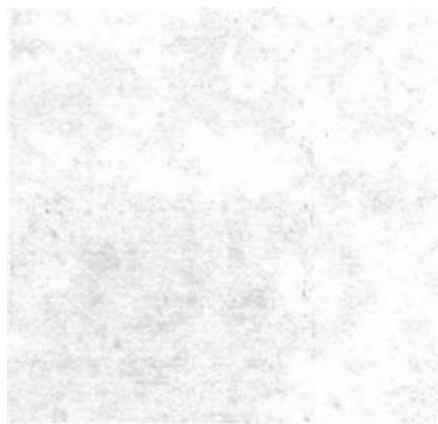


Jump



1982



Jump

August, 1985

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- Conrad Freeman
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- Rod Cullen

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily agreed with or held by the Editor or the B.B.A.

Correspondence from readers is welcomed from all viewpoints. Names will be printed with letters unless requested to be withheld. Articles and photographs can only be returned if a S.A.E. is enclosed with the original letter.

The British Base Association was founded for and dedicated to the safety, advancement and positive public image of fixed object/BASE jumping in the British Isles. The B.B.A. does not encourage or advocate that anyone should make a BASE jump. Neither the B.B.A. nor the editor of this magazine knowingly endorse or condone any foolhardiness or disrespect of any British Law. The B.B.A. came into existence as there was no established or recognised body to represent British BASE jumpers.

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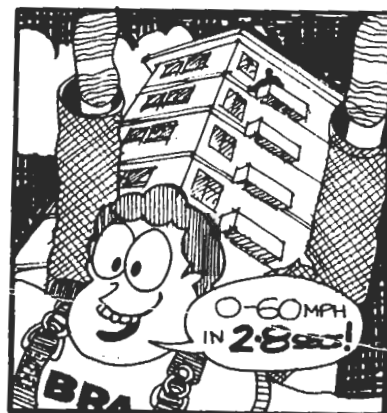
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IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF JUMP Magazine



- THE CHEDDER GORGE cliff site
- Part 2 of MEET PHIL SMITH
- ROGER FROGDIVER - the story of a BASE jumping frog
- Plus another selection of news and views from across the world.



Jumping Off

FREE FALL RECORD

Kevin Venell of Galveston, Texas broke all existing records with a 140' Free fall bridge jump in W. Virginia. see story inside.

BALLISTIC TERTIARY

Testing program underway with Jim Handburys Ballistic Tertiary and Phil Smith. With a view to testing the possibilities of a ballistic tertiary for Base jumpers. See BASE October 83 for report of the ballistic tertiary.

Reports from the 'western front' that 2 buildings under construction in down town LA have been jumped. In Dallas, Texas reports of a 900 foot building nearing completion having also been jumped successfully.

100th BASE JUMP

A Californian jumper has now qualified by having made 100 BASE jumps, several more reported to be getting close. Arizona parachutists J.D. Walker and Nick Bender report they now have 50 and 58 jumps respectively.

AUTANA

Phil Smith reports how he and Jean Boenish failed to make any cliff jumps on the recent BBC expedition to Cerro Autana in Venezuela. He and Jean Boenish went as the BASE contingent of the party consisting of naturalists, climbers and parachutists. Expedition leader and parachutist Adrian Warren reports that they have come back with some good film though was disappointed that they were not be able to include any cliff jump's the trip. Jean broke her leg on the initial landing after having jumped from a DC3 on to the top of the mountain and had to be flown off by helicopter, while Phil sprained his ankle. The rest of the party including the film crew who were carried as tandem passengers, landed fine. Phil says he found a 1300foot

sheer site on the 4,000 foot high mountain. They made a date to make the jump, planning to land in the jungle below, when the military arrived the day before and asked them to leave the area. He said the military were not happy about them landing in the jungle and they suspected the team might be "spying", though what exactly remains unsure. If the final TV program, a pilot for a possible series of adventure/ nature programs, is a success then there should be some more interesting expeditions possibly involving skydiving. We wish Jean well with her recovery.

HOP & COP

There is an anecdote circulating about a european bridge jumper who was about to make a bridge jump following his friends when he was apprehended by a passing police man. The jumper was led to the police car only to find the passenger door was locked. The police man went around to open the door and the jumper having something else other than a trip to the local nick in mind, legged it to the edge of the bridge. Pulling out his large pilot chute from under his sweater as he ran, climbed the rail and was gone. Leaving a bemused police man with a story his colleges would find hard to believe.

SKIP & JUMP

Rod Cullen of Victoria, Australia, who was in the northern hemisphere recently wrote describing some of his adventures from his trip. At the 720 foot Auburn bridge, in California, fellow Aussi Graham Jeffery pioneered a new style bridge exit. "Take one, two steps, one hand on the rail and vault over." Graham also demonstrated barrel-rolls on another of his jumps to "geek" the camera. Rod is recovering from a broken leg sustained in a car crash in Norway and is now walking with the aid of a stick. He also sent the Roger Frogdive story,

that was written for him by a friend during his stay in London. Hope you get jumping again soon Rod.

BUILDING

There have been reports of jumps being made from the 750 foot high Montparnas building in down town Paris. The building features a spectators viewing area on the roof with a high speed lift that gets to the top in around 38 seconds.

EUROPEAN TOUR

Mike McCarthy and Amanda Tucker spent October bridge jumping in Europe, their jumps were filmed by the French photo agency "SYGMA", who had previously handled their ET jumps. They visited 4 bridges, the lowest being over 500 feet, the high point being a 750 $\frac{1}{2}$ high Dam in Switzerland. Amanda wonders if a dam creates a new classification by not fitting under the any of the existing B.A.S.E. parameters. A man made cliff? She suggests that dam walls could be tacked on the end of BASE as BASED. She wonders if anyone has any ideas?

PYLON

Conrad Freeman reports that he and a few friends have made some jumps from a 500 foot pylon on the Welsh side of the Seven bridge. The site he reports has an overhanging gantry and has been jumped free fall and static lined.

GREENPEACE

Robin Heid, Director of the Wild life Society, Denver, Colorado. "Swooped acid rain for Greenpeace from the catwalk of the Gavin power plant's 1,143 foot high smokestack. Chesghire, Ohio. October 1984." Robin writes on the back of his photo-Christmas card, which shows Robin 'the existential terrorist' in action. He also mentioned the jump (demo jump?) was aired on the PBS show, NOVA.

NEW BASE JUMPERS

A recent qualifier for British BASE jumped from all four objects in ten days and is half way to getting Night BASE.

Letters

Dear Nigel

It was my first time at Bridge Day and an unforgettable experience. I thought the day was very well organised and considering the amount of people, you all did a good job of de-briefing every one. Take care,

Carole Devine
Leicester
Canada

NRGB RECORDS

Dear Sir,

Jumpers who have jumped from the New River Gorge Bridge may be interested in finding out how to get official N.R.G.B. numbers. Records have been kept since 1977. These records include all Bridge Day jumps. Every person that has reported a jump has been given a number. Of course, if a jump is not reported we can not issue a number to that jumper. It is important that people who jumped Bridge Day 1983 and 1984 realise that the number they were given at the time was only a registration number, not their N.R.G.B. number.

Please help us keep this record accurate and complete. Please report all first jumps off the bridge. If you make or have made a jump of the New River Gorge Bridge and would like your V.R.G.B. number; please send a self addressed envelope to: V.R.G.B. Awards. There is no charge for your number. Please include your full name, date of first jump from the bridge, address, approximate time of jump, and witness, if any. If you don't already have a number one will be issued to you. Numbers are up to over 475 and after this year's event. Thanks to every one and see you next year.

Greg Gates
N.R.G.B Awards
8116 East 45th Street
Lawrence, In 46226
U.S.A.

Dear Nigel

Sorry I did not see you at Bridge day, had a lot of fun, made three jumps and loved every scary second of it, I was even filmed on the T.V. show P.M. Magazine, It was great.

I welcome your magazine as a good source of information as I am very wet behind the ears on BASE jumping. I would like to find out more on how to pack for on-heading openings, an article on this may do a lot of us with BASE tendencies some good.

Happy Holidays

Arturo Rodriguez
Columbia, SC
USA

Dear Arturo, Good idea, the only problem is that it would be difficult to explain a packing method on paper. The most common approach is to experiment on regular aircraft jumps (slider up) and perfect your own technique. A packing Video is under preparation which should answer some of your questions. The video will show packing by our two British packing methods, the "refined Trash pack" and a nose up version. Both methods are free packed and well proven and consistent for on-heading openings, both static line and free fall. It is good to bear in mind that a stable body position plays an important role in on-heading openings, Nigel.

