



THE GREAT BOOK OF BASE

BIRDBRAIN PUBLISHING LLC

For Up To Date Information and Extra Material, Go To www.base-book.com

BirdBrain Publishing
Planet EARTH
www.base-book.com

Copyright 2010 by BirdBrain Publishing

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, or by any electronic mechanical or other means, without the permission in writing from the publisher.

Written by Matt Gerdes
Edited by Mary Catherine O'Connor
Layout by Matt Gerdes & Loren Cox
All Graphics and Illustrations by Loren Cox

Cover Photo: Dean Potter meditating on 'The Ecstasy Board,' the largest BASE jump in the world at the time of printing, and an exit he opened in August of 2009, together with Andy West. *Photo by Corey Rich*

Inside Cover Page: Matt G above the Gorges du Verdon, France. *Photo by Dom Daher.*

Gerdes, Matt
The Great Book of BASE: BirdBrain
ISBN 9780984555611

Contents

Disclaimer.....	6
Forward.....	8
Introduction.....	12
1 Before You Begin.....	16
2 Begin With the End in Mind.....	22
3 Pre-BASE Training.....	26
4 Objects.....	40
KL Tower.....	56
Castelton Tower.....	58
5 BASE Gear.....	62
Bridge Day.....	76
Lauterbrunnen.....	78
6 Deployment Process.....	82
7 Choosing Partners.....	88
8 Ethics.....	94
9 Packing to PLF.....	102
10 Jumping Progression.....	116
Moab.....	136
Norway.....	141
11 Weather.....	144
12 History.....	164
13 Technical Info.....	178
A Short Career.....	189
A Line for the People.....	192
14 The Whole Earth.....	195
15 Sub-section, Static Lining.....	200
16 Whole Earth (Continued).....	205
17 Advanced Tech. (wingsuit).....	216
18 Tracking & More.....	228
19 Staying Alive.....	244
Appendix.....	253
Thanks.....	266
Index.....	267



Warning!

No reason to sue, it's your fault

READ THIS!!! WARNING: this book discusses a dangerous and lethal activity!

BASE jumping is extremely dangerous. It is so dangerous that we seriously encourage you to not do it. In fact, we honestly think it's a bad idea.

The Great Book of BASE is NOT an instruction manual. You cannot learn to BASE jump by reading this book. The content here is offered for entertainment purposes ONLY.

YOU and ONLY YOU are responsible for your actions and for your life. By reading this book, or even opening or barely touching it, you agree to take FULL RESPONSIBILITY for your actions in life.

If you BASE jump, or even attempt anything like BASE jumping, YOU COULD DIE. This book discusses an activity THAT CAN KILL YOU.

NO WARRANTY IS OFFERED AS TO THE COMPLETENESS OR ACCURACY OF THE MATERIAL IN THIS BOOK.

BY READING THIS BOOK, YOU AGREE TO BE BOUND BY THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS SET FORTH BELOW. IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO BE AND AGREE TO BE BOUND BY THESE TERMS AND CONDITIONS, YOU MAY NOT READ THIS BOOK.

This book is the sole opinion of the author. The information herein is not intended as advice and should not be used to replace any training.

This book was written merely to entertain the reader. If you do anything recommended and/or suggested in this book, you do so at your own risk.

The information in this book cannot replace proper training!!!

The author, editors, and publishers advise readers to take full responsibility for their safety and know their own limits. The publisher and the author make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this work and specifically disclaim all warranties, without limitation.

Neither the publisher nor the author shall be liable for injuries, deaths, or damages arising from your participation in the sport of BASE jumping or anything related to the sport of BASE jumping.



Warning!

No reason to sue, it's your fault

THE INFORMATION HEREIN IS PRESENTED "AS IS" WITH NO EXPRESS OR IMPLIED WARRANTIES WITH REGARD TO ANY INFORMATION PROVIDED and THE AUTHOR AND PUBLISHER SHALL NOT BE LIABLE FOR ANY INJURY, COST, OR DAMAGE ARISING EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY FROM YOUR ACTIONS. IT IS SOLELY YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO EVALUATE THE ACCURACY, COMPLETENESS AND USEFULNESS OF ALL OPINIONS PROVIDED HERE.

IN NO EVENT WILL THE AUTHOR OR PUBLISHER BE LIABLE FOR ANY INCIDENTAL, CONSEQUENTIAL, OR INDIRECT DAMAGES TO YOU OR ANY PROPERTY.

By reading this book, you agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the author and publisher and all related employees, agents, and suppliers against all losses, expenses, damages and costs, including reasonable attorneys' fees, resulting from any violation of this Agreement (including negligent or wrongful conduct) by you or any other person who reads this book.

This book is solely intended to be the author's opinion for reader entertainment and is not professional advice. The information provided is intended to entertain readers only.

The author, publisher, and any employees, agents, suppliers, and any third party information providers expressly disclaim any responsibility for any damages, injury, or fatality occurring as a result of use of the opinions included in this book.

By reading the information contained in this book, you agree that you understand that the content provided is for entertainment purposes only.

There may be errors in this book resulting from the mistake of the author and/or the people with whom he consulted. The information was gathered from a variety of sources, which may not have been independently verified. Those who provided the information may have made mistakes. The author may have made mistakes in the conveyance of the information in this book. The author cannot, therefore, guarantee the correctness of any of the information contained in this book. You must keep in mind that the information in this book may be erroneous, so use your own best judgment.



