

PERRIS PERFORMANCE PLUS (P3)
BIG WAY CAMP

1-4 May 2008

Large formation success is achieved with a carefully constructed plan.

In order for success, this plan needs to be followed TO THE LETTER by every participant. It is not simply a matter of collecting a group of highly skilled skydivers. Large formations require heightened discipline and expanded awareness to a degree much greater than any other type of skydiving.

This camp is designed to give all the participants the opportunity to understand and build the skills necessary to be a part of 100+ way formations. This is accomplished in a controlled environment with smaller groups.

Too often we can allow a camp like this to make us over anxious and worried about performance. We become overly concerned and fear making mistakes in front of our friends and peers. Our focus at this camp is on learning in a “no fault” atmosphere and having a great skydiving experience together. Go into every jump with a calm, relaxed mind, aiming to perform at your very best. On the best skydives, things can go wrong. Keep a calm mind, and we can think through the problem, handle it easily and have a successful jump. These skydives are designed so that each individual can work on specific goals, regardless of the outcome of the jump. Focus on individual goals for this event, not completions or points, and you will see your skills improve jump to jump.

So take a deep breath, relax, stay calm, maintain your sense of humor, laugh, and prepare to have a GREAT time.

Welcome to our world!

Dan Brodsky-Chenfeld
Kate Cooper-Jensen
Tony Domenico
Doug Forth
Larry Henderson
Tom Jenkins

7:30 am.....**Waiver and Check-In** (*see Jen McGowan outside of the “Square1.com” team room*)

8:00 am.....**Meet** in the creeping area outside of manifest;
Break into groups and dirt dive

9:00 am.....**Take off** for first loads.

Plan to debrief in the rooms allocated 20 minutes after landing. Packers are available and recommended. Drink water after each skydive.

BIG WAY TRAINING CAMP

Welcome to the Perris Performance Plus (P3) Big Way Camp! In the next four days we hope to help you increase your knowledge and skills in building and flying large formations.

Mission Statement: To develop the skills required to do large formations safely and consistently.

DIRT DIVES: What do expect and plan for in Dirt Dives

How to judge fall rate from the Dirt Dive and select the best combination of jumpsuit and/or weights:

When you walk out to a dirt dive, take a look at the participants of the skydive. Start with the base (center) of the formation. Look at the physical size and jumpsuit size of the base. Ask yourself the following questions;

Do you know the base? Are they able to set a consistently fast fall rate? Are they experienced? What is the size and shape of the center of the formation?

Facts:

Larger people tend to fall faster.

Large people in small jumpsuits tend to fall faster.

Large people in large jumpsuits may or may not fall fast.

More experienced people tend to maintain a more consistent and faster fall rate.

The shape of the base will tell you a lot about the fall rate. A star, or round formation, will fall fastest. The larger the star, the faster the fall rate will be. If you see one of the following formations in the center, expect and prepare for a slower fall rate:

- Donut. 4 and 6 way donuts tend to fall slower and can turn easily.
- Compressed accordion. This is a very slow falling formation.
- Two way: a two way is the slowest formation!

Any formation that is compact and does not have a large hole in the center will tend to fall slower. Formations such as round stars with an opening in the middle will fall faster. Six to eight way bases are common for large formations.

Things to key on, or the memory game:

Make mental notes of key things to look at to insure that you will be in the right quadrant, and eventually in the right slot. Look for bright jumpsuits, rigs and helmet. Make sure you key on things both in the base and outside of the base. Memorize at least 3, and optimally 6 things to remember on the skydive. Identify the people docking both in front, and also on the side and even behind you, so if you see them in freefall, you know who they are and where they are going.

During your final dirt dive with gear, take a moment to identify your key references again, making sure that they haven't changed jumpsuits or rigs.

While you are dirt diving decide where your eye contact should be during the skydive, and before, during and after each point if doing sequential. Practice this. Normally eye contact should be directly across the formation through the center. If you have a mirror image person, or clone, then identify him or her. Place most of your attention on the base, keeping aware of the clone.

You should always be level with the center unless you are requested to be otherwise. The best way to maintain levels is to keep eye contact with the base.

Do not look away from the center of the formation. If you can see backpacks, you are a little too high, and if you see bellies, then you are probably a bit too low. In the proper position, your views might be quite limited. Keep working to maintain eye contact and fall rate with the formation.

