, 95. Nine metres, 96. Astronauts, 97. Balloons, 98. Bridle, 99. Ropes, 100. Solutions Down, 101. Shadow, 102. Hippo, 103. Accretion, 104. Nine point, 105. Eight, 106. Pop-up, 107. Osteoporosis, 108. Chin-up, 109. Snatch, 110. Solutions Down, 111. Shadow, 112. Hippo, 113. Accretion, 114. Nine point, 115. Eight, 116. Pop-up, 117. Osteoporosis, 118. Chin-up, 119. Snatch, 120. Solutions Down, 121. Shadow, 122. Hippo, 123. Accretion, 124. Nine point, 125. Eight, 126. Pop-up, 127. Osteoporosis, 128. Chin-up, 129. Snatch, 130. Solutions Down, 131. Shadow, 132. Hippo, 133. Accretion, 134. Nine point, 135. Eight, 136. Pop-up, 137. Osteoporosis, 138. Chin-up, 139. Snatch, 140. Solutions Down, 141. Shadow, 142. Hippo, 143. Accretion, 144. Nine point, 145. Eight, 146. Pop-up, 147. Osteoporosis, 148. Chin-up, 149. Snatch, 150. Solutions Down, 151. Shadow, 152. Hippo, 153. Accretion, 154. Nine point, 155. Eight, 156. Pop-up, 157. Osteoporosis, 158. Chin-up, 159. Snatch, 160. Solutions Down, 161. Shadow, 162. Hippo, 163. Accretion, 164. Nine point, 165. Eight, 166. Pop-up, 167. Osteoporosis, 168. Chin-up, 169. Snatch, 170. Solutions Down, 171. Shadow, 172. Hippo, 173. Accretion, 174. Nine point, 175. Eight, 176. Pop-up, 177. Osteoporosis, 178. Chin-up, 179. Snatch, 180. Solutions Down, 181. Shadow, 182. Hippo, 183. Accretion, 184. Nine point, 185. Eight, 186. Pop-up, 187. Osteoporosis, 188. Chin-up, 189. Snatch, 190. Solutions Down, 191. Shadow, 192. Hippo, 193. Accretion, 194. Nine point, 195. Eight, 196. Pop-up, 197. Osteoporosis, 198. Chin-up, 199. Snatch, 200. Solutions Down, 201. Shadow, 202. Hippo, 203. Accretion, 204. Nine point, 205. Eight, 206. Pop-up, 207. Osteoporosis, 208. Chin-up, 209. Snatch, 210. Solutions Down, 211. Shadow, 212. Hippo, 213. Accretion, 214. Nine point, 215. Eight, 216. Pop-up, 217. Osteoporosis, 218. Chin-up, 219. Snatch, 220. Solutions Down, 221. Shadow, 222. Hippo, 223. Accretion, 224. Nine point, 225. Eight, 226. Pop-up, 227. Osteoporosis, 228. Chin-up, 229. Snatch, 230. Solutions Down, 231. Shadow, 232. Hippo, 233. Accretion, 234. Nine point, 235. Eight, 236. Pop-up, 237. Osteoporosis, 238. Chin-up, 239. Snatch, 240. Solutions Down, 241. Shadow, 242. Hippo, 243. Accretion, 244. Nine point, 245. Eight, 246. Pop-up, 247. Osteoporosis, 248. Chin-up, 249. Snatch, 250. Solutions Down, 251. Shadow, 252. Hippo, 253. Accretion, 254. Nine point, 255. Eight, 256. Pop-up, 257. Osteoporosis, 258. Chin-up, 259. Snatch, 260. Solutions Down, 261. Shadow, 262. Hippo, 263. Accretion, 264. Nine point, 265. Eight, 266. Pop-up, 267. Osteoporosis, 268. Chin-up, 269. Snatch, 270. Solutions Down, 271. Shadow, 272. Hippo, 273. Accretion, 274. Nine point, 275. Eight, 276. Pop-up, 277. Osteoporosis, 278. Chin-up, 279. Snatch, 280. Solutions Down, 281. Shadow, 282. Hippo, 283. Accretion, 284. Nine point, 285. Eight, 286. Pop-up, 287. Osteoporosis, 288. Chin-up, 289. Snatch, 290. Solutions Down, 291. Shadow, 292. Hippo, 293. Accretion, 294. Nine point, 295. Eight, 296. Pop-up, 297. Osteoporosis, 298. Chin-up, 299. Snatch, 300. Solutions Down, 301. Shadow, 302. Hippo, 303. Accretion, 304. Nine point, 305. Eight, 306. Pop-up, 307. Osteoporosis, 308. Chin-up, 309. Snatch, 310. Solutions Down, 311. Shadow, 312. Hippo, 313. Accretion, 314. Nine point, 315. Eight, 316. Pop-up, 317. Osteoporosis, 318. Chin-up, 319. Snatch, 320. Solutions Down, 321. Shadow, 322. Hippo, 323. Accretion, 324. Nine point, 325. Eight, 326. Pop-up, 327. Osteoporosis, 328. Chin-up, 329. Snatch, 330. Solutions Down, 331. Shadow, 332. Hippo, 333. Accretion, 334. Nine point, 335. Eight, 336. Pop-up, 337. Osteoporosis, 338. Chin-up, 339. Snatch, 340. Solutions Down, 341. Shadow, 342. Hippo, 343. Accretion, 344. Nine point, 345. Eight, 346. Pop-up, 347. Osteoporosis, 348. Chin-up, 349. Snatch, 350. Solutions Down, 351. Shadow, 352. Hippo, 353. Accretion, 354. Nine point, 355. Eight, 356. Pop-up, 357. Osteoporosis, 358. Chin-up, 359. Snatch, 360. Solutions Down, 361. Shadow, 362. Hippo, 363. Accretion, 364. Nine point, 365. Eight, 366. Pop-up, 367. Osteoporosis, 368. Chin-up, 369. Snatch, 370. Solutions Down, 371. Shadow, 372. Hippo, 373. Accretion, 374. Nine point, 375. Eight, 376. Pop-up, 377. Osteoporosis, 378. Chin-up, 379. Snatch, 380. Solutions Down, 381. Shadow, 382. Hippo, 383. Accretion, 384. Nine point, 385. Eight, 386. Pop-up, 387. Osteoporosis, 388. Chin-up, 389. Snatch, 390. Solutions Down, 391. Shadow, 392. Hippo, 393. Accretion, 394. Nine point, 395. Eight, 396. Pop-up, 397. Osteoporosis, 398. Chin-up, 399. Snatch, 400. Solutions Down, 401. Shadow, 402. Hippo, 403. Accretion, 404. Nine point, 405. Eight, 406. Pop-up, 407. Osteoporosis, 408. Chin-up, 409. Snatch, 410. Solutions Down, 411. Shadow, 412. Hippo, 413. Accretion, 414. Nine point, 415. Eight, 416. Pop-up, 417. Osteoporosis, 418. Chin-up, 419. Snatch, 420. Solutions Down, 421. Shadow, 422. 