EL CAPITAN

Dear Nigel,

How are you, You may not remember me but we met at New River last year and I look forward to seeing you, Martin, Alan and the rest of the Oxford Dangerous Sporters. Although I have made only one BASE jump since New River, (El Cap 3-13-85) I'm afraid I'm hooked on this madness. I've read my first issue of "JUMP" till it is about to fall apart and I'm eagerly waiting my next. So please let me

know how things are going on it as soon as possible. As for the jump off El Cap, myself and two friends made the jump with no problems with the help of a climbing buddy of one of our group. We're now planning a 1500' antenna tower next in the near future. Here are some photo's of the El Cap jump which you are welcome to print if you wish. I'll see you at Bridge Day,

Happy landings, John Hoover, Ok. USA.

Dear John, Thanks for your letter, its good to hear from you. This issue of JUMP has appeared later than I had planned, but I think you will agree it was worth wait with the variety of stories and articles that have been sent in. I gather from Conrad that the DSC will also be back at NRGB this year with more bungee's and other surprises. Good luck with your future jumps and see you in October, Nigel.

Dear Nigel,

Congratulations for taking up the task of publishing "JUMP". As Carl Boenish said it is a new sport.

Friendly,
TV 73
France

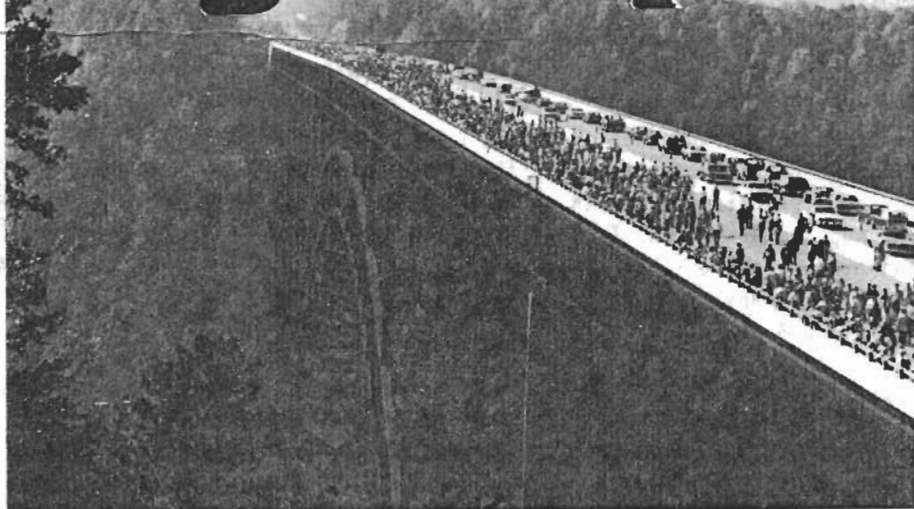
TV STUNT

Dear Nigel

The Dangerous Sports Club was hired by Central TV to perform on their childrens show, "The Saturday Starship". They provided a hotel, women, food a licence to drink the bar dry, and a 65 meter crane; infact all the essential facilities. So, after a hard night making use of the facilities, we staggered out to the central Birmingham car park where the crane was parked. The theme was Father Christmas getting into training for Christmas Eve, so we all wore Santa suits. First Tim did an elephant jump similar to mine at Bridge day: then Dave was catapulted upwards from the

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE

Bridge Day



Robin Heid and Brad Smith take a break from jump mastering



"THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED JUMPERS WAS IDEAL AND HELPED MAKE BRIDGE DAY '84 A RESOUNDING SUCCESS."
JEAN BOENISH, ORGANISER.



"Lets handle ourselves like we didn't at El Capitan..." Brad Smith



B FOR BUILDING

BASE '6

Bridge day was Saturday and only two days away. I looked at a map and from Los Angeles I quickly deduced driving would be at least, a pain. People Express was the obvious solution and with a girl friend in New York I decided Manhattan would be excellent mental therapy for the Crocker Bank in L.A.

I was well received and to my ecstatic delight she suggested the time be best spent admiring the view from the World Trade Centre. The Tower could be seen from all over the city but when we arrived I was further excited by the numerous landing sights seemingly reserved by architects and town planners.

All corners but those facing the neighbouring tower seemed jumpable. My only reservation was the North and Southeast corners of Towers one and two, respectively, suggested a shorter delay to ensure a good set up for not so immediate landing areas.

The buildings have 110 floors and the 107th of Tower Two or Observation Deck is accessible from 9.30 AM to 9.30 PM to anyone with \$2.95 and offers excellent views to unfortunately only the Southwest and Southeast corners. After leisurely admiring the abundance of height at both these sights, I hurriedly made my way Northeast to be struck with megagallons of adrenalin.

Conspicuously suspended from the roof was an unbelievable mile stone. A sign pointed toward an upward escalator and exclaimed "Outside platform". It was at this point while traveling toward the 110th floor and roof I realised the potential, and my image of California's Crocker Bank to be my first and needed building (ASE) was fading rapidly.

Arriving on the roof, Marie, who was having second thoughts about our now four day old relationship, and after several attempts to point out landmarks around the city, sat quietly while I cased the place. Basically it goes like this: The tourist area is a walk way bordering the sides of the building eighteen feet away. It is raised ten feet from the roof and is secured on both sides by an easily climbable fence four and a half foot fence. In the centre of the roof is a heavily tinted telephone box affair permanently occupied by the police. A security guard paces the walkway periodically but remains on the roof at all times. Midway between the walk way and the launch points is an eleven foot fence topped with four strands of barbed wire pointing 45 degrees in both directions. The wire facing the tourist is heavily electrified, the other is not. All this is uncommon to most BASE jumpers, but here of all places is an unbelievable hole in security.

The west side of the electric fence has a gate for a window cleaning device to track in and out and is fifteen feet wide. The break in the fence is twelve feet wide to allow an overlap. However it had been closed to the full extent leaving a gap, nicely supported by operating controls which suffice perfectly for steps. Later I was to learn that Van Refuse (U.S.A.) used the same route in 1980. I had seen enough and left.

The following day I arrived in West Virginia. The bridge was excellent, set in rich autumn colours over 800 feet and packed with jumpers and tourists. I made five jumps, bought a 52 inch pilot chute and compiled several helpful hints. The significant point I noted was the event

provided many people with the opportunity to make their first jump legally and with experience everywhere to assist. (Congrats to the organisers.)

Eager to test a nose down packing method I had been shown the night before in the holiday Inn corridor, I stopped at two drop zones, which were both unjumpable while returning to New York. I knew the Trade Centre was a slide up jump but El Capitan ten days earlier, (my first BASE jump followed by an antenna and bridge jump, were all slider undives, and had resulted in facing the wrong way on opening. I didn't reckon the towers were a good test sight and decided on a modified factory pack, slider down.

I arrived at the Big Apple for lunch on Monday, hung up my no river drenched gear in the sun to dry and set off into town to check Tower One and confirm escape routes.

The following day, Tuesday, I packed ready for a night jump from the southwest corner of Tower Two. The landing area had more undershoot, overshoot options than of a first jump student at Dillingham in Hawaii.

My gear, slung over my shoulder in a para type canvas bag, I paid me \$2.95 and went directly to the roof. Immediately after leaving the up escalator I stood next to the security guard who was telling a tourist about people who call jumping from a building a hobby and the usual death wish comment followed. He was suspicious but finished his shift to be replaced by a woman who was soon being chatted up by a respectively back middle aged gent at the entrance of the up escalator. It was perfect especially as the traffic on the roof was light.

I threw my gear down to the roof on the opposite side of the down escalator and followed out of view from the guard the police and other tourists. Underneath the walkway at that point and hidden from all unrestricted areas, I geared up taking plenty of time. I made and scaled the fence unnoticed and casually folded my hand held pilot chute before making tracts to the launch point. Here I met the policeman. We were separated by the electric fence so his only threat was communication downstairs. He was trembling and with intense sincerity was begging me not to jump and babbling about the winds. I wanted to tell him I was in the wind business and felt I owed him an explanation but now speed was essential for any remaining hope of escape.

I leapt off the awesome construction into those lovely couple of seconds of nothing, counted to four, hesitated and reluctantly dumped. As I predicted I opened 20 degrees to the left, sat for a few seconds on deep brakes admiring the two Christmas trees and turned towards west street into five knots of wind, passed between another two buildings before doing a casual stand up next to a cab. In spite of my offers to pay the bewildered occupants fares if they took me to where they were going, which was followed by healthy tips to the driver and finally bribes to all off them, they declined. I got into the cab anyway but the police cut us off.

