

URRF-2 Launch Report

The second Upstate Research Rocketry Festival launch was held on the weekend of June 27th-29th in Potter, New York on the Torrey Farm. This has been the site of two LDRS's and numerous other launches over the years. In what seemed to be a replay of the first LDRS held here, on the day before set-up, they got two inches of rain in Penn Yan. However, by Friday the field had dried out enough to allow car traffic on it without getting stuck, as the truck that delivered the porta-potties had. A few weeks before, many parts of the valley we were in had been flooded and the crops that were planted were ruined. The field we were flying on was planted in onions, which had all been plowed under and replanted. So we were walking on onions all weekend, and the sickening sweet smell was almost overpowering on Friday until the field dried out more.

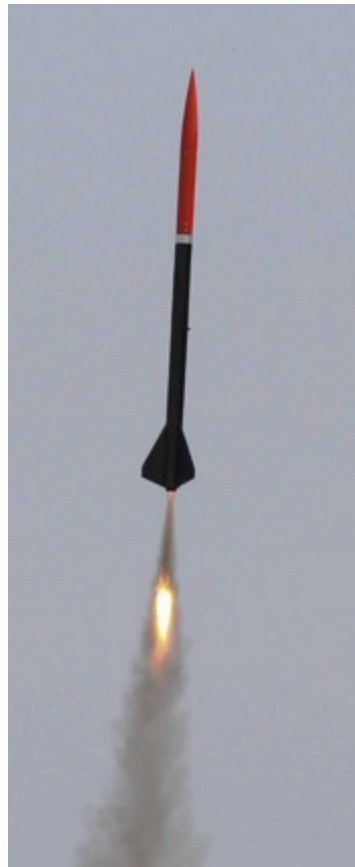


Mark Coburn flew his extended LOC EZI-65 (above left) with a Research J340 using NASSA K2 Fast propellant to an altitude of 2500'. He later flew his LOC I-Roc (above center) with an AT J570 to an altitude of 2200'. He flew his 3" HyperLOC (above right) with an AT I284 to an altitude of 3420'. He also flew his LOC Magnum with a Research K350 motor using NASSA K2 Slow propellant, which flew to 2200'. Mark calls all his rockets "Bug Juice" as the decal on his rockets shows.

Many vendors showed up including Performance Hobbies, Animal Motor Works, Wildman and others. There was a food vendor selling hot dogs, hamburgers, brats and chicken, and had a Saturday roast beef dinner special. Another vendor sold lemonade, so there was always plenty to eat and drink.



Andrew Kleinhenz flew his 5.5" Super Saffron (above left) with an AT J540 Redline to an altitude of 3263'. He also flew his 4" Blue Bird (above right) with an AT J315 Redline to an altitude of 3363'. Andrew's friend Bret flew an Estes Pro-Series Leviathan with an AT G64 White Lightning only to have it land in the trees next to the flight line. Fortunately it was recovered undamaged.



Chris Pearson poses with his EX-perimental 3.0 (left) which flew with a 54mm Research J480 motor and flew to 4100'. His HyperLOC EX-treme 2.1 (center) flew on a 54mm Research K900 to 4800'. He lost the nose cone in flight but it was later discovered in the lost and found. All of Chris' Research flights were done using NASSA K2 Fast propellant.

The weather for the weekend was perfect, with mostly cloudless, blue skies, temps in the 80's and light winds, but

they did pick up a bit in the afternoon both Saturday and Sunday. Fortunately the winds were blowing west to east across the field, which helped recovery.



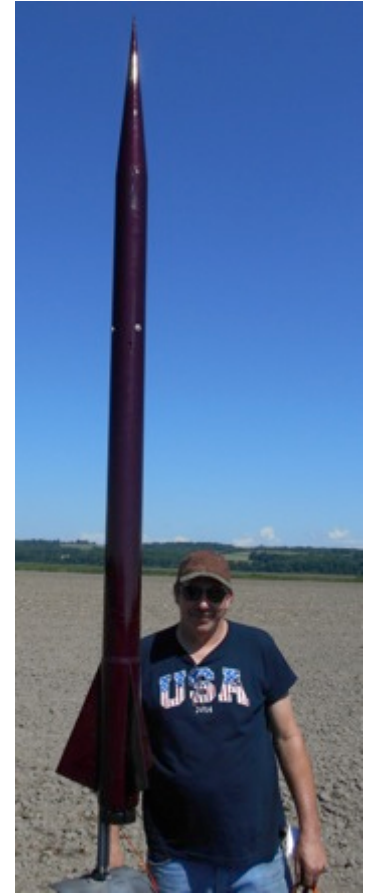
Jim Backlas and Barry Lynch of LOC/Precision pose with Chris' HyperLOC EX-treme 3.0 (left) all-fiberglass 22 pound rocket which flew with a 75mm Research L1175 and went to 7100'. It deployed its main chute at apogee but was still recovered on the field.