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Chin-up, 489. Snatch, 490. Solutions Down, 491. Shadow, 492. Hippo, 493. Accretion, 494. Nine point, 495. Eight, 496. Pop-up, 497. Osteoporosis, 498. Chin-up, 499. Snatch, 500. Solutions Down, 501. Shadow, 502. Hippo, 503. Accretion, 504. Nine point, 505. Eight, 506. Pop-up, 507. Osteoporosis, 508. Chin-up, 509. Snatch, 510. Solutions Down, 511. Shadow, 512. Hippo, 513. Accretion, 514. Nine point, 515. Eight, 516. Pop-up, 517. Osteoporosis, 518. Chin-up, 519. Snatch, 520. Solutions Down, 521. Shadow, 522. Hippo, 523. Accretion, 524. Nine point, 525. Eight, 526. Pop-up, 527. Osteoporosis, 528. Chin-up, 529. Snatch, 530. Solutions Down, 531. Shadow, 532. Hippo, 533. Accretion, 534. Nine point, 535. Eight, 536. Pop-up, 537. Osteoporosis, 538. Chin-up, 539. Snatch, 540. Solutions Down, 541. Shadow, 542. Hippo, 543. Accretion, 544. Nine point, 545. Eight, 546. Pop-up, 547. Osteoporosis, 548. Chin-up, 549. Snatch, 550. Solutions Down, 551. Shadow, 552. Hippo, 553. Accretion, 554. Nine point, 555. Eight, 556. Pop-up, 557. Osteoporosis, 558. Chin-up, 559. Snatch, 560. Solutions Down, 561. Shadow, 562. Hippo, 563. Accretion, 564. Nine point, 565. Eight, 566. Pop-up, 567. Osteoporosis, 568. Chin-up, 569. Snatch, 570. Solutions Down, 571. Shadow, 572. Hippo, 573. Accretion, 574. Nine point, 575. Eight, 576. Pop-up, 577. Osteoporosis, 578. Chin-up, 579. Snatch, 580. Solutions Down, 581. Shadow, 582. Hippo, 583. Accretion, 584. Nine point, 585. Eight, 586. Pop-up, 587. Osteoporosis, 588. Chin-up, 589. Snatch, 590. Solutions Down, 591. Shadow, 592. Hippo, 593. Accretion, 594. Nine point, 595. Eight, 596. Pop-up, 597. Osteoporosis, 598. Chin-up, 599. Snatch, 600. Solutions Down, 601. Shadow, 602. Hippo, 603. Accretion, 604. Nine point, 605. Eight, 606. Pop-up, 607. Osteoporosis, 608. Chin-up, 609. Snatch, 610. Solutions Down, 611. Shadow, 612. Hippo, 613. Accretion, 614. Nine point, 615. Eight, 616. Pop-up, 617. Osteoporosis, 618. Chin-up, 619. Snatch, 620. Solutions Down, 621. Shadow, 622. Hippo, 623. Accretion, 624. Nine point, 625. Eight, 626. Pop-up, 627. Osteoporosis, 628. Chin-up, 629. Snatch, 630. Solutions Down, 631. Shadow, 632. Hippo, 633. Accretion, 634. Nine point, 635. Eight, 636. Pop-up, 637. Osteoporosis, 638. Chin-up, 639. Snatch, 640. Solutions Down, 641. Shadow, 642. Hippo, 643. Accretion, 644. Nine point, 645. Eight, 646. Pop-up, 647. Osteoporosis, 648. Chin-up, 649. Snatch, 650. Solutions Down, 651. Shadow, 652. Hippo, 653. Accretion, 654. Nine point, 655. Eight, 656. Pop-up, 657. Osteoporosis, 658. Chin-up, 659. Snatch, 660. Solutions Down, 661. Shadow, 662. Hippo, 663. Accretion, 664. Nine point, 665. Eight, 666. Pop-up, 667. Osteoporosis, 668. Chin-up, 669. Snatch, 670. Solutions Down, 671. Shadow, 672. Hippo, 673. Accretion, 674. Nine point, 675. Eight, 676. Pop-up, 677. Osteoporosis, 678. Chin-up, 679. Snatch, 680. Solutions Down, 681. Shadow, 682. Hippo, 683. Accretion, 684. Nine point, 685. Eight, 686. 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Chin-up, 819. Snatch, 820. Solutions Down, 821. Shadow, 822. Hippo, 823. Accretion, 824. Nine point, 825. Eight, 826. Pop-up, 827. Osteoporosis, 828. Chin-up, 829. Snatch, 830. Solutions Down, 831. Shadow, 832. Hippo, 833. Accretion, 834. Nine point, 835. Eight, 836. Pop-up, 837. Osteoporosis, 838. Chin-up, 839. Snatch, 840. Solutions Down, 841. Shadow, 842. Hippo, 843. Accretion, 844. Nine point, 845. Eight, 846. Pop-up, 847. Osteoporosis, 848. Chin-up, 849. Snatch, 850. Solutions Down, 851. Shadow, 852. Hippo, 853. Accretion, 854. Nine point, 855. Eight, 856. Pop-up, 857. Osteoporosis, 858. Chin-up, 859. Snatch, 860. Solutions Down, 861. Shadow, 862. Hippo, 863. Accretion, 864. Nine point, 865. Eight, 866. Pop-up, 867. Osteoporosis, 868. Chin-up, 869. Snatch, 870. Solutions Down, 871. Shadow, 872. Hippo, 873. Accretion, 874. Nine point, 875. Eight, 876. Pop-up, 877. Osteoporosis, 878. Chin-up, 879. Snatch, 880. Solutions Down, 881. Shadow, 882. Hippo, 883. Accretion, 884. Nine point, 885. Eight, 886. Pop-up, 887. Osteoporosis, 888. Chin-up, 889. Snatch, 890. Solutions Down, 891. Shadow, 892. Hippo, 893. Accretion, 894. Nine point, 895. Eight, 896. Pop-up, 897. Osteoporosis, 898. Chin-up, 899. Snatch, 900. Solutions Down, 901. Shadow, 902. Hippo, 903. Accretion, 904. Nine point, 905. Eight, 906. Pop-up, 907. Osteoporosis, 908. Chin-up, 909. Snatch, 910. Solutions Down, 911. Shadow, 912. Hippo, 913. Accretion, 914. Nine point, 915. Eight, 916. Pop-up, 917. Osteoporosis, 918. Chin-up, 919. Snatch, 920. Solutions Down, 921. Shadow, 922. Hippo, 923. Accretion, 924. Nine point, 925. Eight, 926. Pop-up, 927. Osteoporosis, 928. Chin-up, 929. Snatch, 930. Solutions Down, 931. Shadow, 932. Hippo, 933. Accretion, 934. Nine point, 935. Eight, 936. Pop-up, 937. Osteoporosis, 938. Chin-up, 939. Snatch, 940. Solutions Down, 941. Shadow, 942. Hippo, 943. Accretion, 944. Nine point, 945. Eight, 946. Pop-up, 947. Osteoporosis, 948. Chin-up, 949. Snatch, 950. Solutions Down, 951. Shadow, 952. Hippo, 953. Accretion, 954. Nine point, 955. Eight, 956. Pop-up, 957. Osteoporosis, 958. Chin-up, 959. Snatch, 960. Solutions Down, 961. Shadow, 962. Hippo, 963. Accretion, 964. Nine point, 965. Eight, 966. Pop-up, 967. Osteoporosis, 968. Chin-up, 969. Snatch, 970. Solutions Down, 971. Shadow, 972. Hippo, 973. Accretion, 974. Nine point, 975. Eight, 976. Pop-up, 977. Osteoporosis, 978. Chin-up, 979. Snatch, 980. Solutions Down, 981. Shadow, 982. Hippo, 983. Accretion, 984. Nine point, 985. Eight, 986. Pop-up, 987. Osteoporosis, 988. Chin-up, 989. Snatch, 990. Solutions Down, 991. Shadow, 992. Hippo, 993. Accretion, 994. Nine point, 995. Eight, 996. Pop-up, 997. Osteoporosis, 998. Chin-up, 999. Snatch, 1000. Solutions Down.