Judging Fall Rate once in freefall

There are a lot of tricks to judge fall rate before you get to the formation and commit yourself. Watch the people closer to the base than you. What is their body position? Are they docking easily and quickly? Are they arching or de-arching before docking. Is anyone low? Take the information you see and adjust your approach as needed. If the formation is falling slowly and there are people low as you approach, be very cautious.

When a formation is building, it often falls quickly at first, and then can slow down as many people dock, often simultaneously. If you are docking later, expect a slightly slower fall rate.

After the first jump, correct any problems you might have. If you are struggling to stay down, change to either a smaller suit or add weights. If you have trouble staying up, check to see if the base is going to make changes that might affect the fall rate before going to a larger suit. Avoid making changes, either minor or major, on every jump. You should be in the middle of your fall rate range, which means you should be able to adjust to minor rate changes easily by compensating with body position.

Floating, or falling slower, than the formation is one of the most common mistakes made by large formation jumpers. Some people know they are floating and like the comfort of knowing that they probably can't go low, others do not know they are in an extreme body position. Both types are easy to identify on video. Organizers look for the inability to stick legs out, and for arms that are in an extreme "W" shape, with elbows back. Just as in any kind of formation skydiving, you want an optimum body position in larger skydives, and you want to be in the MIDDLE of your fall rate range. It might take some jumps to realize just what this feels like.

Booties and Fall Rates

Booties tend to slow down your fall rate. If you are a faster faller, this might be very desirable. If you are a light person, this may mean that you have to add weights to correctly match the fall rate of the formation in order to have the ability to stick your legs out while in the formation. Be aware of how your booties are affecting your fall rate, and don't be afraid to experiment by jumping without them on static formations if you feel you are falling slower than you wish.

Boarding the Aircraft

Board the aircraft in the correct (reverse to exit) order to avoid confusion and extra movement when it comes time to line up. Wear seat belts for take off and to 1,000 feet, and either wear or secure any helmet you may be wearing.

Aircraft Line ups and Jam Ups

Try to duplicate the line up that you experienced on the ground, and while on the ground, try and identify changes that might have occurred on the last jump. Place your hands, feet and body in the same place relative to everyone else. Consistency, as in 4 or 8 way exits, is what works. The exit might not look or feel correct to you the first time, please try it—large formation exits are different in body position than competition exits. An important part of any large formation skydive is the exit and good exits start with good line ups. Take the time to correctly line up, a rushed line up may result in a poor exit and jump.

Good Exits

There are some secrets to good exits. Remember that not every exit will be perfect when you are diving out amidst other people. Do not let incidental contact on exit or even a minor collision out of the airplane affect your concentration. If you are in a position where one person is “pancaked” on the back of another on exit, the top person should put his or her hand on the yoke or backpack and gently slide the bottom person away as both are heading towards the formation.

Trail Plane Exits

Exits are timed in an attempt to show the trail planes as similar a picture on exit as possible jump after jump, but this is not always perfect. When exiting the trail plane, be prepared to see a different picture each time you exit. If you are floating, or an early diver, your picture of the base may range from on level, to above, to below. Be alert on exit and find the base.

PRESENT (to the relative wind) **IDENTIFY** (where the base is) and **INTERCEPT** (do what is needed so that you go to where the base **WILL** be, not necessarily where it is when you first see it. Remember that the base is on the slide on exit as well.

Getting to the Formation

COMMON TERMS USED

Floating. Hanging on the outside of an airplane and exiting before the base. This usually requires coming up to the base from underneath.

Dive Floating. Lining up inside the airplane as an early diver, but still exiting before the base and coming up to the formation.

Super Floating. A single floater from the lead plane who exits on either “ready” or “set”, effectively starting the exit on the trail planes, this enables the use of Dive Floaters.

Diving. Exiting after the base and diving head down to get to the formation.

- **Short Diver.** Leaving right behind the base, usually not an aggressive head down position, but can be the most aggressive slots on the skydive in terms of speed.
- **Medium Diver.** Leaving in the middle of the aircraft
- **Late Diver.** Leaving last or near last out of the aircraft. Usually requires an aggressive body position to maneuver to the formation.

Base. Being in the center of the formation. Setting and controlling the fall rate. A good base is one of the most important elements of large formation skydiving. Bases can range in size from 4 to 100 or more, depending on the overall size of the formation. To build a good base you need to build the center of the formation on heading, while establishing and maintaining a good fall rate. Everyone in the base and docking on the base needs to match the fall rate of the base and dock softly. After docking keep eye contact on the center of the base to maintain fall rate. Once you dock on the base, you have effectively **BECOME** the base, and need to keep working. The base on larger formation typically has the most experienced jumpers and should be considered a position of honor.

