

Skydiving™

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Rules Proposed for El Capitan Jumps

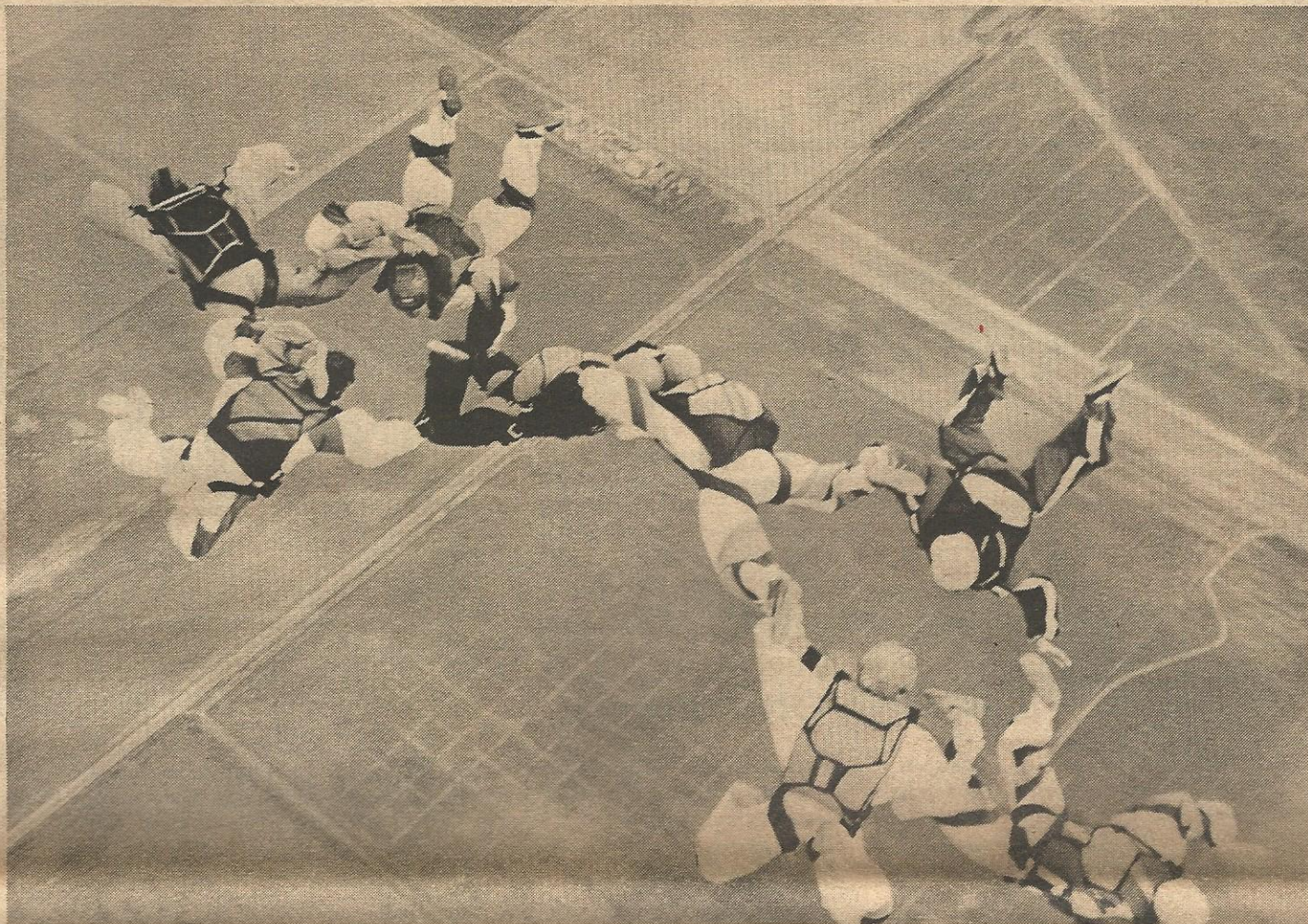
While Southern California was struggling to cope with flooding and mudslides caused by torrential rains, fifty hardcore skydivers met at Perris Valley Paracenter last February to hammer out a set of guidelines on jumping off El Capitan cliff in Yosemite Park in California. The meeting, which attracted jumpers from as far away as France, was considered successful, the resulting recommendations were forwarded to the U.S. Parachute Association. The group requests that the organization's board of directors adopt them as official recommendations for jumping from the sheer granite wall.

Although more than fifty jumpers have parachuted from El Capitan, the U.S. National Park Service contends the jumps are illegal unless prior permission is granted by the superintendent of Yosemite, but such permission won't be granted unless the activity is recognized by a "responsible national sanctioning organization" — the USPA. The USPA has so far refused to sanction the jumps because its board feels it needs to study the subject in greater detail. The meeting in Perris was organized to help provide the USPA with the information it needed.

The USPA was represented at the meeting by Joe Svec, Southwest Conference Director, and B.J. Worth, a National Director, both of whom have made the leap. Svec chaired the meeting. Bill Wendt, chief ranger of Yosemite, attended on behalf of the federal government.

According to Al Warsh, the meeting consisted of two main phases. The first was to determine USPA's role in cliff jumping. The second was to define detailed operating guidelines for jumping from El Capitan.

Those in attendance reached a consensus that cliff jumping had to be considered separately from the organization's Basic Safety Regulations. The Basic Safety Regulations is a set of train-



With one grip not yet closed on the right, this group of women is seconds away of setting a world record. Photo by Phil McCormick.

ing, equipment and facility requirements that the USPA feels are essential to safe sport parachuting. The recommendations, however, specifically apply only to intentional parachute jumps from aircraft.

Since the Basic Safety Regulations define the minimum safe opening altitudes as between 1800 and 2500 feet AGL, depending on the experience of the parachutist, jumping from El Capitan poses a problem since there is only a maximum of 2600 feet of vertical distance from the launch site to the bottom of the cliff, even at a distance of 500 feet out from the rock's face. Even short

(continued on page 20)

U.S. Women Set 8-Way Record

A group of women broke the world record for 8-way sequential RW by performing five maneuvers over Perris Valley, Calif., on March 1. The new record topped the one set in 1978 at Richmond, Ind., by two points. Six of the women live in California, while two traveled from Georgia to make the dives.

The attempt was organized by Dana Morrison and Wendy Neustrup. They picked up Tanya McCormick, Bonnie Chalfant, Chris Deli, Dawn Arbogast, Diana Roland and Valerie Thal to round out the group. FAI Judge Bill Pyle and U.S. Judge Betty Giarrusso observed the three jumps that were made.

The women received help from Garry Carter and Al Krueger. Carter was a member of the Mirror Image team which holds the men's 8-way world record of 11 points, and Al Krueger is captain of Visions, the team that played third in the 8-way event at the 1979 Nationals. The two men offered advice and suggestions for performing round 11 of the FAI 8-way sequences, the round that many jumpers feel has the most "point potential."

"Their advice saved us about ten practice dives," Morrison told *Skydiving*. "They pointed out shortcuts, things they learned by practicing the jump with their teams. The women took their advice without argument, so we avoided a lot of mistakes."

The jumps were filmed by Ray Cot-

tingham and Phil McCormick. Ken Crabtree's air-to-air color video system permitted the group to review each jump immediately and in great detail. (Visions is using the system to help train for the 1980 Nationals at Perris, and Focus, a team at DeLand, Fla., has a similar system for the same reason. The system at DeLand is flown by Bill Sutton.)

Although the record has not been officially accepted by the FAI in Perris — the process usually takes several months — Morrison said it is very likely the performance will be recognized without question.

Florida Meet Set

A combined Southeast Conference Championships/Florida Parachute Council Meet will be held at DeLand, Fla., on May 31-June 1. The meet will consist of 4-, 8- and 10-way RW, 4-way CRW and individual accuracy. And, following the lead of the Georgia Parachute Council's successful met, the 4- and 8-way RW events and accuracy will be divided into categories based on experience.

Cessna 182 and DC-3 aircraft will be used for the competition. Entry fees will be minimal.

Details will be published in Issue #10 of *Skydiving* or are available now by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to P.O. Box 189, Deltona, FL 32725.

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Women Set Texas RW Record

Nine women skydivers built a tri-wedge over Spaceland Paracenter near Houston on February 23. It was the largest all-woman formation yet completed by Texas skydivers, according to Correspondent Beth Pline McMillian. Participants included Dana Boyd, Karla Moore, Caralee Justus, Kathy Moffitt, Wendy Nordstrip, Olivia Jordan, Jenny Larson, Linda Smith and Ms. McMillian. Ms. Boyd and Justus earned their WSCR awards for being in an all-woman formation that built to an 8-way or larger, while Ms. Moore organized the effort.

One participant jokingly commented that "a rumor came out of California this past summer that the only way Texas girls could get a WSCR was if the California girls came down and built one for them. We are all very proud of our small step forward."

All-women formations are accomplishments mostly because it's difficult to get more than five or six experienced female jumpers at the same drop zone at the same time. Parachuting is still predominately a male activity if numbers alone are considered. California, with its big metropolitan areas, has two drop zones with more than just a few women jumpers. Florida also has a sizable population of very experienced women relative workers.

Ms. McMillian also reported that Spaceland Paracenter has once again "become the place to be," at least as far as big-airplane RW goes. The drop zone uses DeHavilland Twin Otters for jump aircraft, turboprop twins that carry from 16 to 20 jumpers. The Twin Otters made 20 loads at Spaceland during the last weekend of February. The correspondent reported, "Dave Boatman even gave us a load for free, he did so well." Boatman operates the drop zone and rents the Twin Otters from Metro Airlines.

