



PROFILE *Fiona Jansen*

By Kelly Brennan

THIS TIME LAST YEAR... **One jumper's incredible journey**

"Last New Year's Eve I told myself that this year I would learn one new skill and make one new lifelong friend. Today I know how to fly and am part of the most loving and supportive family there is."

Fiona Jansen - Skydiver

Fiona Jansen set herself a goal of 365 jumps in her first 365 days, and she smashed it in superb style. The future of skydiving looks very bright if this lady keeps stretching her wings!

Fiona believes her instant love of skydiving was due to the best possible start in the sport. She began at Skydive Oz in Moruya with no clue of what she was getting herself into. She'd never met a skydiver and assumed there wasn't more to it than jumping out of a plane on her belly and throwing shakas at a camera.

"The idea of ever flying a wingsuit seemed ludicrous to me," Fiona said. *"This was something I associated with daredevils that had a definite death wish!"*

From that very first jump, on January 22, and her AFF week in Moruya, she was hooked. Understandable really. She was surrounded by some of the world's best Wingsuit BASE jumpers doing a course and Australia's best Vertical flyers, setting a new Head-Up national record.

"It did not matter that I had zero jumps under my belt and barely any knowledge about skydiving. After Day 1, the best of the best instantly treated me like part of their family."

Following that stunning start, she tried to return to the real world. *"I knew I had to continue jumping when I went*



sleepwalking the first three nights in a row, throwing my blanket over my shoulder like a canopy!"

For the rest of 2019, she spent every possible weekend at a drop zone somewhere, missing out on only 4 weekends due to Melbourne weather.

Her first-year accomplishment list is remarkable by anybody's measure. She's been to eight drop zones, eight training camps and six boogies, competing in two state championships and collecting three medals. She's tackled flat flying, angles, vertical, CRW and wingsuiting. She's logged balloon and helicopter jumps, plus all the fun stuff like inflatables, hybrids, nudies, wingsuit rodeos and Mr Bills.

"And yet I feel like I've only just touched the surface of what's possible," she says!

Her new lifestyle and full log book has meant many sacrifices. Fiona didn't enter the sport with any savings or financial support, so she needs to keep working hard to support the addiction. But she doesn't regret any cent she's spent or any minute she's used for skydiving.

"What keeps me coming back every weekend is the incredible skydiving community. The sport has allowed me to make strong connections with people of all ages, genders, backgrounds, traditions, body types, skill levels and goals. The selflessness of other jumpers continuously amazes me, always willing to answer my questions, look out for my safety, go for a fun jump and help me improve my skills without much personal gain."

I have had a chance to return the favour by helping out on numerous B-Rel and Star Crest jumps and intend to always do so even when I have thousands of jumps."

Fiona brings the same passion to her professional life as an Environmental Engineer, aiming to make our planet more sustainable. People often ask how she can excuse the environmental impact of skydiving. She hasn't found a clear answer yet, but she plans to discover a way to use her expertise to promote sustainable skydiving practices in Australia.

She did a 'nice little Wingsuit 4-Way' for her 365th jump at Moruya on December 29. It was 11 months and one week after her first jump. Soon after this, the bushfires put an early end to the boogie, and Fiona's rig got a bit of a rest as she had a long, smoky ride home to Melbourne, with many detours.

After that amazing first year, there are still plenty of goals ahead. Fiona wants her B-Rel coach rating and she wants to beat a friend to 400 jumps. She wants to be one of the first Aussie women in Wingsuiting competition. And she plans to be a weekend AFF instructor. Not to mention being part of a world record. And doing Wingsuit BASE.

Through all of that, the next big number to chase will be 2,000 jumps in three years!

Fiona's advice to a new jumper...

"Don't be shy. Just go for it. Register for a boogie or show up to a new drop zone on your own. Go up and speak to a complete stranger. Ask as many questions as you can. Don't listen to the weather forecast. Most importantly, jump now and think about the money later;)"