Red Zone Flight

The red zone is commonly known as an area 10-25 feet out from the edge all around the formation. Basically this constitutes the area that is in and directly out of video sight. When in the red zone you need to be aware of everyone around you and move cautiously to avoid collisions. When you are within 10 feet of the formation you should be on the same level as the formation. Avoid vertical docks into your slots and sideways movement in the red zone as this leads to collisions. If you bump into a person and you are on level, no damage is done, if you land on a back, or get landed on, it is not fun for either person, and it commonly results in one or both persons not recovering. As a rule of thumb, whether diving or floating, you are responsible for knowing the whereabouts of those who exit the aircraft between you and the base.

Docking on the formation

The only correct way to dock on a formation is to utilize a NO MOMENTUM dock. This means you should have the ability (and exercise it) to come to a complete stop, one to three feet from the formation, and then proceed slowly to grips. Momentum docks create waves that can travel through the formation. Take the extra second or two to make sure that you are making a true no momentum dock.

Flying the Formation

Once you have docked you need to keep eye contact with the center of the formation and match the fall rate of the base. If doing sequential, then anticipate the next point and watch carefully for the key.

Break Off

Break offs are staged to help establish separation between waves, or rows, of people leaving the formation. If you are in the second or third wave to leave, it is important that you wait until the correct altitude. If you leave early you are changing the plan. Your correct break off and minimum and maximum deployment altitudes will be assigned by the load organizer and will vary depending on the size of the formation.

When it is time to break off, turn 180 degrees from the CENTER OF THE FORMATION. This is important, since when you are in a curved loop or line, your torso may not be pointed at the direct center. Make sure you identify the correct radius for tracking. If, when you turn, you are slightly closer to a person on one side than the other, make minor adjustments so you are directly in the center. When turning, cup your body a bit so you do not sink out during the turn.

Tracking

The only acceptable track is a flat track. This means a very rigid position to maximize your horizontal separation. Relaxed tracks, like deltas, are not permitted. It is important to stay relative to your wave so visuals are maintained. If you are in the first wave to leave, track fast and far. If you are in the second or third waves, or the base, then be careful not only to maintain separation from those beside you, but to keep separation from the wave that left before you.

Pulling

As with most types of skydiving, stop your track, give a good wave off, and look up and behind you to insure separation before deploying. Many accidents can be avoided by taking the extra time to clear your back before deploying. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT. THIS WILL SAVE YOUR LIFE. Take the time to look before pulling.

Under Canopy

Keep your hands on your risers during deployment so you can make emergency maneuvers if needed. Once you have assured yourself of clean air, stow your slider and release brakes. Keep a constant look out for other canopies. Minimize turns under canopy in large formations, and stick to a landing direction or pattern if it has been assigned. Under no situation is it acceptable to perform a high performance landing while on a large formation skydive.

While on final approach, keep your eyes open and your head on a swivel to be aware of other canopies in the pattern. If you are not comfortable with landing side to side with other canopies, please take advantage of the large landing areas available in Perris outside the grass. It is better to walk a few yards than be carried a few feet.

Debrief

We will video debrief each skydive. Both good things and things that could be improved upon will be commented on. This is for the good of the group and is never intended to belittle or slight a person. If you are used as an example, take the information we are sharing and use it to improve yourself. All debriefs will be done in a positive manner. Remember that one can learn more things often from a mistake than from many good dives. One of the advantages of a camp like this is that you are allowed to make mistakes; this is the best way to learn. Learn from other peoples mistakes and accomplishments as well.

Routine Between Jumps

We will establish a routine between jumps. This way you will know where to be. We highly recommend you institute a "buddy system" so that a friend knows where you are at any given time, even if you are just going to the store or restaurant for a few minutes.

Dirt dive
Jump
Land
Pack
Debrief
Drink, eat, use facilities
Repeat!

Please do not be late to dirt dives. If you are a chronic "late person", then ask a friend to help you make the dives and debriefs on time. Tardiness is one of the worst ground offenses on large formation skydives.

At the end of the day we will have a group break down (all participants at the camp). At that time information will be given as to start times and plans for the next day. You are NOT released from the camp until this breakdown has finished. It is tempting to want to take advantage of the great bar at the dropzone every night. Please enjoy yourself responsibly. 20 jumps in four days can be exhausting to any weekend jumper, even a current one, and exhaustion coupled with dehydration can lead to poor aerial performance, injury or worse.