I was surprised that more Skybusters members didn't attend the launch. In attendance were Mark Coburn, Steve Eves, Andrew Kleinhenz, Barry Lynch, Chris Pearson and David Sears. Andrew also brought his friend Bret Rolan. Veteran rocketeer Jim Backlas once again drove his VW camper bus up from Lake Chautauqua to observe the launch and cook breakfast for many of us.



David Sears flew his 4" Wildman Darkstar DD three times, first with a CTI J760 White Thunder (left) which flew to 3000', then with a 54mm Research K700 with Better White Lightning propellant which flew to 3600' (center), and then with a K700 White which flew to 3980'. He also flew his extended LOC Big Nuke 3M modified for L3 flights, (which he flew at the GLRMR launch) with a 75mm Research M1800 with Better White Lightning propellant, which flew to 7500'.

The range was set up with two sets of high-power cells (left and right) so they could load one side while the other was launching. At first they seemed to have past problems with their launch system ironed out, until they went to fly the first M powered rocket, and all three M powered rockets at the away cell took off at the same time. Very spectacular, but I'm sure there were a few pissed off fliers. They also had a very confusing pad numbering system that baffled more than one Launch Control Officer, resulting in a number of wrong rockets being flown. The PA on the range also left much to be desired. Many times we couldn't hear even the count down, and we weren't that far from the range head.



Steve Eves flew his 7.5' 10' long scratch-built Black Magic (above left) with a 54mm Research L1860 and had a nice flight to 2600'. This was the first time I actually got a photo of it! His 4" all-fiberglass Army Hawk missile (above center) flew on a 38mm I420 with motor ejection for a perfect flight. The Skydart (above right) another 4" all-fiberglass rocket was first flown on a 75mm Research K455 Purple and hit 3400'. It was also later flown on a 75mm Research K777. The third flight was with a 54mm Research K900 which blew the aft closure at ignition, resulting in a 20' flight, shattering the nozzle and causing some damage to the nose cone. Steve also flew his 25 year-old LOC Bruiser EXP on a 54mm Research K700. All of Steve's Research flights with one exception were done using NASSA K2 Fast propellant.

There was a standing waiver to 10K feet, with call-ins to 15K feet. If you were expecting your rocket to hit anywhere near 10K, you had to let the range know. All the rockets that needed to go to an away cell were transported by a range truck, which eliminated the need to carry heavy rockets by hand nearly ½ mile to the away cell pads. There was another pad even further away which is where the complex and one O powered rocket of the launch were flown.

Gary Dickinson and Bill Good from Tripoli Mid-Ohio flew a two-stage rocket with a cluster of three Research M motors on the bottom stage and a single M for the second stage. The cluster ignited in unison for a perfect lift-off but the second stage failed to ignite upon separation. Fortunately the recovery systems in both stages worked and the sections were recovered undamaged.

The last rocket to be flown at the launch was a large two-stage Nike-something the owner was prepping at the last minute. I walked by his work table just 10 minutes before the waiver was to close and he was just ripping open the plastic bag to assemble the first-stage motor. The first stage was only a K motor, and because of the weight of the rocket, the motor only took it a couple of hundred feet into the air before burnout and second stage separation. Unfortunately, the second stage did not ignite and although the first stage recovery system deployed successfully, the second stage one did not and the upper stage crashed. Most of the people had already left the launch field so not too many people saw this rocket fly.

Fortunately for everybody, the rain that was closing in from the southwest held off until about 30 minutes after the launch ended, sparing many people a soaking and muddy feet.

It has been announced that LDRS-34 will be held at the Potter, NY field next year, so start building your rockets now!