

## Technology Tuesday

### Description

Someone had to test it....

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It's not in English, but...when they hold up the < href="http://www.icaruscanopies.aero/main.htm">Icarus VX-39 canopy, it's the one Luigi is jumping...

That number, 39, you ask? Stands for 39 square feet of surface area....if you must know.

Once I "trusted" my life to a "square" in the late 70's, my first one was a 230 sq ft "Strato-Cloud." Went to a 200 Sq Ft Pegasus, then a 150 sq ft [Performance Designs](#) Sabre 150 and (so far) ended with a Sabre 120. When I made that transition, I was doing about 160+ jumps/year and I was loading the wing up nicely, thank you. Exit weight was...how shall I say this...more than the "tail tag" said, but I flew it well and have no injuries, or even close calls, because of problems handling the canopy to discuss as a result.

Parachute technology in the civilian sector has come a long way since guys with hot knives and a few C-9 (28 ft diameter) surplus military parachutes (still with lines, they didn't chop them off back then) could slice out a few panels to see how they flew. My first "owned" parachute was in fact, a C-9, formerly white, but dyed maroon by the prior owner.

When "squares" appeared in the mid-70s, they had 5 "cells" (chambers). Most jumpers today have 9 cell canopies, but the "extreme" jumpers, who love the "swoop," some of them use 21 cell versions, to get a thinner wing, and more "stiffness," to generate better lift and speed. Some canopies have air locks, which, once the air is rammed in during the opening sequence to shape the cell, is trapped within, also providing a stiffer wing to the air, with improved performance.

"We" have come a long, baby!

Oh, and when you're bored with your canopy's performance, then you can strap on a "wingsuit" and have a "come to Jesus" experience...

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Helicopter not included...

### Category

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