At least one 8-way team from Texas is preparing to attend this year's U.S. National Championships.

Fokker Boogie in Denmark

Dan Vendelbo from Denmark reports that Scandinavian jumpers have scheduled a boogie for Easter at Stavanger, Norway, "in modest competition with the Zephyrhills Easter Boogie." The jump aircraft will be a Fokker F-27 Friendship, a twin turboprop aircraft that will haul about 40 jumpers. More information is available from Vendelbo at Vangvedvejen 21 Lina, 8600 Silkeborg, Denmark.



A member of the U.S. Army lands during the opening ceremonies of the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid, N.Y. The demonstration jump provided substantial positive PR benefits for parachuting. UPI photo.

Abbotsford Plans Twin Otter Boogie

Abbotsford Paracenter near Vancouver, B.C., has announced plans for its first anniversary boogie. The nine-day affair this summer will feature DeHavilland Twin Otter aircraft, night jumps, water jumps, record attempts, seminars, a bar-b-que and even a banquet with disco dancing. Owner Gerry Harper told *Skydiving* that the event will officially begin on June 28 and last until July 6, with the Twin Otters being scheduled for the two weekends.

One seminar will be held on Monday, June 30, and will be conducted by the current world champion 4-way team,

Rocky Mountain High from Canada. The seminar on the following day will cover style and accuracy.

The jumps are comparatively inexpensive, \$10 Canadian to \$16,000 feet. Harper also decided not to collect a registration fee, although most other center operators do so at the boogies they host.

Free camping and other facilities are available on the drop zone. Further information is available from Horizon Aerosports, 1359 Kingsway, Vancouver, B.C., Canada or by calling (604) 873-2727 or 853-9866.

U.S. Army Team Sets World Records

The U.S. Army Parachute Team, The Golden Knights, has added several more world records to its lengthy list of parachuting achievements.

During jumps at Yuma, Arizona, the Army team set new 8-man and 4-man night accuracy records, and men and women's individual night records, breaking the ones previously held by the Soviet Union.

On February 25th, Cheryl Stearns bested the women's individual night record of three dead centers and two centimeters by a substantial margin, piling up 12 DCs before missing the disc by 14 centimeters.

Four days later Mark Jones set the men's individual night record of nine dead centers with a 23 DC performance. The next evening, however, his brother, Cliff Jones, topped that showing with a 26 DCs.

The Jones brothers, along with Phil Munden and Dwight Reynolds, then broke the 4-man night team accuracy record of two rounds dead center and two centimeters, posting a three round, one centimeter performance.

Later that night, the 4-man team joined Matt O'Gwynn and Maurice Fernandez, and Tom Delaney and Tom Johnson to challenge the 8-man night record of one round. This record also fell to the Knights, who ended the evening with a one round, one centimeter total.

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Skydiving

Parachuting's Newsmagazine

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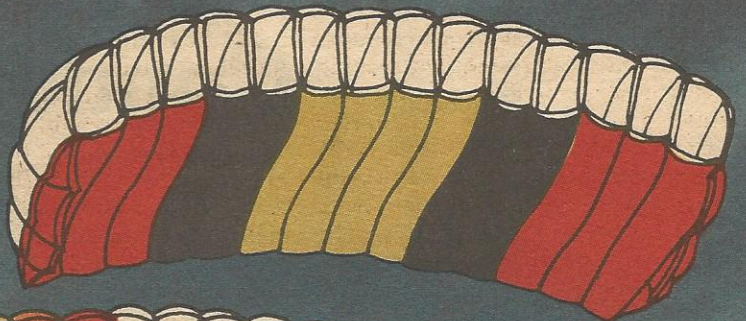
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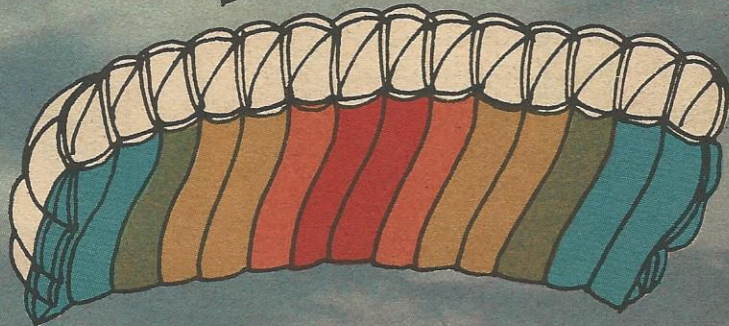
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Elsinore hit hard, other DZs get off easy Flooding Drowns Southwestern DZs

In the wake of record rains in southern California, a number of area parachute centers became victim to rising water levels. One DZ experienced temporary flooding, while two others, located on flood plains adjacent to existing reservoirs, were inundated completely.

Elsinore Parachute Center, located on the southern edge of muddy Lake Elsinore in a basin between two mountain ranges, is under several feet of water. The packing tables are completely submerged, as is the runway, the target, parking lot and packing area. A 12-foot dirt levee was piled up around the hanger and at last word it was suc-

cessful in keeping 10 feet of water out of the building.

Drop zone operator Leo Orłowski was able to remove all aircraft and equipment from the area without damage, and has relocated his operation at the Thompson Airport in Marietta, a small town five miles south of Elsinore.

The drop zone, location of Jacques Istel's proposed Skyworld airports center, will be unusable for aviation activity for one to three years, according to sources in the area. Local jumpers now refer to the drop zone as "Carp-world."

Perris Valley, ten miles east and several hundred feet higher than

Elsinore, was also affected by the heavy rains, but its problems were little more than minor annoyances compared to Elsinore's difficulties.

"The San Jacinto levee burst from pressure due to the rains, and the water came pouring through here," said owner Ben Conatser. "It stayed a day or two, about a foot deep in the buildings, then drained away into Elsinore." Conatser said he lost some money through lost jumping income, but even that wasn't too bad. "We only had half a runway to use one weekend. We were manifesting out of a trailer at the far end of the parking lot, and people had to land on the runway because everything else was flooded, but it wasn't that big a problem. We even had some fun with the water. We killed a dozen carp inside the manifest building, and a couple of people were cruising around the pea gravel in a boat."

Borderland drop zone, near San

Diego, was also out of business for a while. Water from nearby Otay Reservoir had covered most of their runaway and, though it hadn't reached the buildings or landing area, "you could hit the lake with a rock from the manifest," according to Cathy Collingwood, a local jumper. She said the drop zone would probably be closed for several weeks at least, and longer if the rains continued.

Coolidge Parachute Center, located in Arizona, was untouched by rain and flooding, despite heavy damage to Phoenix and surrounding areas.

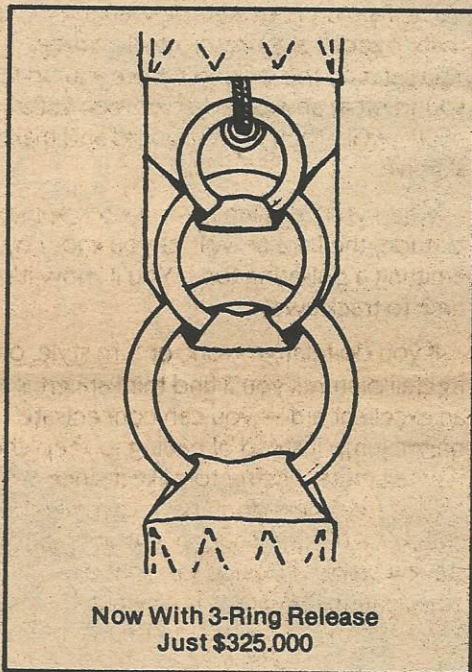
"All it did here was rain for a couple of weekends," said Zing Engstrom, manager of the center. "A few jumpers had trouble getting here because of the flooding, but that was about it."

It is likely that Elsinore will not reopen for a long time. The size of Lake Elsinore depends on the addition of rain water followed by loss due to evaporation during the long, hot summer. But local government representatives say the lake will drop at the rate of two to three feet per year at best, so Elsinore Parachute Center might not reopen at its former site for two or three years.

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U. of Massachusetts Builds 'Own' Formation

Eight members of the University of Massachusetts Sport Parachute Club at Amherst built a formation over Eustis, Fla., on January 11th. It was the largest "all UMSPC" formation built to date and is significant because most collegiate parachute clubs do not have eight or more members at any one time who have the experience to build larger formations. Although collegiate clubs train a great many students, experienced jumpers are continually leaving the club when they graduate and begin to pursue careers.

The UMSPC formation was built by Josh Wolfe, E.J. Sukewicz, Mike Thompson, Kelly Conaty, Chris Jarvis, Bob Clancy, Chick MacLean and Kate Jones. Jones earned her SCS award on the dive by closing eighth.

The club was founded in 1959 and is based on "safety, cheap skydives and fun," according to member Josh Wolfe. It has traveled to Eustis each year since 1974, spending the Christmas holidays in the warm sun. The club's home drop zone is Turners Fall, Mass.

Reunion Scheduled for 'Retired Parachutists'

A reunion of the Retired Parachutist League has been planned for June 21 at Greene County Parachute Center in Xenia, Ohio. The get-together is the idea of Cathy Collingwood, a former member of the U.S. Parachute Team who wants to get "lots of old familiar faces" together for a party. The reunion is scheduled before the Nationals in nearby Richmond, Ind., the following week.

The reunion is being promoted as having "no pressure and no entrance fee." Collingwood said the Retired Parachutist League was simply composed of people who have "ever jumped, flown, judged or been 'forced' to sit through a Nationals."

More information is available from Collingwood at 3811 Riviera Dr., San Diego, CA 92109. She would like to hear from those who are planning to attend.