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Club News



Tim Aucott
We've got the aircraft, the facilities and the desire, all we need now is good weather at the weekends! If, like me, you've spent a lot of time in the tunnel this winter then you'll be eager to get back in the air. This season we have a fantastic mix of events spanning the disciplines, check out our Diary at the back of the Mag.

There is still time to register for Brit Chicks, sign up by 20 April to get your red suit, kindly secured by sponsorship through Martin Harris of London Parachute School. If you'd like to support the British Red Cross then you can donate at the Red Cross and Brit Chick websites or buy a raffle ticket, first prize is an Aerodyne rig complete with canopies! Please give generously, this is a great opportunity for us to make a difference and get some positive national exposure for skydiving.

Have a great season, look after each other and stay safe.

Lucie

Wild Geese

Photo: Mike Murphy



Achievements

First Freefall

Eddie Monteith
Gavin Bradley

Cat 8

Sean Carroll

Neal Fitzpatrick

Cat 8, CH1

Paul Brennan

Dave Scott

FS1

Mark Redmond

I'd like to congratulate everyone who put effort into the first few months of 2007, just look at the achievements so far. It proves that you don't need to go abroad to gain your levels.

Congratulations to Francis Mullen and Jade All-star who announced their engagement, they're both skydivers so we won't lose them to housework or gardening!

Alison, Connor, Jade, Martin, Francis & Mark will head off to Zephyrhills, Florida (11-24 April), let them know if you fancy joining in. The Queens Parachute Club foreign trip to the stunning dropzone of Gap-Tallard, France is 18-22 June, the club's second trip to Gap and not to be missed.

Mike Murphy

Brid

Porters all round at Brid! Photos by Gareth Thomas & Fat Leigh



Cornish



Photos: Ben Wood

Achievements
2500 Jumps
Ben Wood



The weather for the start of our season was glorious! Blue skies and spring-like temperatures made a fantastic first weekend – in February! The new sparkly clubhouse with Sharon in charge has made a very successful start. Sharon and Paul thank all the CPC staff for their much-needed help with the refurbishment.

We're very lucky and happy to have a new very well respected chief pilot, Steve Clarke, with both skydiving and rigging history. We thank Tiggs Featherstone and wish him the best for the future.

This summer, check out Cornish hospitality and jump into three different places in a day! Start with a spectacular jump onto Land's End; then just up the coast to Perranporth Airfield; and that evening onto Perranporth beach at the Watering Hole beach bar.

Cornish Parachute Club is now one year old! The official opening was 4 March 06, sharing birthdays with Andy Hart. We all celebrated in the Watering Hole.

March marked the graduation of our first AFF student. Well done Jan who obtained her B Licence and made her first solo onto Perranporth Airfield – over her mother's house!

The directors of the Cornish Parachute Club thank Geoff Wood and Mike Brown of Hinton Skydiving for the continued use of the Cessna 206. We hope to introduce a second aircraft later this year.

Chris Wood

It's arrived, it's arrived! Our lovely new Porter is here! 'Max and Paddy' (Nick & Gareth) drove onto the airfield in February with a Porter on the back of a trailer. A big thank you to Steve Watts and Tim Morley for their help bringing the aircraft back from Italy and to Andrew Wallace who worked his fingers to the bone getting it ready.

Nicky and Ollie worked around the clock modifying the hangar to fit the Porter in, not even batting an eyelid to comments that the beam they were cutting out was structural! Nice work guys.

It's Porters all round this year! We're very excited to announce that Tim Porter, Leigh Birchenough and their Go Free freestyle school will be joining us. It's going to be great having a new focus on freestyle.

Clair Armstrong

Achievements
First Freefall
Ryan Brown
CP1
Gareth Thomas

CH2, JM1
Ollie Thornton
Tim Morley
50 Jumps
Ollie Thornton

500 Jumps
Simon Rehill
8500 Jumps
Nicky Johnston



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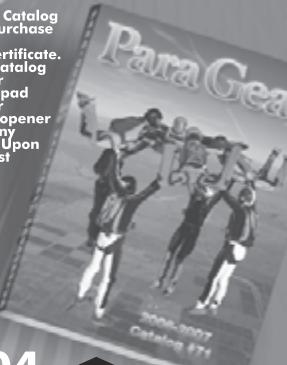
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EQUIPMENT COMPANY

Robin's got the tailgate bug and has booked the Skyvan for several events starting with Easter. We'll see double in June with a two-Skyvan, hopefully record-bashing weekend. Keep an eye on www.netheravon.com for Liz's Wingin' It, Caroline's big-ways and a camera extravaganza.

We're eagerly awaiting the arrival of one 'Foxy Lady' – our new Caravan, scheduled for midsummer. Our old stalwart Alpha Hotel will be known as 'Hound Dog' so the punters don't get confused about which aircraft to board! The DZ spring clean will see a refurbished bunkhouse, hopefully ready for Easter.

Nethers wouldn't be right without a fancy dress party so we celebrated a significant milestone for Pam 'Xena warrior princess' and our newest CSI with a 'P' party! Suspect outfits included Pinocchio, a prisoner, a pirate, and some pimps but the pumpkin, aka Si Bristow, gets the dodgiest get-up award – you need a licence for tights like that!

