

WINGSUIT SKYDIVERS BECOME HUMAN SURFBOARDS FOR PARACHUTISTS

First women in history dock wingsuit and parachute; “Project XRW” sets new records

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LAKE ELSINORE, CA, 23 September, 2010 – For the first time in the history of human flight, three wingsuit skydivers flew and linked up with three parachutists for simultaneous “human surfing” in the air. One of the linked pairs became the first female team ever to ever “dock” a wingsuit and parachute in flight. Skydiving is an 85 percent male-dominated sport. The surfing pairs held the configurations for a full minute, a new record, at an average vertical descent rate of 33 miles per hour.

On a separate jump, two wingsuit skydivers flew up on either side of a parachutist, taking both his hands in a never-before-seen linked configuration. The wingsuiters decreased their vertical speeds so drastically that their fall-rate computers were unable to tell whether they were in freefall or under a functioning parachute. Advances in technology and skill also allowed the parachutists to speed up vertically while still landing safely. The wingsuit skydivers opened their own parachutes before landing.



Raise the Sky (www.raisethesky.org) and the Performance Designs Factory Team (www.pdfactoryteam.com) organized the event at Skydive Elsinore (www.skydiveelsinore.com) to launch a partnership that will take leadership lessons and the science of human flight into schools. “XRW is grueling and rewarding. We want to share our adrenaline management skills not just with other skydivers, but also with kids for whom the risks and fears of getting through school every day make XRW look tame,” said PD Factory Team member Ian Bobo.

About Raise the Sky:
www.raisethesky.org

Raise the Sky is a non-profit organization that uses the promotional power of skydiving to facilitate charitable giving, community involvement, and fearless outreach.

About the Performance Designs Factory Team:
www.pdfactoryteam.com

The PD Factory Team is comprised of 10 highly-skilled aerial athletes sponsored by Performance Designs, a manufacturer of high-performance parachutes. With over 85,000 collective jumps, the team dominates the competition circuit domestically and internationally, accumulating multiple world championship victories and world records along the way.

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Project XRW Elsinore: Fact Sheet

Accomplishments:

- Three wingsuit skydivers in freefall linked up with three parachutists for simultaneous “human surfing” in the air, a first in the history of skydiving.
- Jessica Edgeington and Taya Weiss are the first female skydivers to dock a wingsuit in freefall and a parachute (and the second pair in the world to surf- and rodeo-style dock).
- Two wingsuit pilots in freefall simultaneously held hands with a parachutist in flight, another first in the history of skydiving.
- An unlinked, mixed “flock” of seven wingsuits in freefall and parachutists flew in close proximity for more than a minute, yet another first in the history of skydiving.

Equipment: Parachutists flew 71-square-foot Performance Designs Velocities with special trim tab risers provided by Sun Path Products. Wingsuit skydivers wore TonySuit X-Birds.

Jumps: 20 Project XRW team jumps completed over four days. **Location:** Skydive Elsinore (www.skydiveelsinore.com) in Southern California between Los Angeles and San Diego, nestled between Lake Elsinore and the beautiful Ortega mountains.

Athletes:

Wingsuit Skydivers: Taya Weiss – *(available for interview)*. Lead organizer of the US National Wingsuit Record, multiple wingsuit record holder, and advisor to the International Parachuting Commission.

Jeff Nebelkopf – Designer and Chief Test Pilot for TonySuit Wingsuits, multiple wingsuit record holder and winner of time and distance competitions.

Will Kitto – Avid BASE (Building, Antenna, Span, Earth) and skydiving wingsuit pilot based in Southern California.

PD Factory Team Parachutists: Jessica Edgeington – *(available for interview)*. One of the best female canopy pilots in the world. Full bio: www.pdfactoryteam.com/bio_edgeington.php

Jonathan Tagle – *(available for interview)*. Gold medal winner, 2010 US National Skydiving Championships of Canopy Piloting. Full bio: www.pdfactoryteam.com/bio_tagle.php

Ian Bobo – Over 12,000 jumps. Gold medal winner in canopy piloting and formation skydiving. Full bio: http://www.pdfactoryteam.com/bio_bobo.php

Videographers: Phil Peggs, lead videographer (flying a wingsuit). David Gershfeld (flying a wingsuit). Niklas Daniel and Brianne Thompson (ground and shooting from inside the airplane).

Sponsors: Skydive Elsinore www.skydiveelsinore.com, Performance Designs www.performancedesigns.com, PD Factory Team www.pdfactoryteam.com, Sun Path www.sunpath.com, TonySuit Wingsuits www.tonywingsuits.com, Paralog www.paralog.net

Social Impact: Launch of a partnership between Raise the Sky and the PD Factory Team to do community outreach to at-risk youth all over the United States in 2011. Demo jumps into schools (where possible) will be followed by discussions about leadership, risk, teamwork, and the science behind skydiving.