

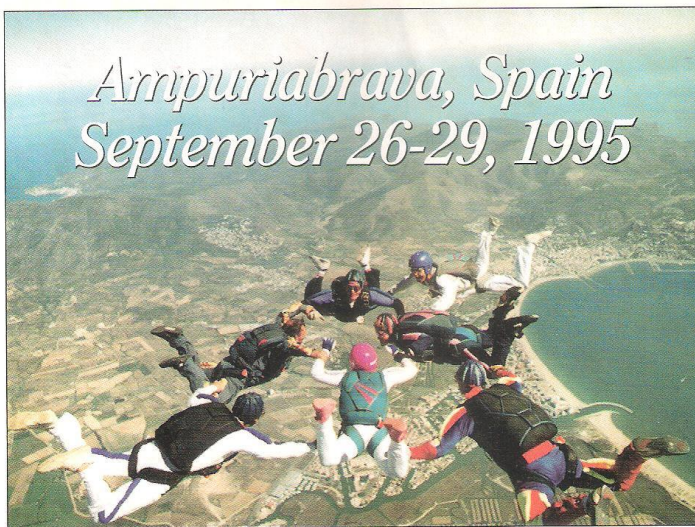
Third World POPS Meet 26-29 Sep 1995 Empuriabrava, Spain

John Crowhurst, U.K. Top POP and the newly appointed World Top POP (he accepted the post at this meet's awards banquet), hosted one in Empuriabrava, Spain, in 1995.



3rd POPS World Meet

REPORTED BY ALICIA ANDERSON



Top photo: POPS competitors build a 7-way over Centro de Paracaidismo Brava; the Mediterranean Sea and Pyrenees Mountains are visible in the background. Above: Roger Humphrey, Pat Moorehead, Tom Zukowski and Bobby Valenzuela raise the POPS flag in Spain.

Less than a mile from the wide, sandy beaches on the crescent Bay of Roses along Spain's Costa Brava lies one of USPA's most scenic drop zones: Centro de Paracaidismo de Costa Brava—an efficiently fun, full-service DZ that hosted more than 130 competitors attending the 3rd POPS World Meet in September.

Organizer John Crowhurst, "Top POP" from England, and meet director "Lofty" Thomas, also from England, worked closely

with Kate and Pete Jones, Ivan Coufal and the entire DZ staff to make this one of the most successful POPS meets ever. Thirteen countries were represented, with jumpers travelling in from the U.S., Australia, England, the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Scotland, New Zealand, Austria and Spain.

For those not familiar with POPS, it's the Parachutists Over Phorty Society. At this meet, the competitors ranged in age from



The American contingent at the 3rd POPS World Meet shows its colors in Ampuriabrava, Spain.

40 to 70 years. Experience levels were even more varied, spanning from just 200 jumps to over 11,000.

The POPS trademark and most popular event was, as always, Hit 'N Rock. American Bobby "V"alenzuela set a new record with a time of 3.77 seconds. Considering that jumpers must land near the target, remove all gear, run and touch the disc, then run 40 feet to a rocking chair and sit down, this record may stand for a while.

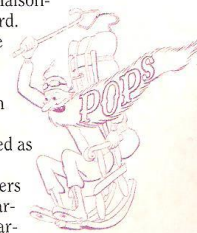
In Hit 'N Rock, time begins when the jumper lands, and the clock stops when the competitor's seat hits the chair. To get a head start on the competition, some jumpers choose not to wear shoes, jumpsuits, gloves or anything that might slow them down when they remove their gear. Some scores can be as long as five minutes. But the crowd cheers each one on, and it's all in good fun.

What was once a more casual POPS event, accuracy has now become an intense competition between champions. After five rounds in Spain, there was a three-way tie for first. The jump-off then produced a two-way tie, both jumpers striking dead centers. Goris Fons of Belgium won the final jump-off to earn the title of POPS accuracy champion.