Welcome to rigger George Panagopoulos, joining the staff. Congratulations to Jeff Chandler, now eligible for SOS (Skydivers Over Sixty) after 39 years of jumping. A special mention to Ryan & Lucy on their engagement, Ryan popped the question on Valentine's day – you old romantic!

Kath Salisbury

Nethers



Skyvan back for big-ways this summer

Photos: Ryan Mancey

Ian Cashman



Headcorn



Achievements

CH2
Noah Woodman
JM1, CH2
Wendy Foster
Gill Finch
Mark O'Reilly
200 Jumps
Wendy Foster
Mark O'Reilly
Noah Woodman
400 jumps
Dean Glasgow
800 Jumps
Richard Parkin

Jane Buckle by Baz Smith

We've got the usual comps, starting 12 May with the Andy Kelly 4-way. It's a great meet so, if you fancy improving your skills, join us! There's usually really good coaching on hand. Chris Shaw is organising big-ways this summer so get yourself added to the club email list. 23 June is the summer masked ball. Stock up on Alka Seltzer now!

Ruth Cooper



Stu Ferguson by Alan Thompson

Peterlee

As widely reported, Peterlee was under major threat from a wind turbine, proposed to be built to the northeast of the airfield. The planning meeting was held at Easington District Council on 6 February. We were quite anxious as the planning committee had approved the application and were recommending councillors to vote in favour of the turbine. However, we weren't going to give up without a fight and had numerous speakers, most agreed it was the scariest thing we'd ever done! We were fantastically backed up by over 80 people in the chamber with standing room only. This definitely helped our cause and only one councillor voted in favour of the turbine, thus securing the future of our centre! We had fantastic support from the BPA and everyone up and down the country, as well as abroad, thanks to you all.

Marcus Speed passed his BI course at Netheravon, congratulations! Our two resident TIs had major milestones: Phil celebrated his 1,500th and Mark Wilcox his 2,500th with a chaos dive, which involved taking grips any which way, this made for an interesting bar debrief! Lee Lee Saunders returned from Afghanistan and immediately made use of his BMI rating, with both Mark Wilcox and Kev Dynan doing their first BirdMan flights. With Ross that makes four birdies at Peterlee!

Adam Pencharz



Kev Dynan and Lee Saunders by Paul McCormick

Achievements

Cat 8
Paul Aubrey-Rees
FS1
Charlotte Kemp
Max Mcleod
FF2
Francis Reardon
50 Jumps
Charlotte Kemp
600 Jumps
Leah Parle

Photos: Ryan Mancey

Ian Cashman

Achievements

First Freefall
Harry Wheatcroft
Freddy May
AFF Graduate
Paul Abdullahi
Cat 8
Wesley Chatterje
Harry Hill
Matthew Bagshaw
Jump Numbers
200
Gareth Carson
700
Dave Taylor
900
Paul McCormick
1500
Phil Howarth
Alan Thompson
2500
Mark Wilcox

Black Knights



Achievements

First Freefall

James White

Cat 8

Charlie Hogg

Lee Allison

50 Jumps

Al Wheatland

50 Jumps, 1 Hr Freefall

Phoebe Fox-Bekerman

Alex McMullen by Rob McVey

Ollie Ossman made a surprise return to fly the new Porter for a few weeks before popping back across the channel to Gap. No doubt Ollie and his spectacular moustache will be back soon – provided he brings yet more schnapps!

Hats off to Deano for Splashdown of the Month, after a not-so-graceful downwind puddle-surf! Steve 'Tippex' Watkin wins Best Spot award for landing on the pitch at a Sunday league football match!

The AGM was again a cracking weekend. Will Cooke pulled off some outrageous dance moves, his robotic body-popping nearly as impressive as his ability to make a pint disappear!

Mark Twigg took a course of hypnotherapy to help stop smoking. So far it's going well other than he's started sleepwalking, waking up in the middle of the street wearing his pink panther pajamas!

We have a host of top events; see the events page on the website for details and news. Avalore are here for the first freefly skills weekend, 12-13 May, for one-on-one coaching and everything from virgin freeflyers to experienced jumpers looking for tips.

Godzilla, the monster Porter, will join us again for the season, when we'll be open for long weekends Friday to Mondays! We will open every day for the first week of every month!

Rob McVey

Tilstock

Photos: Paul Morrison

Several went to the Dubai boogie including Christine & Phil, both doing AFF after being frustrated by RAPS in bad weather.

Good news, we're now open on Fridays and the Airvan is here full time. It flew in lately to give us a taster, two lifts and then off to a demo. It's got carpet – oooh! It's got seatbelts – ooooh! It's got a proper door that keeps out all the drafts – ooooh! The first lift were sweating, all kitted up in winter gear being used to a drafty Cessna, we'll know better next time!

A word of advice to all instructors; if you're teaching students that the shiny handles on rigs are not meant for carrying them, avoid picking up a round reserve by the handle – oooooops!

Paul Morrison

St Andrews

We've had plenty of social events, including a memorable stag night and wedding for our 'beloved' CCI Alan, happily sentenced to life with his new wife Amanda. We celebrated a traditional Burns Supper with the usual haggis, neeps 'n' tatties followed by highland dancing generously washed down with whisky.

We've had some very persevering students who made the most of the few sunny spells and are now experiencing the thrill of freefall. With spring well on its way and the nights getting longer, we're looking forward to a good summer and the BBQ season, who says global warming is a bad thing?!

Graeme Mackay



Photo: Will Simm



Neil gives Claire a lift!



The haggis address by Louise Runciman



Scottish dancing by Louise Runciman



Our UK Para Perris Boogie finished on a high with me and Warren breaking the 100 jump barrier, Warren with an awesome hybrid 2-way. Steph clocked up her 100th in Spain on a BirdMan rodeo jump with Sally Uren on her 1,700th.

Five from UK Para formed half the Brit contingent at the PIA (Parachute Industry Association) Symposium, in Reno, Nevada. Tomo and Jess re-affirmed relationships with international manufacturers to ensure we continue to provide the most up-to-date products and services. Andy Page, our Advanced Rigger, attended rigging and technical classes.

Congratulations to Grant for a well deserved second year on Council and for completing his PPL with two months in San Diego. Watch this space for antics in the Cherokee 6!

Achievements

50 Jumps, CH2

John Marshall

100 Jumps

Vikki Forrest

Warren Favish

Steph Snow

200 Jumps

Damian Hewitt

1 Hr Freefall

John Marshall

Bob Harding

By the time you read this we'll have our Nomad back, complete with new engines to improve our turnaround time.

PD is making us part of its European tour and will be at Old Buck, 15-17 June, for a weekend of demos and answering your canopy questions. Tim Porter is also here that weekend for a mini FF boogie and will be available for coaching, contact us to register, jump@ukparachuting.co.uk.