Anyone interested in the sight should think a lot about concealing gear, especially over the next few months. Centre management has put the pressure on and even the ticketing personnel have been well briefed. The idea of hiding in an accessible place till closure could at least be entertained, although one's first destination should be the police station with a trivial query. Two televisions are on full display. On the left is the inside of Tower

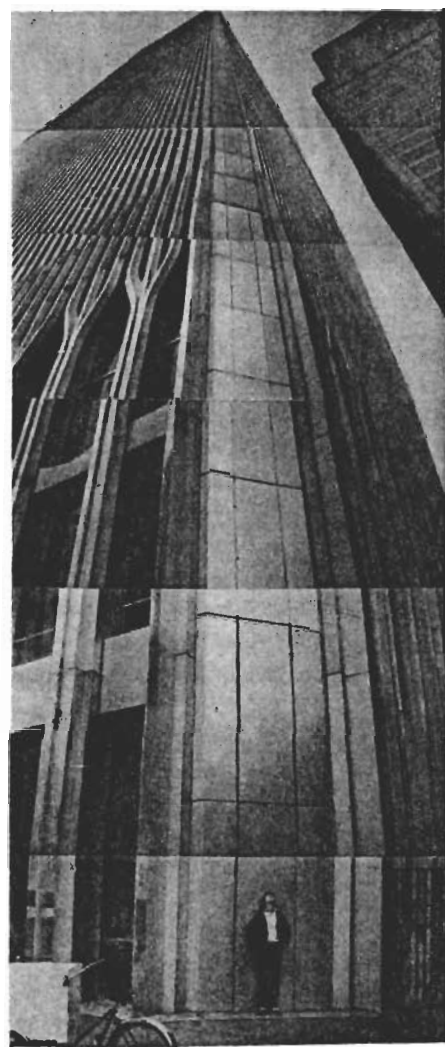
Two's 110th floor door and the right screen displays the same place in Tower one. The other idea worth consideration is a water escape which is quite feasible even with a six second delay. More over though, New York is riddled with choice buildings and if your after a famous one the Empire state is only \$2.75.

to foreigners though, be warned, the jails and cops here are all they are cracked up to be.

Finally I would like to congratulate those of you who encouragingly provide helpful suggestions and advice to us beginners, but most off all those people who promote jumping off things as having fun.

Keith G8

"I'd like to apologize for any inconvenience that I may have caused the authorities. I made every precaution for safety for both myself and anybody else."



Tower tourist's unhappy landing



THE TRADE CENTER—Fetris had to climb two fences, one of them electrified, before making his leap.

110-STOREY PARA PLUNGE ENDS IN ARREST

NEW YORK, Wednesday A DARE-DEVIL tourist parachuted off the top of one of the world's tallest buildings in front of amazed onlookers.

Australian Nicholas Fetris, 22, climber two left, fences, one of them electrified, and jumped off the 110-storey No. 2 tower at the World Trade Center.

He landed safely after his 1250ft. drop.

But as he tried to get away in a cab police arrested him.

Fetris was charged with criminal trespass, reckless endangerment and resisting arrest.

A spokesman at the Center in Lower Manhattan said: "The many tourists he had a backpack on when he went out on the observation deck."

The outdoor deck is surrounded by a 10-foot fence.

Patrol

The area is patrolled by a police officer, but Fetris waited until he was out of sight to climb over the fence and run across the roof to the edge of the building, which has a 10-foot electrified fence.

"We don't know how he was able to get over that fence," said the spokesman. "It's enough to give you a good shock."

Fetris claimed he was an "accomplished parachutist."

● The world's tallest tower is the 1028ft Metra Centre in Toronto.



DOWN TO EARTH: Nicholas Fetris is taken only Marshall a police station

BLANDS of WEMBLEY LINEN SALE STARTS

THURSDAY 18TH OCTOBER

Wincey Blanks, large selection of perfects and seconds. Quilt coverlets from £7.99. Continental Quilts £10.50.

BRIDGE DAY

Evaluation of statistics

by Jean Boenish

October marked the fifth annual celebration of the 876-foot-high New River Gorge Bridge in Fayette County, West Virginia, and, true to form, BASE jumping was again part of the festivities. 248 jumpers from five different countries registered for just one day of bridge jumping and made a total of 563 jumps, including the first tandem BASE jumper ever.

The beautiful weather and peak autumn foliage helped draw about 100,000 visitors who spent a great deal of their time in neck-craning positions watching the jumpers.

This year, two tuxedo-clad English bungee jumpers also added a new festival attraction jumping, tuxedo clad, attached to the bridge by long elastic cables that bounce to a hanging standstill and then get winched up with the jumper on the end. The crowd was especially impressed by their formal suits.

Good organization combined with pleasantly cooperative and attentive jumpers combined to make this the most successful and safest bridge jumping day yet. 55 percent of the jumpers registered the day before and took advantage of informal seminars conducted by experienced BASE jumpers.

Subsequently, approximately 80-90% of the jumpers used recommended equipment and technique, with a few exceptions:

- 42% used large pilotchutes (at least 40 inches),
- 67% had long bridals (at least 8 feet), and 70% wore floatation gear.
- Even though they were discouraged, about one third of the jumpers still used S.O.S. releases or thread through leg straps.

ONE EVERY 38 SECONDS

For six hours the jumpers exited the bridge railings at a rate of one every 38 seconds. In an even split, two-thirds of the jumpers limited themselves to one or two jumps for the day. The remaining third split evenly between making three or more, with one jumper making 6 and another managing 8. Registrants did not jump.

The quality of the jumps was generally consistent and good. Though 57 percent of the jumpers had never before made a BASE jump, of all 563 jumps half were flawless. This year, there was an excellent boat rescue service standing by in the river below, and the low water level had exposed a fine sandy landing area about 12 meters in diameter. However, a significant number of jumpers had difficulty with accuracy and landed on the rocky shore or in shallow water. Of 33 deep-water landings, 3 were intentional, 6 required rescue boat assistance and three needed help from shore.

The only major injury was a broken foot incurred from a misjudged landing approach by a jumper using an unfamiliar canopy.

A few jumpers carried teddy bears or other stuffed companions tucked under their harnesses. But notwithstanding such security measures, there were still some notable problems. Of the 563 jumps,

- 13 percent had 180 degree openings,
- 6 percent had line twists and 8 percent exhibited bad body position or instability.



Brad Smith demonstrates the finer points of a BASE pack job, first timers certainly paid attention

- 28 percent had off-heading openings that were not as severe.

Besides a handful of extra short or long delays, broken steering lines, torn cells and rogue jumpers, there was:

- One bridal wrapped around an arm in free fall,
- A minor free fall collision during a 2-way at the very end of the day,
- Two reserve activations.

One of the reserves was fired accidentally, did not completely open, and the jumper landed under the main. The other reserve was released by a jumper who thought he was experiencing a hesitation with his standard size pilot chute and bridal that was released on exit; the main opened, then the reserve, so the jumper did a canopy transfer and landed in the trees under his reserve.

The BASE jumper's nemesis is carelessness, and problems often develop from lack of familiarity with gear or less-than-optimum gear combinations.

The number of registered jumpers was ideal, and helped to make Bridge Day '84 a resounding success. Oodles of safe jumps were made, and while this year's organisational efforts were all volunteer, jumper donations offset most of the major costs, proving that the event can be self supporting.

Jumpers and spectators alike enjoyed this year's festivities, and BASE jumping took another leap towards becoming a regularly accepted sport. The bungee jumpers, who were the novelty this year, even made BASE jumps towards the end of the day; as newspaper reported,

"... after several hours of hurling themselves off the bridge the two strapped on parachutes, over their tuxedos and jumped off like conventional people do."

EL CAPITAN

A report by J.D. Walker
On August 6th, five jumpers left from El Capitan in a night dive. We join the story with the jumpers sitting at the cairn, recovering from their 14 1/2 mile walk which they made in just four hours. They arrived at sunset still with plenty of light to see the landing area's.

"After it got dark the temperature began to drop and we donned sweaters and jumpsuits to fight off the slight breeze that dropped the temperature even more. As we sat on the top we swapped tall tales and made little adjustments to fight off the willies we all had. Here I was on top of El Cap, every jumpers' dream, wondering, what am I doing here?

