

TRIPOLI Vegas

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

October 1997

Delemar Launch

By: Brent McNeely

I've been to four Delemar launches since I got into high power rocketry. Each event just keeps getting better and better. When I showed up Saturday morning for this launch I was expecting a very small turnout, smaller than the May Delemar event anyway. I was pleasantly surprised when the turnout seems actually a bit better. And to top it off, the weather was absolutely great.

This launch was to be a little different for me. Two of my cousins had driven to Las Vegas from Evansville Indiana. My cousins Dan and John had never seen anything

larger than an Estes rocket go up. You can imagine their what they thought after Delemar. We drove up to the event in a caravan with my good friend Al Messing from California. We arrived at about 8:30 prior to the anyone launching anything. We got the sun shade up and the rockets out.

It was perhaps thirty of forty minutes or so until the first rocket went up, Dale Ainsworth's Arcas on an 'H' motor. My cousins were in awe. The thought the rocket looked like a small military missile taking off. We were entertained throughout the morning by Jim Hart and his new R/C

plane. Jim has gotten quite good at doing stunt tricks and perfect landings. Perhaps thirty minutes after Dale's rocket flew, the first high power rocket went up. I believe it was an eight foot rocket on a J135. Long burn motors always have an awe inspiring effect on people witnessing high power rocketry for the first time. The countdown was given over the P.A. system, the launch button was flipped, flames leapt from the motor, and for seven seconds the rocket accelerated into the clear blue sky. Several seconds later a parachute could be seen way, way up there. As you might expect, my cousins jaws dropped and all you heard for the entire flight was "wow!", "gee wiz," and "look at that thing go!" This experience was just the beginning of a great Delemar launch.

About 10:30 we saw a dust cloud coming our way from across the lake bed. It was a tan Hummer towing a trailer. We knew that Ricky Rocket had just arrived. And by the size of the trailer, he must have a large rocket to fly. We were right. About an hour later

Ricky opened the door to the trailer. Low and behold, inside was a huge rocket. We are talking about 22 inches in diameter, 19 feet tall, and 230 lbs. Frank Kosden was on the premises prepping an 'O' motor for the monster rocket. Did I mention that the entire rocket airframe was made out of kick drums from a local drum shop near Ricky's house. Appropriately, the rocket was named 'Jurassic Kick.' It was quite amazing. Throughout the day we watched on as the rocket construction continued. We would check occasionally between flights to see how the huge project was coming along.

We watched several large motor flights go up from Karl Bauman, Sue McMurray and crew. I believe their first flight of the day was on an AeroTech 'M' motor. There was a thunderous roar as the rocket lifted off the pad and leapt into the sky. I turned to my cousins and said, "well, what do you think of an 'M' motor?" They just shook their heads in disbelief. And it only got better. The next flight from Karl and Sue was on the new N2000. This time the rocket really ripped off the pad leaving the ground shaking, hearts pumping, and a long trail of exhaust. This was my fourth time to see an 'N' motor ignite. And strangely enough, from what I understand, there have only been four N2000 motors ignited.

The cousins, my friend Al, and a small group of curious spectators followed us out



From the Editor

I've mentioned for the last few months that a move for the web-site was coming up. Well it took place this last week. The new location will be permanent (as long as I'm doing the web site anyway). Please take a look at the site and send me email with things you'd like to see be put on it. I look forward to your comments!



about a mile from the launch site to a smooth area of the lake bed. We then set up our ground support to run rocket cars. I prepped my accelerometer, rocket motor, igniter, and rocket car. After we made sure the track was clear, we had a countdown. I threw the switch and the AeroTech I161 ignited. Flames jetted out the back and the car shot down the track until the parachute brought it to a stop a half mile away. We drove out and recovered the car. I took a quick reading of the accelerometer and got a reading of 178 mph. Not bad for a mid-range 'I' motor. Al Messing prepped his Speed Demon rocket car and made a run on an I284. Al spent the week before the launch on a metal lathe fabricating set of custom 80mm wheels. And he got to put them to a test. The I284 lit and the car zipped down the track. Although Al didn't have an accelerometer, however, we have been plotting the accelerometer data from several runs and are certain that his speed was 320 mph (plus or minus 2%). It seems that the speed was just too much for the parachute system, the car stripped the chute, broke the cable and continued rolling for about another 700 ft. beyond our normal stopping point. We drove out and retrieved the Speed Demon which was perfectly intact and still sitting on all wheels. Al was elated with the run.

While we were out running the rocket cars, we saw a few rockets go up. One of the rockets we saw was Les Derkovitz's all fiber glass rocket. What a nice flight. Several other rockets went up, but we couldn't identify whos they were. When we got back Ricky was putting the finishing touches on his Jurassic Kick. Jim Hart and Frank Kosden, myself and a few others helped take the

rocket out to the far pad. It was quite a chore to get the rocket onto the rail and raised into place. But we had help, about ten people assisted to get the rocket into place. After a bit more work, the electronics were armed and everyone backed off. There was a countdown from ten, and just before the sun set, flames flooded out of the Jurassic Kick as it crawled skyward. It was a short trip until the parachute was deployed and the rocket came back down. The altitude was under 1500 ft. Not exactly impressive for an 'O' motor flight, but quite something to see for a rocket of that size.

After that we were ready to call it a day. Those of us who were headed back to Vegas loaded up our cars and made a quick trip into Alamo to gas up before heading back. While there we ran into Steve Ainsworth and his son Dale. Seems their Jeep has problems with the water pump. We ended up giving them a ride back into Vegas.

Sunday was hardly worth mentioning. We drove back up from Vegas, arriving about 10:00 or so, just in time to help take down the pads. The wind was blowing and everyone gave up on launching rockets. It was too bad we didn't get another day like Saturday. But never-the-less, I felt that the launch was a great success. I just wish I would have had a chance to launch a rocket, maybe next time.

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Launch Dates

October 18..... El Dorado Dry Lake Bed
 November 29, 30..... El Dorado Dry Lake Bed
 December 20..... El Dorado Dry Lake Bed

Meeting Dates

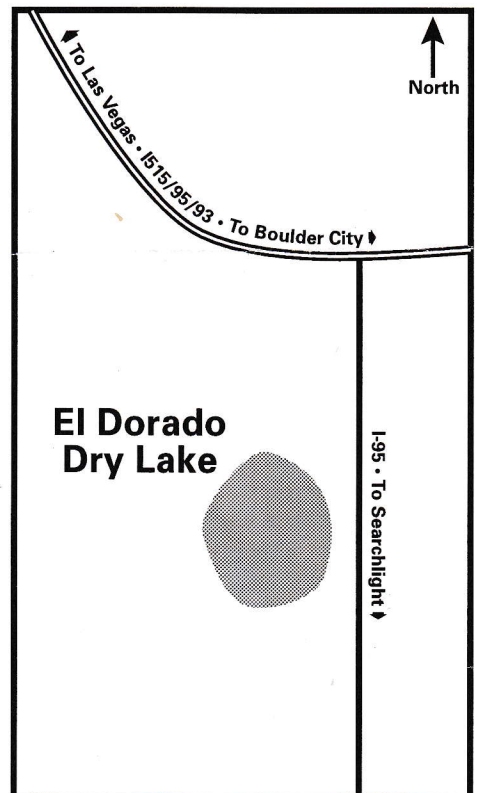
Every Thursday prior to a launch date

Octoberfest at Lucerne

Note: The Octoberfest launch at Lucerne Test Range California is October 17-19. Please consider attending this fest launch if you can't attend our local launch. We want support the LTR group in California.

MCNEELY & ASSOCIATES

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