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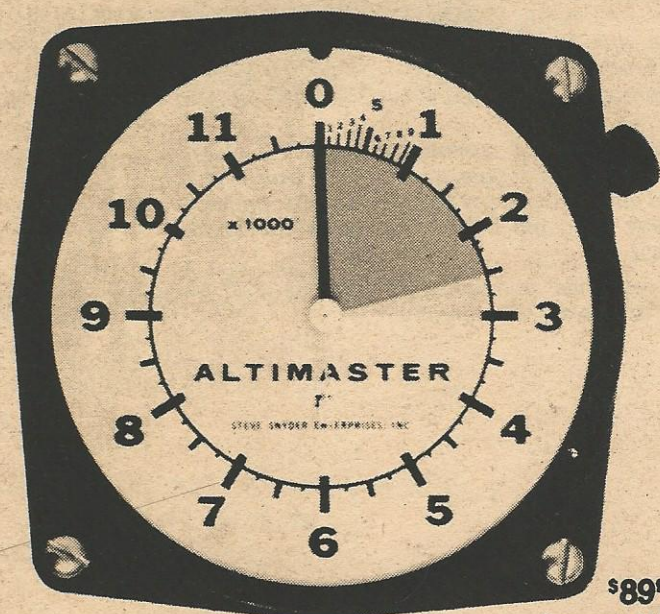
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"Several hundred" Wonderhogs affected Relative Workshop Recalls Ripcords

The Relative Workshop of DeLand, Fla., has issued a recall of certain Wonderhog reserve ripcords with plastic handles. The company will replace the ripcords with ones with metal handles at no charge to the owner. The Relative Workshop manufactures the Wonderhog harness and container system.

The recall was ordered by Bill Booth, the president of the company, after he learned of two instances where plastic ripcord handles failed in the air. The failures did not involve Wonderhogs, nor was anyone injured, but Booth decided there was a real possibility that similar failures would continue to oc-

cur, and that Wonderhogs might be involved.

The sport parachute industry in the U.S. has delivered rigs with plastic ripcords for about seven years, and three types are commonly seen. Only one type is involved in the Relative Workshop's recall program.

The type that the company is recalling is made of tan nylon, has a round cross section and a smooth finish. The ripcord cable passes through a post that has the same diameter as the rest of the handle.

This type of handle was installed on several hundred Wonderhogs that were

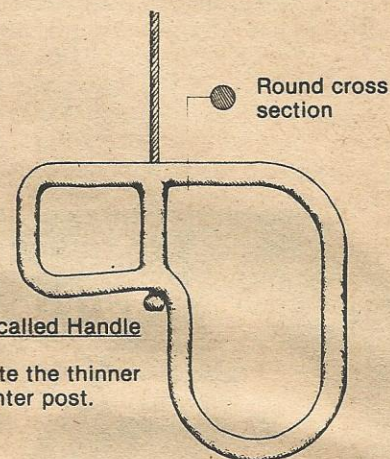
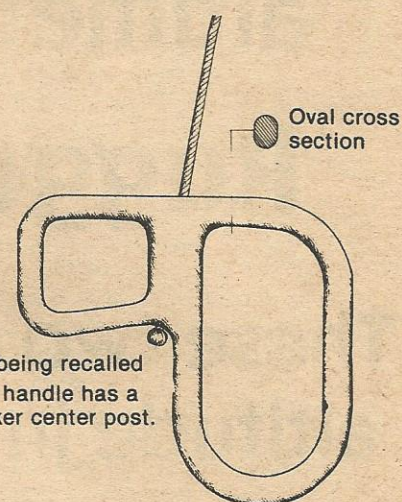
manufactured during the first few months of 1979.

(Wonderhogs were also shipped with a different type of plastic handle, a type that is not suspected of being inadequate. The second type has a rougher finish and is made of translucent plastic. The handle has an oval cross section and a thickened post through which the cable passes.)

Booth explained that his company will replace the nylon ripcords with metal ones. Wonderhog owners that have the type of ripcord that is being recalled should send the entire ripcord to the Relative workshop together with this information: the name and mailing address of the owner; the serial number and date of manufacture of the rig (this information is on the TSO tag that is tucked behind the back pad at the top of the container); the name of the per-

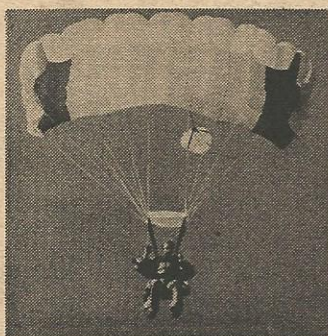
son or dealer from whom the rig was purchased, and whether the rigs were purchased new or used.

Since the company knows exactly which rigs left its plant with plastic ripcords, the requested information will



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But the Merlin may not be the ideal canopy for a relatively inexperienced jumper who is not yet a competent ram-air pilot. Novices are more apt to overcontrol a Merlin. A typical mistake is flaring too high above the ground.

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allow the Relative Workshop to keep track of how the recall progresses.

Booth said that his company will simply return any ripcord it receives that is not the type covered by the recall or is received without complete information.

This is not the first problem the Relative Workshop has experienced with reserve ripcord handles. Until early 1979, the company installed anti-windblast handles on its rigs, a type of handle that both the U.S. Parachute Association and the British Parachute Association determined was involved in several fatalities. Both organizations urged their members not to use blast handles.

Booth contends the blast handle is suitable for sport use. He said his company was forced to switch to plastic ripcords as a result of the USPA and BPA "ban," selecting the type of handle that it is now recalling because that handle was both available and widely used by other manufacturers. Metal-handled reserve ripcords were not readily available at that time, according to Booth. He said the company switched to metal Martin-Baker handles as soon as a supply was found in mid-1979.

Booth estimates the recall program will cost the Relative Workshop several thousand dollars.

But the company is getting off cheaply. It supplied only a few hundred of the handles, only a small percentage of the 10,000 handles of this type that have been manufactured. The nylon handles are presently found on several thousand rigs built by several manufacturers. Recalling the replacing all these handles would cost the sport parachute industry a considerable amount of money — probably around \$100,000.

More information on the Relative Workshop's recall is available from the company at 1050 Flightline Blvd., DeLand, Fla. 32720.



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Coolidge D.Z. The Jump Shack Pope Valley D.Z.

Istel Scholarship to USAFA

The National Collegiate Parachuting League last month sent a \$850 check to Cadet Kevin Silva of the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. Silva earned the award for his first place overall finish at the National Collegiate Parachuting Championships held at Marana, Ariz., last December.

The prize is an annual award of the NCPL. The source of the money is the interest generated by a \$10,000 trust fund established by Jacques Istel in the memory of his father, Andre Istel. Istel established the fund nearly a decade ago through an agreement with the National Aeronautic Association. The NAA administers the trust fund, and neither Istel nor the NCPL has access to the interest-generating \$10,000.

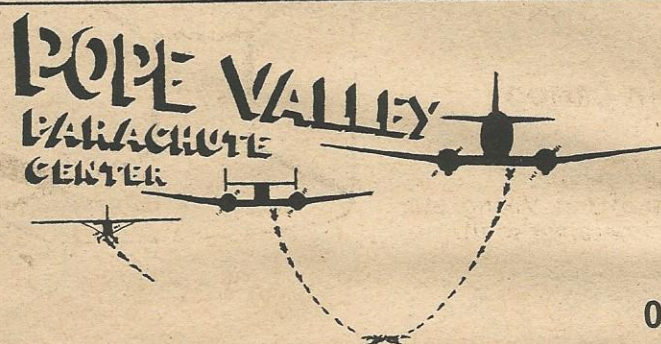
The award is called a scholarship, although the recipient is free to spend the money as he or she chooses. In Silva's case, however, the money will "be used for the specific purpose of promoting collegiate sport parachuting at

the academy," according to a letter that accompanied the check. Historically, military academy competitors have declined any cash or merchandise won at the collegiate meets.

Mirus Selected as Judge for 1980 U.S. Team

John Mirus has been selected by the USPA to serve as the U.S. judge at the World Parachuting Championships scheduled for Yugoslavia this summer. The meet will consist of style and accuracy events.

Mirus, an Army officer currently stationed in Europe, holds an FAI Judge's rating as well as most parachuting licenses and ratings. He has judged both the U.S. Nationals and the National Collegiate Parachuting Championships several times in the past few years.



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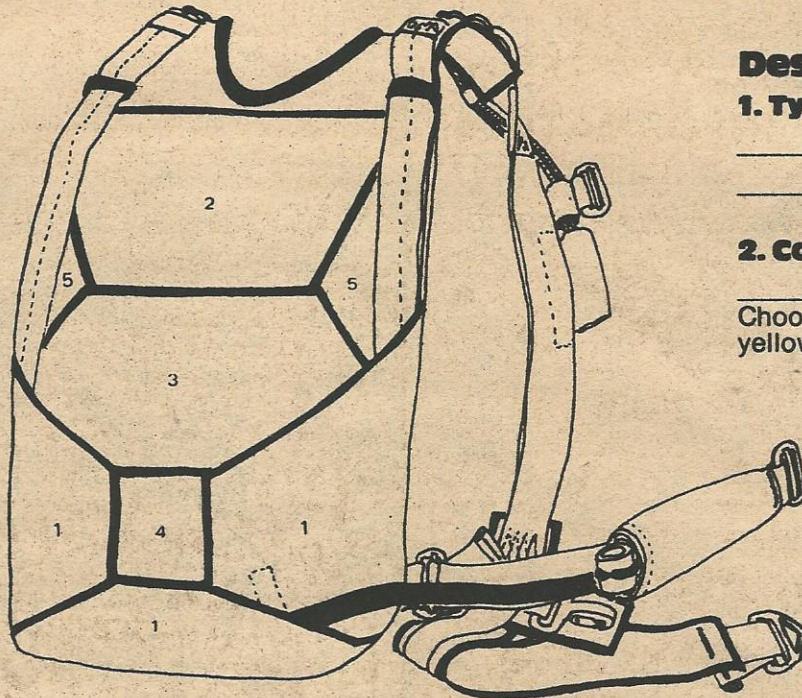
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From the Loft

This column is written by Bob Stroud, a Master Parachute Rigger and DPRE from Edmond, Okla., who has extensive sport parachute rigging — and jumping — experience. Bob will be happy to answer your equipment and rigging questions. Address them to Bob Stroud, c/o Skydiving, P.O. Box 189, Deltona, Fla. 32725.