Vikki Forrest



Warren's 100th by Lorraine Dixey

Cark

Achievements

First Freefall

Steven Freakes

Cat 8

Bev Giles

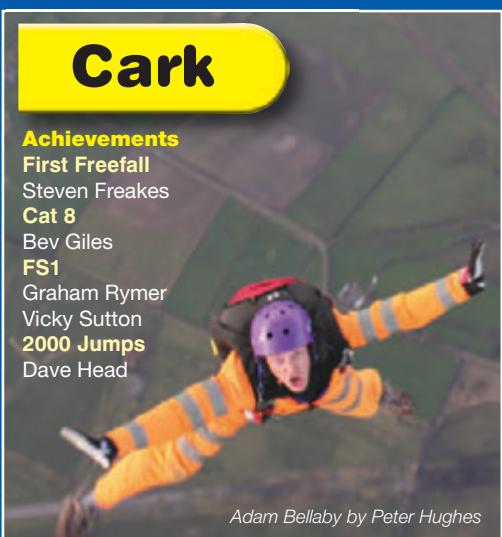
FS1

Graham Rymer

Vicky Sutton

2000 Jumps

Dave Head



Adam Bellaby by Peter Hughes

With the XL750 back from Cranfield with a fresh C of A the rain and wind depressed even Cliff Wilson – who seems to have his own manifest pen! Undaunted, work continued converting all the student static line equipment from round to square reserves. Congrats to Sarah, Steve, Nick and Gary for passing the Daz Doorstep Challenge camouflaging their new gear with mud after a week's downpour.

Big congratulations to Vicky Sutton who completed her first jump on a Saturday morning and by Sunday was on freefall! This has left Shadow a skydive widow!

We're looking forward to the FS Grand Prix in May, teams are talking of nothing but tunnels, coaches and camps, anyone would think they were planning holidays!

Stuart Morris

Hybrid taken by Peter Hughes



It's all happening at Dunkeswell!! Early April will see the arrival of a Twin Turbine Beech King Air! Climbing to 15,000ft in just over 7 minutes, we'll probably have the fastest climbing jumpship in the country. We have permission to operate up to 15,000ft on every lift, jump tickets will be competitively priced and 14 slots should see everyone happy.

By now we should be putting the finishing touches to our brand new clubhouse. The new buildings will comprise a jumpers' lounge, classroom and massive packing area. The new location will be closer to the Air Centre restaurant (with whom special skydivers' discounts are being negotiated), nearer to the bar for post-jumping revelry and with room for parking. Additionally, we will have a new skydivers' camping area with free hot showers!

We are delighted to welcome British and World Record holder Pete Stone back to 'The Well' as our resident FS coach. With 3,000 jumps his experience will be a great addition.

A number of exciting events include an Avalore freefly weekend, the Mike Wills Memorial Speed 4-way competition, the Sky Divas girls' boogie with organising by Caroline Hughes, a POPS meet and the biggest ever Dunkeswell Summer Ball. Check the events page on www.skydiveukltd.com

Miko

Dunkeswell

Achievements

200 Jumps

Emily Abrey

Phil Stenning

4000 Jumps

Gavin Horrell



King Air at Dunkeswell,
photo by Andri Weise

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Photo: Mikhail Mineev

Weston

We reopened on Saturday 3 February with a beautiful sunny day which made it, surprisingly, remarkably warm! It's been busy since. Many have been learning packing and working towards CH qualifications. If you'd like help with these skills, come down – learning to pack **now** means you can jump more come summer.



Kati & Greg by Nigel Holland

Congratulations Greg Simmonds and his gorgeous new wife Kati, we wish you all the best for the future. We're very proud to be the home DZ of POPS latest member, Phil Hartree.

We have some fantastic events lined up with the BPA FS Coaching Roadshow kicking off 5-6 May, with the fantastic coaching line-up of Sparky, Amanda Kemp, Julia Foxwell and Tanya Hollis. Jumps are from the Nationals aircraft, the Dornier G92, perfect for teams!

Other Events

25-27 May – Brian Vacher, Safe Flight School Canopy Training
30 June - 1 July – Tracking Weekend (register online)
14-15 July – Boxer Short Skydives for Everyman
4-5 August – 4-way FS Comp hosted by *Team Elan*
8-9 September – 4-way Scrambles

www.boxershortskydive.com
www.skydiveweston.com

Nigel Holland

Achievements

AFF Graduate

Neil Hughes
Christine Dowson

Cat 8, CH1

Brian Parone

CH2, FS1

Phil Saunders
Lewis Watson

CP1

Shep

50 Jumps

Greg Simmonds

Nigel Holland by Ken Taylor

Jersey

Simon Griffiths
by his brother Alun



The beach is beckoning for another bumper year! We welcome back the nine seater Airvan for some speedy altitude and bigger formations! We're looking forward to the annual Liberation Day Boogie, mid-May. There's a trip to the World Freefall Convention in July, get in touch if you fancy it.

As usual there will be plenty of opportunities to jump onto the beach. We're planning the first ever jumps into Guernsey! If you need any gear have a look at the online shop for loads of cheap goodies! Check out www.skydivjersey.net or email me to receive the regular newsletter sil@skydivjersey.net. Blue skies, have a fun and safe season!

Simon Griffiths

Hinton

The new look Hinton opened after Christmas. DZ Sports has a purpose-built shop and is looking fabulous. Maddy has increased the stock so there's loads of cool stuff, well worth checking out. Matt and Dave are happily ensconced in Point Zero, now located at Hinton. We have a brand new room for chilling out with an array of TVs, DVD players, sofas and beanbags.

Progression days resulted in many newbies gaining B Licences. If you missed out we're running another session on spotting, canopy handling (CH2) and being a jumpmaster, check the Club News page on the website. The training is free and well worth attending.

Joel returned from Lodi a few stone lighter, with a USPA rating and as a mega-fast tandem packer. Orf pitched up at the bar after months travelling the globe, drinking copious amounts whilst reducing everyone to fits of laughter with bizarre tales of his exploits – no change there then!

We look forward to a great season and hope to see all those 'fair-weather jumpers' soon. May bank holiday weekend you can jump a reserve, canopies from 120 – 210 sq ft will be rigged into your container. It'll cost you nothing, just a jump ticket, come and have a go! We also have load organising that weekend so it's looking like a good one. Don't forget the Nish Memorial Scrambles, 14-15 April, all welcome, register by 9am on Saturday, big party in the evening.

