

Tripoli Central California October Skies Newsletter



The Sun is rising in the East, dew is settling on the alfalfa and the sound of combines can be heard close by. As one surveys the landscape there is a large field of alfalfa with a few Swathers finishing up. The field to the east is alfalfa with small trees close by, south is just dirt with sparse weeds. A clear blue sky, this is a Rocketeers dream.

Welcome to the 2008 edition of Tripoli Central California's "October Skies" newsletter. All this starts on a Friday in Helm CA, just west of the Maddox Dairy.

First one to arrive as usual is "What's Up Hobbies" followed by Rick with the equipment trailer. Then members start to trickle in and setup begins. The Raimondi's, Jim Norton, Mike Sunseri and several others jump into the foray and presto we're setup.



It's Friday and that means EX day, always present for EX is James Marino along with several others who dabble in the field. But it's not just EX, you can also use commercial motors which lends to the day being busier than usual being EX and all. Making the day busy as usual was Christopher Raimondi, not only does he help with setup he has around 11 flights. Flying everything from a Bomarc on a B6 to a LOC Onyx with a F39, way to go Chris. Right behind him was Tom Lipscomb with 6 flights, flying his LOC Weasel, Norad Pro Max along with other rockets using everything between an E16 and an I161.

Now everyone is used to an easy pace on Friday but that's not always the case anymore, commercial motors are now in play. That means flyers have an extra day to try out new stuff and that is what Gordon Balena did. Gordon started the day out with a Performance Rocketry 5.5" Nike Smoke on a J275, the first of 2 Nike's for Gordon. After a successful flight he went on to prep his 7.5" Nike with a K1100. This was the Nike's first flight and all did not go as planned, there seemed to be problem with the chute during recovery. Damage seemed to be mostly to the nose cone as it was looked over. Mike Sunseri also had a nice flight with his 4" by 26" scratch built "Nuclear Strike" on 3 E9's. Charlie Wittman had a couple of flights using Marino's motors, one a J600 Blue the other a K950 Blue.

New to the EX foray was Brian Dalby flying his "Blue Thing" on a J2?? motor with lots of smoke n Stuff just pouring out of it. Ever-present James Marino lit up "PU38 Explosive Space Modulator" on an I258 Blue for a nice flight. Breck Lietz had his Giant Leap "Wasted Bux" ready for a K560 Swamp Gas motor, hit the button and the motor Cato'd. Sorry Breck but that's why they call it EX, better luck next May. There were other flights during the day which made for an interesting day, but Hey that's why they call it EX don't they?

At the end of the day all in all everyone seemed pretty happy all things considered. Yeah we had a couple of Cato's along with some recovery issues, but that's EX. With the launch equipment in order and a pretty good turnout for the day, I would say it was a success. As an added bonus we found out that there is now a new Rocket Co. out there. The name is "Quasar One Rockets" and

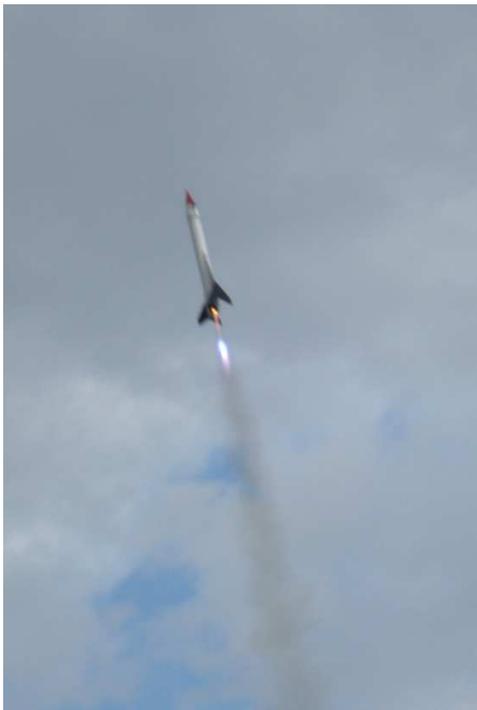
these are light, tuff, and unique rockets. If you enjoy flying low, mid, and multiple motors then these are the rockets for you. These rockets can be found at What's Up Hobbies and online through their store @ www.Quasaronerockets.com. These kits have been put together very well from the construction details to the decals provided so check them out. If you have questions about them I am sure they will be happy to answer them, Thanks Mike Sunseri and QuasarOne.