We encourage you to ask questions, learn and most of all, ENJOY!

Blue skies,
Your P3 Big Way Camp Organizers

BIG WAY BASICS

Base

As a base flyer you and your team need to take responsibility for the success of the entire jump. In order to do this you must:

- 1) Set a fast and consistent fall rate.
- 2) Build the base quickly and on heading.
- 3) Maintain the planned shape of your base formation
- 4) Be aware of the outside flyers
- 5) Absorb hard and/or off level docks without sacrificing the above
- 6) Key sequential as appropriate
- 7) Initiate the break off plan

Once the base flyers have built the formation their job has just begun. The ability to accomplish the tasks listed above requires serious flying and awareness. You will have to utilize all your skill as well as raw physical power to get the job done.

You need to scan the outside flyers to be aware of the moment by moment situation, but at least 50% of the time your eye contact will be directly across to your clone. You will need to communicate and work with each other to achieve these objectives.

As each outside flyer docks, they will need to accept the responsibilities of becoming part of the base.

Outside Flyers

Every well organized large formation is a carefully designed road map. Your path and traffic has been planned out and predetermined starting from the time you line up in the plane until you have docked on the formation, and even including breakoff and tracking.

It is rarely a lack of skill that causes formations from completing. More often it is a lack of understanding of the how the map works. Often problems are caused simply by a jumper not having the patience or awareness to see a plan through.

Patience is the key. Take the time necessary to see and be aware of all the details that confirm the plan for YOU.

Step by Step

1. Know the quadrant that you are in, relative to line of flight. Have references both in and outside of the base to confirm that the base has built on the planned heading.
2. After exit fly to your quadrant. If everything goes as planned you should already be there or close to it when you leave the plane.
3. Build a stair step of waves out from the base. Your position in this stair step is called "final approach position". The first wave will be approximately 10 feet out and 5 feet up. The next wave is 20 feet out and 10 feet up. This angle holds true for following waves.
4. Go to your final approach position and STOP. At this point you have a chance to evaluate the situation. Now is the time to determine and match the fall rate. Look for everyone docking in front of you and around you. As the first wave docks the next waves move up to the next stairstep, and so forth.
5. This creates a very controlled and predictable build. Though always short of perfection, this plane allows for any potential problems to be recognized by each individual and the group as a whole. The plan has room for error built into it. If we recognize the errors along the way they can be easily fixed and the formation will build safely and successfully.

Tips to Get On and STAY ON a Big Way

Also known as “how not to irritate the organizer”

By Kate Cooper

People often approach me with the same question. “I’m good, I know I’m good, but no one else knows that. How can I get on the “A” list to be invited to all the 100+ way formation events and/or World Record Events”?

The answer is “just add air”. In order for a person to be invited to these elite loads, they need to be recognized by either the organizers of the event or recommended by persons respected by the organizers of the event. The easiest way to do that is to attend as many smaller camps or boogies where these people are working so you can show your skills off in a more intimate format. Below I have listed some steps that will help make the transition easier and earn you that treasured invite to a special event.

First: Attend a big way camp or boogie event where you will have the opportunity to spend quality time with the organizer. There are a series of BIG WAY camps being organized at several larger dropzones. These events allow a person to make jumps with active organizers and show their talents in a “no fault” atmosphere. Regardless of the eventual outcome of any specific skydive, each participant can work on and show off their skills to the people who will be evaluating their performance. After the event send a brief e-mail to the organizer reminding them of who you are, asking permission for future recommendations, and thanking them for their time.

Second: Organizers tend to look for quality (not quantity) of recent skydives. A 4 or 8 way team, or aggressive tunnel training, is worth more to many organizers on a resume than hundreds of lower quality “fun jumps” made at various boogies. It’s well known that it’s easier to train a good 4 or 8 way jumper to do big ways, than the other way around. This is not because the team jumper is inherently a “better” skydiver, it’s usually simply because they are more attuned to coaching and learning. In short—they listen better.

Third: Currency. A person who has made 200+ jumps in the last 6 months will always get my attention over an equally unknown person who has 1,000 jumps in 15 years. I’ll take the current low timer over the uncurrent mid-timer in almost any case, all other experience being equal.

Fourth: Don’t give up, especially if you are a lower time skydiver or from a smaller dropzone. If you are told “no” once, find out what the organizer is looking for in terms of experience and go out and get it. When you reapply, remind them who you are and that you’ve gone out of your way to accomplish their request. They’ll be impressed.