Sandi Keith

Achievements

First Freefall, Cat 8

Joel Keith

AFF Graduate

Richard Lumb

CH1, CH2, JM1

Martin Haywood-Wakeman

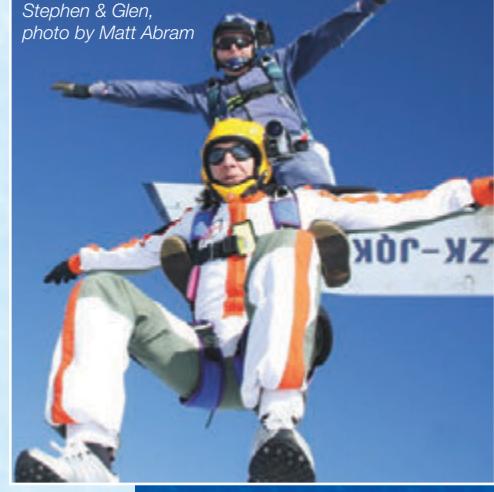
600 Jumps

Steve Baldwin

8000 Jumps

Geoff Wood

Stephen & Glen,
photo by Matt Abram



Sandi in the snow, taken by Maddy Moore



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Lewknor

London Parachute School is extremely pleased that they have secured sponsorship for the Brit Chicks 2007 record attempt from the British Red Cross. Many thanks to them and good luck to all the girls.

The DZ may have been closed for the winter but that doesn't mean LPS has been taking it easy, oh no! A whole load of work has been done on the facilities in time for the new season. The catering wagon has had a total internal refit and the toilet block been given a fresh coat of paint. Many thanks to Martin, Rachel and Tim L for all their hard work.

The great news is that the Islander will be our plane for



the entire season allowing us to get more lifts in, basically that's more jumping and more fun for everyone! There's now a good selection of club kit to hire.

Tracy Curling



Photo: Mark Stone

York, Leeds & Hull Uni took advantage of the Skydive Spain Boogie to bang in loads of jumps, consequently our RAPS students are progressing very well. Back at Hib, Eamonn Henshall achieved his Cat 8 while Charlotte Fletcher finally broke through the 10 second barrier! We've got future champions on the way up!

The BCPA Valentine's Meet had an excellent turnout of over 100 people and lots of lifts. The bar was quite busy too! (See page 71.) We thank all who made it the weekend it was. A special mention to Abertay Uni, a really nice bunch of people who arrived at 3am Saturday, put a tent up in the dark and still manifested first thing in the morning! Monkey, get them exits sorted!

We're hosting B Licence progression days as well as regular courses, for both pro and flat packing. We've introduced the FS Ground School to help people gain more awareness and are designing new courses for further progression, keep an eye on www.skydiving.co.uk



BCPA creeper antics by Blair Stent

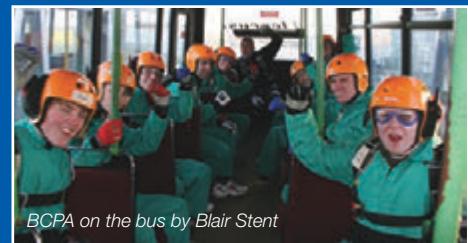


Fusion by Andy Wright

Our regular teams are warming up; *Valkyrie*, *Synergy*, *Murphy's Law*, *Havoc* & *Fusion* all started training. Wes passed his TBI course and his first ever static line jump in the same week; Jo Burns her FS coach rating; Darren Glover his FF coach; and Noel Purcell his CSI. Richard Daughtery finally passed his FS1 after 18 years! Richard holds a blue C Licence, we think he's going to be the last ever blue D Licence awarded!

Look out for the Seville Easter Boogie, 4-way skills coaching with *Fusion* & *Havoc* and the 4-way scrambles.

Mike Colthart



Errol



Alice by Chik Adams

We're getting back to some kind of normality following serious flooding. The field still resembles a marsh in places but we're getting to know where the dry bits are! Skydiving in wellies just doesn't look cool!

We're pleased to see that Tom's health continues to improve. A warm welcome to our new pilot Tim Humphrey and a huge thank you to Sandy Barnett for his help recently. Mike Paterson has decided he'd like to become an instructor, well done! Some folk will do anything for a free jump!

Walter is off on his travels again. Home for just two months he's off to Libya. Good luck mate, see you in Empuria.

Bob Henderson



Swindon



Photo: Dylan Griffith-Jones

Andy Parkin is the proud father of a baby daughter Sydney, while Brucie and Jo Johnson now have their second child, Boris. Mark Benson must be the only skydiver in history to travel to the USA three times with his rig and complete just one jump. You 'The Man'!

Russell Barnes turned amateur stunt man, being filmed by Wiltshire police rolling his Citroen Xantia after hitting a tree! We're obtaining the footage for posting on YouTube. Jez has again broken yet another camera but remains in high spirits, after beer and more beer.

Skydive London has new part owners, Stu Livett has sold out to Tomo & Grant of Old Buck fame. Brucie still owns the remaining shares and will be running, allegedly, things at the DZ with Geordie still holding the CCI mantle.

Dylan Griffith-Jones

Chatteris

Pat Hammond, already there coaching willing victims the deviant art! Everyone made full use of the fantastic weather, speedy Dorniers and cheap cervezas. Some have already made a return trip – or two! Jumphogs Lorraine and Si spent Christmas in Perris, doing over 100 skydives each!

Congratulations to John Stevens who qualified as a BPA jump pilot. Rumour has it John holds the record for 'most vomited on' by a tandem student, so it was only a matter of time before a change of career!

Fiona Law

The staff sneaked in some exped training at Skydive Spain, with blue skies, friendly faces and accommodation, a 16 bed luxury villa with pool – hard times! The staff did

about 30 jumps each, attaining personal goals, trying many disciplines within the skydiving fraternity, jumping from new aircraft and getting used to different surroundings. Thanks to the staff at Skydive Spain for your hospitality.

Welcome to Ian & Zara Lyons. Well done to Salmon for achieving his FS1 eventually, Smitty for Cat 8 and congratulations to Tony, Phil and Ed for achieving their CSBI.



Riggers course, photo by Bill Sharp

Through their hard work and enthusiasm all the candidates on the riggers course in December were successful, congratulations Kim, Dave, George, Stuart and Dean. I'd like to thank the commandant for hosting the course at RAPA and Bill Sharp & Andrew Hilton for setting up and running this superb course.

Hutch

Want to learn big-way skills? Caroline Hughes of skydivechoreography.com will run large formation skills weekends for intermediate skydivers, 21-22 April (single aircraft loads), especially Brit Chicks and for upper intermediate jumpers 11-12 August (dual aircraft loads). If you're intermediate for the first one, you could easily be upper intermediate by the second so get yourself booked on! Caroline covers for bad weather by running a comprehensive list of seminars too. Langar's very own organisers Dave Lewis and Billy Payn will be running a big-way weekend, 5-7 May, with multi-aircraft formation loads. For information or pre-registration, email loadorg@bpslangar.co.uk

Freeflyers, don't forget Go Vertical, 6-10 June, with the Beech 99 and Tim Porter. For fledglings we've got Mark Harris of Top Gun for a BirdMan weekend, 9-10 June; suits, first flight courses, coaching and load organising. Just rock up on the day and fly! A competition for everybody: 10-way speed star, 26-27 May, out of the Skyvan, it's a laugh whatever your ability or orientation!

