Random â€œAviationâ€• (Skydiving) History

Description

H/T: Military.Com News

Project Excelsior. 102,800 feet. Basically freefalling from space. You have a pressure suit on. You ride up in an open gondola. You begin the experiment with only 6 parachute jumps in your logbook. You have been raised to believe no one wants to get out of a â€œperfectly good airplane.â€• â€œPassing a batonâ€• between two freefallers is still a skill to master in the sport (stability required). Olav Zipser and company havenâ€™t been born yet, let alone developing head down freeflying. Whoâ€™d want to jump a â€œsquareâ€• parachute? Space: Back then it really was a final frontier. One the way â€œback,â€• you lose your glove and your hand begins to 1) freeze and 2) swell from the pressure differential.

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Col Kittinger still holds the record for altitude for a freefall set Aug 16th, 1960.

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Take a few moments to read about Col Joseph Kittinger. Not only did he do this project, he also was involved in testing observations of space from balloons, flew 483 combat missions in Vietnam in A-26s Invaders and F-4 Phantoms, was shot down over North Vietnam and spent 11 months as a POW. Quite a ride, Iâ€™d say. Oh, and I guess he still ribs Chuck Yeager about beating him to being the first man to go supersonicâ€¦.

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