

# PARACHUTIST SURFS WINGSUIT IN FREEFALL

*“Extreme Relative Work” Project Raises Awareness for Sexual Assault Prevention with Miss Nevada*

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MOAB, UTAH, 24 April, 2010 – The launch of Project XRW, or “Extreme Relative Work”, marks the first time that a parachutist has surfed on the back of a wingsuit skydiver who is still in freefall. Advances in technology and skill allowed the wingsuit skydiver in freefall to match the slower vertical speed of the parachutist for more than 20 seconds. The wingsuit skydiver opened his own parachute before landing.



A wingsuit has not yet been landed without a parachute. While parachutists and wingsuit skydivers have made contact before, this extended contact in a surfing configuration was a new step. The stunt was organized by Raise the Sky ([www.raisethesky.org](http://www.raisethesky.org)) to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Operation Freefall ® ([www.operationfreefall.com](http://www.operationfreefall.com)), a national sexual assault prevention campaign. Skydive Moab ([www.skydivemoab.com](http://www.skydivemoab.com)) was chosen as a location for its stunning scenery of red rock canyons.

Miss Nevada, Christina Keegan, joined world champion canopy pilot Jonathan Tagle and wingsuit flyer Jeff Nebelkopf. Keegan is a survivor of sexual assault, and has used her platform to publicly speak out. She did her very first tandem skydive – wearing her Miss Nevada crown – and enjoyed it so much she went a second time.

Keegan and the Project XRW team jumped on April 24<sup>th</sup> as part of Operation Freefall, along with hundreds of first-time skydivers across the country. More than \$100,000 was raised to fund community-based services for survivors of sexual violence. Raise the Sky and Operation Freefall are planning a follow-up video contest to involve even more licensed skydivers in the anti-sexual-violence campaign.

**Aerial HD video and still photos are available upon request.**

**About Raise the Sky:**  
[www.raisethesky.org](http://www.raisethesky.org)

Raise the Sky is a non-profit organization that connects members of the worldwide sport skydiving community to humanitarian and charitable causes. Our mission is to use the promotional power of skydiving to facilitate charitable giving, community involvement, and “fearless outreach”.

**About Operation Freefall:**  
[www.operationfreefall.com](http://www.operationfreefall.com)

Operation Freefall ® organizes survivors of sexual assault and their supporters to do tandem skydives and increase awareness of sexual violence. The event is held simultaneously across the country on the last Saturday of each April, and it benefits both SOAR ® (Speaking Out About Rape ®) and local community-based anti-sexual violence organizations. In the past nine years, Operation Freefall has raised one million dollars with nearly two-thirds of that going back to local communities.

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## *Project XRW Fact Sheet*

**Accomplishment:** The first time a parachutist has surfed on the back of a wingsuit skydiver who is still in freefall for 20 seconds or more. Advances in technology and skill allowed the wingsuit skydiver in freefall to match the slower vertical speed of the parachutist.

**Equipment Used:** Jonathan Tagle's parachute: Performance Designs Velocity, 71 square feet, with special trim tab risers provided by Sun Path Products. Jeff Nebelkopf and Phil Peggs (videographer) both wore TonySuits X-Bird wingsuits.

**Jumps:** 8 Project XRW jumps completed by Tagle, Nebelkopf, and Peggs. Christina Keegan (Miss Nevada) did two tandem jumps with instructor Ben Lowe.

### **Athletes:**

<b>Jonathan Tagle</b> <a href="http://www.pdfactoryteam.com">www.pdfactoryteam.com</a>	<b>Jeff Nebelkopf</b> <a href="http://www.tonywingsuits.com">www.tonywingsuits.com</a>
Jonathan Tagle won first place overall at the Dubai parachuting championships in January 2010. One of the most accomplished canopy pilots in the world, he is a member of the Performance Designs Factory Team. In addition to numerous parachuting competition victories, he also holds a US National Wingsuit Record in formation flying.	Jeff Nebelkopf is the TonySuit Head Wingsuit Designer and Chief Test Pilot, presiding over the innovation in wingsuit construction and design that has made TonySuit the fastest selling wingsuit brand in the US. He also holds a US National Wingsuit Record in formation flying, a category for which he pioneered the judging system.

**Videographers:** Phil Peggs ([www.philpeggs.com](http://www.philpeggs.com)) filmed the Project XRW jumps, flying a wingsuit with Nebelkopf and Tagle. He holds a US National Wingsuit Record in formation flying. Chris Hunter ([www.hunterimagery.com](http://www.hunterimagery.com)) filmed Miss Nevada's tandem, with Eli Bolotin providing a second outside camera angle.

**Organizers:** Eli Bolotin ([eli@raisethesky.org](mailto:eli@raisethesky.org)), Taya Weiss ([taya@raisethesky.org](mailto:taya@raisethesky.org)), and Kellie Greene ([info@soar99.org](mailto:info@soar99.org)).

**Sponsors:** Sun Path ([www.sunpath.com](http://www.sunpath.com)), TonySuits ([www.tonywingsuits.com](http://www.tonywingsuits.com)), and Skydive Moab ([www.skydivemoab.com](http://www.skydivemoab.com))

**Location:** Skydive Moab ([www.skydivemoab.com](http://www.skydivemoab.com)), a United States Parachute Association-affiliated dropzone in Utah near Arches National Park. On Saturday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, one Project XRW jump was done into Mineral Bottom (part of Canyonlands National Park), and one into the Sorrel River Ranch Hotel ([www.sorrelriver.com](http://www.sorrelriver.com)).

**Cause:** Awareness and fundraising in support of programs that promote violence prevention and help survivors of sexual assault seek emergency and long-term healing care.

**Social Impact:** Operation Freefall has raised a million dollars since its founding, with nearly two-thirds going to local community programs. Skydive Moab contributed \$50 from every tandem video for the weekend to Operation Freefall. Raise the Sky coordinated sponsorship and media to raise awareness for the cause.