Winds coming off of the Pyrenees Mountains interfered with the 10-way speed star event and only one of the three rounds was completed. Judged by air-to-air video, the 10-way scrambles teams were comprised of jumpers with a variety of experience levels on each team. "Otter Droppings" captained by Larry Landgrand took first, followed by Pat Moorehead's "International Air Pollution" and Jacques Maison-neuve's team in third.

Rene and Anneke Boidin of Belgium, Pauline Crowhurst and Peter Best from England served as judges. Best presided as chief judge.

Two Pilatus Porters and a Twin Otter carried the 40-plus-year-



POPS World Meet

Continued

olds on a scenic flight to altitude, complete with a view of the Mediterranean Sea, the Pyrenees, Spanish farmlands and Roman ruins.

After Hours

The second night during the meet, chef Christian Falco—who holds the Guinness world record for the largest ox ever roasted—put another one on the grill for the competitors. The ox barbecue was a big hit, as was the evening's musical entertainment. It was an extremely popular event and by far the best excuse for the fun and fellowship, which is such an important part of POPS.

During the meet, two new chapters of POPS were formed: one in Spain, headed by Manuel Gonzalez, and one in Germany under the direction of Volker Cornills.

During the awards ceremony, a special "traveling" plate was donated to POPS by Pete and Kate Jones. It was awarded to the skydiver with the most "character and personality" and the one who best embodied the spirit of POPS. Bobby "V" received the nomination by unanimous vote and won the award. He'll have the pleasure of presenting that award to the next recipient at the 1997 POPS World Meet in Sun City, South Africa.


Ampuriabrava DZ owner Pete Jones, who turned 40 earlier this year, received his POPS membership in a special ceremony that included all the Top POPS from around the world: John Kinton (Australia), Rene Boidin (Belgium), John Hostein (Denmark), Mike Allum (England), Marjolaine De Pury (France), Volker Cornills (Germany), Jim Huizinga (the Netherlands), Manuel Gonzalez-Sancho (Spain) and Alicia Anderson (USA). Because of the growing popularity of the POPS organization worldwide, the group decided to nominate a world Top POP to act as a point of contact for all others. It was agreed that Mike Allum of England would be that person.

Approaching 5,000 members, POPS membership is still on the rise. The only real qualifications are to have made a least one skydive and be at least 40 years of age. With an average age in the mid- to late-30s, the skydiving community can expect this trend to continue.

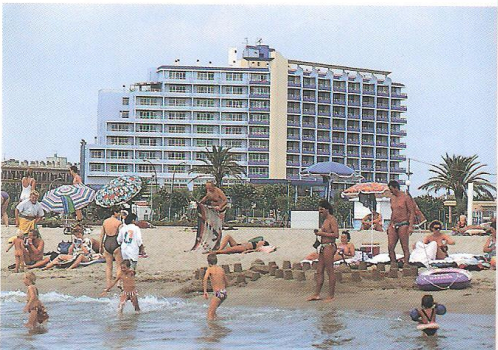
But what's after 40? For POPS members, that would be Skydivers Over Sixty (SOS), an expanding segment of the POPS worldwide base. Several SOS-ways were made during the week in Ampuriabrava, organized by SOS founder and former USPA National Director Pat Moorehead. Plans are in the works for several European chapters of SOS, with competitions and boogies soon to follow.

If you meet the qualifications and you're interested in joining either POPS or SOS, contact POPS organizer Alicia Anderson or Pat Moorehead at (310) 633-1226.

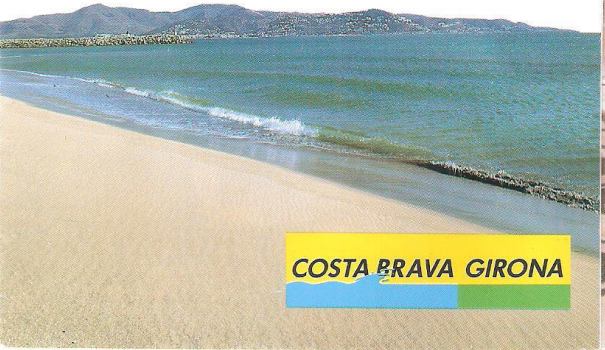
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