Packing Manual

Butler Parachute Systems, Inc., of Austin, Tex., has completed the owner's manual for the Beta Emergency Parachute System it manufactures. The Beta is a lightweight back parachute designed for pilots. It's TSOed in the Standard category and is offered with either steerable surplus or new lopo canopies.

What is noteworthy about the owner's manual, however, is that it thoroughly and clearly tells the owner — who is likely to know little if anything about parachutes — how to use and care for the rig. The manual covers preflight inspection, fitting and wearing the Beta, PLFs, hazardous landings and maintenance tips. The text is well organized and nicely written.

The major portion of the manual is aimed at the rigger who packs the Beta. A component list is provided, as is a list of required tools. The assembly and packing instructions are clearly illustrated by some 26 photographs.

Again, the publication is an exceptional example of a parachute owner's manual and is a worthwhile addition to a rigger's library. Copies are available for \$5 each postpaid from Butler Parachute Systems, 1804A Vechmark Lane, Austin, TX 78665.

3-Ring Component Problem

Advanced Air Sports, the manufacturer of the Handbury Rig, has shipped "several" sets of 3-ring risers that were built from the wrong material and could cause a problem.

According to a Master Rigger who encountered one set of the risers, a coated cord was used to make the small loop that locks the small ring in position. (It's the small white loop that the plastic-coated release cable passes through.) The loop is supposed to be built from uncoated (untreated) nylon cord. The coated cord tends to keep its shape and effectively prevents the small ring from flipping up after the breakaway handle is pulled. The riser will not release in that condition.

The improper cord was used only on risers manufactured by Advanced Air Sports and sold with Handbury Rigs. It's noticeably stiffer than the correct material.

Advanced Air Sports will properly replace the faulty risers with a new set.

How effective is the coated cord in preventing riser release? The Master Rigger who reported the situation said, "I stood on a rig and pulled on one riser with all my might and it wouldn't release. We have had incidents on a breakaway where the jumper had to flip the top ring himself."

Perry Engstrom of the Jump Shack in Zephyrhills, Fla., recently reported a situation that requires attention by both riggers and jumpers. It is also related to the 3-Ring release.

Two German jumpers visited his shop. Each owned Relative Workshop

Wonderhogs that were built by Guardian Parachute in Santa Anna, Calif., under contract to the Relative Workshop. The ends of the breakaway cable — that plastic-coated cable that threads through the white locking loop in the risers — were not properly finished. Normal manufacturing procedure requires that the ends of the cable be cut and then heated in a flame so the plastic molds around the end to make a smooth point. Apparently the cable was improperly finished, because a "hook" of

melted plastic remained on the end of each cable. This hook prevented the complete extraction of the cable by catching in the white nylon loop. The risers cannot be released if the cable hangs up in the loop.

The problem isn't really noticeable unless some load is placed on the riser before the breakaway handle is pulled.

Riggers and jumpers should inspect the ends of the breakaway cable before another jump is put on the rig. Any burrs or hooks should be removed and the ends refinished.

Engstrom reported that all four breakaway handles were improperly finished, the ones in each rig and each of the two spares.

The Relative Workshop has been aware of the problem for some time after it was discovered during the final

inspection process. (Bill Booth, president of the Relative Workshop, said that all Guardian-made Wonderhogs were supposed to be inspected by his plant before they were shipped.) Either the improperly built handles were missed by his quality control inspectors or reached the field directly from Guardian. Guardian has shipped Wonderhogs to dealers both in the U.S. and overseas, and these rigs were not subjected to the Relative Workshop's inspection procedures.

Tack the SST Locking Loop

Riggers should inspect Jump Shack SSTs and Racers to insure the locking loop on the reserve pilot chute is properly tacked. A rigger recently reported how a Racer was improperly assembled



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CALENDAR

APRIL

April 12-13, Green Beret Club Meet, Spring Lake, N.C. Accuracy, style, 4-way sequential and 4-way speed formation. FFI: Jo Matthews, Sec., 308 Elaine Street, Spring Lake, NC 28309 (919) 497-6962.

April 19-20, USPA Jumpmaster Certification Course, Marana, AZ. FFI: Tony Frost, Marana Air Park, Marana, AZ 85238 (602) 682-4441.

April 24-27, Military Nationals, Green Beret SPC, Ft. Bragg, N.C. Registration May 23rd, A.D. Military only. \$10.00 registration fee. Hosted by 18th Airborne Corps., 82nd SPC, Green Beret SPC. FFI: 82nd SPC (919) 436-2919 or 436-5858.

April 26-27, Virginia Parachute Council and Eastern Conference Meet. Style and accuracy, 4-way sequential. Qualify for the Nationals here. FFI: West Point Airport, West Point, VA (804) 785-9994, or 843-4139 (nights) or Tinker at 674-5155.

MAY

May 2-4, USPA Jumpmaster and Instructor Certification Course, Chambersburg, PA. FFI: Chesley Judy, 1571 Inlet Court, Reston, VA 22090 (703) 435-2492.

May 3-4, Ninth Annual Southern California POPS Meet, Elsinore, Ca. Hit-n-rock, accuracy and three-way scrambles. DC-3 Howard, and Cessna. FFI: Pat Moorehead (213) 630-5229 or Len Zak (213) 542-3030.

May 3-4, USPA Jumpmaster and Instructor Certification Courses, Ft. Campbell, KY. FFI: Paul Reynolds (615) 431-9578 or (502) 439-4309.

May 9-10, Fifth Annual Fun Meet Beagle Sky Ranch, Medford, OR. FFI: Richard Zimmerman, 910 Taylor Street, Apt. #1, Medford, OR 97501 (503) 779-JUMP, or (503) 826-5389.

May 17-18, Southeastern Conference Style and Accuracy Meet, Raeford, NC. Council Meet combined with Conference Meet. Sponsored by 82nd Airborne Club and Raeford Club. Accuracy, style, 4-way sequential and 4-way speed formation. 4-way may qualify for Nationals. FFI: Jo Matthews, Sec., 308 Elaine Street, Spring Lake, NC 28390 (919) 497-6962.

May 17-18, RW Central Conference Meet, Greenville, IL. 4- and 8-man only. FFI: Bill Hays (314) 423-2012.

May 24-26, POPS Nationals, Tahlequah, OK. Accuracy, Hit 'N Rock, and RW events. Big star attempts. Also, bring along tight jumpsuits for a special RW event. FFI: Ken Hills, P.O. Box 1246, Tahlequah, OK 74464. (918) 456-5114.

May 24-26, Westwind Boogie, West Point, VA. Fun jumping. Loadstar and Twin Beech available. FFI: West Point

Airport, West Point, VA (804) 785-9994 or 843-4139 (nights).

May 24-26, Desert Sun SPC Military Meet, Yuma Proving Ground, Ariz. Open to all DOD personnel. Accuracy, 4-way RW, fun jumping. Send \$10 to register. Jumps from helicopters. 2LT John Mullen, P.O. Box 3075, USAUPG, Yuma, AZ 85364, AV 899-3116; (602) 328-3116; (602) 328-2474 (home).

JUNE

June 14-15, USPA Jumpmaster Certification Course, Hanau Army Airfield (Fliegerhorst) W. Germany. FFI: Earnest M. McDermon, HHC 3d Ar-

mored Division, APO, NY 09039 (2314-7378 0611-544255).

June 21 — Retired Parachutists Reunion, Xenia, OH. No pressure, no entrance fee, low key fun reunion. RSVP: Cathy Collingwood, 3811 Riviera Drive, San Diego, CA 92109 (714) 270-2493.

JULY

July 19-20, South Dakota Skydivers Thirteenth Annual Competition, Sioux Falls, SD. Accuracy, 4-way sequential, large star RW. Party, trophies, free camping and indoor packing. FFI: SDSI, P.O. 63, Sioux Falls, SD 57101. (605) 647-2381.



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Jumper Killed in Flight Training Crash

A flight school training accident claimed the life of an experienced skydiver recently at an Oklahoma Air Force base.

Captain Michelle Joganic was piloting a Cessna T-37 jet trainer on February

20th when the plane plunged into a wheat field 20 minutes into the flight, killing her instantly. An Air Force spokesman at Vance AFC, where the mishap occurred, said investigators haven't determined the cause of the

crash.

Joganic had logged a total of 65 hours, 11 in T-37s, when the accident took place.

The Air Force spokesman termed Joganic "a real go-getter," who had commanded large training squadrons at Lowry AFC and the Air Force Academy, both located in Colorado, and received several service awards before being assigned to flight school.

"She received two commendation medals and a Meritorious Service award," Laughlin said, adding, "those aren't just handed out at the end of an assignment, either. She had an excellent service record."

Joganic began skydiving in 1973 at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, and had accumulated 600 jumps at the time of the crash.

Aerial Circus Travels to Mexico

The California Aerial Circus, a demonstration parachute team headquartered in Long Beach, Calif., traveled to Mexico in late February for a 12-day exhibition in the Olympic Stadium in Mexico City.

