

BLUE SKIES MAG.COM

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AND YOU MAY ASK YOURSELF: WELL... HOW DID I GET HERE?

Well holy shit. You have in your hands the first issue of *Blue Skies Magazine*. I kind of thought we were kidding when we first talked about publishing our own magazine. Turns out we weren't.

If I were you, the first things I'd want to know about this new magazine are: who are you people, why are you doing this, and what can I expect to read about? So let's begin.

We are: Lara Kjeldsen, Kolla Kolbeinsdottir and Pierre Kotze. Yes, all of our very funny last names begin with the letter 'K'. No, you can not call us KKK. We are from the USA, Iceland and South Africa; you can guess who's from where and what relevance that has on our viewpoints.

Things we like: beer, news, *Office Space*, our home countries, dogs, Jägermeister (only me really, but I love it enough for all three of us), gossip, politics, boobs (well, one of us), boys (the other two), not being told what to do and skydiving.

Things we don't like: bullshit, tables of contents (does anyone read those?), ignorance, trying to make skydiving serious, poor grammar, fake boobs (actually our opinions change daily on this subject) and being told what to do.

So there you have it—three stubborn, independent, slightly immature, broke gossip mongers who hate fakery. In short, we're skydivers. Skydivers who actually started a company and now publish a magazine. Yeah, we're just as astonished as our parents are. You can read more about us individually on our website, www.blueskiesmag.com/about, if you're at all interested.

I can't speak for the other two, but I skydive - and am putting my life into this magazine - for the freedom. Not just the freedom of flight, although I do love being surrounded by just the air and my rig, but I love the freedom of our community and our lifestyle. The freedom to live in a camper on an airport. The freedom to not care how old or young your best friends are. The freedom to be

(Continued on next page. Obviously)



Sit-fly exit over Skydive Chicago in Ottawa, IL, during their annual Summerfest boogie.
Photo by John Zagoda

NAME THIS SECTION*

BILL HEANER IS ATTEMPTING A SUPPOSED WORLD RECORD STUNT THIS SPRING. According to his website, www.billheaner.com, Bill will exit from a balloon at 7,000' with his paraglider, fly down to 5,500' and meet back up with the balloon to re-enter it in flight. Also according to Bill, "Never in the history of aviation has anyone jumped out of an aircraft and reentered the same aircraft on the same flight." We wonder if he's ever seen <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9PxJU3elcA>



BRIT CLIMBER/BASE JUMPER LEO HOULDING IS PLANNING AN INCREDIBLE SET OF BASE JUMPS THIS AUGUST. First, he will hike 30 miles into a canyon in the Baffin Mountains in Canada. Next, Leo will attempt the first free ascent of Mount Asgard; this will have taken two weeks, by his planning. After summiting, he'll BASE jump from the peak in a wingsuit and land—only to attempt it again, but in 24 hours. Best of luck, Leo.

News from our friends at World Wide Wingsuit News, news.flylikebrick.com.



AIRTEC, THE GERMAN MANUFACTURER OF THE CYPRES AAD, HAS LAUNCHED THEIR REDESIGNED WEBSITE, www.cypres.cc. Users can explore the interactive Cypres, complete with videos of the cutter in action, units being dunked in water and run over by beer trucks. Fun for the whole family—and very informative for anyone with an interest in their gear (which should be all of you!). Features are still being added, according to company spokesman Martin Thannheiser.



THE PALM BAY, FLORIDA POLICE DEPARTMENT IS USING THE DUDEK SYNTHESIS, A POLISH POWERED PARAGLIDER, in its new test program, Search Operations Aerial Response, or S.O.A.R.. Officers are trained to fly at altitudes between 500'-1,000' AGL for search and rescue operations as well as photographing crime scenes and assessing disaster damage. According to the department, "There are also plans to use this ultralight aircraft for crime prevention through routine aerial patrols over sections of the City which experience higher numbers of residential burglaries. By being more visible from the air than on the ground, we hope our aerial presence will be a deterrent." Bad boys, bad boys, what are you going to do? What are you going to do when the powered paragliders come for you? For more information, visit www.dudek.eu/eng/dudek.php?go=soar and www.palmbayflorida.org/police/documents/soar_program_fact_sheet.pdf