Saturday means a lot more activity with all the flyer's anxious to take to the skies. Taking in the activity were our usual crew that seems to man the day's activities. Alice and Laura took care of the flyer registrations while a host of volunteers RSO'd and LCO'd, Rod, Brian, Richard... We had too many volunteers to name so "Thanks to YOU all" that took the time to take care of business. A welcome surprise for the weekend was finding that Gary Moratz was attending and photographing for Extreme Rocketry. Bruce the Prefect of the club would also be a busy man this weekend, with 14 cert flights.



Starting our Saturday with "The National Anthem" it also includes a ceremonial launch. Gene Engelgau had his "Public Space Transport" loaded with a special chute in it from Fruity Chutes with a Stars and Stripes theme. It went up beautifully but there was a problem, the electronics may not have been armed and the ejection charge didn't go off. This resulted in a "Lawn Dart" landing, sorry Gene. Hopefully we'll see this patriotic chute in another rocket soon.



Pictured at left is "Public Space Transport" on it's way up. Videos of this flight as well as others can be found on Youtube using October Skies 2008 as one of the searches. Getting on the TCC mailing list is also a sure fire way to catch as well as share pics and videos.

Along with all our cert flights we had some unique rockets along with some interesting flights. Brian Weese is known for his scale work and scratch building abilities. This day he impressed us all once again with his "F-104 J" a silver custom built rocket with the correct markings in place. Loaded with a K695 it came in at 12# using motor ejection, great flight Brian. Darryl Paris came up with a 1 1/2" dia. Titan 3 cluster using 2-E-9 and a D-12. As you can see there was everything in the high to low power range for everyone to enjoy. Brian Dalby brought out his 3" Goblin with a Kosdon I motor; we don't see enough of these motors. Good to see Frank Kosdon is still out here enjoying launches and supporting the hobby, Thanks Frank. Then there's your drag racing events, one of them featured a father daughter race. The Lightfoots' had a custom 2"x 40" on a F50 going up against an Elipse + 3"x 81" with an I300T. Yes you guessed right the F50 took the race, nothing like a little friendly competition.

Watching M's go off always seems to really perk up a crowd, so on to some M flights. Gary Vielbaum & Frank Lucchelli brought out "The Ultimate Tool", a 10" dia 11' tall 57# beauty. Painted perfectly to match a Mac Tools theme it held an M1419 along with Missile Works, GWIZ Delux, GPS flight, and Walston tracking. The up part was great but there was a problem during ejection resulting in body damage, at this time we don't know if the electronics survived. Up next was James Dougherty's 1/2 scale Patriot 7.5"x 10'. This beast came in at 70# with a M2500 Blue Thunder and all the goodies, GWIZ-LCX, ARTS2, ARTS2 -GPS. Sporting a beautiful paint job by Rod Lovely this rocket was almost too purdy to launch, but that's not how James' rolls. This beast rocked off the pad to an altitude of 7K feet with a landing to match, soft and sweet with the main at 1900'.



Pictured at left is Gary & Franks V2
At right is James' 1/2 scale Patriot

Not to be outdone by the big boys Jim Norton and Kevin McGrath brought their projects loaded with the ever popular airstarts. Kevin had his 8" LOC Bruiser painted red/yellow up for its first flight. He placed it out at the away cell (Area 41); the Bruiser weighing in at 17# came to life with no problems. Lit up first was a J460T with 2ea. I112J for the airstarts, all taken care of by the GWIZ MC. Great flight Kevin. Jim Norton was also ready to take center stage with his "Spontaneous Combustion" a Polecat modded kit. Loaded with a K805MG for the initial liftoff, airstarts were taken care of using 2ea. I350SS. The altitude Spontaneous attained was 4204'. Perfect flite electronics took in all the details with the main coming out at 1K', great flight Jim. These were some spectacular flights that entertained us all, thanks guys.

