

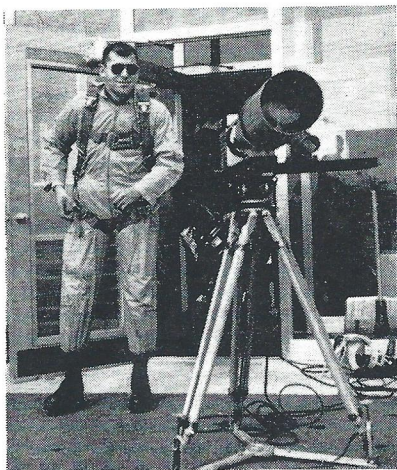
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POUR LE SPORT!



The author standing beside the telephoto lens of the camera used for closed circuit television viewing of free fall jumps at the air sport center.

America's first Sport Parachuting Center, recently opened at Orange, Mass., is to become a haven for all air sportsmen.

By JACQUES ANDRE ISTEL

POUR LE SPORT!

FLYING MAGAZINE has watched with amazement and considerable interest for several years the fervent activities of Jacques André Istel, author of this article. A naturalized American born in France some 30 years ago, Istel comes of a distinguished international banking family, and undoubtedly is the nation's leading parachutist. In fact, to quote The New Yorker which recently devoted one of its famous "Profiles" to Istel . . . "It is scarcely too much to say that Istel is the parachuting movement in the United States."

A Princeton graduate, Captain in the Marine Corps Reserve and a commercial pilot, Istel is president of Parachutes, Inc., which designs parachutes not only for the rapidly-becoming-respectable art of sport parachut-

ing but also for the U. S. Marine Corps. He is executive vice president of the rapidly growing Parachute Club of America and has been the United States team captain, trainer and organizer at the international sport parachuting meets which we lately have been entering with rapidly increasing success.

Latest step in Istel's meteorically successful drive to build sport parachuting in the United States is the opening of a Sport Parachuting Center at Orange, Mass. However, Orange is to be more than a parachutist's dream come true for Istel envisions it as a haven for all air sportsmen. No news could be more welcome for all to whom flying is a fine sport, a great art, a challenge of skill, and a wealth of infinite lore. THE EDITORS.

UNKNOWN TO THE PUBLIC at large and even to most of the aviation world, a peaceful revolution is taking place in the sky—aviation as a sport and as a youth movement is coming into its own. And a major motivating force of this revolution is, of all the unlikely elements, sport parachuting.

In the April, 1956 issue of FLYING, the article, "Sky Dive to Moscow," briefly discussed the sport of parachuting. It was a European art, practiced in the United States by a handful of sportsmen. The mechanics of control in free fall seemed almost miraculous to us and the European standards seemed unreachable. Our hopes of competing in the World Championship in Moscow that summer were small. Nevertheless a team was assembled and trained, with generous assistance from a few individuals, amid general public indifference.

In a field of ten nations at Moscow, we finished sixth and brought back fresh knowledge of the strength and weakness of our European competitors. Two years later we led the Western nations in international sport parachuting competition.

Sport parachuting has two principal areas of skill: style in free fall before the parachute is opened, and accuracy in landing. Style means that, while descending, the expert parachutist has complete control about the three axes of

his body. The vertical axis: he can make fast, flat turns at will and stop them on heading. The horizontal axis: he can make perfect forward and backward loops. The longitudinal axis: he can make barrel rolls while remaining on heading. And he can vary his rate of vertical descent and control his forward glide in relation to the ground. New words describe his feats. "Pointing" to a parachutist, for instance, is the art of directing his body during descent to the proper parachute opening point for accuracy in landing. By pointing their bodies, two parachutists leaving a plane together at 12,500 feet can be more than one mile apart when they open their parachutes at 2,000 feet.

What results are obtained with modern techniques? Take my own experience. In 1952, on six successive jumps from 2,000 feet, I failed to hit once within 1,500 feet of my intended landing point. In late 1958, on ten successive jumps from an average altitude of 7,500 feet on different fields and under varied wind conditions, my average recorded distance from the center of the target was 43 feet. Many of our sport parachutists undoubtedly did far superior work during the same period. Obviously parachuting standards have changed.

The new techniques brought new safety, new instruction, new equipment and, of course, new popularity to the



Sport parachutist in free fall over Orange Airport which will become center for gliding, private flying, model aircrafters, intercollegiate air meets.

sport. The 200 sport jumps made in the U. S. in 1956 became 1,300 in 1957 and 5,500 in 1958. Safety of the sport is reflected by the new insurance plan of the Parachute Club of America, automatic with membership; Club dues of only \$15 a year include the insurance premiums. Acceptance of the sport is shown in the numerous Sport Parachuting Clubs at colleges and universities, officially sanctioned at West Point, Princeton, Williams, and the University of Texas; and unofficial but very active at Harvard, Yale, Syracuse and the University of California.

Basic safety regulations and standardization by the Parachute Club of America are reflected in requirements for an Instructor License: 200 free fall jumps including 10 of 60-second delay, 50 to 30-second delay, 100 of 20-second delay; control in free fall on the vertical, horizontal and longitudinal axes of the body; ability to vary horizontal

displacement and rate of descent in free fall and to follow safely and judge a student during free fall; land within 20 yards of center of target on 20 jumps with 30 second delay.