SEVERAL GEORGIA STATE RECORDS WERE SET AT THE FLORIDA CANOPY PILOTING ASSOCIATION'S SWOOP MEET THIS APRIL. Skydive the Farm hosted the meet, and DZO Hans Paulsen was the proud setter of new state speed record, with a 2.9 second run. Local swooper and new member of the PD Factory Team, Ian Drennan, swooped into a 390.50' distance record. Drennan also holds the 2006 Maine state distance record of 410.01'.



* **WORKING ON THE FIRST ISSUE AND WE NEED YOUR NEWS! PLUS, WE NEED A NAME FOR THE NEWS - THE SHORT, TIDBIT-Y STUFF WE ALL LOVE. THE SCOOP? THE SNOOP? STUFF? CHIT CHAT? LOOSE LIPS?** Tell you what - if one of you comes up with the name we use, you'll be our first profile. Okay, go!

~Lara

(Continued from previous page. Duh.)

your very odd self and still fit in with other misfits. The freedom to give the "normal" world your proudest middle-finger salute. I don't think there is a magazine right now that truly encompasses that freedom, and I want to give it a shot.

Now to the most important part—what can you expect to read about? I'll start with what you won't find: everything we don't like. Except maybe fake boobs; I can't promise we won't hate those on the day the mag goes to print.

Observant readers may notice that I left out bullshit. Let's be honest, some bullshit is downright awesome. We promise to serve up only the awesomest strains of BS: tales from back in the day, that-fish-was-this-big jump stories, old-fashioned smack talk, true-ish demo/road/boogie reports and anything that starts with "hold my beer and watch this". The less cool bullshit includes: glossed-over accident reports, the same tired boogie article again and again and again, roses and sunshine reports of politics, censored photographs, censored language, censored opinions, being told what to do. Did I mention we don't particularly care to be told what to do?

If you've ever met any of us personally, you know that we're fairly quiet people. If you've actually gotten to know any of us, you also know it's the quiet ones you have to look out for. So look out; Blue Skies are here.

~Lara

PS – Go to www.blueskiesmag.com/about and be the first to comment with the correct song name and artist of this month's column title. Who knows what will happen? 🎵



Blake Johnson (www.blakewjohnson.com) captured this 13-way head-down record over Skydive Dallas.

CHECKIT OUT!

JUST LIST GEAR REVIEW

By "Bad" Andy van Handel
Photography by Linda Haas



BIRDMAN GTi

Manufacturer:

BirdMan International

- Wind tunnel tested
- Wingtip grippers with pockets
- Front and back air inlets
- New windproof main fabrics
- 54 g rip-stop balloon zp
- New easy accessible cut away pillows & loop
- Wing attachment that prevents emergency handles from hiding
- Adjustable thumb loops
- Robust leather in booties
- L.Q.R.S. (leg wing quick release)
- Windproof safety belt access

Website: www.bird-man.com

I own two BirdMan suits: a GTi and a SkyFlyer. I made my first jumps on a GTi and didn't have any problem whatsoever learning and honing my skills with it. It's a bit more tiring on the arms than a classic, but overall I don't find it any harder to fly. That being said, I would even recommend it as a first suit for experienced skydivers. Pull sequence needs to be a tad cleaner in a GTi, but "smooth" skydivers will probably want to skip the Classic and move straight to this suit. Do not make the mistake of trying a SkyFlyer before you have experience with either a GTi or a Classic; the SkyFlyer can be quite squirrely or "loose" when you are pushing it and is harder to tame. With a GTi, you will have no problems whatsoever flying with people in Classics and even most people in a SkyFlyer. True, the very experienced SkyFlyer pilot will be able to smoke you, but in flocking we all adjust to a happy medium anyway, so it's all good. ✈



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...for regular updates, information on article and photo submissions and more.



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