



**F**or anyone who may have been skeptical after reading the article "Love in the Air" in the May/June issue, check this out: Todd Love got his A license June 22! We left off with the plan to hold an AFF camp for Operation Enduring Warrior students at Skydive Suffolk. That plan came together May 20-24 and three OEW students (Josh, Aaron and Erik) and Todd Love couldn't make this trip and neither could AFF. However, Todd couldn't make this trip and neither could Nik and Brienne of AXIS Flight School, who had their hearts set on instructing him. Not sure who has a busier schedule—Todd or AXIS—but the only way we could bring them together was to move Todd's AFF to Arizona. So OEW turned to Skydive Arizona with the request to host Todd's training with Nik and Brienne as his AFF instructors. Their response was a full sponsorship of Todd Love all the way through A license!

Wasting no time, Todd arrived June 2 and immediately began the first jump course with AXIS Flight School. Then thanks to an invitation from Henry Berkowitz and the JOIN and SkyVenture Colorado crews, Todd got to knock off some body flight rust in the tunnel during Henry's bachelor huck.

Monday's jumping was cut short by gusty winds and dust devils but AXIS was able to get in one important jump. Brianne said, "In order to protect Todd's hand and wrist, we thought it would be a good idea to move the flare point on his canopy up to his belly-button level. Justin Price of Desert Skies Rigging and Nik decided on shortening Todd's canopy during a hop and pop to check out its performance. No further modifications were necessary." Todd's main canopy is a Performance Designs Spectre 170, and after the test jump Nik had no doubts it was the right choice. Everything and everyone was ready, but now Todd only had two days left to jump on this trip—his busy schedule had him back on the East Coast for the weekend.

# LOVE IN THE AIR: Full Altitude

BY MURV



You may have wondered, "So what if...well, how will he...what about...?" After a year of coordinating, planning, tunnel training and research and design, Todd finally had a chance to answer the skeptics.

Todd's rig was a major factor in making it possible for him to skydive solo. Following April's tunnel training the rig went back to UPT for the finishing touches. His Vector 3, equipped with an SOS, kicked even more ass when it came back! The new harness features a Kevlar enclosure that Todd is able to use as a landing surface. UPT's Louie Palomares remarked on the project, "This was a fun and interesting system to work on! I basically started with just the main and reserve container along with the provided silicone mold and had to get really creative. Some of the initial feedback (and in-house influence) helped with the design and I was happy to see the rig fit Todd so well both on the ground and in the air. I wasn't really sure how well the harness was going to fit him, so I created pockets in the saddle so you can swap out foam of different thicknesses."

D-Day (literally—it was June 6) finally came and Otter 1 had six slots dedicated to Todd's first jump: Todd Love (the student), Brianne Thompson and Niklas Daniel (AFF instructors), Mike McGowan (who volunteered his talents for photography), Wes Moraes (video), and Murv (just lurking). History was made! "Welcome back to Earth, Todd!" said Brianne following his smooth landing, "Let's do this again."

Anyone who has had the chance to share the Otter with Todd, see him land, watch him fly in the tunnel, or just hang out around the DZ knows

the incredible energy and positive attitude he exudes. And energy is definitely something you need to make it through four AFF jumps per day in 100-degree heat. It took Todd just two days to perform eight jumps and complete AFF. He even went the extra mile by testing out his SOS cutaway system. No, that wasn't part of the plan of course! As Todd explained later, "I just had a tight brake line and didn't think that I could land it, so I just got rid of it." Watch his AFF video (YouTube "Todd Love Accelerated Freefall Training" or scan this QR code with your smartphone for all the awesomeness. >>

Todd completed eight jumps on his first trip to Skydive Arizona, four tandems with Mike Elliott earlier, and had 13 jumps remaining to complete his A license. American Airlines chipped in by setting Todd up with a ticket to Arizona. When he returned June 16 his ride from the airport, and hosts for the week, were Chelsea and Aniz of Green Light, who have been an amazingly supportive sponsor of this project. Todd and Aniz showed up at SDAZ early the next morning. While most students would be smoked after two, Todd put in five jumps showing no signs of fatigue!

Tom Deacon stepped in to coach Todd on the next six jumps Thursday and Friday. By Saturday morning Todd needed two more jumps for his A license, which translated into a Todd-way and a graduation jump. AXIS, Airspeed, Tom Deacon, Ian Mackenzie, and Sandy Radsek joined Todd on a 9-way jump (YouTube "Todd Love's First 9-Way"

or scan this QR code with your smartphone. >>

Having completed all the A license maneuver requirements early, Todd received coaching on transitions to the head-up orientation on his graduation jump with Nik.

Welcome to the sport, Todd! To say that seeing Todd skydive is inspirational is an understatement and the impact goes far beyond the wounded veteran and skydiver communities. One of the goals of Project X-Wing is to make skydiving accessible to a wider range of jumpers. If you have questions about special considerations for Todd's and other wounded veterans' training, contact Operation Enduring Warrior at [enduringwarrior.org](http://enduringwarrior.org) or AXIS Flight School at [axisflightschool.com](http://axisflightschool.com).



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Iveta "Murv" Muravyeva is a pilot and a skydiver with more than 10 years of experience in both. She joined Operation Enduring Warrior in 2012 as the Operation X-Wing director with a goal of connecting wounded veterans with the skydiving community. Murv is also a member of 2MH and an apprentice videographer at Axis Flight School.