FORWARD

By Harry Parker

The book you are holding in your hands represents the most comprehensive look at BASE jumping to date. BASE jumping is an underground sport and is highly susceptible to passionate, highly varying interpretation by the jumping community. Finding common ground is rare and everyone has an opinion. With the recent decade of explosive growth in this otherwise non-mainstream sport, this book is long overdue.

Back in the 90s, it was hard to get anyone to agree. The Cliff Jumpers Association of America (CJAA), founded by Dennis McGlynn, represented the second generation of jumpers attempting to find some common ground in practice, theory and thought. The heart of the effort was to forge unity in hopes of getting access to sites, especially to our National Park System, without having to run from the cops.

In 1997, the CJAA published “The CJAA Guidelines” providing the first real look at acceptable BASE standards and practices, through the eyes of the most highly respected manufacturers of the time. This publication was written for our survival.

During that time, real unity occurred. Legal events began to emerge, concentrating on competition through the International Pro BASE Circuit (IPBC). Through these events, a generation of BASE jumpers was trained in packing, exit, and landing technique. The events opened up many sites which are taken for granted today. Mentors became full-fledged instructors with evolving courses, manufacturers took a quantum leap in their business practices, and equipment reached safety levels never before thought possible.

More than ten years ago I tried to visualize what the sport would be like as jumpers would come from other disciplines, such as climbing and hang gliding, and from the other outdoor sport communities. In order for access to actually happen, our activity needed to cross the cultural lines of sport. And it has.

During my time fighting for access I saw an obvious culture inevitability: We were backcountry parachutists learning to navigate a world that was completely foreign to the DZ we came from. We were placing ourselves in the open and possibly dangerous wilderness. It was dangerous because we were not trained, and we were the foreigners. Hiking six hours into the backcountry can get you in a lot of trouble and change your life forever if someone breaks a femur and you don't know what to do. Weather changes in an instant and can make an exit next to impossible. When you add BASE jumping variables to backcountry risks, you create a potent statistic cocktail.

Matt Gerdes is a professional paraglider pilot who has been involved with the paraglider testing and design industry for a decade. He has racked up more than 2,000 hours of flight time at sites all around the globe, with a perfect safety record. Matt has made over 550 BASE jumps (at the time of printing), and his experience as a paragliding instructor for more than 10 years gives him the perspective needed to compile a book of information such as this. Matt's complete immersion in outdoor sports also includes big wall climbing and backcountry skiing with many years of experiences, both good and bad, in the open wilderness. His combination of mountain sports and the years spent doing them has created an excellent lens through which to view our sport of BASE jumping.

Just reading the weather portion of this book is worth the cover price. As many BASE jumpers leave the states and flock to the big mountains of Europe and beyond, many of us go unequipped to meet our real nemesis, the land and earth itself. Just ask anyone who has spent an evening, unprepared, on the top of a Norwegian wall.

Nothing is perfect, and no book can encompass every detail of any one subject, nor every viewpoint. Every book is subject to the eyes that wrote it. What you are holding in your hands is one of only a few published works on the guts of BASE. It includes theory and discusses standards of acceptable practice for the sport you love. Many have given their lives to learn some of these valuable lessons and much of the info in this book is probably already out there somewhere. What makes this book invaluable is the comprehensive nature of the information and having it all in one reference -- written specifically for BASE jumpers by a BASE jumper.

As BASE jumping moves into the next decade and our sport opens more possibilities for practice, some hope that we, as a group, further cross-train and educate ourselves. Being safe, respectable and professional isn't just about being able to exit stable anymore.

After sampling this book I can't help but wonder what the next ten years will bring to the sport of BASE jumping. What I do know is that the sport is always in need of comprehensive and accessible information, like this book. People like Matt should be supported in their efforts to bring out the best in ourselves and our sport. I've stood on the edge with Matt a couple of times. He is focused, motivated and an experienced jumper; but above all, he is humble.

Buy this book; read it, practice it, share it.

-H.P.

Harry Parker's skydiving career spans more than 20 years and his BASE jumping career almost as long. While attending the University of Florida, Harry was president of the University of Florida Falling Gators, and took the team to its first Collegiate competition in 1989. He also created a demo team that served the surrounding area.



Harry Wingsuiting Kjerag, 2003
Photo by David Major

After college, Harry traveled the US as a rigger and videographer for skydiving events, concentrating on the boogie circuit, which brought him to live in California after more than five complete cross country trips. During that time Harry grew into BASE jumping and was fortunate to experience some of the most pristine natural jumping sites that the US has to offer.

In 1994, Harry became one of the founders and president of the Cliff Jumpers Association of America. The CJAA organization was dedicated to unifying, standardizing and creating access for BASE jumpers in the United States. This organization and its members created some of the first real organized, open and legal BASE jumping events since the inception of Bridge Day. Shortly afterward, he partnered with Dennis McGlynn and Avery Badenhop and the three formed the International Pro BASE Circuit. The IPBC was dedicated to many facets of BASE jumping: raising experience and proficiency levels, standardizing equipment and theory, and increasing site knowledge and site access through competitive BASE jumping in the US. Above all, the IPBC was committed to pushing the edge in all directions of what could and, as others sometimes said, couldn't be done. By the time the late 90s rolled around, the IPBC was running Bridge Day and holding international BASE demonstration events throughout Asia, attracting hundreds of BASE jumpers, both new and seasoned.

Throughout the years, Harry has concentrated more and more on his skydiving photography and video. You can still find Harry at Bridge Day, announcing all the thrills, chills and spills of the event. www.TheHarryParker.com