

Jules McConnell

Winner of the 2009 Tim Bates Award



Nominated by teammate Michael Vaughan

Personal Details

(Taken from a sponsorship proposal produced by the Australian Canopy Formation team – these are Jules’ own words):

# Jumps	3000+
Age	32
Years in Skydiving	13+
Occupation	Full time Skydiving Instructor
Home Dropzone	Skydive The Beach, NSW
Parachuting Qualifications	Instructor ‘B’ AFF, RW, Tandem Vector/Sigma; Strong Rated Display ‘B’ Licence Australian Parachuting ‘F’ Licence Packer ‘A’

Passions in Skydiving Enlightening all levels of skydivers to the beauty, freedom and exhilaration of canopy flight – taking an experienced jumper for a one-on-one Canopy Formation or Canopy Piloting jump blows them away almost as much as their first jump – it’s a great feeling to share! Also, meeting amazing people in the sport, sharing experiences and knowledge through international competitions and events.

Skydiving Highlights Every single jump, particularly though, surviving C2 spinal fracture from landing jump #442 - learning from my mistakes and now sharing the right knowledge to upcoming jumpers especially in that “indestructible” stage. Participating in 25-Way CF Australian Record, 36-Way CF Australian Record, 36-Way CF New England Record USA, 100-Way CF World Record, Organising and Piloting All Female Australian CF Formation Consecutive Australian National 2-Way CF Champions 2007/2008/2009 Australian Canopy Formation Team 2008

Other Interests Juggling, unicycling, aerial silks, rock climbing, hanging out with my man and my dog!



Jules and her man Pricey



Team Ookoonono - Crash, Jules & Michael



Jules accepting her Tim Bates Award

The following is authored by Michael Vaughan...

Putting Back Into The Sport

Jules works full time in the skydiving industry as a tandem master. You would think that in her spare time she may want to get away from the sport of skydiving. But no, a lot of that spare time is taken up developing the sport and passing on her own experiences and knowledge, gained from international coaches that she has sought out to advance her own personal skills.

Jules is a very competent canopy coach and has coached canopy flight courses in QLD and NSW. Jules is often asked to load organise and coach at boogies or organise canopy coaching camps. Jules recently took time off work to travel to sunny Queensland to coach and organise at the Equinox Boogie.

In 2008 Jules organised and/or coached at CRW training camps in the lead up to the next Aussie record attempts which were held at Skydive Nagambie in March, 2009. Jules was actively involved in camps held all over Australia including Maitland, Elderslie, Batchelor, Moruya and York. The discipline of CRW is on the move in Australia due to the dedication and commitment of coaches such as Jules who are encouraging participation and fostering growth in the sport.

Jules is an AFF instructor often doing AFF and B-rel jumps at various other dropz ones, helping newcomers to our sport.

Jules is also very active in promoting the sport. In her own time she has sent media releases, video footage and photographs to television stations and newspapers to get coverage for various skydiving events. This promotion also extends to writing articles for the ASM, updating daily blogs during competitions and events, and advertising upcoming events via local online forums.

Jules sacrifices a lot of her spare time and also takes a lot of time off work in order to develop the sport in Australia. Jules does get paid most of the time for her tireless efforts but it rarely makes up for the loss of income from not working. Jules' enthusiasm is often limited by the amount of spare time that she has available and the financial impact of taking time off work.

Women in Sport

Jules is a fantastic ambassador for women in skydiving and absolutely an inspiration to others. Her credits include:

- The only female performer in the top 10 in 2-Way Sequential at the 2008 Canopy Formation World Championships (Note: a USA 2-Way CF Team had a female camera flyer)
- Coaching at the last two Skysisters Symposiums and Equinox Boogies at Ramblers
- Organising and piloting an unofficial all female Australian CF Record in 2007
- The only female to ever compete in 2-way sequential at the Australian CF Championships
- One of only three females to ever compete in the Australian Canopy Piloting Championships.

Jules recently attended an event to promote our sport at an elite level to over 800 schoolgirls from years 8-11 from schools all around Sydney. Womensport & Recreation NSW organised "Sydney Schoolgirls' Breakfast With The Stars" where over 100 "Sports Stars" meet with schoolgirls to discuss their sporting careers and share common goals with these upcoming sportsters – possibly the future of our sport.

Excelling in the Sport

In 2008 Jules has excelled in her chosen competition discipline of Canopy Formation. Jules is a member of the Australian Parachute team competing on the national and international stage at an elite level.

The year began with Jules competing in the Australian Canopy Formation Championships winning a Gold Medal with her 2-Way Sequential team Ookoonono. This win then qualified Jules and the team to represent Australia at the World Championships in September 2008.

In July 2008 Jules travelled to Taiwan with the Australian Parachute Team to compete in the World Games Pre-Event. The team surpassed all previous competition performances and finished in 2nd place.

The team also participated in the IPC Web Challenge, similar to the now defunct APF Web League. Against a number of international teams, Ookoonono finished in first place, again achieving new team competition personal best scores.

In September Jules travelled to the Netherlands with the team to compete in the World Championships. Against the best teams in the world, the Australian team finished in seventh place with a new personal best competition performance.

The teams improving results in such a short period show Jules and the teams' commitment to excellence:

COMPETITION	LOCATION	DATE	AVERAGE	PLACING
Australian Nationals	Picton, NSW	March 2008	9.7	1st
World Games Pre Event	Kaohsiung, Taiwan	July 2008	10.4	2nd
IPC Web Challenge	NA	July 2008	11.0	1st
CF World Championships	Teuge, Netherlands	Septe 2008	11.7	7th

During the year Jules and the team have also sought coaching from the World Champion USA Canopy Formation team members. This not only helps Jules improve her own personal skills but ultimately benefits the sport of skydiving in Australia by allowing Jules to pass on that new knowledge.

Jules has shown categorically in 2008 that she is one of Australia's elite athletes and she is recognised by her peers as such. She is a fantastic ambassador for our sport, an outstanding athlete and often demonstrates a willingness to help nurture others in the sport to help them achieve their own goals.



Jules & Michael in their new team rigs and canopies. Colours depict Australian colours and also their sponsors Skydive Surfside.