Fun thing about a 3 day launch is that everyone seems to try and get an extra flight in for the day. We had a lot of fliers with multiple launches. Bill Kellerman had 3 flights one of them with his Public Enemy 4" kit on a H112J, Matt Lawrence right alongside him with his Bullpup using a H148R. Breck Leitz too had 3 different rockets one a Preying Mantis with a J295 and a Sudden Rush on an I295. Andy Hansom had 3 flights with 2 of them being scratch builds, "Kraken" and "Mr. Whiskers" using I285R motors. Richard King had 2 flights, 1st his Polecat V2 on a K270, the other "Big Daddy". Big Daddy has always been fun to watch and had always returned, till now. At last check with the crowd it was possibly seen in 2 different directions, hope Big Daddy finds its way home soon Richard.

Scott Lippold had 2 flights with his LOC kit mentioning that he was looking into electronics, OK Scott let us know when you have them. Rod Lovely had 2 flights, the Honest John being the one that kept us on our toes. The takeoff was awesome but just after apogee we knew something was wrong, the main didn't deploy. Usually the nosecone and body come down separate, this time the main came out just before it hit the ground. Rod said it looked worse than it was and could be rebuilt, but probably at a later date.

Kelly of San Luis Obispo flew "Star Dreamer" on a J500, writing in the notes "Wanted to dedicate this flight to her Grandfather who inspired me to get where I am today". Kelly I am sure your Grandfather is proud of you. Jonathan DuBose flew "QLZ" a sustainer 3' x 75" with a K270 with GWIZ ADEPT and OZARK on board. Drew Gleason had his 5.5" Nike Polcat loaded with a K550, it had some recovery issues causing a fin to crack upon landing. It'll fly again with a little bit of work, hopefully by Dairy Aire if not sooner. Jonathan Anberg flew "The Sting" on a K695R; you gotta love those Redline motors. Cal Poly was represented well by the students in their program always making things interesting for us.



Spontaneous Combustion the business end

Low and Mid power was busy all day long, there were over 80 flights on the day. Matt Travesse had 7 flights on the day flying everything from a Ninja to a Fatboy on B-6's to D12's. Jim Norton had his "Triple E" LOC kit using 3-E-9's, while Rod Ohmen had his "Baby Bottle" ready to go. The Baby Bottle was fun to watch, who would've thought about launching a Baby Bottle? Norm Newlon also brought something different to the table, "Spudnik". Yup you got it right, Mr. Potato head going up in a Sputnik fashion with long rods to hold him off the ground. Talk about a creative bunch, always thinking and entertaining. Robert Zylstra was amongst the frequent flyers with "White Rushin" burning an E30. Mike & Maria Baily joined up to fly their Cherokee 3D and Big Daddy, while Merle Hagen flew his Cirrus Dart loaded with a Perfect Flite Alt 15K. . Karl Braumheckel had "Sky Stinger" a parallel 3 stage rocket, A-10, A-10, to C-6 definitely an interesting flight.

With so many flights we want to thank everyone that came out to fly Saturday, it was a lot of fun. With everyone retreating to their campsites or packing up to go you never saw such a happy tired bunch. Just when you would think the day is over you look to see one very busy person, Jack of What's Up Hobbies. That store just never seems to close, lucky for us.

Saturdays Cert. Flights

Paul Geitner w/LOC Iris I154 level 1 successful

Danny Jack w/ Giant Leap kit J350W level 2 successful altitude 5380'

Matt SLO w/ Custom built Rocketstar level 2 successful

Steve Sawyer Custom built Stretch Magnum 6" dia 8' long 26# M1297W w/ ART2, Perfect flite Mini alt, Red Bee, altitude of 10'500' Successful

Patrick Kellas w/Aerotech Sumo H128W in flight failure and recovery failure 1st attempt

Patrick Kellas w/Aerotech Sumo H128W level 1 successful 2nd attempt

Suzie Paris w/4" kit I229T level 1 successful

Jeran Ott w/PML 4" kit I220W level 1 successful

Dwight Lee w/ Custom built Event Horizon I357T level 1 successful

Sunday's tend to be a bit more laid back, most of the anxiety has cleared the air and everyone seems more relaxed. That is once you get at least 2-3 cups of coffee in you along with some breakfast. One of the nice things about waking up at a launch is smelling all the food being cooked. Bacon and sausage with potatoes seems to fill the air. There just seems to be something special about waking up to food with the crisp cool clean air about you.

