

# Former PA resident on world stage for parachuting

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A former Prince Albert resident is making airwaves in the competition of parachuting.

Lee Bibby grew up just south of Prince Albert and attended Carlton Comprehensive High School.

When he was 18 years old Bibby would join the Canadian Military and travel around the country.

Currently Bibby is stationed in Trenton, Ont. and just returned from the World Competition for Parachuting which was held in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates this past December.

“We competed in the World Parachute Competition. The significance of this particular one is since parachuting was invented there’s only been one time previous that all the different disciplines in parachuting were brought together at one competition site,” Bibby said.

Bibby and his team are made up of four people who are former SkyHawks from the Canadian Forces.

“Typically [SkyHawks] go across the country and do demonstrations, you know promoting the Canadian Forces, so basically we got together from our former experience, knew we had some background in this specific discipline and we started working on it about six years ago on our spare time. It’s something we do on our own time, with our own money, with our own equipment,” Bibby said.

Bibby and his team took part in the two-way canopy formation part of the competition in Dubai.

He explained the two-way canopy formation uses three of its members. Two people will do the formations with a cameraman following behind, members have 30 seconds from the time they leave the aircraft to build their first formation.

Each team has five formations in each round and teams have 60 seconds to do as many of the formations as they can.

Bibby explained that once your 60 seconds are over your time is done and you will be scored by five judges on the ground once they see your video.

“There’s not a lot of free fall involved, just four seconds once you leave the aircraft and open your parachute. And it’s a timed event so it takes about 60 seconds of working time that you have to do basically a sequence of events or a draw that you’ve been given prior to going up,” Bibby explained.

“If your video cameraman doesn’t capture it or they can’t see a grip your taking with your feet cause you’re using your feet with the lines of the canopy to score these points, if they don’t see a point you’re not going to get awarded it.”

There were 23 teams taking part in the competition for that specific discipline in Dubai and Bibby and his team placed 10th.

He said it was one of their goals to break the top ten and beat their previous record.

“We almost broke the Canadian record, basically we had 15 seconds left in our round and one of the canopies became fouled, I fell about 200 feet and by the time we could get back together and get back into the game our time had expired. So we missed it by just a little bit,” Bibby said.

The team had three goals initially:

1. To get into the top 10 on the world stage
2. To break their own team record which was 11 and they did that by getting to a 13 point level
3. To break the Canadian record of 14 points.

“We’re right on the doorstep, it’s kind of simplified what we’re perusing now and that’s the Canadian record,” Bibby said.

He said they expect to break the record this July in Quebec at the Canadian Nationals, which will be held from the 15th to the 19th.

To get to Dubai Bibby and his team had to compete at the Canadian Nationals.

“You have to go to the competition, get first or second and then you’re able to go to the world competition. My team is part of several people that represent Canada at the world stage,” Bibby said.

For their discipline the highest score is 14 points in one round and with a panel of five judges Bibby said you never know when you’re going to break it.

This is the second time this team has gone to worlds.

They went to Holland in 2008 and were a junior team who was still developing.

Bibby said they needed the world competition experience to get where they are today.

“We were trying to think at that time what would be a better route for our team is to pour more money into training or should we go and spend the money to go to one of these high level competitions. You know, that competition experience that you gain by going to these high level competitions you just can’t buy,” said Bibby.

“There’s people who go out there for the enjoyment of parachuting. For myself and my team members we look at our enjoyment as the competition and the thrill of competition.”

He said his family is very supportive and his daughters love seeing the parachuting videos.

For more on the SkyHawks click [here](#).

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