Only three Americans meet these standards today but by midsummer the U. S. should have 20 instructors. By 1961 these standards will seem too easy—the impossible of 1956 is elementary today. Take competition. The U. S. is now a power in sport parachuting. In Paris on June 29, 1958 before what a disappointed sporting committee told us was a very small crowd of 35,000 people, the U. S. came in second out of ten western countries, beaten only by France. In August, 1958 we placed sixth out of the 14 countries represented at the World Championship; 12 fielded full teams, eight of which were of professional calibre although labeled “ama-

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teur." More important, we beat France and now lead the West. The Parachute Club of America, a non-profit affiliate of the National Aeronautic Association, raised money for the U. S. teams.

The training techniques which led to this measure of success with comparatively inexperienced personnel are now called the "Telsan Technique." Prospective parachutists are given dummy ripcord jumps in the stable fall position while on a static line. This teaches students to pull a ripcord under jump conditions. Other innovations teach rapidly the skills of stability, spotting and pointing.

New parachutes have made the sport easy. Equipment witnessed overseas gave us new ideas for highly steerable designs which led to development of the famed "Sky Diver" parachute, winner of every major U. S. competition since its creation in 1957. Highly steerable and with great forward speed, it has a slow rate of descent. Landings are quite gentle—comparable to a four-foot drop. Opening shock problems were solved with use of a deployment sleeve—a device which locks the canopy until the parachutist is drawn upright. It also prevents possibility of a parachutist tangling in the lines during the opening.

Still, our parachute oscillated. We now have an original U. S. design called the "Telsan Targeteer." To our knowledge it has the greatest forward speed of any parachute in the world. It turns on a dime. It descends as slowly as the Sky Diver and the huge, 35-foot Army T-10. It does not oscillate.

This triumph of U. S. efforts will be put to the test in competitions this year and may bear our colors in Bulgaria at the 1960 World Championship. This fifth world sport parachuting meet will be difficult. For instance, one event which will require a great deal of practice is a series of five 360-degree turns followed by one backward loop during a 25-second delay. The parachutist will be in free fall when he receives a visual signal from the ground telling him which particular sequence of right and left turns and loop to perform during the next 22 seconds of descent. Bonus points can be earned for

completing proper sequence before the 23rd second of delay.

The years 1957 and 1958 saw many experiments undertaken such as the first free fall-to-free fall film on this continent using a rather clumsy camera rig on a helmet which is now being replaced by a far more efficient unit.

In spite of such steps forward, we knew that our progress would amount to little without a good place to jump in America—a center complete with stocks of parachutes, aircrafts, pilots and competent instructors.

On May 2, 1959, the first U. S. Sport Parachuting Center opened in Orange, Mass. A beautiful location among the hills about in the middle of the state and not far from the New Hampshire border, it is a modern airport with three 5,000-foot, paved runways, leased for 20 years by Parachutes, Inc.

Orange is wide open to all sportsmen in aviation—to private pilots, glider pilots, college flying clubs, model aircrafters, builders of experimental aircraft. Executive planes are encouraged to stop. There are no landing fees and the field is always open during daylight hours. But the heart of Orange is sport parachuting.

As a private pilot who for years found that large airports were oriented toward large aircraft, I believe that Orange can fill a definite place in the aviation scene. As a parachutist who for years jumped into fear, ignorance and forbidding expense, I am happy to offer a haven to sportsmen. Parachuting prices are reasonable: \$30 for a one-day first jump course includes all expenses of aircraft, pilot, new sport parachute, licensed instructor, boots, helmet, coveralls, drift indicator, etc. Parachutists may jump with their own chutes for as little as \$2.50. Courses include advanced free fall techniques.

Orange is an act of faith—by Crocker Snow, Director of the Massachusetts Aeronautic Commission which first recognized and encouraged sport parachuting; by the Orange Airport Commission who gave us the chance to test our ideas; by our investors who are risking their capital; by our executives who are risking their careers.

Orange is an experiment. At worst it will be just another airport. At best it

will be the air sport center of America—the gathering place for keen aerial competitions, intercollegiate flying, soaring, parachuting. Inexpensive overnight accommodations are available at the airport in a rudimentary dormitory. Comfortable rooms are available in town.

And spectators have not been forgotten. All activities are covered daily by live closed circuit television. A tracking method perfected by Telechute, Inc., together with huge telephoto lenses gives the spectator for the first time a close view of free fall parachuting. The hand motions of a parachutist a mile and a half away can be seen easily. Two hours at Orange will make you a good judge of parachuting. You will see for yourself the difference between a good and a bad barrel roll and share the excitement of two parachutists attempting to pass a baton during a free fall relay.

Whether the experiment succeeds or not, Orange, by its very existence is a triumph for private enterprise. It is the only privately financed parachuting center in the world. Its creation is one more proof that our system of private enterprise can better any venture of the communist world while maintaining individual freedom.

Orange is a dream come true—the concrete result of eight years of effort to make sport parachuting feasible, to prove the value and interest of aerial sports, and to bring a new element of challenge to our youth. In the rush for progress, for faster airliners, for bigger missiles, for more economic business transportation, we begin to lose sight of the sky as an open frontier for your people. They want flight and they must be afforded access to it. The National Aviation Education Council has taken a wonderful step in telling young people about aviation. But it creates a thirst it cannot quench since it cannot offer action.

Aerial sports offer action. Sport parachuting is safe, it builds stamina, self-confidence and, by its very nature, responsibility to oneself and to others. These qualities are the antithesis of juvenile delinquency. Delinquency is excess energy wrongly channeled. A new frontier needs new energy. The sky is a new frontier, and Orange is its border town. END