On to the flyers, up early was Gene Engelgau with his Talon 4 on a K550 making it to 5K'. Cliff Sojourner put his Mustang up twice on G-80's, an APT Hawk on an J800 and his BSD Iris on a K270. Way to go Cliff. Bill Kellerman returned for 2 more flights as did Jerry Murhpy with his "Purple Sky Flyer", nice flights guys. Mike Baily had 2 really nice flights, a K-185 in "Competer3" and his LOC Vulcanite on a J500MG. Watching that Vulcanite go off on a J500MG was something else, now you see it now you don't. A serious no nonsense flight for sure.

Talk about a busy body on Sunday, here's Hunter Elloway with 7 flights for the day. Flying 2 Estes rockets on B & C motors and a LOC Weasel with an F-22. Then topping it off with a Mirage on F & G motors and an Aura with E & F motors. David W. flew his Big Daddy on an F42 & G78, right behind him was Jianna of Fresno with 2 flights of her own. The Rocha Bros. made it out as well, Alden with "Batso" a LOC Onyx modded kit and Dylan with a 3"x 56" scratch build. Martin Hall made it out to the pads with Razzmatzz a 2 1/2" by 4 1/2" scratch build on a K185W, talk about a nice flight. Making sure it came home he loaded it with a Big Red Bee and a Perfect Flite MAWD to ensure all went as planned, good job Martin. Nathan Schmitt brought out a custom 1.1" by 24" scratch built rocket with a G77-10R. To keep track of it it too had a Big Red Bee along with a Pico Alt. to record the event. Brian Dalby aka Gilligan loaded up "Superstarblaster" with 2ea H165R's, I still don't understand why they called it a "Heads Up Flight".



Ashley Lightfoot was multitasking too, flying his Elipse+ along with announcing the days activites. Karl and Andrew Baumheckel combined for 8 flights on the day. Karl with 3 one of them being a scratch built 2.1" x 60" rocket loaded with a G71. Andrew had 5 flights all low power but 3 of the 5 on scratch builds, now that's a family that flies together. Chris Uffelman flew a Vaughn Bros "Blobbo" on a C6 and a StrongArm on a G64. Manish Singh had a Madcow kit named "Ducky" out twice on a G38 & G80, nice work Manish. By this time some people are starting to wind down, others are trying to get just one more flight in. Some of the last minutes flights are always worth waiting for.

Paul Avery could be seen working on his project during the day in between helping fellow flyers get their projects ready. His Project was "Push the Button Max" its a 10" Thumper kit with a Blue/Yellow paint job holding an M1315. Making sure it would come home safely he loaded it with 2 Perfect Flite altimeters checking it 3 times from what I could see. Paul had a picture perfect flight showing us no details were left unchecked. Next up was Rod Lovely with his 5.5" custom Patriot on a K250, love those long burn motors. Cal Poly San Luis Obispo was once again well represented, they always seem come up with unusal configurations. It's always inspiring to see the enthusiasm and potential these students possess.



Sunday's Certification Flights

Tyler Ritchie custom 2" x 50" 3# rocket on a J350W congrats

John Stenger custom 2.5" x 8' 6# rocket on a J350W congrats

Rick Miller Polecat Goblin 4" on a J350W congrats

Anthony Young PML kit on an H128 congrats

Karl Baumheckel custom 4" rocket on a H73J congrats

Now that the weekends activities have concluded and the teardown process starts, I began to think about the weekend. At home and work you hear about the economy, the election and other news related items. But when you get away to a weekend launch it all seems to go away, leaving you with time to spend with friends and fellow hobbyists. Being able to leave that all behind for a weekend, Now that in my book is like a Mastercard moment, ok maybe partially is was. Thanks again to our crew and vendors who make all this possible. What's Up Hobbies, QuasarOne Rockets for joining in the foray, Gary Moratz for photographing, and "Do Right" BBQ for feeding us Saturday and Sunday.

Always on our Thank You list is the "**Maddox Dairy**," for without them where would we be?

Flight totals for the weekend, Saturday yielded 79 low-mid power flights with the majority being F-G motors. High power for Saturday was 50 flights. Sunday had 42 low-mid power motors with the majority being G's. High power was 38 flights.

If you are interested in a picture of your rocket, or your rocket with you contact Gary Moratz @

gamoratz@earthlink.net www.rocketography.com

Thanks again and happy flying.

Ben Sandoval

The following photos are from Jim Norton