9 o'clock arrived and our radio contact did not call. After about fifteen minutes, I called down, fearful that Robin (Clem's girl friend and our ground-crew) had been picked up or harassed into telling the rangers what was going to happen, or any other number of paranoia's. I could not distinguish the landing area and I really started to worry if everything would be okay or not. I then stated that I wasn't sure about jumping till morning, and Jon agreed. So we had a quick conference and decided what to do. Clem was a veteran of previous night El Cap jumps, and decided that he was st qualified for what needed to be done. He donned his gear, got a pin check, and after a "see you guys", made a beautiful exit. We waited for what seemed like an eternity before, way off in the night we heard that "WHOOOOSH-CRACK" that meant he had thing we anxiously awaited a call up on the radio.

About 11:00 PM, Clem came up on the talk box with a soothing comment, "No wind, no dogs, no problem with vision". Now it was my turn. Although there were three others with me I

felt totally alone, and although I had 40 BASE jumps, I was very scared. I told these other guys that and found I wasn't alone, after all. Finally, I counted down from five and exited. I was not wearing any head gear and now I knew why: the wind, the cliff face, the climbers lights on from Clem whizzing by. This 12 second free fall, tracking like mad, was what I was here for; indeed what I live for...

I tossed my pilot chute as El Cap towers whizzed by. My 228 Comet opened perfectly and I turned parallel to the wall to see this marvel of granite. Clem had alerted the climbers, now I saw them flick their lights on and off while they banged metal objects and screamed out to us. It was an incredible sight that I'll never forget. I arrived over the meadow with altitude to spare, circled lazily as I tried to spot Clem and Robin below. Clem read my mind as he flicked the directional flashlight and they were right in front of me. I flared a hair high but still had a good landing. Quickly, I removed my gear and stuffed it into my jumpsuit. There was no sign of anyone but us in the area.

Now a few moments after I landed we heard the unmistakable sound of another canopy open. It was not until after Steve Wood landed that Paul jumped, but right after Paul opened we also heard Jon's canopy crack into life. The time from Clem's exit and Jon's opening was a good fifteen minutes, which was far to long. I was guilty of this time spread as were Steve, and then Paul. This was a contributing factor to our later problems.

We had been down a good fifteen minutes and were just finally wrapping up as searchlights popped up and started to fan all over the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

ONE JUMPERS VIEW

By Ken Szorosy

like most others I first heard of this annual event through skydivers at my local d.z. in Lakewood NJ. After just a few short conversations with people who had viewed the 1983 video of the bridge jumping, I felt the urge starting to take hold of me.

Much to my interest and learning, Skydiving printed two articles back to back concerning the schedule and many facts proved to be invaluable for those like me who couldn't get there a few days earlier for the informal seminars.

After having read these articles over and over, I felt comfortable to make this jump with my Strong Combination Tandem with ripchord and free packed Para-Commander. I had attached a nine foot bridle to the pilot chute, which I planned to hold in my left hand while leaving my right to its usual chore of pulling the ripchord.

Friday, the twelfth of October finds me taking the family car to work while my wife and sons pack the truck for the trip. Then at One o'clock I set off with my sixteen year old son Ken jr. and two non-jumping friends Karl and Ed, on the eleven hour drive to W. Virginia.

Upon arrival at the bridge we were struck with the irresistible urge to stop halfway across the bridge and take our first look into the gorge, only to find the bridge engulfed in darkness and the gorge blanketed with fog. Only tomorrows sun will bring to life the picture I hold in my mind, but for now its on to Fayetteville for fuel and directions to the nearest tavern. Upon awakening, in the scenic overlook parking area we go in search of a hot breakfast which would have to serve as the day's main staple. With that consumed,

we secure parking for the truck at one of the camp grounds. Now on foot and laden with my gear, I cross the highway into the overlook area where our organisers are busily signing in new potential BASE jumpers. Its here Im assigned number 205 for the day.

Still seeking my first look into the gorge, I hit the highway and make the trek to the approximate centre of the bridge. Resisting the gnawing ache in me to stop along the way and steal a glimpse, I force myself on to the centre. Now I look down for the first time. The picture comes to my mind in an instant. It's a carbon copy, with its large boulders stretching some four hundred feet up river to the rocky shoreline and a sand bar at the farthest end. Instinctively, I plan my canopy ride, carefully scrutinising the alternate landing sites I may be forced to use.

As I refocus my attention to the activities on the bridge, I find that the organisers have roped off an area which will serve as our exit point. Inside this area, I see an organiser sitting at a small table with a ledger in front of her, a set of steps used to

help the jumpers mount the bridge railing for exit, and a I.V. crew making final adjustments to their equipment in preparation to capture some of the sights and sounds of this event. Quickly now I pull on my floatation vest and slip into my harness. There's time for one last picture, then ... HERE WE GO

My senses are awakened now and seem to be at their peak, for I plan to make as accurate a mental record of this jump as I possibly can. My first BASE jump Being somewhere around fifth or sixth things moved fast. One jumpmaster checked my gear, giving me the go-ahead nod with another asking my number to record into the ledger. The TV crew seeks my permission to ask one question. I say "Yes", only to miss the question as I climb the steps. Stopping, I ask "Pardon?" the interviewer asks, "What are you thinking?" I answer "Getting down"

I mount the rail. With my head and shoulders held high and eyes glued to the horizon, I launch my body into the gorge.... Immediately, my first sensation is recorded. Its a familiar one. Once again that ache in my body has been satisfied, the



"Once again that ache in my body has been satisfied..... by becoming detached from all objects and experiencing FREE FALL."

satisfaction obtained by only becoming detached from all fixed objects and experiencing FREEFALL.

One second out I release my pilot chute and sense that a good exit finds me stable preparing to execute my look, reach and pull. As I pull my ripchord, I become aware of the acceleration that I'm now experiencing. THANKS GRAVITY.

Upon receiving opening shock, or something similar, I look up to see my para-commander in full blossom and right on heading. Immediately I skirt the shoreline and only realise success when I pass the last big boulder with enough altitude to initiate the ly turn of this canopy ride and land amidst the many rocks on the shore.

As I hit, I pitch forward onto my knees. The next moment finds me soaking my left ankle in the new river. I'm lucky; it's just a slight sprain. As I sit here listening to jumpers under canopy whooping it up and landing up river on the sand bar, I take notice of the unseasonable warmth of the water. Sitting here and scanning the landing area, I notice a very small bus. Knowing seats to be at a premium, I gather up myself up and occupy the first e. With the bus now filled, our driver starts the slow winding ride up out of the gorge. On our ride up, each jumper took his turn relating his individual thoughts of this amazing jump. As each account was given, it seemed to magnify the adrenalin high we all shared through our newest adventure. An adventure which makes us fledglings in the organisation of BASE.

As we arrive at the top, I notice the crowd of onlookers has grown, with their numbers expected to peak at seventy thousand. It'll be a great day for people who love large crowds. Final count was one hundred thousand spectators, and at times the bridge felt like it:



3 way wedge organised by Scotty Carbone. With Scotty are, left wing, Tony Martin, Scotty at the point with Peter Dougherty taking the right. As I repacked, with the help of my friends, they relate their feelings to me; they tell me that they find the view from the bridge somewhat scary... This is due to the impossibility of accurately calculating the jumpers proximity to the ground, as seen from the bridge rail. All that attributing to the way the spectators were glued to the rail of the bridge for hours on end.

Once repacked, I think over the variables of my next jump. My plan is to tape my ankle and wait for a favourable breeze, which coupled with all the altitude I can get, may net me the sand bar. If no wind arises, I'll inflate my vest and land in the river, depriving the rocky shoreline of another statistic. For now I decide to sit on the concrete highway divider behind the exit area to observe jumpers and spectators alike.

As I sit here, I'm hit with the thought that I just rode to altitude in a Bus. Knowing that've just opened the "book" on BASE I settle back with my one jump and tell myself "welcome to BASE"

For today there will be no propwash, no climbing out on the strut, wing or fuselage. The

jumpers, who stand in line to exit, resemble jumprun. I note that this is too much for some to bear. One fidgety jumper nearing the exit point turns abruptly and heads off the bridge, as though he remembered that he had left his water kettle boiling away on his camp stove. Just like any other jump run that doesn't look right, you tell the pilot to take it round again.

After sitting here for two hours, there is no doubt in my mind. These spectators come here to see these jumpers hurl themselves into the gorge. It doesn't take long to see what is making the crowd alive with excitement. Usually they sit on the ground and strain to see us at altitude, here they're at altitude with us. The only way they could get closer would be to the action would be to jump

A resident of Fayetteville explains how, prior to '77 it took half an hour to cross the gorge and today it takes one minute on their bridge, the worlds longest steel steel arch type span. I ask her who made the first recorded jump from the bridge? To the best of her knowledge, a doctor and his dog, they ... Er...he left a goodbye note in his car on the bridge.