Pat Moorehead told *Skydiving* that his group was billed as part of the All American Thrill Team and was scheduled to compete against the Mexican Parachute Team for the benefit of the audience.

Moorehead said "The show consists of motorcycle ramp jumps, car crashes and precision motorcycle riders. Dar Robinson was hired to leap from a helicopter more than 200 feet above an airbag — without a parachute. We did the same show last year and had a ball. All expenses are paid, plus we get a per diem and a lot of bucks."

In addition to Moorehead, the team sent Len Zak, John Raymer, Darrel Defreitas, Sandy Doyle and Bobbie Gallo. Moorehead said the show is expected to lead to others throughout Mexico and South America and perhaps Japan.

Moorehead also told *Skydiving* that he, Dick Pedley and Len Zak made the first "all POPS" jump off El Capitan on October 4, 1979. (POPS refers to the Parachutists Over Phorty Society.) They earned El Cap numbers 48, 49 and 50 for their effort. The clandestine jumps were made without Park Service permission. "We were pretty sneaky," reported Moorehead.

No Conference Meet for Southwest

Joe Svec, director of USPA's Southwest Conference, has announced there will be no 1980 Conference Meet for his area. Svec reported in his conference's newsletter that last year's meets (there were two, one for style and accuracy and one for RW) were both poorly attended. He said both the competitors and the hosts were not enthusiastic about the idea of the meets for 1980.

Jumpers in his conference who wish to qualify to attend this year's U.S. national championships should contact Svec at 13 Bucan, Houston, TX 77076. Individuals and teams can demonstrate that they meet the minimum performance standards required to enter the nationals before a conference-rated judge, with the jumpers bearing the cost of the judge's fees and expenses.

The Southwest Conference, which includes Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico, is the second conference to announce the cancellation of its annual conference meet.

USAFA Trains at Yolo

Fifty jumpers from the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs spent the last week of March training at the Yolo Country Droz Zone near Davis, Calif.

The drop zone is run by Parachutes Plus, Inc. Spokesman Ellen Michael told *Skydiving* that Yolo was selected because it is fairly close to McClellan Air Force Base near Sacramento and the team can stay and eat at the facility "for free."

The team planned to bring both of its DeHavilland Twin Otter aircraft and make a total of about 200 jumps a day. Yolo has a 5,000 foot paved runway, paved taxiways and a pea gravel target, but other facilities are Spartan — no building or running water. Still, the 15-year old drop zone has an active student program and occasionally hosts a DC-3 or Twin Beech.

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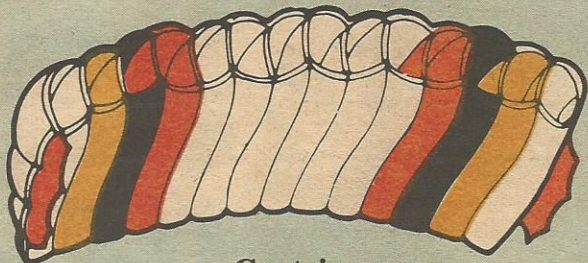
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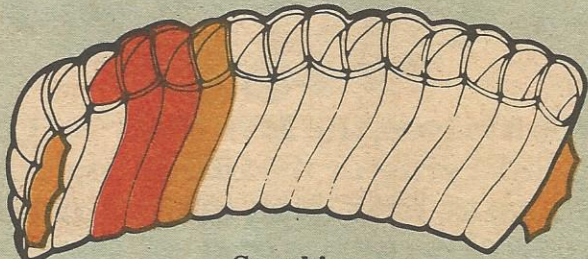
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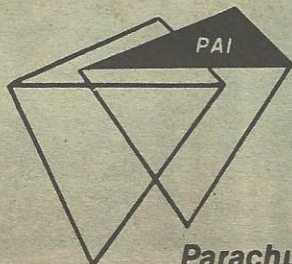
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(continued from the previous page)

by a dealer and the result could have caused a total malfunction of the reserve.

The packing manual instructs the rigger to tack the locking loop securely to the crown of the pilot chute. The tacking is done at both ends of the Type 4 tape that forms part of the locking loop assembly. After this tacking is completed, the pilot chute cap, or "hat," is sewn to the crown of the pilot chute and the pilot chute is ready to be installed.

Properly tacking the locking loop is important. If it's not tacked (or if it's tacked improperly), the loop can slip off the crown of the pilot chute. If it does, the possibility exists that the Type 4 will be pulled into the grommets on the reserve flaps and prevent the pilot chute from launching.

This possibility was recently illustrated when a Racer's reserve was pulled on a packing table. The locking loop had not been tacked at all and a "table total" resulted. (The rig had been jumped several times in that condition.)

The packing instructions provide complete details on properly assembling this type of pilot chute.

Installing Paralerts

An equipment dealer recently pointed out some considerations of mounting the SSE Paralert on a helmet or soft hat.

Mounting it directly on the back of a hat or helmet, near the lower edge, may increase the likelihood of injury if the jumper lands in high winds, falls over backwards and strikes his head. The theory is the Paralert would concentrate the impact in one small area of the skull.

A spokesman for SSE, Inc., agreed with the comment, but added that, "If it is mounted near the lower edge of a French soft helmet it is very difficult to hit while the reserve is packed. However, on a reserve landing it could be a

problem (if it has been mounted in that area)."

The spokesman added that mounting it on a hard shell helmet would reduce the chance of injury.

A jumper who is concerned about this situation has several options. He can mount the unit directly on top of the helmet, figuring that it will be unlikely he'll experience a blow in that region, at least from landing. Or he can wear a rigid helmet. Or he can mount the Paralert's sensing unit somewhere other than his hat or helmet. Or he can decide the risk is one he's willing to take and mount his Paralert wherever he wants.

Employment Requirements

A Chinese airline, advertising for female flight attendants, says they must be well-proportioned and have "correct political thought," says an aviation magazine.

Kneissl Jumpsuits in Production

Kneissl Jumpsuits has sprung up in southern California, offering a lightweight, fast falling suit especially designed for sequential flying. The company built 35 suits in November, its first month of operation.

The company is owned and operated by Mike Parnell, a member of the Visions 8-Way Team from nearby Perris Valley. He originally planned to make a few suits for his team. "We all got together and designed a suit we thought would work well for us. Before even one was made, there were orders for a dozen more."

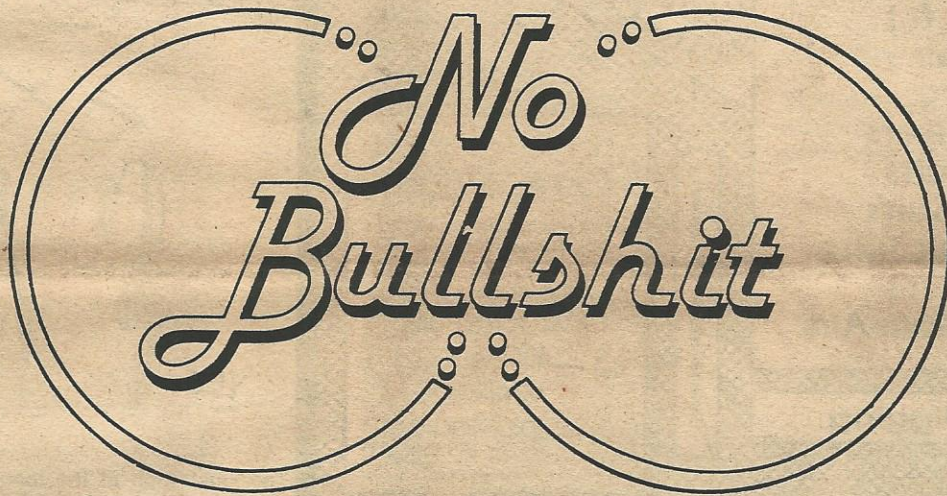
Kneissl suits are trimmer than most jumpsuits worn today, having less fabric in the arms, legs and "wing" area. Parnell claims the design enables the wearer to "fly faster than, yet still fall with most other jumpsuits on the

market."

The suit is made from a lightweight fabric that is a blend of 60% cotton, 30% Kodel polyester and 10% nylon. The fabric was originally intended for use in swimsuits, so it is quite durable and resists fading and shrinking. Parnell also works for the Ocean Pacific sports wear company and apparently buys his fabric from that firm.

The base price of the suit is \$85; options can increase the price to \$95. Parnell has entered into an agreement with the Kneissl, a ski equipment corporation, where Parnell's company pays Kneissl a small percentage of its gross sales in exchange for marketing support.

The address is Kneissl Jumpsuits, 15475 Lincoln, Lake Elsinore, CA 92330.



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Pat Works' **RW**underground

This column is written by Pat Works, author of the *Art of Freefall Relative Work and United We Fall*. For several years, Works published a newsletter titled *RWunderground* for relative workers.

30-Way Over Perris

After much planning, Perris, Calif., people put up a 30-way in January. The big XXX built cleanly and fast and gave a lot of the participants their first completed mega-way.

Jerry Ryan organized the effort. He used two DC-3s and put the 5-way base in fast-falling jumpsuits with high shoulder grips on each other.

Each of the five 6-way wedges had a key person who collected tickets, directed the efforts of their wedge, provided the head count for size information, and moved people around to achieve the most successful result.

This was the largest formation ever built over Perris Valley Paracenter.

Trash Packing

Trash-packing is satisfying. It fills my long-expressed desire to pay very little attention to my parachute and still get soft, clean openings. If I don't dwaddle, I can repack in 10 minutes flat.

I am convinced it is the only sensible way to pack the GQ Security Unit canopy. It also seems to work well for the Para-Flite Cruisair, Strato-Star and Strato Flyer as well as the NAA Para-Foil.

