



# SAFETY NOTICE

2/99

## TOP FLYER, SPRINT & PIT CONTAINERS (GERMAN)

A fatal accident in Germany occurred in December 1998, where a parachutist experienced a high speed malfunction of his main canopy and upon carrying out his reserve drills, the reserve bridle line parted company with the free-bag at the bridle/bag junction, preventing the reserve canopy extracting from the free-bag.

The apparent cause of the problem was that sub standard material was used in the manufacture of the bridle line. Where the bridle line was sewn to the free-bag, several rows of stitching had been applied at the bridle/bag junction point. This caused a 'widening' of the bridle line material fibres and when used at high speed, tearing and parting of the weakened fabric occurred.

Following this accident the two German parachuting organisations (the DFV & the DAC) grounded the above German made containers, as they may have contained the suspect free-bags.

It has therefore been decided that any parachutist who has one of the above containers must not use it until the free-bag has been inspected by an Advanced Rigger. The Advanced Rigger should inspect the free-bag/bridle junction area. When a reasonable amount of force is applied, and bear in mind the snatch etc on a terminal reserve opening, if the fibres start to enlarge significantly, especially at the sew point, then the free-bag should be destroyed, or at least the complete bridle replaced.

Any queries, please contact the BPA office.

Tony Butler  
Technical Officer

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