Not Very High, Now Get Thee to a USPA Member Drop Zone!

Description



Note the BIG grins. Photo: Wyat Drewes

Over the last few months, my sitemeter has shown a number of searches for words to the effect of â€œwhat are the odds of dying while skydiving?â€•My blog ends up in the top ten responses on the search engine of choice. Writing this post will help elevate it, too, but thatâ€™s not my point. So, earnest searchers who might arrive at this post, here are a few thoughts from one who has made it though 28 years and 15+ hours of being propelled by gravity towards the â€œBlue Planetâ€• many more times than once:

The odds? Not much at all. Way better than driving your car. There are many other ways to actually die faster, that you will be involved in daily and not give it a second thought.

Afraid of heights? I have known many a skydiver that wold feel unsafe on their two story house roof, clearing out gutters (way dangerous!), yet be there in freefall beginning at 13,000 feet with the biggest grin on their face youâ€™d ever witness on a human beingâ€¦quite honestly, from 20 ft, thereâ€™s no time for your canopy to deploy, therefore, itâ€™s really scary!

The world looks flat (for the most part), from such heights, even in the low thousands for static line jumps, and the visual cues that make you queasy at 20 feet donâ€™t have the same effect. Besides, a good jumpmaster is making you run through the â€œdive flow,â€• to enable the best conditions in your head to achieve success, once the plane is no longer cuccooning you (not even so) safely (but you think itâ€™s a â€œperfectly good airplaneâ€• and thatâ€™s good enough for you at this point).

Consider this: The parachuting community, led by the United States Parachute Association (USPA) , begun about 40 years ago at the Parachute Club of America (PCA), has been, with the exception of the

â€œBasic Safety Regulations (BSRs)â€• self regulating. The BSRs carry the weight of FAA regs, and are nothing to mess with, but is a fairly short, yet well determined list of the very basic safety do and donâ€™ts. Scan them yourself in the Skydiverâ€™s Information Manual (SIM) in Section 2.

Now, enough! Find the closest USPA Group Member drop zone (that means they play by the USPA rulesâ€¦the ones that make the sport safe and funâ€¦by checking here in the USPA Drop Zone Directory.

Go and make your smiling muscles do what they have never done before. I take no responsibility for the sore face muscles as a result, but I bet you wonâ€™t really care.

As a matter of my advice for the type jump to begin with, you ask? Do an Accelerated Freefall (AFF) course. If you can avoid the Tandem jump (which depends on the DZ), Iâ€™d just head straight to â€œdoing it!â€• Being a not current now, but for many years Instructor and Jumpmaster, the fess the JMs and Is get paid are highly appreciated, but the far greater benefit is you will actually have skydived.

Telling your buds you â€œwent skydivingâ€• and did the Tandem â€œpony rideâ€• thing is like pretending you flew the jet from LA to New York, when you actually sat in the back, eating peanuts and trusting the pilot. Do it for real and see what you have missed.

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Oh, and the entire time in freefall is spent having fun, not staring at an altimeter, waiting for pull timeâ€¦



I have this guyâ€™s signature in my logbook! Lew Sanborn, USPA D-1 (expert license)

Met him in CA jumping in 1996. A legend in the sport. And I have met many, many interesting people from all over the world, including Charlie Caseâ€¦and heâ€™s a legend of old timey jump days, too.Thereâ€¦that should put me higher on the search engines and still get useful info to the inquisitive among us.
Tracked back @: SteelJaw Scribe

Category

1. Public Service
2. Skydiving

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