

# TRIPOLI Vegas

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

August 1997

## National Launches

By: Brent McNeely

This last month has been filled with big national launches: Balls and LDRS. I was fortunate enough to attend both events and wanted to give everyone a short review of what happened.

### No Balls & Balls

Black Rock dry lake bed is known for three things: (a) land speed records (b) burning man and (c) big rocket launches. If you've never been there, I highly recommend making the trip at least once in your life. Black Rock is about an hour and a half north and a bit east of Reno. It is a huge drive, but well worth it.



Starting on Sept. 2 this year Craig Breedlove will be running his Spirit of America jet car for a world record there. Not to be ousted, the current land speed record holder, Richard Noble, will be back at the exact same time to reclaim his title with his new car the Thrust SSC (super sonic car). We ran into Andrew Noble, Richard's brother, at Gerlach and heard all the inside scoop on the upcoming race.

But, even more famous than the land speed record is Burning Man, an annual party of 17,000 people in the middle of the lake bed. Apparently they erect a huge 90 ft. wire frame man. Everyone writes down their troubles and vices they want to get ride of and stick it in the frame of the wire frame man. At night, they light up the man and burn up all those bad things supposedly purging each person of their vices. It is a several day event with lots of alcohol, drugs, body piercing, tatoos and dancing in the middle of the desert.

Not to be outdone, Aeropac holds an annual four day experimental rocket launch in the middle of one of the largest lakebeds in the US. The big events this year were seeing the new turbo-M motor from Aerotech, the Dr. Rocket N-2000 sub-min diameter and the new very cool liquid fuel rockets from Aerocon/RATT. Other non-launch highlights included Keith's hybrid rocket mountain bike and Ky's dual stage 110 mile disaster.

The weather was great for the whole four days. Certified motors were flown on Sat and Sun with the experimental motors flying Mon. and Tues. I flew my Poltergeist on my first hybrid J-145 for 6200 ft. Not bad for a hybrid rocket! The thing flew completely out of site. After my

flight they required all high altitude rockets to use tracking powder. I agree it was necessary. Gary prepped his turbo-M motor for flight in Williams rocket. And I must say it was spectacular! That is a very, very nice M motor which will cut M flight costs almost in half. Great idea Gary! Oh, speaking of new motors, I should mention that APS and Hypertek were no where to be found. Rumor has it they are having major production problems. Time will tell if they survive.

The biggest certified motor to fly was the new N-2000 from Dr. Rocket. Mike came up with a new aft closure which allows a fin can to thread to the closure. He also has a new forward closure which allows the payload tube to thread onto the closure. Very, very slick. The flight went really well, except the parachute tangled and the rocket came down hard enough to crack it at the motor and payload coupler.

Aeropac would not allow Rocketman Ky to fly his experimental rocket under their waiver and with Aeropac support. We all watched on at a distance as Ky lit his two stage rocket. The first stage got Mach 2.6 for 40,000 feet, but the second stage never lit. The result was a sub-terran lawn dart with a \$100 reward for the first person to find it. About four hours later the reward was claimed. Ky's 110 mile effort got him 40k on the booster and another 12k or so of glide on the upper for 50-60k. Ky says he

### From the Editor

Well, last month was the big election. Voted in were Mike Alber as president, Brian Riordan as vice president and Dave Pacheco as secretary/treasurer.

Congratulations guys! I guess Les will finally get the rest he deserves from so many years as president of the club. Thanks Les for all you've done for us!

## Club Equipment BBQ Party

We will be having a short launch this month. Around noon we will be heading over to Steve Ainsworth's house in Boulder City for a BBQ and equipment cleanup. Please bring your own food & drinks! We will supply the BBQ. All those who didn't get their cards punched for club service this last year will get the opportunity to get double punch credits for every hour put in at the cleanup. This is the last extension for those who need punches on your membership cards! Cleanup work will include sanding, oiling and painting launch pads as well as checking out all the wiring and electronics on our launch system.

will be back next year with a bigger, better rocket ship.

Keith has a mountain bike with a home brewed hybrid motor that never quite got going. But, it sparked Ky's interest. Apparently next year Ky will be having a head to head drag race with Keith on hybrid powered bicycles. Amazing!

### LDRS report

I've never been to LDRS which was held in Hartsel Colorado this year. But, when my in-laws moved to Colorado Springs I just couldn't resist going. LDRS was four days of solid launching with only two shutdowns, one for rain and the other for a flight-for-life helicopter to pick up Eddie who collapsed from altitude sickness while retrieving his rocket.

