

POPS

23way

13 Jul 1997

Richland Skysports, WA

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From: POPS New Network (PNN)
Field Report

For Immediate Release:

Northwest Record Attempt and Boogie Turns into POPS State Record for Washington!

Larry Thompson, former NW Regional Director, entrepreneur and perennial Boogie-Meister spent the spring of 1997 compiling a list of likely participants to set a NW Freefall record - and then embarked on a campaign to ensure they would commit to the effort.

Using E-mail, snail-mail, telephone and fax, literally hundreds of communications were traded until, on July 11, 12 and 13 over 60 enthusiastic skydivers converged on Richland Skysports DZ, Washington.

During the planning stages, all of the problems that usually appear prior to this type of event, indeed did appear. This included a change of location (from Toledo, WA), loss of one of the promised aircraft and conflicting events during the same month.

But, never mind, determination and perseverance by Larry and his 'Captains' Jeff Sanders, Rod Johnson and Ron 'Cheeto' Murrock were to guarantee, if not a successful record, for sure, a fun weekend of jumping with old friends.

Indeed, jumpers from all over the U.S. from as far away as Canada, Texas and California gathered ready to raise the NW record from 53 to 60 or more.

Day 1 Friday 7 - 11- 97: 7 - 11 'Lucky numbers Day' at the DZ and base practice gets started in late morning. The DC-3 and Skyvan, on line for the attack on the record are ready to roar and more and more jumpers arrive as the day progresses. The co-captains expertly place skydivers into slots that fit their experience and enhances the possibility of success. Five jumps are made today with several big ways including one formation load that yielded a 44 way; things are looking positive. The day concludes with a sunset load that allows the group to view the plains of southeast Washington - and then it's beer time.

Day 2, Sat. 7 - 12 - 97: Roll call reveals just short of 50 skydivers have registered for the record attempt. Others have arrived to boogie but it soon becomes obvious that the current record will stand until a later time. Spirits were still up and the co-captains manifested load after load yielding formations in the 40's. The day concluded with an uncompleted 26-way POPS record attempt/demo into Pasco Baseball Stadium at sunset. Back at the DZ, the jumpers feasted on turkey, chicken, ham, beer and video reviews as plans were made for Sunday's boogie and POPS Dives.

But now the focus shifted to set a new POPS Freefall record for Washington.

Day 3, Sunday, 7 - 13 - 97: Today the POPS determined that the record would be theirs. Using Skydive Arizona's "Super Box" Skyvan, from an altitude of 15,000+ the first attempt failed because of fall-rate problems. Organizer Rod Johnson switched a few people and slots and on this second attempt, the Washington state record of 23 was theirs. Everyone on the DZ cheered as the POPS landed and TopPOP, Alicia Moorehead, announced that 23 POPS Record Certificates would soon be in the mail.

POPS Freefall Photo by Dave Hoyt of Yakima, WA, 509-452-4283, will be sent today by Federal Express.

Reported by Pat and Alicia Moorehead and Larry Thompson. FFI call Alicia or Pat.