Trash-packing makes most sense if you freepack, since trying to stuff a fluffly trash-packed canopy in a bag takes a lot of time.

To trash-pack, lay your rig belly down and stow the brakes. Then grab the right and left riser groups — one in each hand — and walk them down to the canopy. Then hoist the canopy up by the lines with one hand while you roughly flake the nose with the other. That done, lay the canopy nose down on the ground.

Up to this point, all you're trying to do is sort of make the canopy fall into the shape it eventually has to assume on opening, i.e. nose forward, tail to the rear, all loose material up away from the lines, and the lines straight. If it looks like a horrible mess, it's probably right.

Now you split the tail, and loosely "cocoon" it by wrapping it around the

rest of the canopy. Bring the slider up and double-stow it to a central 'A' (nose) line. Be sure to put nearly all of the slider in the rubber band (see sketch), 'A' or the canopy may hide behind the slider and during deployment scare you.

Now, stomp it into your container and go for it. You'll want an experienced trash-packer to show you the ropes. Otherwise, you'll never believe how easy it is.

Footwear for Landings

Here's a tip for taking the pain out of those, zero-wind, hot summer landings on hard surfaces . . . the kind of landings that make you say "Ouch!" and sometimes give you tender feet or even stone bruises. Nike, a big brand name in the athletic shoe business, offers a shoe called the Tailwind which features nitrogen-filled air-bladder cushioned soles that do an excellent job of absorbing shock.



The Nike Tailwind athletic shoe.

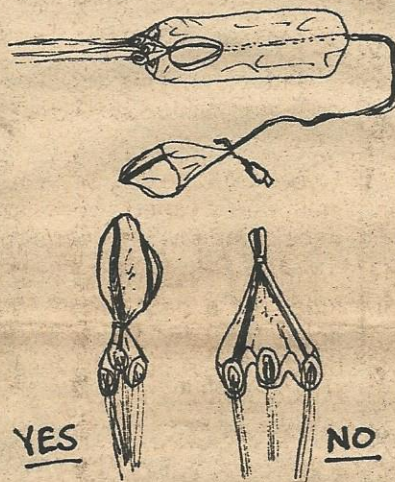
The Tailwind has leather and nylon uppers and waffle-patterned soles. The shoe is made in the U.S. and workmanship is excellent. Although Nike shoes come in a variety of colors, the Tailwind is available in a light gray with blue trim — attractive and not too prone to showing scuffs and dirt.

The Tailwind is superbly comfortable, especially compared to a pair of \$15 K-Mart specials. Even the tongue is foam padded.

Another significant feature of the shoe is its light weight. Again, compared to a cheaper shoe, the difference is immediately noticeable.

And the energy absorbing soles *do* work, coddling your feet on landing as well as just everyday wear. Because the Tailwind is of standard low-cut athletic shoe design, a jumper can expect to get any ankle support from it, so novices or injury-prone skydivers should wear boots as common sense dictates.

Skydiving's evaluation of the Tailwind revealed only two undesirable traits. One is the black rubber soles tend to leave marks on linoleum floors. The second is that the shoe retails for \$49.95 a pair. That's about twice what you can expect to pay for an average pair of athletic shoes these days, but about half the price of a pair of jump boots. But the Nike Tailwind is several cuts above the average as it provides superb comfort, excellent workmanship, light weight and real quality. The shoe is a noteworthy example of getting what you pay for.



The illustration at the top shows a "trash packed" canopy before it is bagged or put into the container. The proper way of stowing the slider is shown below.

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Prices expected to continue to climb steeply

Fuel Prices Up Sharply

The average price of aviation fuel was \$1.40 a gallon for the month of January according to a survey of fixed base operators. The price presented a 10-cent a gallon increase over the December 1979 price. Avgas went up in price the most, with 80 octane going from \$1.25 to \$1.41 and 100 octane increasing 11 cents to \$1.46 a gallon. Jet fuel remained at \$1.34 a gallon.

Added to the sharp price increases, some areas are still suffering from acute avgas shortages. The Rocky Mountain area has been hit the hardest, mostly as a result of a refinery fire in Texas.

Increases in the price of avgas and practically everything else has caused

many drop zone operators to raise their prices or change their policies regarding the minimum number of jumpers needed to get their aircraft off the ground. Major drop zones in both Florida and California were charging \$12 to 12,500 feet from DC-3s and Lockheed Lodestars, while some northern DZs and some operators of 4-place Cessnas are charging about \$1 per thousand feet.

The price of gasoline — both for automobiles and aircraft — is expected to continue to rise steadily throughout 1980 if demand stays strong. Although Americans have made some noticeable progress in conserving gasoline and therefore somewhat softening demand, the effect on prices hasn't been significant.

FAA Wants to Increase Fines for FAR Violations

The FAA asked Congress early this month to increase the limit on civil penalties that can be imposed on the FAA for violations of safety regulations from the current maximum of \$1,000 per violation to \$25,000 per violation. The legislative proposal, which had been sought by FAA Administrator Langhorne Bond, also seeks the imposition of criminal penalties for violations of regulations on "commercial operators and others who fail to file reports with the Civil Aeronautics Board of Secretary of Transportation, fail to keep required records, or falsify such reports or data."

The Department of Transportation said the current \$1,000 maximum penalty, "a level that was adopted in 1938, "is an inadequate deterrent" to rules violations. The proposed legislation seeks authority for the FAA to seek criminal penalties and jail sentences of up to one year for failure to maintain or falsification of reports.

The proposal also seeks a change to the way civil penalties are imposed. The current law requires that if a civil penalty (a fine) imposed by the FAA is opposed by the accused, the matter must be handled through institution of a civil suit in federal district court. The recent proposal, however, urges the establishment of an administrative procedure within the Department of Transportation to settle such cases without having to go through formal court proceedings. The FAA said, however, that court proceedings would still be used in major cases.

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Refinery Fire Crimps Supply of Avgas in Much of U.S.

Shortage of aviation gasoline in the central and southwest sections of the U.S., primarily due to an explosion and refinery fire at a Phillips Petroleum facility in Borger, Tex. last month, has resulted in rationing of supplies by dealers, exhaustion of supplies at many

points and higher prices. Federal and oil industry officials say the situation is not likely to improve significantly until mid-April and may not return to normal until late this year.

FAA officials in the agency's Central Region office in Kansas City described

the situation as "poor to miserable," and one man who has been monitoring the problem for FAA said, "I don't think there is any fixed-base operator in the Central Region (Kansas, Iowa, Missouri and Nebraska) that has an adequate supply." Officials estimate that 25 to 30 percent of the FBOs in the Central Region are having "a significant problem" in obtaining sufficient avgas to meet demand and at one point recently the agency had identified 65 locations that were completely out of avgas. FAA's Southwest Region, headquartered in Fort Worth, Tex., said it has been notified by aeronautics commission officials in Texas and Oklahoma that in many cases dealers are limiting avgas purchases to 10 gallons per engine and some dealers in that region are out of fuel. Flight service stations in both regions are issuing NOTAMs to pilots, warning them to call ahead to ascertain the availability of fuel supplies before making a trip.

The disruption of normal supplies of fuel has driven FBOs to the spot market, resulting in steep price increases when fuel can be obtained. FAA spokesmen said prices in the four-state Central Region are averaging \$1.70 to \$1.80 per gallon, adding that a number of locations are charging as much as \$1.95 per gallon.

Energy Department officials in Washington said that "from now until mid-April it's going to be rough, just plain rough." The loss of one refinery would not normally cause such a major disruption in supplies, but Phillips was producing about 25 percent of all aviation gasoline nationwide and was supplying

avgas for other refiners that do not manufacture it. Approximately 90 percent of Phillips' avgas production was at Borger.

A Phillips spokesman said the company is trying to alleviate the problem in a number of ways, including establishing exchange agreements with other refiners and boosting avgas production at another Phillips refinery in Sweeney, Tex. Phillips expects it will be able to process about 50 percent of normal crude oil volume at Borger by sometime in March and hopes to see this increase to near 100 percent sometime in April. However, this is not expected to greatly increase the avgas supply because one of the systems severely damaged in last month's fire was a unit that produces chemicals that give avgas its high-octane, low-lead characteristics. Phillips said it will be months before that unit is operational again and other sources say it could be October before that unit is back in operation.

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1964 A skin-tight jumpsuit cuts down wind resistance, which is great for turning a style series. (And with the nifty double zippers, you can put your jumpsuit on *after* your boots and look really sharp all at once.)



1973 With the advent of relative work, jumpers begin to realize that falling fast is not always the hot tip. "Down and out" starts to mean more than just a rotten state of mind. Someone comes up with the revolutionary idea of putting small wings and flares on the arms and legs of jumpsuits. This turns out to be a good idea: it slows down your rate of fall a little and makes relative work easier.



1976 Little wings are a good idea, so bigger wings would seem to be a better idea. Your rate of fall is decreased more, but a bigger wing can make big problems. A little reach can mean a big bobble. Fluttering and flapping wings means your flying won't be as smooth as it could be.

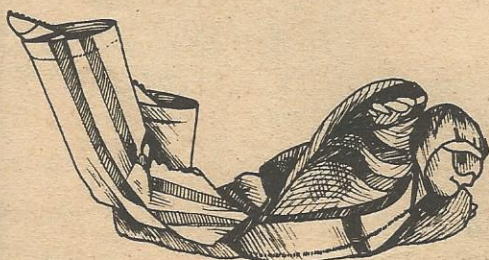


1978 Too much of a good thing. Too much wing can mean strange body positions are needed to compensate for erratic wing movements. Sometimes it feels as if the suit is flying you instead of the other way around. It means sacrificing control for a decreased rate of fall.