Langar Universities Skydive Team (*LU:ST*) are doing well in the BCPA league. Members of *LU:ST* hold the top 4 places in the individual league and 10 places out of the top 16 for the BCPA Valentine's Meet, *LU:ST Seraphim* took first place (35 points in time) and *LU:ST Separation* came joint second, see page 71.

The night jumps went well, with over 50 people scaring themselves silly and learning all about night vision – or the lack of it!

This winter's facelift project has been the refurbishment of our canteen, with a larger and brighter seating area and more drinks and snack machines.

Milko

Achievements

FS1

Donna Jenkins
50 Jumps
Ruth Ferris
200 Jumps
Si Chipp
400 Jumps
Rich Rust
800 Jumps
Lorraine Dixcey



Si Chipp over Perris by Lorraine Dixcey

Achievements

FS1
Salmon
Cat 8
Smitty



RAPA big-way by Stu Storey

Langar

Dan & Martin by Tim Aucott



Achievements

First Freefall

Graham Nicholas
Kiara Vincent
Pranav Agarwaz
Cat 8, CH1
Graham Nicholas
Sam Wood
Steven Ward
Mark Ward
Pranav Agarwaz
CH2, JM1
Sam Bemment
Lee Funnell
FS1
Cara Finn
Steve Smith
Graham Nicholas

Jump Numbers

50
Kyle Price
100
Martin McShane
400
Andy May
1200
Ivor Flowers
1600
Pixie
1900
Dave Grzeskowiak
Craig Poxon
3000, 48 Hrs Freefall
Al Hodgson

Ally Milne geek by Tony Danbury



Swansea

First AFF graduate Ash,
by Yo Lee



Achievements

AFF Graduate

Ashley Crocker
50 Jumps
Tom Ramsden-Hare
200 Jumps
Stuart Lee

It's been occasionally glorious with fantastic views over the Gower and the Bristol Channel, even as far as Ireland and Land's End some days!

Ash became our first AFF graduate! Ash, we're still awaiting our beers, we don't believe that 'It's in the fridge' rubbish! We look forward to the returning Stu, who will have completed his camera course with Wendy Smith in NZ. Don't think that being abroad for your 200th will avoid the egg and flour – and this time we'll film! DZ Ploughing Award goes to Speedy, trenches should be dug with tractors not knees!

We look forward to seeing lots of jumpers – don't miss our big-way weekends with the two Let 410s.

Louise Ramsden-Hare

Chris Benyon!

The staff at RAPA would like to wish you a happy retirement and all the best for you, your wife Kanchana, and the boys Terry & Lesley. In his own words Chris is 'the true old and bold pilot'. His 40 year career in aviation started off with flying in 1966 (BPA number 8) and finished with Chris being the Chief Pilot at RAPA in 2006.

Chris's first encounter with a parachute was a water descent into Lake Coniston in 1975 using a C9. His affinity with water became more apparent when he carried out his first freefall jump into the Irish Sea! As Chris's parachute interests progressed he thought it a wise investment to replace his worn out para boots with a modified pair of Wellingtons – ensuring that L and R had been painted on them so as to improve his canopy control!

Chris's greatest affinity was with flying and he amassed over 10,000 flying hours, in such aircraft as a Piper 22 Tripacer; PA 32 Cherokee 6; Cessnas 172, 175, 182, 185 & 206; BN 2a; DC3; Piper Navajo PA31; and BN 2T.

One final story; whilst delivering parcels to the Isle of Man at night, his aircraft developed an engine problem over the sea. The only way that he could continue flying was to leave his command, jettison several parcels out of the aircraft and then return to the cockpit... this happened several times until the aircraft was in trim so that Chris could return to the mainland. If you were wondering where your birthday or Christmas present went, then send your thanks to Chris and Davey Jones's locker!

Cheers Chris, the sport has lost one of its true characters but your legacy will live on!





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Red Devils by Andrew Lovemore

Sth Cerney

2006 saw the end of an era in the departure of Carl Williams as tandem co-ordinator, and January 2007 heralded a new beginning. We have secured the services of Silver Stars Bookings Ltd as our new tandem co-ordinator and we're seeing some new and exciting changes. Discounts are now available for bulk purchases, plus an internet forum for what's on and bitching and a new clubhouse to watch DVDs. We are introducing freefly, FS and canopy coaching and will have a duty instructor available every weekend for briefs and packing courses. Pre-manifesting is now offered. We hope to have the new canteen facilities in place very soon, along with a small shop for those skydiving essentials. All Silver Stars club members will get discounted tunnel time and free coaching!

The Let is operating this year – honest! We hope for some friendly competitions later in the season – here's to a great one!

Rachel Organ

Strathallan

Those that headed for Zephyrhills reported to those cold and wet here that they had a mega time and packed loads of jumps in – jealous, us? Never! Pauline came to the rescue with her Saturday night trip to Laser Quest and Bunster has now been renamed Rambo for his outstanding performance. We're planning the BCPA weekend in May but be warned, Rupert cheats at Giant Twister!

Adelle Collins

Achievements

First Freefall

Angus Scott
Ian Miller
Tom Spencer
Ross Drummond
Chris Conlin

Cat 8, CH1, CH2

Alan McGeoch
50 Jumps
Barry Hyde

BCPA

At the Valentine's Meet everything started in a bit of a blur for those who made the 'unfortunate' mistake of partying into Saturday morning! Pushing my hangover to one side I sorted out the new arrivals. Had anyone told me I'd run out of registration forms I wouldn't have believed them. Given that past years have seen 60-70 people, I was pretty awed when over 110 showed up! No-one would say it was quiet!

Come lunchtime a weather-defying 3-way creeper competition was enthusiastically organised with the help of Simon Brentford. After three rounds, many crumpled fingers and the comedy stylings from a particular Loughborough University, the weather allowed a brave few some cloudbase lifts. Later on with the sun setting and the bar opened it was time for the DJs to spin up. Who'd have thought we'd be thrown out of the bar at only 3.30am?

The following morning most were spurred into action by the voluptuous blue sky beckoning beyond the cosy world of their warm sleeping bags. Four of the twelve 3-way teams completed round one. Commiserations to LU:ST Colostomy who missed the weather and ended up doing a hop 'n' pop from 3.5K.

Thanks to Hib for hosting another fantastic event and putting up with students being students!

Marc Fletcher



Members of LU:ST by Gary Wainwright



LU:ST Colostomy by Blair Stent

POPS

Besides the meets which we've already scheduled for Bad Lippspringe, Cyprus and Hibaldstow, Dunkeswell (Skydive UK Ltd) has provisionally agreed to another POPS meet, 13-14 October to help spread countrywide.