Glancing at my watch, I see its already 3:20pm. Knowing that I've been ignoring the breeze thats been nibbling at back of my neck for long enough, I start to chute up. As I pull on my floatation vest I see two jumpers at the exit point, as one steps over the rope, the other heads off the bridge. (Telling the pilot to take it around)

Rather than explaining the variables concerning this jump, I ask the Jumpmaster to radio down to the rescue team that I'll be landing in the river. As there were no other jumpers ready to jump the jumpmaster gives the okay, then takes it a step further. He orders the rescue boat to start its engine and move out into the river. Taking a moment to stand on the rail and look down, I get a rush knowing that in a second gravity will be my throttle. So, with head and shoulders held high and eyes fixed on the horizon, I launch myself into the gorge. "YES" This time simultaneously throwing the pilotchute out to the left and pulling my ripchord. As I open under a good canopy right on heading, I feel it lurch forward as it is gathered in and pushed along by the afternoon breeze. In clearing my mind of all going on around me, I turn all my attention to carefully monitoring my angle of approach, soon to take my decision. Halfway point and my

decision is made, without so much as a one degree turn in either direction, I slam down on the soft sand of the sand bar. As I stand I hear the cheers of my fellow jumpers, acknowledging my good fortune. Realising that momentarily I'm on center stage, I feel uncomfortable. I shake of the awkward feeling and the hard landing by my slowly gathering up my canopy. While I do this a puzzled rescuer in his canoe, cruises up to the sand bar with a confused expression on his face. Avoiding a lengthy explanation I tell him its a long story and ask him to convey my thanks on to his fellow rescuers. His silent answer comes by way of a smile as he turns his boat out into the rivers current, to retake his position among the rivers eddies.

Now, beaming with accomplishment that I'll savour for quite a while, I make my way to the road find a ride up to the now, empty bridge, and find my friends, fired up with excitement over my recent success. The next morning, over breakfast I have another surprise. While reading the Beckley Sunday newspaper, the Herald, I'm elated to find a colour photograph of my Para-commander on the front page. Thats one for the scrap book. We start the long drive for home, then as we reach the bridge, we're struck with that same irresistible urge to stop and look into the

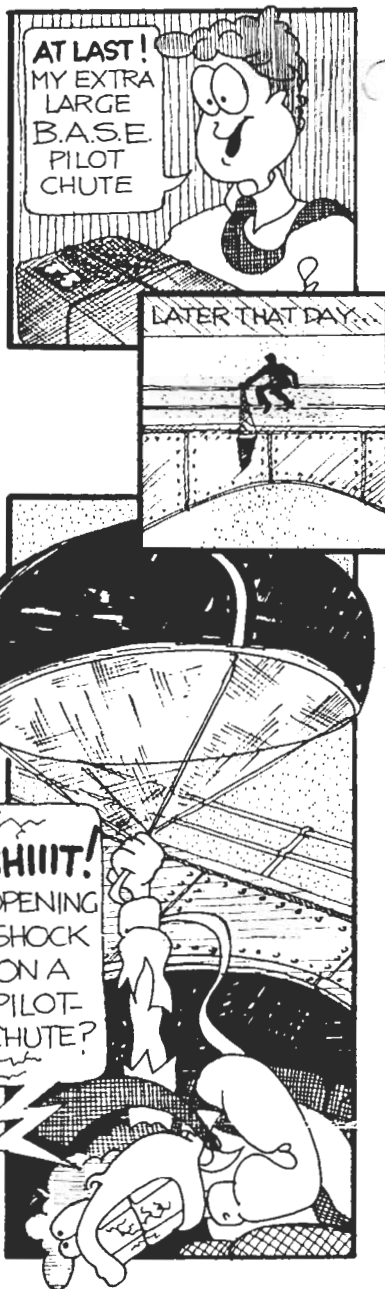
gorge. However, as I look into the gorge I no longer see the gorge as it appeared yesterday. In its place I see what I now term to be "The east coast's center piece to BASE jumping"

Blue Skies in '85

Ken Szorosy NRGB 309

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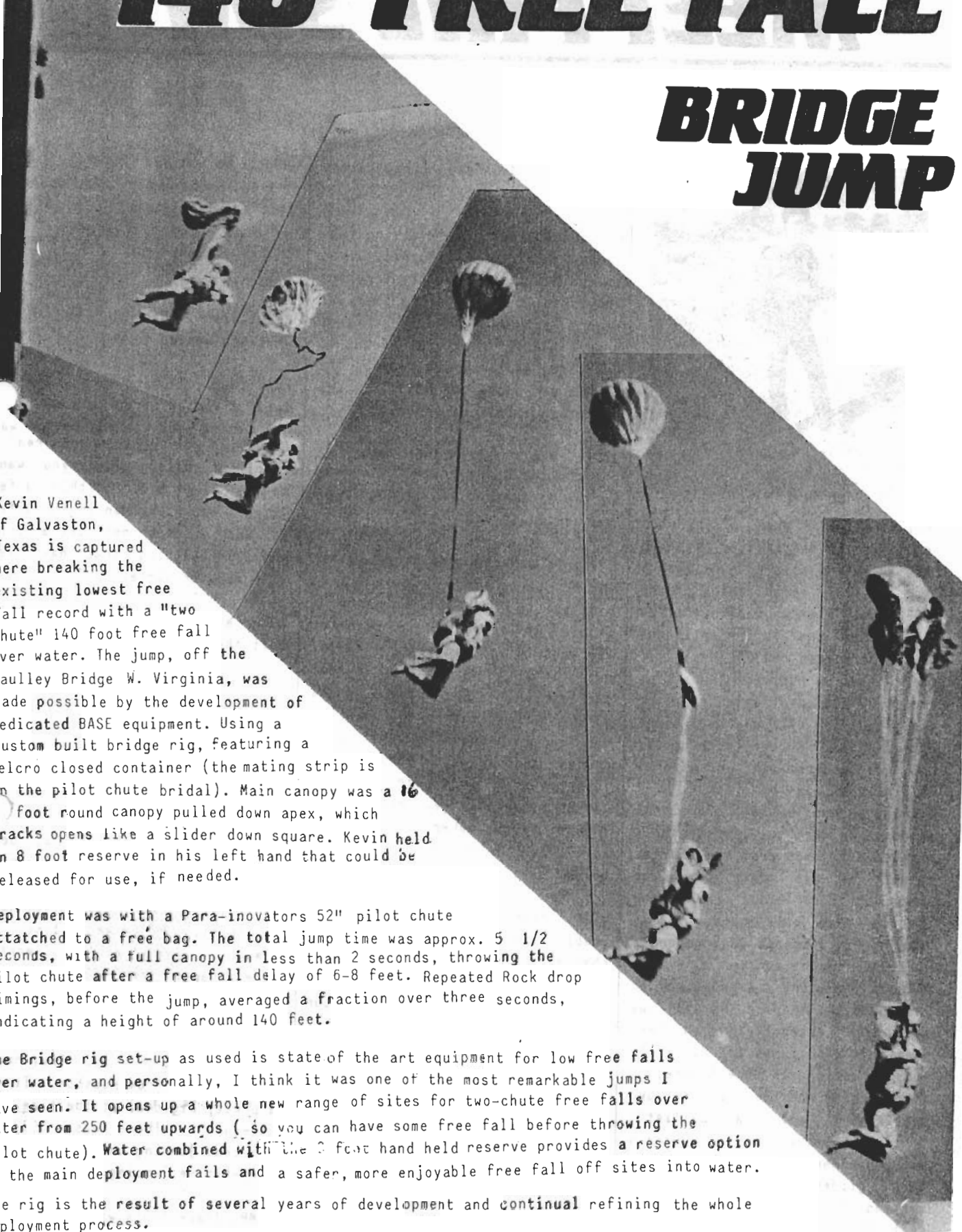
EL CAPITAN Cont

meadow. Clem gave me his gear, except a day pack he had and he and Robin headed out of the meadow towards the rangers. Steve took a course roughly southwest towards the edge of the woods. Both Jon and myself headed south to the Merced river where we entered the waist high water and began moving down stream. We had gone about 150 feet when I stepped into a hole that brought the water to my face, it was quite unnerving. I

was still carrying two sets of gear and I almost let the stuff go down the river as I struggled to keep my head up. I followed Jon's voice and soon stepped onto higher ground and soon we had crossed the river where we met up with Paul. Thanks to Clem and Robin confronting the rangers and their dogs we all escaped the meadow. Jon Bowlin, Paul Thomson (of California), Steve Wood (New Zealand) and myself made it across the road up into the talus and trees of the other side of the valley, as Dave was searched (he only had a back pack

140' FREE FALL

BRIDGE JUMP



Kevin Venell of Galveston, Texas is captured here breaking the existing lowest free fall record with a "two chute" 140 foot free fall over water. The jump, off the Gaulley Bridge W. Virginia, was made possible by the development of dedicated BASE equipment. Using a custom built bridge rig, featuring a velcro closed container (the mating strip is on the pilot chute bridal). Main canopy was a 16 foot round canopy pulled down apex, which tracks opens like a slider down square. Kevin held an 8 foot reserve in his left hand that could be released for use, if needed.