I spent four days selling out of my booth in the vendors area. About 500 people came to watch and fly and rockets flew constantly on all days. The neatest new motors flow were from Kosdon. His new Green Gorilla is something to see. Just imaging a Ron Urinsco Red Eye but with a bright green flame. Wow! Very cool. Also new was the Kosdon Skid Mark which reminded me of the Urinsco Spitfire on steroids. They thing was huge and very, very loud. Definitely a head turner. (Oh, rumor at LDRS is that NFPA will be making the Spitfire style motors illegal next year, bummer!).

Did I mention the PML dunking booth? It was loads of fun to watch Bruce Kelly, Frank Uroda, Shelly Long, and Jodi Michaelson get dunked. Jerry Irvine showed, and I personally thought they would sell out if they could ever get him in the booth.

Gary flew his M-turbo again for head turning results. That's a motor! I lost my Poltergeist twice only to find it hours later after walking miles searching for it. During my searches I found seven other rockets for

other flyers. I also got to see a nose cone under parachute land on a horse and start a stampede. That was something to see!

The best flight at LDRS was on an H motor. Randal from Salt Lake brought his flying chicken rocket up and put it on the pad. The thing looked like a four foot Big Bird with bright yellow feathers. Not only did the rocket look cool with the chicken head pointed up towards the sky, but the rocket flew with a spin. Each leg had a foot which acted as a rudder fin to cause the rocket to spin. Best of all, no parachute deployed and the chicken ended up burying its head in the sand just like an ostrich. It was side-splitting hilarious. I just hope that Ky got that one on video!

Other cool new rockets were from Retro Rockets. They rockets were made out of cedar or some such cool wood. I mean the entire rocket was made out of wood. The largest of these all wood rockets flew on a J motor for a perfect recovery. Very hip...

Contests at LDRS included altitude & closest to the pad. The altitudes were 5,000, 10,000 and 12,500. Closest to the pad contest was run by Rocketman. Prizes were given along with trophies for the winners.

The award ceremony and raffle were lots of fun. They had about \$5,000 worth of hardware, reloads, kits, and electronic gizmos there. I only bought \$5 in tickets and won twice. I took home several four and 7.5 inch tubes from Red Arrow Hobbies. Lots of other people won things like 98mm motors sets, 75mm motor sets, etc.

All in all, this month has been spectacular for rocketry. It was a definite contrast between the dusty desert of Black Rock and grassy hills of Colorado. Both places I love and can't wait to visit again.

## Leadership List

President..... Mike Alber • 871-7777  
Vice President ..... Brian Reordan • 434-6229  
Secretary/Treasurer . . Dave Pacheco • 751-3948  
Prefect ..... Ron Denton • 384-8233  
Newsletter Editor.... Brent McNeely • 873-8222

## Launch Dates

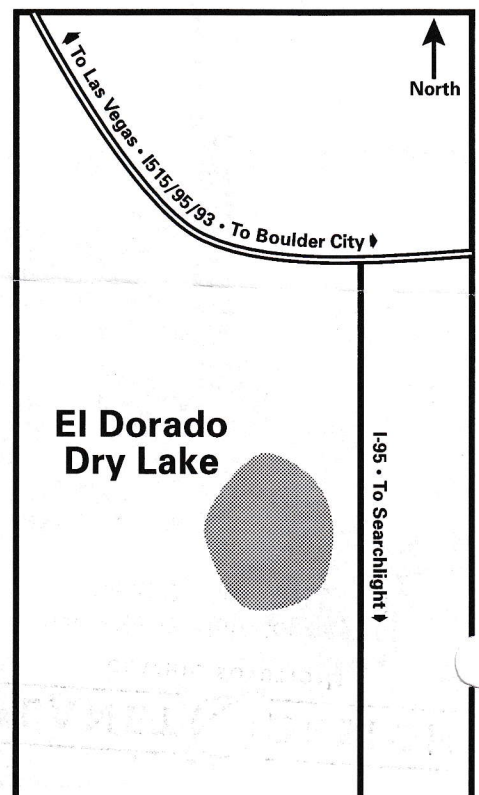
August 23..... El Dorado Dry Lake Bed  
September 20, 21 ..... Delamar Dry Lake Bed  
October 18..... El Dorado Dry Lake Bed  
November 29, 30..... El Dorado Dry Lake Bed  
December 20..... El Dorado Dry Lake Bed

## Meeting Dates

Every Thursday prior to a launch date



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