We're all itching to have another go at improving last year's 36-way POPS UK record so training is going on most weekends at various DZs. Tunnel time sessions are being planned as this goes into print. None of this is lost on our cousins 'down under'. As a gesture of goodwill, the photo showing Aussies and Kiwis (well known to most of us) showing off their medals in their latest 'Down Under' competition last October.

Keep training POPS... but most of all **enjoy!**

Peter, Ralph, Mike & Ian by Debbie Sommers



Dick Barton



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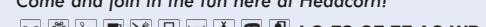


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19 St Andrews
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23 Tilstock
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www.bcpa.org.uk
chairman@bcpa.org.uk
Contact: Marc Fletcher, BCPA Chairman
The BCPA aims to promote skydiving at collegiate level. We run regional and national events for over 40 affiliated university clubs. The BCPA provides a community where university skydivers can find like-minded people to jump and socialise with.

POPS UK

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Tel: 01249 701805
dbarton@fsmail.net
www.popss.org.uk
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Arno 'klein' Declercq

Wendy Colman

Mike Colman

Tim 'crashtest' Da Sma

Kirk Verner

Craig Girard

Elisama Rodriguez

Tom 'Lange' Migerode

Johan 'Konijn' Van Beck

Yves 'Baron' de Burbure

Eric 'doc' De Coster

Gerard Shut

Tony Quintyn

Philippe 'Flipper' Danck

Ian 'Prof' Vereecken

Jan Lemairewaet

Nathalie Van Haecht

Philippe Reijnders

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7-8	Bodyflight World Challenge	Bodyflight, Bedford	www.worldchallenge.info
9-11	FF Tunnel Camp	Airkix, Milton Keynes	www.airkix.com
9-15	Go Vertical	Empuriabrava	www.skydiveempuriabraya.com
13	Anna Endicott Benefit Concert	Thornbury, nr Bristol	www.netheravon.com
13-15	BirdMan Tour	Empuriabrava	www.skydiveempuriabraya.com
13-15	Atmonauti Sfida Cup	Marche, Italy	www.atmonauti.com
13-17	Mekong River Boogie	Vientiane, Laos	www.mekongriverboogie.com
14-15	Nish Memorial Scrambles	Hinton	www.skydive.co.uk
14-15	Brit Chicks Warm-Up	Sibson	stumpy-nutty@tiscali.co.uk
16-18	Canopy Piloting Course	Empuriabrava	www.safeflightschool.com
16-20	BPA Instructor Course	Langar TI/AFF	0116 278 5271 trudy@bpa.org.uk
17	BPA Council Meeting	BPA Offices, Leicester	www.bpa.org.uk
18-20	Canopy Piloting Course	Lillo, Spain	www.skydivelillo.com
18-22	FF World Record Tryout Camp	Perris Valley, USA	www.skydiveperris.com
21-22	4-Way Skills Camp	Hibaldstow	www.skydiving.co.uk
21-22	Brit Chicks Warm-Up	Langar	load.organising@btinternet.com
21-29	Skysisters	Ramblers, Oz	www.skysisters.com.au
25-26	Spanish CP Nationals	Lillo, Spain	www.skydivelillo.com
25-May 1	Bridge Boogie	Marche, Italy	www.atmonauti.com
26-29	Rocky Point Boogie	Puerto Penasco, Mexico	www.skydiveaz.com
27-29	BirdMan Tour	Tortuga, Italy	www.skydivetortuga.com
27-29	Atmonauti Race Cup	Marche, Italy	www.atmonauti.com
27-30	Judging Seminar	RAPA	charters@ingliston.fsnet.co.uk
28-29	Brit Chicks Warm-Up	Hibaldstow	sachachilton@btinternet.com
28-30	Queen's Day Boogie	Texel, Holland	www.paracentrumtexel.nl

MAY

3-6	Big-Way Camp	Perris Valley, USA	www.skydiveperris.com
5-6	4-Way Grand Prix	Cark	www.skydive-northwest.com
5-6	BPA FS Coaching Roadshow	Weston	www.skydiveweston.com

5-7
Langar

5-7
RAPA, Germany

5-7
Hinton

5-8
Gap, France

7-9
Empuriabrava

10-13
Perris Valley, USA

10-13
Eloy, USA

11-13
Marche, Italy

12-13
Langar

12-13
Hibaldstow

12-13
Hinton

12-13
BKPC, Cockerham

12-13
Headcorn

12-13
Elsinore, USA

12-13
Hibaldstow

12-20
Langar

14-18
Strathallan
CSI/TBI/AFFBI/Adv

14-28
Cyprus

16-20
Empuriabrava

17-20
Langar

17-20
Lapalisse, France

17-20
Spa, Belgium

19-20
BKPC, Cockerham

19-20
Hibaldstow

19-20
Dunkeswell

21-23
Empuriabrava

21-25
Strathallan
CSI/Pre-Adv

23-25
Lillo, Spain

25-27
Weston

25-27
Dunkeswell

26-27
Langar

26-27
Langar

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26-27
Elsinore, USA

26-27
Eloy, USA

26-28
Langar

26-Jun 3
Old Buckenham

30-Jul 8
Marche, Italy

31
BPA Offices, Leicester

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26-Jun 3 CF World Record Selection Camp
Empuriabrava

Atmonauti Pro 4
Marche, Italy

STC Meeting
www.bpa.org.uk

JUNE

1-3
Rijeka, Croatia

2-3
Langar

2-3
Dunkeswell

2-3
Headcorn

3-9
Perris Valley, USA

4-8
Hibaldstow

6-10
Langar

6-10
Russia

9-10
Langar

9-10
BKPC, Cockerham

9-10
Hibaldstow

9-10
Netheravon

9-11
Ramblers, Oz

9-17
Peterlee

11-13
Empuriabrava

11-16
Empuriabrava

12
BPA Offices, Leicester

15-17
Old Buckenham

15-17
Hibaldstow

15-24
Cark

16-17
Hibaldstow

16-17
Perris Valley, USA

18-20
Empuriabrava

20-22
Lillo, Spain

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22-24
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Jul 1
Bled, Slovenia

Tracking & Chicks Freefly
Weston

30-Jul 1
Hibaldstow

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JULY

2-4
Hibaldstow

Anton Malevsky Cup
Stupino, Russia

AN72 & Wingsuit Boogie
Cochstedt, Germany

P3 Power Play
Perris Valley, USA

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Texel, Holland

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27-Aug 6

Irish Parachute Club www.skydive.ie

28-29

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29-Aug 3

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30-Aug 1

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30-Aug 3

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2

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23-Sep 1

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24-26

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SEPTMBER

1-2

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