Fifth: Create a “jumping” resume. On it include your name, e-mail, snail address and telephone numbers. For jump experience have year of first jump, total number of jumps to date, largest formation (attempted), largest formation (completed), and height and weight. Add a brief description of other factors that may weigh in the decision, such as team or tunnel or camp time. List the slot(s) that best reflect your current abilities for success: Base, early diver, early floater, long diver, long floater, or (organizers love this) ANY SLOT IS FINE. Having such a complete resume submitted by a person looking to join the ranks of large formation jumpers is always a bonus because it makes the organizers job easier. This is good thing.

Sixth: Start creating a list of known organizers who you are confident will give you a positive recommendation for the event(s) you would like to attend. Ask them permission to use their names as references. When using them, include their e-mail addresses so that the person making the reference will be able to contact the organizer easily. This list should be included on your resume, but also available separately. Knowing that known, respected organizers are willing to recommend a person goes a long way in terms of making decisions for events.

You followed the steps and you have the invite, what next? You're on the big load. Here are 12 things that will help you to stay on the load once skydiving starts.

First: Return any paperwork or deposits for the event promptly and with all information included. Don't make the organizer chase you down for payment. Once you are at the event, introduce yourself by first and last name to the organizer(s) when convenient and don't be offended when they forget your name. Remind them if they call you by another name.

Second: Assess the slot you've been assigned and decide if it's the slot that best reflects your current talents and ability. If you should be moved, let your plane captain know AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. He or she will pass that information on to the organizer as necessary.

Third: Don't be late. Ever. Not once. It really irritates organizers to try and track down people for dirtdives or debriefs. Have a "buddy system" and get in the habit of letting at least one person know where you are no matter WHERE it is or for how long. Have access to a watch for events so you can make calls.

Fourth: Bring all your suits and/or weights to an event. If you need more lead, or more suit, handle it. Don't go to the organizer and ask questions that other people on the load can answer. Be ready to loan stuff to others on the dive if need be. Wear an audible altimeter and set it to the correct altitudes for break off and deployment. If break off is keyed from the center, then trust the center. Don't pull low.

Fifth: Be invisible. Organizers aren't looking for the person with the funniest jokes in the dirt dive, or the fastest swoop to the formation. They want to see the completed formation, or successful sequential if applicable. If, during a video debrief, the organizer asks "who is this?", answer with your complete name. Hearing "that's me" is frustrating when you are dealing with multiple people. Relax, it's often not a bad thing, just the organizer wanting to familiarize him or herself with the people on the screen. If you are asked to explain a specific action, keep it simple. "I made a judgement error" goes a long way over a lengthy explanation which boils down to the same answer.

Sixth: Don't argue. This makes you visible. If you are right, and the organizer is wrong then get your facts straight and present them to your organizer or plane captain without emotion. Video and or witnesses backing up your point of view are a good thing. Mistakes happen. People wear similar suits and or rigs. Don't take responsibility for an error that isn't yours, but don't take it personally if a mistake does happen.

Seventh: Don't get lost. It's a one point (maybe 2-3 at best) skydive. Know (at a minimum) 3-5 major keys on different people in the formation. Include the base, and several waves. At least one should be opposite you in the formation so that if either you or the formation is off heading, you can recognize that easily. Know who exits the plane in front of you and who docks both in front and behind you, so if you are late (or early—they are equal offenses) you know whos way to stay out of. The ability to dirt dive the entire skydive in your head, from both your point of view and the camera point of view has, in my experience, been very helpful for visualizing where one's slot is.

Eighth: Don't come up to the organizer (or plane captain) "volunteering" information about other participants unless it is critical to the outcome of the dive or safety of the participants. Even so, do this only if you are sure that no one else on the dive knows this information. Time is precious.

Ninth: Take care of yourself. Drink water during the day, and (at least part of the time) during the night. Sleep. Eat a lot of healthy snacks rather than large meals that will slow you down. Don't make your health the organizers or plane captain's problem.

Tenth: Track like your life depends on it. It does. Clear your air, deploy your canopy. Hands on risers during deployment, keep an eye out for other traffic 100% of the time. Don't hook turn or make any radical canopy maneuvers on big ways. After landing collapse your canopy quickly and turn to face on coming traffic while picking up your canopy and moving to the side. The jump is not safely over until you are in the packing area. This isn't an article on safety, but these are the basics that should be followed on 100% of your skydives.

