

# TRIPOLI

## Vegas

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Official Newsletter of Prefecture #24 of the Tripoli Rocketry Association, Inc.

July 1997

## Delamar '97 Part 2

By: Brent McNeely

*This is the second part of the Delamar Article. Part one was printed last month.*

We had a second great night's sleep on the lake bed with a spectacular sunrise for the second morning. The air was dead calm and the rocket gods begged us to prep rocket motors for flight. I began prepping my Poltergeist with a K185 in order to get some real altitude (for me anyway). I've never had a rocket fly over 5,000 feet, so I hoped to get into five digits with the K185. I should have known better. The last flight of the Poltergeist on a K185 killed one of

my fins at about 1,100 feet where the rocket took a direct right and flew horizontal. Sunday's K185 was much more spectacular with a motor cato at 380 feet (according to the altimeter). Apparently two of the delay element O rings became overlapped allowing the motor to jet out the front and back. The result was a six second flight at under 380 feet. I think Jodi and Ky got it on video. It should be quite something to see!

About the same time I blew up my Poltergeist, Woody Gregory brought out his beautiful Pshycodacktyl. This rocket had a paint job like no other. You might have seen Woody's work. He's the guy that did the custom paint jobs for Public Missiles (as seen in the 97 Public Missiles catalog). This rocket had strange fins all over the bottom of it and a wild colored paint job; and it was tall (about 14 feet). Woody said he was going to fly it once on a K550, hope he could recover it intact, and retire it (to put in his display case which is where it belongs!). Fly it he did, straight as an arrow. The rocket zipped along its course with a perfect recovery.

The guys in the local club had been waiting to see two projects fly. One belonged to Les Derkovitz, club president. Les had been working on his custom Dynacom fiber glass kit for almost two years. He was unable to fly it at Balls or Delamar last year because of wind. This year he got his chance. The rocket stood about 14 feet tall with both of its stages. The first stage was powered by an L1900 with the upper stage taking a K900. We all stood to watch as they ignited the rocket. The first stage ignited and flew great, arcing over our heads behind the flight line, after burnout it had perfect separation and deployment of the chute. However, the second stage never lit. We waited; we prayed, but no fire. All of us felt incredibly sick inside knowing how hard Les had worked on his project. He got back the rocket with what appeared to be minimal damage to

the upper stage: one cracked fin.

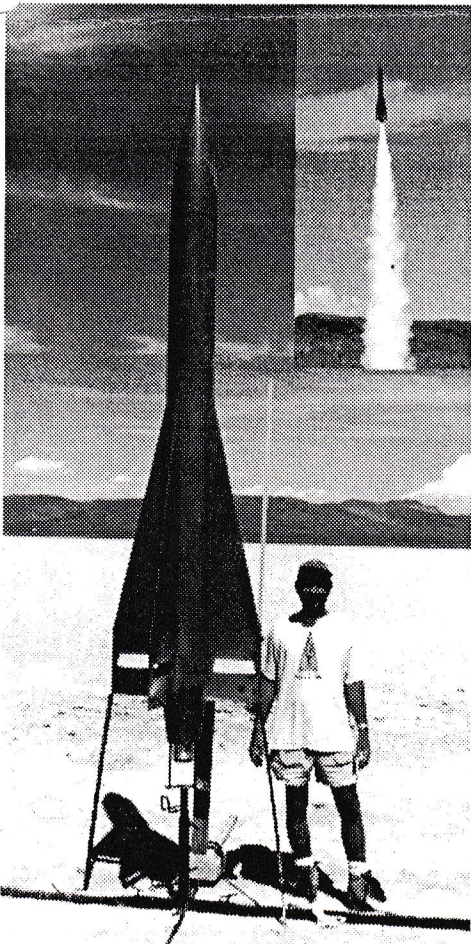
Unfortunately, he won't be able to fly it for another year or so until he saves up the bucks for another motor.

We only had one level three certification flight that I'm aware of: Eric Williams. Eric brought his Phoenix (Dynacom kit) loaded with a M1939, a big motor for a small five inch airframe. But, Eric had something going for him. The kit held together, took off like a bat out of hell, and had a very, very nice recovery.

