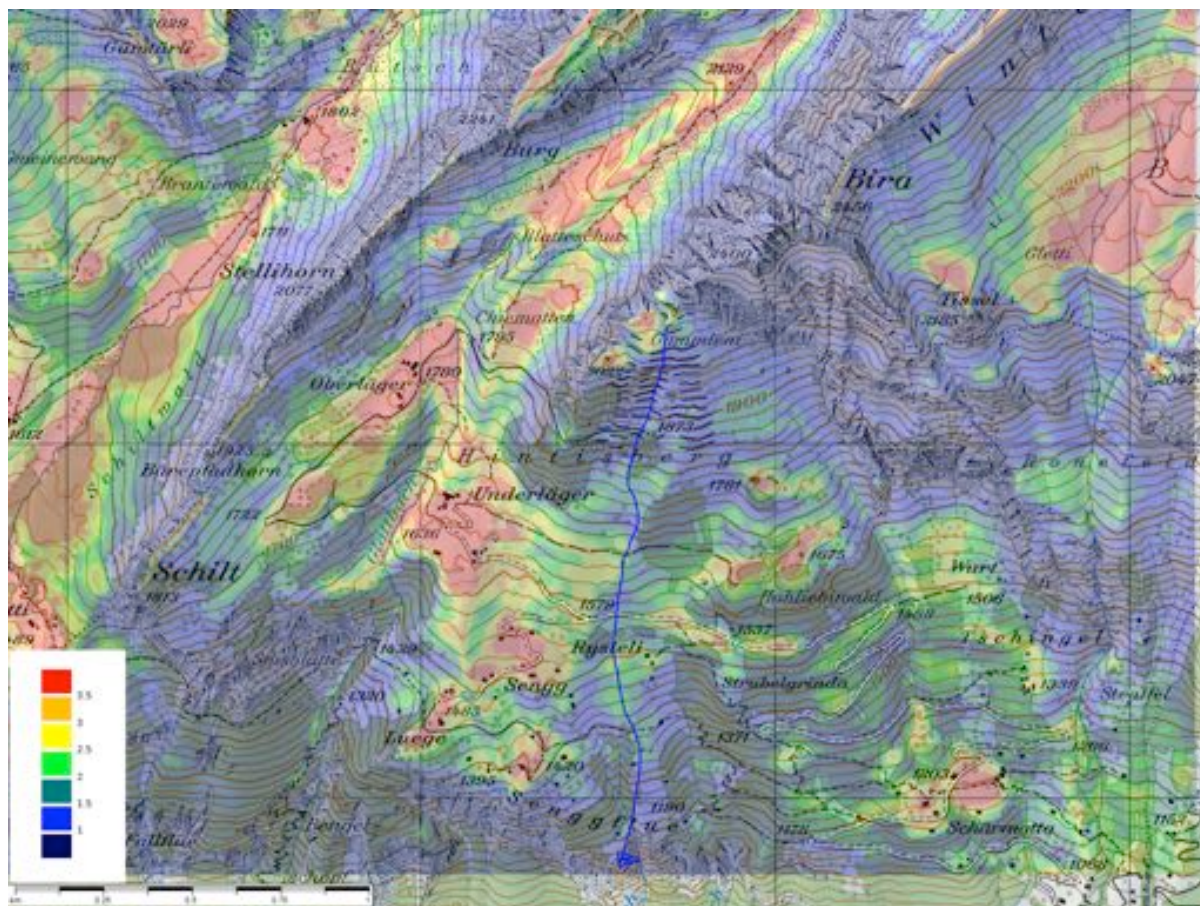


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On March 29th Dan Vicary and Ludovic Woerth tragically died while flying their wingsuits above Hintisberg, Switzerland and soon after Brian Drake died from his injuries. The following information was obtained by several methods: speaking with the police who were on the scene, inspecting all three pilots' equipment and exhaustively analyzing video from the cameras on Ludo and Brian's helmets, as well as Dan's belly camera. We also visited the crash site, met with Brian's doctors and spoke with the wingsuit pilot Severin Schmid, who was with them until helicopter lift-off. We hope our efforts will help answer key questions, quell unnecessary speculation, and perhaps, help to prevent future accidents from occurring.