Deployment was with a Para-inovators 52" pilot chute attached to a free bag. The total jump time was approx. 5 1/2 seconds, with a full canopy in less than 2 seconds, throwing the pilot chute after a free fall delay of 6-8 feet. Repeated Rock drop timings, before the jump, averaged a fraction over three seconds, indicating a height of around 140 feet.

The Bridge rig set-up as used is state of the art equipment for low free falls over water, and personally, I think it was one of the most remarkable jumps I have seen. It opens up a whole new range of sites for two-chute free falls over water from 250 feet upwards (so you can have some free fall before throwing the pilot chute). Water combined with the 8 foot hand held reserve provides a reserve option if the main deployment fails and a safer, more enjoyable free fall off sites into water. The rig is the result of several years of development and continual refining the whole deployment process.

MEET PHIL SMITH

part one



Phil "Smitty" Smith of Houston Texas has the distinction of being BASE 1. Having played an active part in the establishing of the BASE club. Phil has made over 124 BASE jumps and is presently the most experienced BASE jumper in the world. He has made jumps from around 30 different objects having qualified for BASE over six times (hexa-BASE). Former truck driver and now student and occasional BASE stunt man he formed "SKY STUNTS" to handle his professional engagements. He has successfully carried out jumps from the rooftop catwalk in two major US Dome stadiums for Thrill shows and opening Base ball games, Cliff jumping in Utah and most recently as a BASE camera man on a B.B.C. natural history expedition to Venezuela, S. America. As well as featuring extensively on Carl Boenish's BASE Tapes 1 + 2. Phil, ever thinking to the future, is also working on the testing and development of a ballistic tertiary reserve for BASE jumpers with Jim Handbury, the pioneer of hang glider tertiary reserve systems in the 70's. So let us meet Phil Smith. Interview by Nigel Slee. © JUMP 1985

JUMP: When did you first start jumping?

PHIL: Well, actual skydiving was January 1970 in California. I was in the Marine core at the time and they had a club on the base. We didn't actually make our first jump there, we went down to Lakeside, south of San Diego. The DZ was set among the hills, it was quite beautiful out there.

JUMP: What attracted you to parachuting, was it part of being in the Marines or was it something you wanted to do?

PHIL: It was not something I had wanted to do since I was a little kid, but it had been with me for a couple of years. I had seen the Ripchord TV series years earlier but that wasn't my real inspiration. Several months earlier I had talked to a guy who had gone through a first jump course and made a parachute jump, just the idea intrigued me. It was such a challenge. Before that I had never taken on anything really dangerous or bold...or...er.. Manly?

PHIL: Yeah Manly... I got the inspiration to do it then, a challenge I had to take on.

JUMP: What did you think of your first parachute jump?

PHIL: My jump didn't go just like all the rest (of the course). I had a broken steering line and hadn't been told what to do, I ended up making a down wind landing, crash and burn. I picked myself up and was ready to go again.

JUMP: So things have'nt really changed that much then over the last fourteen years?

PHIL: (Laughs) No

JUMP: Was it a moment of realisation that you had found what you wanted to do?

PHIL: Well, I wasn't sure then, I knew I wanted to do some more. I had such a good instructor, he was the kind of person who really inspired people and made you want to be like him. Within a few jumps I was hooked on it for life, it was a career not just a hobby and its something that has been with me ever since.

JUMP: What did you do when you left the Marines?

PHIL: Well, I stayed out in California for a few months. I had moved to Elsinore to be close to the DZ and I had a job there.

JUMP: When was that?

PHIL: That was in '72 I had been jumping at Elsinore while I was in the Marine core. I put out students, packed rigs, that sort of thing. Kept me close to jumping. Those couple of months were a happy time for me. I knew I couldn't do that for ever, I wanted to do other things so I went back to Texas where I'd gone to school and grew up. They had a DZ 200 miles from Houston. It was a pretty big deal at the time. " Lakeoh ". There was a DC3, ten man team jumping and I got into competitive jumping.

JUMP: There '70's was a period of great changes for skydiving, new

idea's, gear. Did you manage to except the new things as they came along?

PHIL: Yeah, In fact when a lot of the new things came out I would be right there with them and be ahead of some other people. "Piggy-back" rigs were one thing, I jumped right on those. In the Texas area it was kind of a gradual thing. There was a couple of us who had piggy-backs and the rest stuck with conventional gear. Gradually they saw the light, they saw how much faster you could go, how much you could do. Then came the piglets (light weight round canopys for RW jumpers), small piggy-back gear. That helped competitive RW a lot.

JUMP: So for a while you were into competitive skydiving.

PHIL: Yeah, I was. I found competition jumping another challenge. It was a way to get quality skydiving, jumping with the same bunch of people all the time. It some ways it was cliquish but you were assured of quality skydives 'cos people would get consistent when they jumped together. You would push your parameters... limits.

JUMP: How about square canopies. When was that '75/'76?

PHIL: Yeah, I was a little behind the times on that. Our team had a good deal on piglets and we stuck with them for a while (laughs) We were about a year behind, I got a "Flyer" (small 5 cell) and stuck with that for three years after Flyers were obsolete. I made 500 jumps on it, including 30 of my BASE jumps. I made some hard landings.

JUMP: So when did you first here of people jumping off things?

PHIL: Ofcourse I'd heard of Owen Quins jump (WTC1 1975) and heard of Don Boyles jump (see October 34 JUMP,) in 1970 from the Royal Colorado Gorge Bridge and I think

I heard of the Space needle jumps in Seattle. Don Boyles jump was just totally out of the question for me at the time. I thought that was just the craziest thing in the world. The idea of jumping so low (1050 feet) with a parachute such as that (28'10") knowing how long they take to open was way ahead of me.

The first time I ever thought of doing anything like that was after I heard of the first jumps of El Capitan in late 1978. People who had been to California had heard rumours and seen the films. A 3,000 foot cliff, WOW 3,000 feet, I thought, "Well hell, thats just like jumping out of an airplane, I could do that. That'd even be safe. Before long the film circulated round and I got to see it. I had to do that. You know even though it was maybe a little more dangerous than an airplane jump, it was so beautiful The idea of being right next to a big rock there and flying by it. Seeing the film of a guy going off with a rear facing camera and his jump suit was just motionless, just flat as it could be (unlike an airplane jump where it would be rippling around). Then it started ts he gained more speed, started slowly rippling and going more and more and then he opened. Well that turned me on to it. It was just a matter of time. I almost went out before it was authorised to do it.



Then an opportunity with the authorised jumps in 1980. When I heard I applied for permits and I was so sure I would like it I applied for permits for two separate days. One, a day break and another so if I liked it I could make two jumps there. I went out there and called by the Park Rangers office and there was a little note from Carl Boenish on the common problems that people were having and what to do to avoid them and how to do it safely. I read it, memorised it and went up and did it.

I met some other people there and we spent the night up there. The next morning we were going to jump and I met a guy I'd known years before, Jake Lombard, he had jumped it quite a few times. He helped me alot with my confidence. I was standing on the edge baulking and I said. " Whaaaaaoh, God I'm scared" and he said. " Go ahead man, you can skydive" With that I just ran off. Had a beautiful jump The second I hit the air I was at home again. To quote Jim Brookhauser " I was in my element". WOW it was like I'd made my first jump again. I knew that was it, I had to do that. At the time I didn't think of anything else, buildings or bridges, it was just that cliff.

JUMP: So it was the overall feeling?

PHIL: Yeah, the mental and physical feelings, the feeling of standing there on a rock and stepping off into space. The instant falling feeling and then the acceleration and then the wind picking up and blowing in your ears, blasting your face. The actual horizontal movement on El Cap' where you see your self tracking across the ground.

JUMP: So you had a days break and went back up?

PHIL: Oh yeah, just right back up. I knew what to expect that time, so I got more out of the second

MEET PHIL SMITH

jump 'cos I could take in more. I didn't have as much fear in me although I have always been scared of all jumps.

JUMP: When did you meet up with Carl Boenish as you and Phil Mayfield feature on his BASE tape 1.

