

Componentry Aids Bowman's Skydiving Success

By Rachel Monserrate

Dana Bowman, a former member of the Army's elite Golden Knights parachute team, has been jumping into the Winter Sports Clinic since 1996. Bowman, who lost both legs in a tragic skydiving accident in 1994, is a prime example of how determination can help overcome disability.

When Bowman lost his right leg above the knee and his left leg below the knee, most people believed that it was the end of his skydiving career. However, Bowman proved everyone wrong just five months after his accident when he snuck out of Walter Reed Army Medical Center and completed his first jump without clearance from his doctors.

So just how does a bilateral amputee manage to skydive? For Bowman, it's all in the components. On his right leg, Bowman uses the Endolite Mercury™ Knee for his jumps because of the stability and endurance of the knee. He also uses a Hanger ComfortFlex™ socket, which has an expandable strap for a perfect fit while he's jumping. Bowman lost his left leg just two inches below the patella, and for this reason his prosthetist, Kevin Carroll, MS, CP, FAAOP, built his socket to ride above the knee to prevent hyperextension when Bowman lands on his jumps. On the left leg, Bowman also uses a Double Pre-flexed™ Suspension Sleeve from New Options Sports to prevent slipping. The sleeve also retains suction due to the special material and design. Bowman also employs the use of an AEGIS Ultimate Liner from ESP. The AEGIS is pre-flexed to 45 degrees, which prevents bunching in the back of the knee and prevents excessive pressure over the knee cap when Bowman is jumping. For added stability to his knee, Bowman wears the Axiom knee brace from Bledsoe Brace. He also wears the Endolite Elite® Foot, which provides shock absorption upon landing. And for a little flair, Dr. Comfort designed custom-made shoes with Dana Bowman's name on them.



From Left: Bo Derek, Dana Bowman, and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz.

Helping Other Amputees

Through his accident and subsequent recovery, Bowman has made it his mission to encourage others who are facing difficult times. He is a national motivational speaker and an Amputee Coalition of America (ACA) certified peer visitor. Along with actor and fellow amputee John Siciliano, Bowman is actively involved in providing prosthetic components to those in need through the Bowman Siciliano Limb Bank Foundation.

Through his travels and work with disabled individuals, Bowman continues to stress the importance of his motto, "It's not the disability, it's the ability. Never quit."™

For more information about the Bowman Siciliano Limb Bank Foundation, visit www.danabowman.comlimbbank