Dan and Brian were filming for their web series, "A Straight Shot" – a project funded and marketed by a production company. Since there were two additional spots available on the helicopter, Ludo and a Severin Schmid had been invited to participate. The four had previously planned to fly in the Valais region of Switzerland and spent the night at Severin's place. The four arrived at the Helicopter base Air Zermatt in Raron early that morning. However, when strong Foehn winds were present they decided to adjust their plans and go to Lauterbrunnen. After reviewing current weather conditions and speaking with local paraglider pilots and tandem masters who had jumped that morning, the four decided to fly a line above Hintisberg.

The group went to the helicopter base in Mannlichen, briefed the flight, and reviewed video of a few of the many past flights Ludo had performed at the same location. During the briefing, Ludo and Dan (who had allegedly flown this line twice before) referred to the flight as the "Fuck Yeah Line". For those who are unfamiliar, this is the line that was made popular in the Dream lines 4 video. The line takes wingsuit pilots over avalanche barriers, down grassy slopes, and passing in between trees. Below is a rough visual description of the intended flight path. The "Fuck Yeah Line":

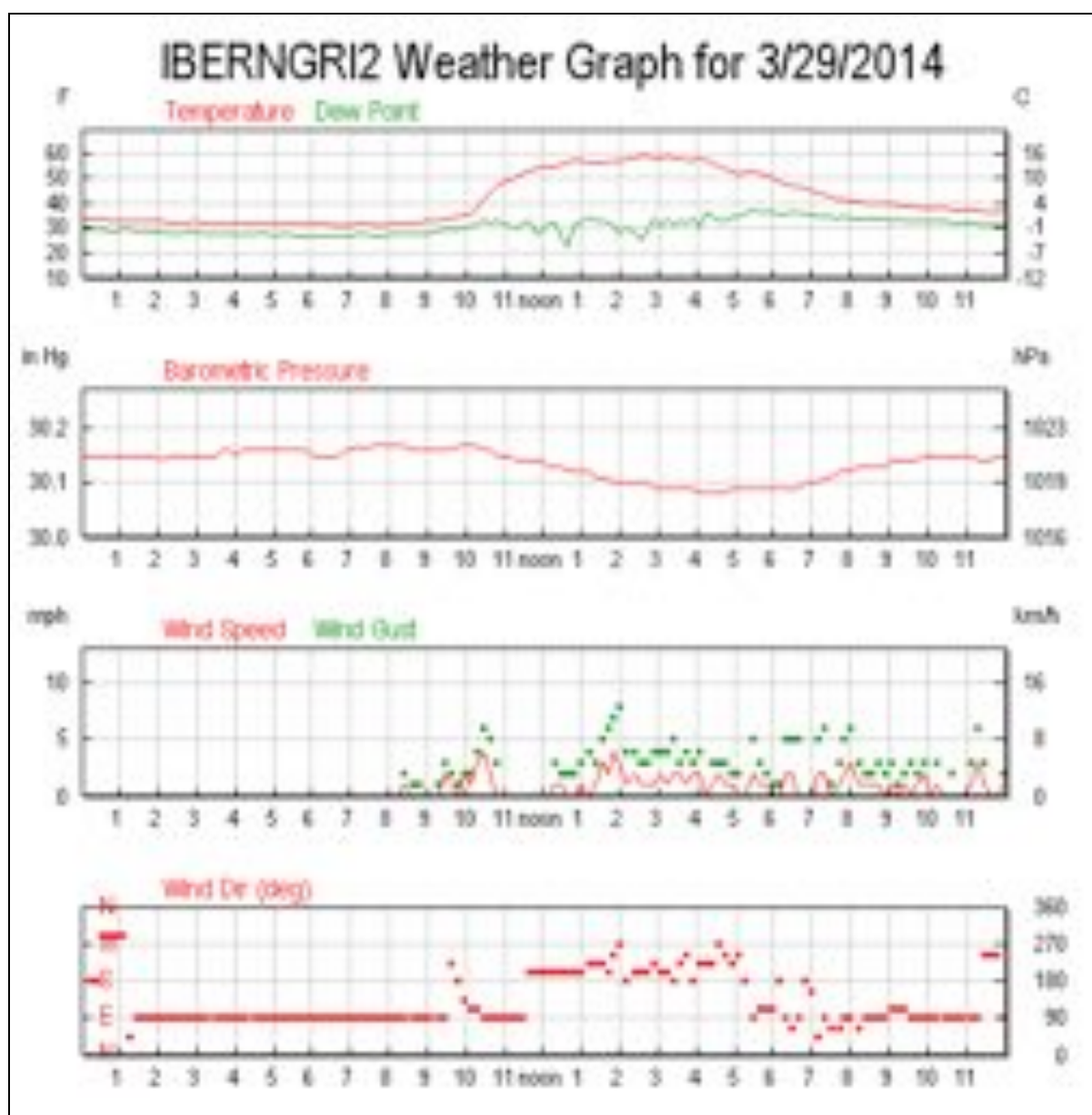


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Severin participated in the briefing, was geared up, and prepared to make the jump. But at last minute, and while still on the ground, he decided against it. When we were slightly more persistent, and really inquired why Severin stayed on the ground, he stated he “just didn’t feel like jumping”. He added that he felt prohibitively distracted by the health problems of a family member. He denied having any doubt about weather conditions and still believes it had no influence on his decision.

Immediately after the accident there was no report of Foehn activity in Interlaken, however it was in the general forecast as a possibility. There was light South/Southeast wind which could be considered a light Foehn event. Additionally he said that a family member had recently been experiencing some health problems and he felt distracted by the current circumstances.