1980

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Installing New Rivets is Recommended

Jump Shack Issues Advice on R-3s

The Jump Shack, Inc., has issued a bulletin advising jumpers with R-2 and R-3 canopy releases to regularly inspect the devices. The bulletin also suggests that the aluminum rivets that have been used until now in the releases be replaced with ones made of stainless steel.

The bulletin was issued primarily in response to an incident at Zephyrhills, Fla., in January when an R-3 release failed to work properly. The jumper was able to release only one riser and subsequently suffered a broken leg when he landed under a partially inflated main and entangled reserve. (See *Skydiving*, Issue #8.)

Inspection of the jumper's equipment revealed that the activation web had separated from the cam which pulls the locking slider down. The web is attached to the cam with three aluminum rivets, and the heads of the rivets had pulled off. The bulletin states that the failure resulted from "repeated operation"; apparently the jumper had operated the releases several times in a suspended harness before he jumped it.

The bulletin also said that the R-2 release, which is very similar in design to the R-3, has a service life of 800 releases.

The company recommends that the aluminum rivets be replaced with ones

made of stainless steel, a much stronger metal that is less susceptible to fatigue. It also said that if the "releases show signs of rivet stretch (or) deformation of the head, or if you can stretch or fail the rivets with a pull force of 50 lbs. on the activation web, contact your sup-

plier for steel rivets and replacement instructions."

Replacement of the rivets is a fairly easy job. The Zephyrhills incident involved R-3s that were essentially brand new, so the stronger rivets should be installed on new as well as old rigs.

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Jumping in Hong Kong

Parachuting is alive and well in Hong Kong, according to Peter Howell, a resident of the city. He recently told *Skydiving* that sport parachutists there jump on weekends, usually out of a Cessna 182 or a Wessex helicopter. Visitors are welcome and "need to bring only logbooks and money — everything else can be rented." He suggested jumpers contact him c/o Steven Elmslie & Company, GPO Box 776, Victoria, Hong Kong. Telephone is 5-224109.

Aircraft are Fuel Misers

Contrary to what much of the public believes, traveling in today's jet airliners is more fuel efficient than travel by automobile.

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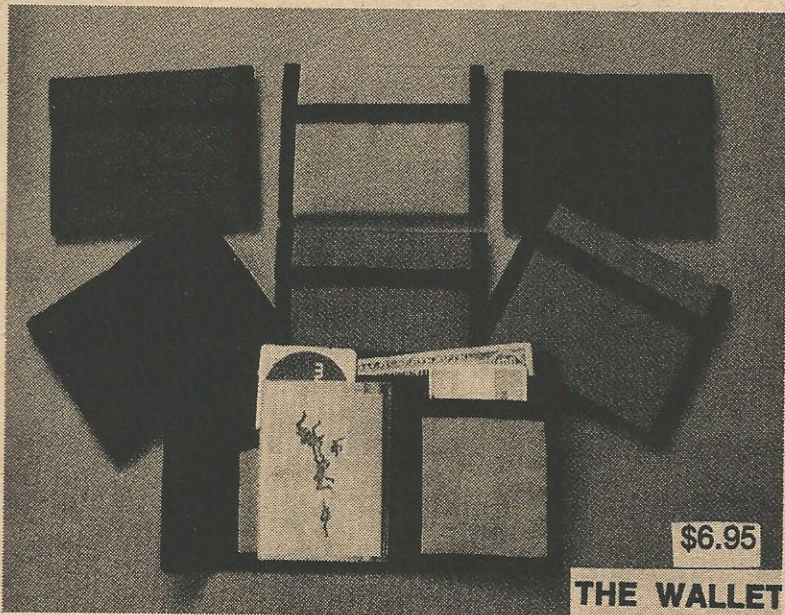
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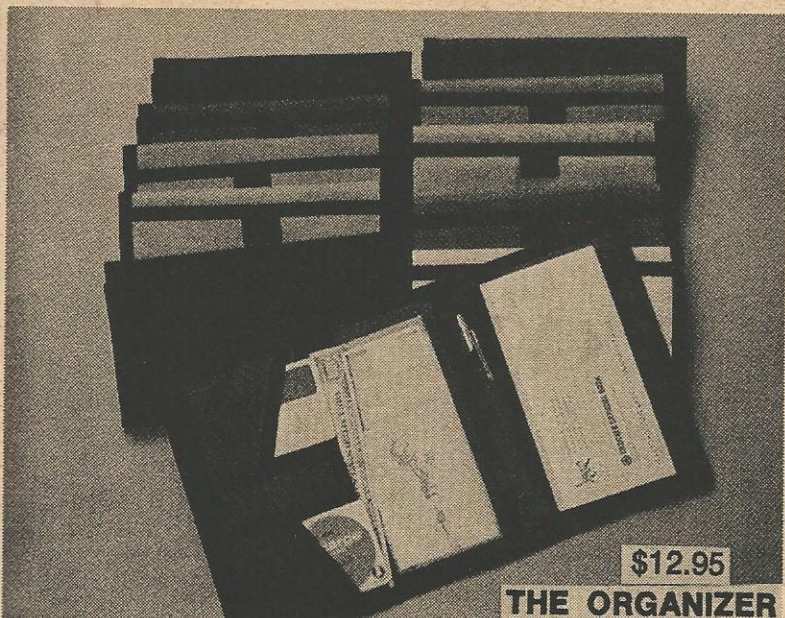
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20/Skydiving, March, 1980

El Capitan Seminar

(continued from page 1)

freefalls from El Capitan therefore result in what the USPA defines as low openings.

In spite of this conflict with the Basic Safety Regulations, the group at Perris voted unanimously to ask the USPA to endorse jumps from El Capitan.

Bill Wendt opened the next half of the meeting by explaining the park service's policy on hang gliding from El Capitan. (Hang gliders have been permitted to launch from Yosemite's mountains for several years.)

Wendt explained that although permission was initially given for launches from El Capitan, crowds of spectators trampled the delicate alpine meadows and caused traffic jams on the park's roads. Hang gliding was then moved to Glacier Point, a less visible and more remote area of the park that alleviated problems caused by spectators. He also explained the reasons for the Memorial Day October 1 to season for hang gliding in the park and the need for a nationally recognized sanctioning organization.

The group at Perris then went to work drafting a set of recommended procedures for jumping from El Capitan.

The recommendations:

1. The jumper must be a member in good standing of the USPA and have a D license. Persons from foreign countries must be members of their national aero clubs and have an equivalent FAI license.
2. No RW or team jumping. There must be at least 30 seconds between jumpers on launch.
3. There must be a ground crew at the landing zone at the time of the jump.
4. The jumper shall delay between six and eight seconds before parachute deployment. A maximum effort should be made to track away from the cliff face.
5. A rigid helmet, jumpsuit and adequate footwear shall be worn in addition to a main and reserve parachute.
6. A ram-air parachute shall be used for the descent, with the jumper having at least 50 jumps on that type of canopy, five of these jumps having been made within the last 90 days. The reserve parachute must be steerable.
7. Care must be taken at the jump site on the nose of El Capitan not to drop any rocks or equipment. The jumpsite itself is located a little east of due south and about 0.4 miles from the top of El Capitan and is marked by triangulation

point 7569. A rock cairn about five feet high marks the exact jump site.

8. All jumps must be before 8:30 a.m. and aborted if the wind is more than 10 mph at either the launch site or landing zone.

9. If a treetop landing is necessary, the jumper must remove the canopy and any other equipment at his or her cost without damage to the tree.

10. A Wilderness Permit is required. All litter and equipment must be packed out from the top of El Capitan by a support team.

11. No more than 12 parachute jumps per day and only from the top of El Capitan, will be permitted.

12. Jumpers must have written permission from the superintendent of Yosemite National Park on their person at the time of the jump.

Non-compliance with any of these regulations shall result in the suspension or revocation of the jumper's license and legal action by the park service.

If USPA approves these proposed regulations, the park service will publish them as official regulations.

The jumpers at the meeting in Perris then drafted an additional set of recommended procedures:

1. The ground crew at the landing zone shall maintain radio contact with the cliff support team.
2. A cliff party of two or more should be required — no lone hikers in the wilderness.
3. For every two jumpers, there should be at least one support crew member to carry down litter and extra gear.
4. All jumps should have demonstrated proficiency with riser turns and steep accuracy approaches. This can be signed off at the same time as the canopy proficiency requirement.
5. The landing zone shall be El Capitan Meadow (primary) or Devil's Elbow (secondary). Every effort shall be made to land as near as possible to the road and to exit the meadow as soon as possible to prevent environmental damage by crowds of spectators.

The last order of business was the resolution to form a Cliff Jumpers Association to work with USPA and the park service. Mike Sheerin was elected president, Al Warsh, vice president and Jean Boenish, secretary/treasurer.

Those at the meeting expressed the hope that their efforts will pave the way for legal jumps from El Capitan. Nearly ten jumpers have been arrested for jumping or attempting to jump off the cliff. Although some have pleaded no contest to the charges and paid fines, other are still awaiting trial.

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Kicked out of the Marine Corps

Skydiver Booted for Modeling in Buff

A Southern California skydiver has been in the national news lately over her photo feature in the April issue of Playboy magazine.

Bambi Lin Finney, a Marine Corps sergeant at the time the feature was done, was part of a section entitled "Women in Uniform," in which women from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard joined Ms. Finney in posing for the magazine. Shortly after the issue appeared on newsstands, Finney was given an honorable discharge from the Corps and sent packing.