### From the Vice-Pres.!

Les took a break last month and I conducted the meeting at which we made a couple of decisions: to extend the card punch deadline until August 23, but no later. We will be having a club maintenance BBQ at Steve Ainsworths house in Boulder City on August 23rd. Those attending will get to BBQ and clean up the club equipment while earning double credit hours on the membership card.

Perhaps the most important thing that happened last meeting was the nomination of officers for club positions: Mike Alber for president, Brian Roerdon for VP, and Dave Pacheco for sec/tres. Nominations will be open again at the beginning of our next meeting. We will vote after the last of the nominations are made. So, please show up to nominate the person you want in office and to vote for the best person.



The grand finale, end-all-be-all flight of the launch was made by our club's very own Ron Denton. Ron spent the winter months this year building his monster 60% scale Hawk missile. He was putting the finishing touches on the paint on Saturday and prepped it most of the morning on Sunday. The rocket weighed in at well over 100 pounds, making most of the rockets at the launch look like the Estes variety. Ron and crew loaded the missile in a pickup and drove it out to the far pad. It is not every day that you see a missile launched on an O3600 motor (the motor was built by John Johnston and Rick Lore). Ron designed special internal, dual launch lugs and a special dual launch rod system. It took a while to get the missile on the pad. After extensive double checks by the crew, everyone got into the pickup truck to drive to a viewing point some distance away. It was then that we realized we forgot to hook the igniter up to the launch pad ignition clips. We stopped, hopped out, hooked up the igniter and got back in the truck (hoping we didn't forget anything else). We pulled off to the area south of the far pad near Ky and Jodi who were waiting with the rest of the launch team. Ky and Jodi started rolling film as we heard over the radio the countdown made by Dave. When Dave got to zero he pushed really hard on the launch button, and kept pushing until smoke began to drift from the bottom of the rocket. Then it began, the sparks and a little bit of flame for just a second or so before the full motor

shifted into gear. The ground shook and our hearts skipped several beats as the rocket moved off the pad. I can't say the rocket really took to the air slow or fast. All I can say is it was awfully majestic--mighty majestic. I never in my life have seen so beautiful a lift off. The rocket climbed and climbed as we snapped pictures. I ran out of film before apogee, but I assure you, all four chutes were there. One chute was for the nose, the other three for the booster. The missile grabbed a total of 9,349 feet, not bad for a big, bad missile like that. The whole rocket came down only a couple of hundred yards from where we watched lift off. The giant chutes looked really great as it brought the rocket down without a scratch, scrape, dent, break or shred. The chutes even laid down in perfect formation because we had zero wind. All of us had lumps in our throats because it was so darned beautiful. I've never seen anything like it and don't expect to again for years to come. I was ready to go home after that. How could it be topped?

We drove back to the launch line and began closing up camp and taking down equipment. Franko was about the only one still bringing rockets up to launch while we took down the pads. We left one up for Kosdon and his crew to make some experimental flights later that evening. The rest of us, shook hands, waved, and drove off the lake bed keeping an eye out for UFOs and secret Aurora jets.

## Leadership List

President . . . . . Leslie Derkovitz • 875-1904  
 Vice President . . . . . Brent McNeely • 256-8211  
 Secretary/Treasurer . . . . . Lance Tharpe • 262-9131  
 Prefect . . . . . Ron Denton • 384-8233  
 Newsletter Editor . . . . . Brent McNeely • 873-8222

## Launch Dates

July 19 . . . . . El Dorado Dry Lake Bed  
 August 23 . . . . . El Dorado Dry Lake Bed  
 September 20, 21 . . . . . Delamar Dry Lake Bed  
 October 18 . . . . . El Dorado Dry Lake Bed  
 November 29 . . . . . El Dorado Dry Lake Bed  
 December 20 . . . . . El Dorado Dry Lake Bed

## Meeting Dates

Every Thursday prior to a launch date

## Officer Nominations and Elections this Month!

Nominations will continue at the beginning of this month's meeting, during the meeting we will vote into office president, vice-pres, and secretary. During last month's meeting we had several nominations. The are:

**President: Mike Alber**  
**Vice Pres: Brian Riordan**  
**Sec/Tres: Dave Pacheco**

If you would like to nominate someone for the upcoming election this Thurs., please attend the early part of the meeting when nominations will be made. If you show up late we may have already closed nominations and voted in the officers.

**Tripoli Vegas Website has been updated with a new look. Get online and check it out!**  
**wizard.com/~planetds**



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