Eleventh: Utilize the talent on the load. The chances are that there is someone, either near you in the formation or on the airplane who knows the answers to the questions you are afraid to ask in a large group. Ask them. People LOVE being asked questions. If you are asked a question and don't know the answer find someone who does. Take advantage of the amazing amount of talent to be found on any large formation skydiving load and learn from others.

Twelve: Don't hurt Kate

Enjoy your journey exploring large formation skydiving! It's a wonderful and very social aspect of the sport. The feeling of sharing success with 100, 200, or 300 people together is quite special, and I recommend it to everyone. I look forward to sharing some air with you in the future.

Blue skies, big blots

kate

My First Big Way—as told by Big Way Camp graduate Chester...

Hi Kate

BIG WAYS ROCK!!!

Wow...

I had such a great time at the TSR. We didn't make it, I suppose you know by now. Still... this was amazing. I could not believe that the image my brain was registering was not someone else's video, but direct real time from my eyes. As far as learning goes, I learnt a lot. I learnt:

- 100+ ways are biiig, you gotta keep your eyes and awareness open every nanosecond of the skydive

- even if the guy in front of you is BJ Worth, you shouldn't trust your dive to him, you should keep your reference on the base and as many people in front of you as you can remember colors and positions

- don't follow the man in front of you too closely. he might decide to slow down suddenly and you might take him out or even collide with him hard if you're not paying enough attention (on one dive he slowed down faster than on the others and I passed right by him and had to sit there and wait for him to be in front again - my bad)

- the formation tends to slow down very noticeably as people start docking (particularly when they are not docking cleanly), so never lose your attention on levels, or you might end up level (or low) before you realize what just happened

- don't dock until the thing in front is solid. I saw people make the formation worse by doing this. Me too, on a dive I flew towards BJ, even when he was being swung with the end of the piece he was docking on. I should have waited for him to swing back to his place, then docked.

- the end of a big way is a cool, long tracking dive where you measure yourself against some of the best people out there. Humbling, yet also great for improving (my last track was noticeably better than my first).

- be prepared to land out. Ask locals about the places to land out. I would instinctively have chosen a field closer to the DZ had I not known that the bush was thick and 3ft tall. From the air it looked very OK.

- maybe a second audible would help. Then you can have a signal on your break off altitude, one when your track is halfway (or 5 secs before it's over), one when you should stop your track and open, one as a low-altitude warning. Not a big deal, but would be nice.

- people are not predictable (even if they are supposed to) under canopy. So keep your distance. And be aware of people all around you. And don't expect others to know you are there. Actually, expect them not

to know, and fly accordingly.

plus tons of other stuff that doesn't come to mind right now. I knew all this stuff in theory from the camps, but hadn't been able to see all of the "why"s first hand until now, only some of them

As far as my own performance goes: I did well, I think, but I could have done better. Had 2 exits where I got flipped (I was in the corner in the Otter), and a couple of times coming into the formation I was a bit behind Larry H, who was supposed to dock on my leg, so I had to fly past him - that tells me it took me too long to get close. My approximation was always a bit on the high side of the stadium, which I guess is good, but I could probably take my line a bit down, don't need that much height to be sure not to overshoot. I am pleased about my docking on BJ and my final few feet every time, however I did not help enough on keeping the whacker from pushing on us (BJ was anchor, then I was the first on the inner whacker line, and Larry was anchor on the outer whacker link docking on my leg) At the end of the weekend when they took some people away in front of us, Larry decided to put me as an anchor in BJ's place. I was honored and pleased by this!

Our highest jump was from 21000ft, that's really amazing to me. Loong jumps.

So, you can see Kate, I had the greatest of times. Tons of learning, met good people, had a nice plane for learning - tons of people to ask questions and learn from (4 world team '04 sector captains in it! plus a couple of other world team '04 participants).

I love this!

Blue skies,

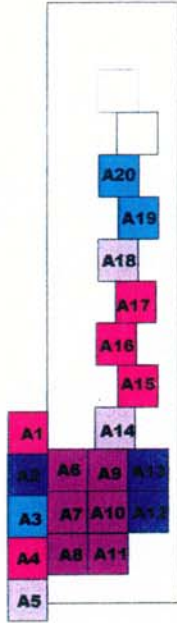
Chester

PS I was here in part thanks to what I learned in the Big Way Camp in May @ Perris, so thanks to you too!