"They said it was 'for the convenience of the Marine Corps,'" she said, "and for what they deemed 'substandard conduct.' I think they felt I may have corrupted all those other Marines if I'd stayed in."

Finney felt the Marine Corps "over-reacted" in dismissing her from the service, and said fellow workers at the Twentynine Palms Marine base east of Los Angeles didn't like the way it was handled. "They were unhappy I was being kicked out for something like that."

The 22-year-old Finney currently has about 90 jumps. She started skydiving in Okinawa, and jumped actively at Perris Valley — where the skydiving scenes which appeared in the magazine were shot — until late November.

"I used the modeling fee I received to buy a new rig, but I ran out of money to jump with," she said. "I hope to start jumping again this spring, after I finish a promotional tour I'm doing and get another job."

She will return to San Diego when her tour ends, where she hopes to find work as a teletype operator, the same job she performed in the service.

Finney said the photo session at Perris was enjoyed by everyone. "It was the tightest exit I've ever seen," she said of the jump which was photographed for the magazine. "Everyone wanted to be in the picture — even the dirt dives were done tightly!"

A ground photo of Bambi in her gear, flanked by jumpers John Miller and Scott Flanegin, was also published. The semi-nude picture, where she ap-



Playboy magazine provided these two photos of Bambi Finney in her jump gear (above) and in a swim suit. © 1980 Playboy.



peared by a swimming pool wearing only an open shirt, was not taken at Perris, however. "We did that shot in Palm Springs," she said.

Lodestar Sold

Clarence Schwinn's fine old Lockheed Lodestar — one with a \$7,000 paint job — was sold recently to a company in Florida. The 260 mph, twin-engine aircraft is now flying shrimp and lobsters.

The aircraft was a common site at drop zones in Wisconsin and Illinois for many years. It was rarely in the same area for two weekends in a row, opting instead to fly all over the area, visiting most of the DZs in the two states.

EDITORIAL...

Needed: A Shot in the Arm

In spite of an overall increase in USPA membership, fewer jumpers are successfully participating in the organization's rating program. While about 900 skydivers earned Jumpmaster, Instructor or Instructor/Examiner ratings in 1975, only about 700 did so last year.

Of all of USPA's many programs, few are as important as the training and certification of instructors and jumpmasters. The program is the product of years of work by volunteers and the association's paid staff, and it has probably done more to improve the safety of the sport as the steerable reserve. Practically everyone praises the program's certification courses, seminars and publications.

Why, then, the decline? I offer two reasons:

The sport is constantly changing. As is often pointed out, commercial centers have replaced non-profit clubs in most areas of the U.S. In the past, when clubs were thriving, most intermediate parachutists — prime jumpmaster and instructor material — pitched in and helped their clubs "handle" students. But now that centers have a full-time staff to run their student programs, most jumpers have little if any direct exposure to students. Fewer jumpers today have a need to learn how to competently instruct and jumpmaster.

While the above reason for the slack in the sails of the rating program can be accepted as a result of the evolution of the sport, the second reason cannot. The USPA itself promotes the program less these days. Articles in *Parachutist* magazine on training and basic parachuting are few and far between. Regular promotion of the program can only spark jumpers' interest and encourage their participation.

Although the USPA rating program will probably never again have the momentum it enjoyed in the past, I'm convinced the sport would benefit if the association would make more of an effort to promote and publicize it.

—MFT

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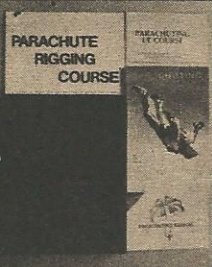


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LETTERS.....

Clearing Up CRW History

We know we were not the first to do CRW — we'd heard that some people on the East coast had done hook-ups in 1975 and 1976 (2-mans for sure and maybe 3-man, too).

Unfortunately, we're jumpers and not writers, so the articles that have been published elsewhere were not written by us. So we were surprised as everyone else when we read in *Parachutist* that said we were the "first" to do CRW. Anyway, we weren't the first and we don't claim to be the first; we just picked the idea up and helped it grow.

We're very pleased with the progress and acceptance of CRW. It's nice to know people don't think we're crazy anymore like they did in the beginning.

Steve Haley
CCR 1
Norton Thomas
CCS
Know Sense Canopy Team
Oakland, Calif.

Skydiving's recent article that questioned CRW "firsts" was very accurate.

The East Coast certainly gave birth to CRW and the first CRW award system. Dave Strickland, Gary Pond and Mark Beard built a 3-stack at the conference meet in Stormville, NY, on June 12, 1977. It was flown to the ground from 2,000 feet and witnessed by many. The feat sparked the creation of one award system for CRW.

That was three days prior to the California 3-stack (and several months after the Florida 3-way). Ken Preble died in a plane crash a few days later and we named our award system after him.

The Florida jumpers were certainly the first CRW jumpers and the East Coast is where it started growing. I of course think the first 8-stack and other feats of the West Coast were great — but let's give credit where credit is due.

Dave Strickland
CRW 1, CCR-22
Northampton, Mass.

(Strickland originated a CRW award system independently of the one that

Tom Courbat founded. Courbat's was recently turned over to the USPA.)

Readers Defend Marana

In a recent issue of *Skydiving* were several perorative comments regarding Tony Frost of Marana, Ariz. Since I did not attend the Collegiage Championships, I can't comment on what happened at the meet.

However, when I arrived after the meet, a complete stranger with nine jumps, Mr. Frost and his partner, Greg Behrens, treated me like a close relative. I came prepared to camp out for two weeks, but they would have none of that; instead they put me up in their house for the entire time.

When I left Marana, I had logged 40 jumps and received much instruction. Everyone couldn't have been nicer.

Perhaps being host for such a meet frayed Tony's nerves. Let's give Marana the benefit of the doubt. As your correspondent Robin Heid pointed out, "the facilities are excellent." In my experience, so are the people.

Michael Kelly
Rapid City, S.D.

In all fairness to Mr. Tony Frost, owner/operator of Marana Skydiving Center, the success of the collegiate nationals was due to the huge amount of cooperation I, as meet director, received from *everyone*. Your reporter, Robin Heid, was present only for a portion of the competition. All the problems we had at the collegiate championships, which were similar to those encountered when running any major parachuting event, were handled to everyone's satisfaction.

It should be noted that the 1979-80 National Collegiate Parachuting Championships ended with good feelings. It is my belief that everyone, including the competitors, the judging staff, myself, and the drop zone management, had a good time.

Al King
Director, NCPL
Washington, D.C.

Defends Student Piggybacks

This is in defense of the new Jim-Dandy three color tandem (Gerald Baumchen, *Skydiving*, Issue #8).

Our club, Circle M SPC, has been training students for a little over a year on tandem systems with a very good safety and retention record. We put a lot of thought and discussion into the system for about a year prior to using it. To make the transition from surplus gear to tandem we felt the key to safety and success was proper instruction and enough of it.

As for safety, we feel it is safer to teach a first jump student on tandem than teach him on surplus for 20 to 30 jumps and then retrain him on the tandem gear which he just bought. From the student's view, he is more comfortable, there is less hassle in the aircraft, the transition to his own tandem is going to be smoother, and he looks better to his friends who have come out to watch him.

From the club's view, the tandem is easier to keep track of, easier to pack, and easier to maintain.

As for legal aspects, we teach by USPA Doctrine and the FARs. Our jumpmasters and instructors are USPA rated. Our gear is a TSO'd tandem with a Stevens, Paracommander main, 24' reserve with a 4-line release and is hand-deployed on freefall. On static line we attach the line to a spring-type pilot chute and use non-attached paper pilot chute in the pouch for dummy pulls.

Learning to jump is like learning to drive — why learn to drive on old sage green dump truck when everyone else is driving a new Jim-Dandy three color sports car?

John Mitchell
USD-3828
Jackson, Miss.

Plastic Ripcords

My compliments on the latest (Jan. 30) issue of *Skydiving*. I found particularly interesting the article dealing with the failure of an SST reserve ripcord handle. I witnessed a similar incident in Sparta, Illinois, a year ago.

This jumper was also jumping an SST with plastic handles on the main and reserve ripcord. The system was almost three years old. Both handles were ori-

ginal. The ground temperature at the time of the jump was about 14 degrees F. At pull time he had the main ripcord break off in his hand. He then attempted to pull his reserve with the same results: broken handle. As in the incident you reported, this jumper was able to grab the remaining portion of the handle and deployed his reserve at what ground observers estimated to be between 300 to 500 feet.

At the time of the incident I submitted a report to USPA both verbally and in a written incident report. While I realize that you can't cry wolf over a single incident, I feel that any equipment failure at a critical point should be passed along to the jumping community. Its good to see somebodys finally doing the job.

Ken Swyers
USPA Area Safety Officer
Overland, Mo.

Thanks to Finder

While visiting Perris, Calif., last Thanksgiving, I lost my parachuting I.D. — license, ratings, etc.

Two weeks later I received an envelope address to me with the words "lost and found" in the upper left corner and the letters C.O.D. with a box drawn around them where the stamp should be.

For some reason, the post office delivered this to me for free. Inside it was my lost I.D. The postmark on the envelope reads City of Industry, California.

If whoever did this is reading: thanks a lot!!

Bob Young
Parachute Associates
Lakewood, N.J.

Skydiving's "Letters" column is the place to publish your tips, suggestions, announcements, observations, corrections and amplifications.

Send your letters to *Skydiving*, P.O. Box 189, Deltona, Fla. 32725. Generally, letters cannot be acknowledged or returned. *Skydiving* reserves the privilege of editing a letter to meet space requirements.

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If you're the kind of jumper who controls his canopy with gentle pressures rather than by sweeping tugs on the toggles, you'll like flying a Strato-Cloud.

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