PHIL: I went home and a week later I was talking to Phil Mayfield and he had heard they were closing down the sanctioned jumps at El Cap'. It was only open for one more week and he had just lined up two slots on the last load. He was offering me one, I jumped on it. That load was with Carl Boenish and Dave Blattell, it was Dave's load. We jumped on that even though it was another trip out to California. It was our last opportunity to jump there and to meet Carl and be in his films. I was going to have to wear a film camera as part of the deal and maybe do some kind of tricky stunt.

JUMP: This was to become the Granite circus sequence on BASE tape 1?

PHIL: Yeah, As it turned out what we did was the pogo stick, stilts, hand walking and skateboard.

JUMP: How did you feel about doing something like that?

PHIL: Im not very acrobatic so I knew I couldn't walk on my hands or didn't think I could pogo stick, but I'd walked on stilts quite a bit as a kid. Carl made me a nice big pair of stilts about 4 feet high. On level ground I was fine and thought, "I can handle this" Well the morning we got up there to jump (Phil laughs) I look at the exit point and its quite steep, probably a 30 degree slope. I thought, "Well

what have I got my self into here..." I thought the worst that could happen is I could fall down. If I fall before the exit point I wont go over the edge. On the other hand if I happened to fall right on the edge and go over, maybe with a broken leg... I had some help getting up, once I got up on them all the cameras were rolling so I couldn't stop. I just started walking that way and the momentum carried me like a 3 or 4 step thing and I stumbled off the edge. (All the stunt props were tied to rope so they didn't fall from the cliff). Once I was in the air I was stable.

Once that happened I had my contact with Carl and I already had some new things in mind. A friend in Texas had found a TV Antenna 1100 feet high. We had actually climbed it and thought about jumping it. Now I actually had enough experience to know what to do on a BASE jump. How to exit and be stable from zero airspeed. I approached Carl and asked if he would be interested in coming out and filming it, even have us wearing camera helmets. Carl hadn't done anything like that yet either. He had done a lot of El Cap' filming, filmed at the Royal Gorge Bridge, he had no tower stuff.

JUMP: When did the Royal Gorge jumps fit in?

PHIL: Actually I think the R.G.B. jumps were done before the sanctioned El Cap jumps. Anyway, Carl jumped at the opportunity, it would be great footage to have and he was always looking for new things to put in his movies. So a month later it was all set up, he and Jean came out from California and went out and looked at the tower, came back to my house and got our crew. The next morning we went out there, 'jumpers were Phil Mayfield (BASE 2), Phil Chaplin and myself. Jean climbed up with us to film while Bobby Hilder carried luggage and film equipment. The winds were blowing

strong and maybe 10 degrees off the wire. They weren't ideal at all, but we did a few drops and decided to go ahead and do it, it was good enough.

JUMP: Had you packed slider down?

PHIL: Oh well thats an interesting point, what was my first experience with a slider down. Carl brought up the point the night before about taking your slider off or leaving it down all the way for a faster opening. He also suggested instead of going off with pilot-chute in stowed in pouch, we have them in our hands. That was also a new idea to us. So what we do is take our pilot chute out and the bridle and hold it to full extension, where I have enough slack so you wouldn't pull your pin (when in full exit arch position) and yet not so much slack that it's going to wrap around your leg, and just fly like that... We had only planned 3 to 4 second delays and we didn't want the extra burden of having to reach in and grab a pilot chute and pull it out; possibly going on your back by doing that. That turned out to be a scarier jump than El Cap, I knew El Cap was 2,200 sheer and you had time for a cut-a-way reserve ride. This thing was marginal, but I got up there on the edge and er... (laughs) ... er once they start the count down and the camera were rolling, it would be (laughs again) to 'unmanly' to turn back so I had to go ahead and do it.

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I had a really nice exit, real stable, 'turned out I got some really nice shots with the rear facing camera. There was a broken steering line on opening and my canopy just surged off to the right... right towards the guy wire, you see on the film I do a riser turn and pull out of it. It looks as if the wire was just a few feet away, though I don't know as its hard say from looking at the film. From then on it was...God, it was cloud nine, flew down, crashed hard on the ground, it didn't matter (chuckles) you know I could be a hero. I had film and everything. I was as happy as I could be. The other jumps were successful too.

JUMP: What had you planned before hand for emergency procedure for a jump from 1100 feet?

PHIL: I really didn't have it all sorted out then what I would have done. It was a while later before we really talked about those sort of things. I imagine if I had had a canopy malfunction right way on opening I would have chopped it and gone for the reserve. It's probably best to dump into it and hope for the best at those heights

Carl and Jean flew back to California and it wasn't long before he had the film back and sent me over a video of the film. The very next week I had been talking to Robin Heid about the Royal Gorge Bridge. I had heard about their jump and God, I wanted to do that too. That looked like a piece of cake, a wide open bridge 1050 feet high. So Mayfield and I went up there met with Robin who had already told a few others and we had a group of seven.

JUMP: So this is the picture in Skies Call of you all on the back of the truck.

PHIL: Yeah, going off the top of Jim Tylers truck. That was the first time I'd met him, Robin Heid also, though I'd spoken on the phone to him a couple of times. Mayfield and I had a great time there, we had smooth successful jumps, just one each. We had a few troubles while we were there, Mayfield jumped first then me, the next guys were getting ready to go and the uniformed bridge personnel came out and tried to stop them. "Hey you, Stop, you got to get off this bridge." So they said O.K. got up on the truck and off

they went... He didn't interfere any more. Hank Ascutto was one of the guys going off and he had some kinda problem with his canopy, landed backing up into one of the walls of the gorge, tumbled a few feet and got back up ending up with a broken ankle. It looked like he never had control of the canopy after opening. It was a canopy he had never jumped before. I think thats a cardinal mistake there, test jumping a canopy at a BASE site

Jim Tyler did a 200 foot static line there. Im not sure whether the slider was up or down, a 200 foot static line, thats 4 seconds of free fall before the static line even engages... We had to get Hank out, that was our big key. We had to get a rescue as he landed on the wrong side of the river. The river is pretty rapid there. The rescue people came down there and got a basket across a raging river. It was pretty fascinating to me.

At that point we had jumped a cliff, an Antenna and done a bridge, we didn't really have a notion of BASE yet, but I had been looking at a building in Houston...

TO BE CONTINUED

EL CAPITAN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

and camera) and was questioned at length before they let him go. His actions ensured no one got caught with gear. Meanwhile, Jon went further up the Talus, Steve went west as Paul and I decided to depart the area. After stashing our gear, Paul and I started walking down the loop road. We had only gone 100 yards before two cars pulled us over. We then received the first degree as they told us all sorts of garbage, such as they had found our gear and the others were in custody. They then told us the others had "confessed" and told them our names. This was funny as we could see the area where our stash was,

and nobody was anywhere near it... Also I knew Jon was right above us in the forest, not in jail as they told us.

After several attempts at questioning us, they separated Paul and I. At this time, the officers told Paul that they were generally for cliff jumpers and if he would co operate, he would receive a \$100.00 fine and get out of jail right that next morning. Well Paul felt this wasn't so bad and admitted his jump, but did not give any of the other names. When he did this, he was IMMEDIATELY forced to kneel and was cuffed and quite physically thrown into a car and hauled off to jail.

After this I knew what the score was, for sure. I then refused to

answer any more questions put to me. I was then taken to jail and questioned at length and I soon discovered many of his seemingly harmless questions were trap questions, so I refused to talk to this guy, to. Finally at 2.30am I was released, soaked to the chest, only to be warned that I would be arrested for vagrancy if caught sleeping in a non designated sleeping area.

Again I was able to make it to John, who had no idea about the others fate. We were then followed every place we went. Soon Jon and I were hauled in for "investigative detainment". Jon now knew Paul was in jail and I

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

Cont.

had not implicated anybody during my previous visit. They then told Jon, after they couldn't get to him, that I was in jail and he might as well leave. We finally got back together and met up with Dave and Robin, who had also seen Steve that morning. Now we all knew what the spookies were up to. Jon and I decided to hitch up to retrieve his vehicle. Before we got to far, again we were picked up - only to find they had picked up our gear, and identified it by calling the riggers on the reserve repack cards. We were each grilled again, threatened by all sorts of garbage and still we refused to give in. They now gave us citations but we were not arrested - they couldn't prove we actually jumped unless we confessed, which we didn't.

