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	Parachuting - Formation Skydiving	

Parachuting - Formation Skydiving

WHAT IS FORMATION SKYDIVING?

This discipline tests the skill of the parachutist to fly their bodies in free fall relative to their team members, enabling them to build formations or patterns in freefall. These are executed either in the prone position (belly to earth) or in the vertical position (head or feet towards earth). There are four events in all - 4-way Open, 4-Way Female, 8-Way and 4-Way Open VFS (Vertical Formation Skydiving). The performance of the team is filmed by a video camera flyer (camera mounted on the helmet) and that video is the evidence used by the judging panel to assess the score. At the start of the competition a draw from a pool of published formations is made for each of the 10 rounds of the competition. Each round consists of 5 or 6 formations, depending on the draw sequence. Teams will aim to repeat the sequence as many times as possible within the working time allotted (4-way 35 seconds, 8-way 50 seconds).

HOW IS IT SCORED?

The judges award one point for each correctly completed formation providing the transition from the previous formation to the new one is correctly made. The responsibility is on the team to "show" the formation to the Judges. The team with the most points at the end of the competition will be declared the winner. The judges may view each performance up to 3 times, once at normal speed with the option to view 2nd and 3rd times at reduced speed. The top teams are flying very quickly with the 4-way World Champions turning an average of 26.40 points over 10 rounds at the last World Championships. compared with VFS - 23.38 average and 8-way 21.60 average. The judging panel is made up of 5 judges who each judge independently with the event judges collating the scores at the end of the judging cycle for a majority verdict on the number of points scored.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO TO WIN?

Fly smoothly and cleanly, with good awareness of the other team members, also to remember the sequence. Flying too fast and aggressively can be counterproductive. It is important to have a good camera flyer who has trained with the team to give the best possible image for judging.

TELL ME MORE

Although there is gender distinction in the 4-Way Female event, all the others are open and many teams are mixed male and female. There is no real advantage to either gender. The discipline is well supported at the grass roots level in most countries and is very popular amongst fun parachutists. The skills acquired to fly formation skydiving lead to the ability to take part in attempts at new large formation world records.

"Build patterns in freefall with speed and accuracy"