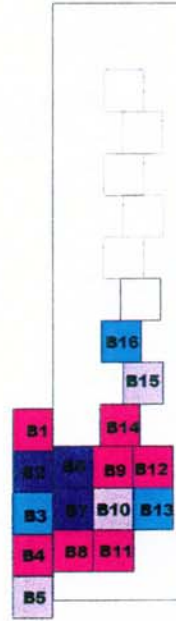
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Line of flight

A Lead Otter

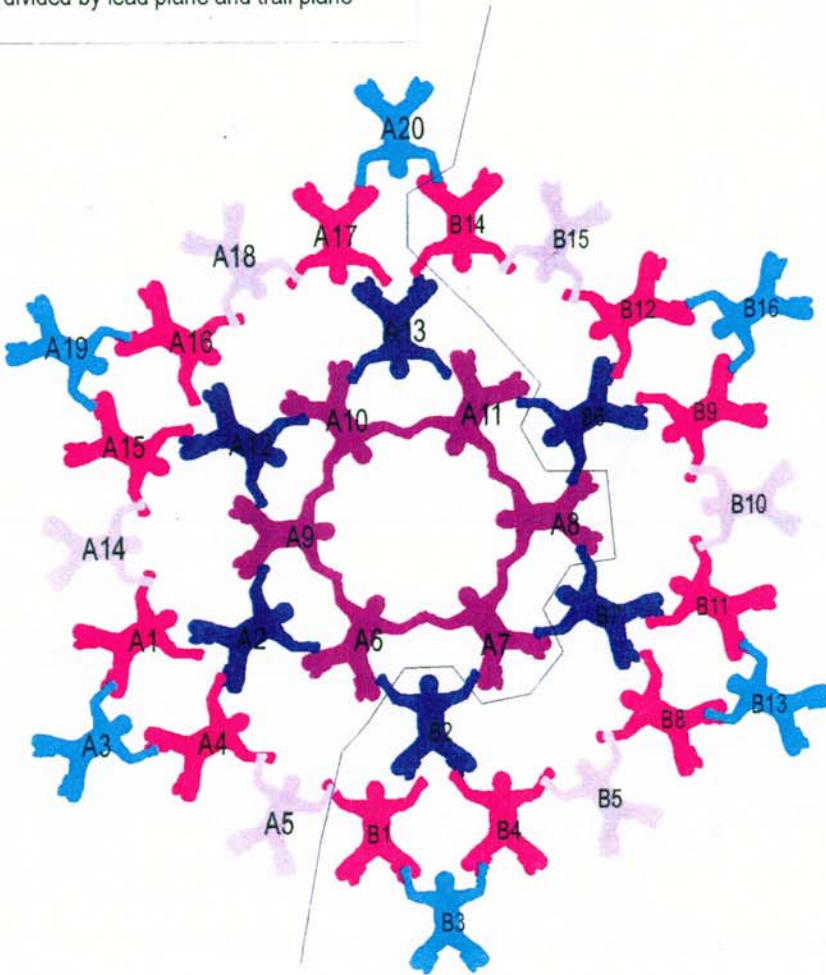
Exit line up



B Trail Otter



Formation divided by lead plane and trail plane



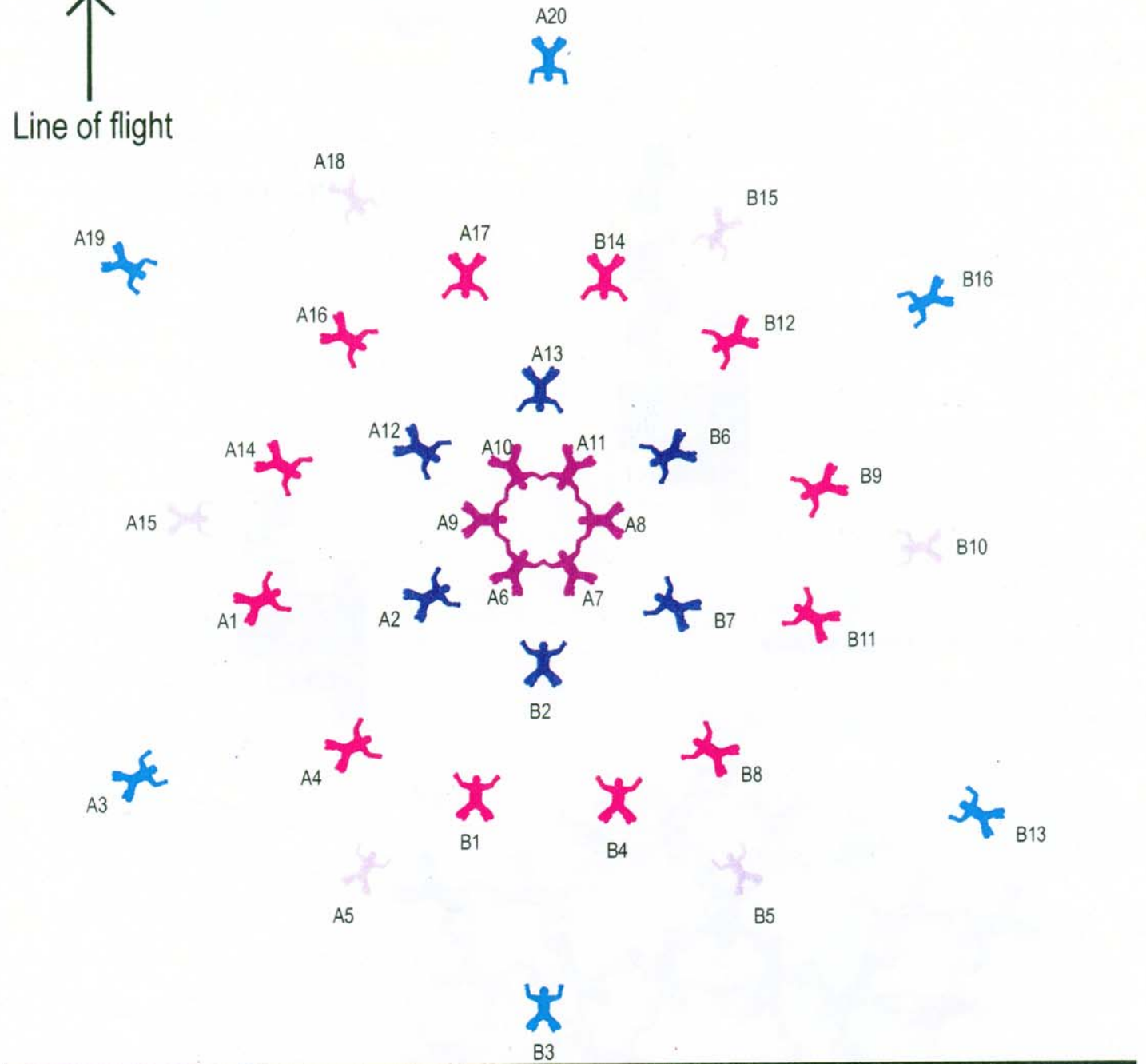
Approach to the formation

Note: everyone gets lined up on their radial from the base, before getting near the formation. Now it is a straight approach to their slot.

Top view



Line of flight



Side view

Note: everyone keeps a height advantage until their within 5 to 10 ft of the formation

Diving and Floating Techniques

Diving

AA is the perfect line to the formation. It is a direct line from exit to base. This is not achievable.

A This line is achieved when you exit with legs and arms fully extended to counter the forward throw of the aircraft. Hold this position for 4-5 seconds and slowly transition to a dive, always keeping your eye on the formation and going directly to your slot.

B This is achieved by exiting straight into a head down diving position and then going in a direct line to the base, the forward throw of the aircraft actually makes you travel FARTHER from the base.

C This is achieved by exiting straight into a head down diving position and “blind diving” without seeing the base. This is also referred to as “down and over” and is an old style way to dive. NOT ACCEPTABLE for this camp or large formations.

Method A as shown above is the fastest and safest way to your slot. While Method C feels faster, you actually travel almost twice the distance, and by taking your eyes off the formation and diving blind, you create a hazard to yourself and others.

Floating

The exit and first 2-5 seconds are the most important time for any exit, but this is exaggerated in floating. A good body position on exit is very important whether you are floating physically outside the airplane or dive floating. While dive floating, the most common mistake is to “dive out” and then turn uphill to float. The correct exit is to never let your head and shoulders get below your feet. Exit head up and pivot on the relative wind while identifying the base. While dive floating you want to use the forward throw of the aircraft to keep you close to the base on exit, exactly the opposite of diving.

Sometimes while floating you will need to leave your arms straight out to the side in an Iron Cross position for exit. This will increase your “up” factor and decrease your forward factor. Your arm placement will dictate your float angle. Your arms back will mean more forward, and your arms out will mean more up. The best line to travel is directly towards your slot, becoming level with the base outside the formation and then traveling to grips. Try to avoid coming up directly into your slot and/or going up higher than the base and then having to come back down to your slot.

Remember that whether diving or floating the FASTEST line is the STRAIGHT line from exit to your slot.