Weather history for the area on March 30th:



Dan, Brian, and Ludo (in that order), exited the helicopter at 2700m. After reviewing their video footage and GPS data, the three pilots appeared to be flying quite slowly. For almost the entire flight both Brian and Dan could be described as flying in near full-flight position. The line they had intended required them to pass a ridge, which was not possible at the altitude and distance they exited

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the helicopter. After questioning jumpers with previous experience flying this site, they estimated their own previous exit altitude was roughly 300-500m closer to the ridge (forward direction) and about 200-300m higher.

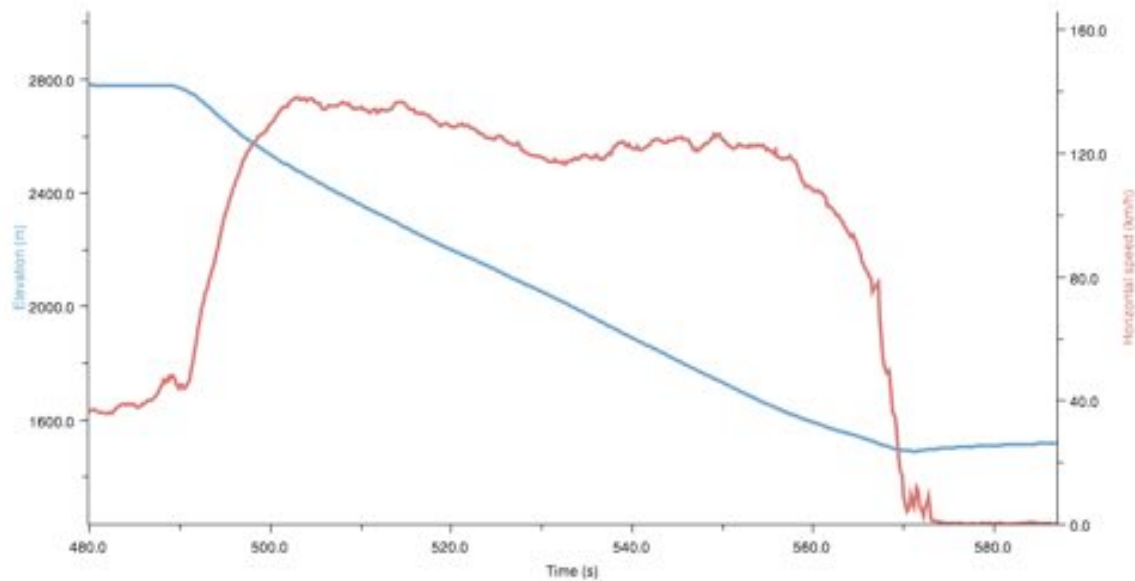
The line they had intended required them to pass a ridge, which was not possible from the altitude and distance at which they exited the helicopter. From exit, the group continued flying down the small valley until the ridge on their left was low enough to turn left. The left turn delivered them, again at low speed and low altitude, on top of a slope that varies in glide ratio from 2.2 - 3. Throughout his flight, Brian appeared to be one hundred percent focused on Dan. At the time of Dan's impact, Brian appears to establish maximum glide position turning his attention forward just moments before his own impact. Ludo appears to take one brief look up at terrain after turning the corner, but made no adjustments to flight path. Ludo kept Dan and Brian in near perfect frame until Dan's impact. Dan impacted on a slight uphill grade, Brian just after on a slightly downward slope and Ludo also on a slight incline. According to Brian's doctors, this might be the attributing factor for Brian's initial survival. Both Brian and Ludo's bodies travelled after impact but Dan's came to a more abrupt stop. Dan and Brian were found within 50m meters of each other and Ludo was found approximately 160m downslope.

