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Moruya skydiver helps break national record

SKYDIVING

MORUYA-based skydiver Jules McConnell coordinated a national record-breaking canopy stack formation skydive at the annual Skysisters event held in Queensland last week.

Following a week of coaching by McConnell, the Skysisters broke the Australian all-female record with an impressive eight-way canopy stack formation on their first attempt. The record replaces the five-way record set at Skysisters in 2007.

McConnell, the national champion in canopy formation and silver medallist at the 2010 World Championships, said she was really happy with the result of the jump.

"I've been coaching the girls all week in preparation for this attempt so we were all really pumped about getting it together on the first jump and setting a new Australian record," she said.

"Canopy formations are probably one of the most male-dominated disciplines in skydiving purely because of how physically taxing it is to fly under canopy for that long. It's like doing 10 minutes of pull-ups at the gym without a break!"

McConnell has great experience in large formations being the only Australian female on the 100-way world record achieved in 2007.

Along with McConnell the other skydivers who took part in the record jump were Katherine Mettler (Queensland), Charlotte van den Burg (Queensland), Jill Grantham (Victoria), Amy McDermott (WA), Nerissa Anderson (Queensland),

Tracey Basman (NSW) and Wendy Smith of New Zealand.

Skysisters 2011 organiser Susie McLachlan said the record was a great achievement.

"We are so proud of the girls, the Drop Zone erupted when we saw them holding the formation above us and you could hear the squeals of delight for miles," she said.

"This is what Skysisters is all about, pushing boundaries and breaking records as a group of girls who love what they do."

The jump was captured by world-renowned cinematographer, Norman Kent who is responsible for filming the skydiving scenes in movies like *Terminal Velocity*, *Point Break* and *Get Smart* as well as Australian skydiving cinematographer extraordinaire, Steve Fitchett.



SKY'S THE LIMIT: Moruya-based skydiver Jules McConnell coordinated this national record-breaking eight-way canopy stack formation skydive.

PHOTO: Norman Hunt.