We all refused to have the magistrate, Donald Pitts, ex-paratrooper co-incidentally, hear our case and technically the case is no longer in his power and must be heard by a federal judge. This single fact is very important - we wanted to be tried by a judge who was not "bad attituded" towards jumpers as Pitts certainly was. (He is the judge who was doling out the 6 months probations and confiscating gear for a year, which we now now is above his rightful penalty provisions as a sentencing official).

In any case the Federal government must file new charges against us in a federal district court, within 90 days. The federal prosecutors knew we intended to challenge the definition of the aerial delivery law, as this section of the federal code dealt with delivery from aircraft by parachute. We were fairly sure (my attorney was positive) that the application of the rule was wrong and the federal prosecutor knew it would never hold up in district court. He allowed the 90 days to expire (only to drag the

matter out and make it as miserable as possible). In this light, the district judge allowed motions to be heard for dismissal of all charges, and orders for return of property. All motions were unopposed by the federal prosecutors and the motions were granted. We had won.

FULFILLED AMBITION

At last, for myself anyway, that particular leap was the culmination of four years of letter writing, phone calls and all the rejections I had received from the Park Service, despite all the concessions I had offered to make the jump there. I had said I was going to do it to and finally Carl Boenish told me in June 1984, to just do it if I really felt it was my right to, and everything else would take care of itself. Sure as anything, he hit the nail on the head. His words and all our little talks on this subject kept going over and over in my mind. How right he had truly been

J.D. Walker

If you want to know more about the Yosemite Cliff Jumpers Assoc. you can contact J.D.Walker at 507 W.El Prado Rd, Chandler, AZ 85224, USA

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Incidents

PILOTCHUTE IN TOW

An experienced BASE jumper broke both legs while making a night jump from a building in Texas. The exit point was around 750 feet high. The jumper experienced a pilot chute hesitation which resulted in the jumper deploying a conventional back mounted reserve. On deploying the reserve the pilot chute cleared, resulting in both canopies going up together with the reserve wrapping round the main. The jumper landed under a spinning malfunction breaking his legs. An interview with the jumper has been printed as we both felt it ~~would~~ benefit other jumpers to read of his experience and hopefully learn from it and prevent a similar incident.

He explains how and why he thinks it happened and how it could possibly been prevented, plus a few other enlightening views on making safer BASE jumps. There have now been several field reports of either pilot chute hesitations or entanglements. It has been suggested that jumpers take care to fold large pilot chutes in a manner that will reduce the risk of it entangling itself after it is thrown. Though in this instance this was not ~~four~~ to be the problem.

Phil Smiths article "leaping buildings in a single bound" in BASE No.6 provides an invaluable source of information for any one interested in this area. (back copies may be available from JSBA.) Jean Boenish's BASEics manual is another invaluable reference source on all aspects of BASE jumping and is available through USBA.

RH: Three of us had jumped it successfully two nights before. The exit point was off a crane boom that stood 50 feet higher, and out from the face of the 55 storey building. the landing area being a park in front. We were

taking 3 second delays with 40 inch vanned pilotchutes. I went off and did a "3", threw the pilotchute. It went out fine to the right. I stayed flat and stable and continued my count and when I hit "6 1/2" I was "1 1/2" seconds off the side walk and in free fall still accelerating. I went in for a left hand pull on the reserve ripchord. When I dipped the left hand shoulder I'm sure it broke the burble. Both pilot chutes went up almost simultaneously, the reserve spinning round the main as it was going up.

I was around the 18th floor with 2 1/2 end cells open on the left side. A hard right spin and getting slightly closer to the building. All I did was try to jerk the reserve lines back off the main to get as much of the main open as I could. At the very last second when I knew I was going to hit, let go of everything and got into a hard plf position, feet and knees together and did a right plf (RH laughs). Thank God for the spin which kept me from getting back and hip injuries.

JUMP: How do you think the malfunction could have been avoided?

RH: Three things:

1. Instead of being flat and stable as I was try to maintain a head high attitude.
2. Use the best pilot chute available, like the 52 inch type, with correct bridal length.
3. Use a tertiary reserve system.

The only difference to my usual body position was that I was more flat and stable. I'm usually real head high, even more so than is good for camera work. I decided to got out flat and stable and watch the fountain in the park below me. So I was developing a bigger

burble than usual at 3 seconds.

JUMP: So you think head high reduces body burble?

RH: I think head high body position will really help reduce the burble. The best way is to watch the pilot chute when you throw it and you will stay head high. I think it really helps but that night I didn't.

JUMP: So, by experience, your convinced about the advantage of a tertiary reserve for jumps at these heights?

RH: Yes, from 900 feet down your at a limbo altitude where you shouldn't be firing a reserve into your pilotchute or a malfunction. If you have a tertiary available for jumps from these heights I certainly suggest using it.

If I'd had a tertiary that night I'm pretty sure I could have got it out in time and would have been walking around, a lot better, right now. (11 months later).

JUMP: Could a tight container been part of the problem?

RH: No it was very loose, an old one pin wonderhog with a flat bridal with a curved pin. The rig was rigger checked afterwards and the pin was primed before I jumped.

JUMP: Was it a malfunctioning pilot chute? bridals, especially cord ones, have been known to tie up a pilot chute making it stream.

RH: No I believe it just burbled, it was a dark night and the other jumpers watching from the exit point couldn't see the pilotchute. If the pilotchute was hooked on anything (horse shoe) after three seconds I would have felt the drag. At six seconds I was in full free fall and still accelerating. Its a real sinking feeling. The whole thing happens faster than you can imagine.

Incidents Cont.

Throw at '3' and you have no right to expect a main before '5' and then there you are 1 1/2 seconds later and your at your Minimum Reserve Altitude (MRA).

JUMP: How do you determine your Minimum reserve altitude?

RH: What ever object your jumping you figure 1 1/2 / 2 seconds, what ever your comfortable with, back from the ground up at thats the last bottom line. Unless your getting line stretch on your main thats when you should be getting your reserve out. At 6 1/2 seconds, when 8 is impact, its not the time to start making decisions. You get every thing out you can and I did!

BUT AT THAT TIME I REALLY WISH I HAD HAD A TERTIARY

BOOK REVIEW

BASEics by BASE 3

Available from the United States BASE Association. 12619 South Manor Drive, Hawthorne, CA 90250 USA

Price \$3 + \$1 overseas.

BASEics is a guide written for the skydiver interested in BASE jumping. As author Jean Boenish explains in her preface, "It is not meant to be the final word in BASE, rather, as a whole, it is intended to share general preparatory knowledge of BASE requirements and expectations. Jumpers seriously pursuing BASE activities will supplement this knowledge with research and discussion with other BASE jumpers, along with updating the information. Conscientious and responsible preparation allows more opportunity for enjoyment of the experience". As such it is invaluable reading

for the new comer to BASE jumping. Up to the release of this guide the would-be BASE jumper has had no easily available source of reliable information. Jean, with her considerable experience and involvement in BASE, has produced a well researched guide, the result of several years preparation. Earlier drafts were sent out to active BASE jumpers to study and provide their own feed back and to cater for any changes before the guide was released in October 84. The last paragraph in the guide sums up the experience of the jump and her view of what its all about.

"Each BASE object presents its jumper with a unique view which imparts an intimate and poignant experience of that object. From exit through the first second of

free fall, the jumper takes in the surroundings of the object. Then, towards the second second of fall, gravity pulls the jumper from a read high position into a prone position. There, in the silence of a new time frame, the jumper watches as the object begins to pass beneath his feet. Quickly the object up speed, and the jumper is thrown back to the immediate sense of time of a standard skydive. The object rushes by, the jumper moves off, and the intimacy of the jump fades away. Where ever the canopy opens, the process stops and the jumper is pulled back to normality. The size of the object is put back into perspective, the jumper descends back down to the ground. But the experience will always exist for the jumper to recall, relive and learn from".

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ground, as if on an ejector seat. Then it was my turn. With the help of a colleague, I had tested the rig with weights beforehand using a 52" pilot chute, so I was confident as we were hauled up 200 feet to the top. From there we could see that Birmingham really does have more canals than Venice. We waited for the floor managers signal (live TV show) and then, when my helper primed the pin, I exited, throwing out the pilot chute in the same action. A sort of hop 'n' pop (or lurk 'n' jerk, or jump'n' dump, or whatever you call it). The car park came up, the crane rushed by and I heard the music again, you know what its like. After a brief 5 second canopy ride, I landed nicely, and had to restrain myself the Ya-hoo when a cameraman rushed up to me: I adjusted my beard and gave a "Ho Ho Ho". Another job well done. More exposure for BASE jumping, and back to the facilities. Thanks again for the pilot chute, and see you soon.

Blue Skies,

Conrad Freeman
Dangerous Sports Club

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