Below is a visual representation of the data collected from one of Brian's GPSs:



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More data from Brian's second GPS:



The Helicopter pilot, according to police and audio from camera footage, allegedly followed the three jumpers after their exit and notified Rega Swiss air rescue moments after their crash from the on board radio. Ludo and Dan were declared deceased at the scene by local police responders. Brian was taken directly to the trauma center in Bern via REGA helicopter. Brian arrived to the hospital in a coma. He was physically unable to breathe without the assistance of a ventilator and showed very limited signs of neurological function. Three days post-incident, Brian was able to tolerate a supine position without a dangerous increase in intracranial pressure and was given an MRI. The results of the MRI concluded that Brian had suffered a complete and irreversible loss of brain function, including the involuntary activity necessary to sustain life. Brian was removed from life support. He died approximately one hour later with his father by his side.

Our painstaking review of the available evidence leads us to the following summary conclusions:

Primary causes of this Accident

- Improper spot. The three exited the helicopter too low and too far from geographical features making it impossible to complete their intended flight plan.
- After failing to join their intended flight path the three continued to fly down valley losing altitude and speed.
- All three flew “blind” around a corner without precise knowledge of the terrain ahead of them and failed to deploy their parachutes.
- Camera fliers focused on capturing video and almost completely ignored the terrain.

Recommendations

Planning

- Strict adherence to flight plan checkpoints and have an action plan when check points are not reached.
- Choosing exit locations from a helicopter or light aircraft should be ascertained from precise and previously established coordinates.

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- Exit altitude should always allow a large margin for error.
- All pilots should be able to visualize their line of flight from exit location.
- Diving into the entrance point of the selected line should be a priority in order to ensure the rest of the flight.

In Flight

- Never try to out fly terrain.
- Following a fellow wingsuit pilot with video camera/s while terrain flying is discouraged, and should only be performed when both pilots (especially the camera flier) are intimately familiar with the terrain.
- Different camera set up and lenses could be use in order to achieve a “Full subject” in frame, having a longer lens would allowed a further distance from subject and more room for error for camera flyer.
- When flying as a leader know that you have an additional responsibility and you must follow the plan and line that has been agreed on, no room for improvisation when other people are following you.
- When following someone, don't trust anyone, look after yourself.
- When in doubt, pitch.

Additional note

- External and internal pressures from paid and commercial operations can potentially interfere with sound decision making. More thorough briefing and triple safety checks should be standard for this kind of jumping. The use of a safety officer, as in most other commercial high-risk operations, should be considered standard.

FINAL NOTE

This report has been put together with LOVE and tears by multiple friends from the flyers involved and revised and approve by the Drake family. We have attempted to stay objective and factual and draw conclusions that could help the Wing Suit community learn and grow to honour the amazing lives of our dear friends.

Fly Safe – Only Love is real.