

Central Valley Rocket News  
Tripoli Central California  
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Bob Parks' Piston Test rocket takes off on a 1/4A3. Photo by Jim Norton

By Jim Norton

Photos by Jim Norton, Aaron Hagadorn and Adam Levi

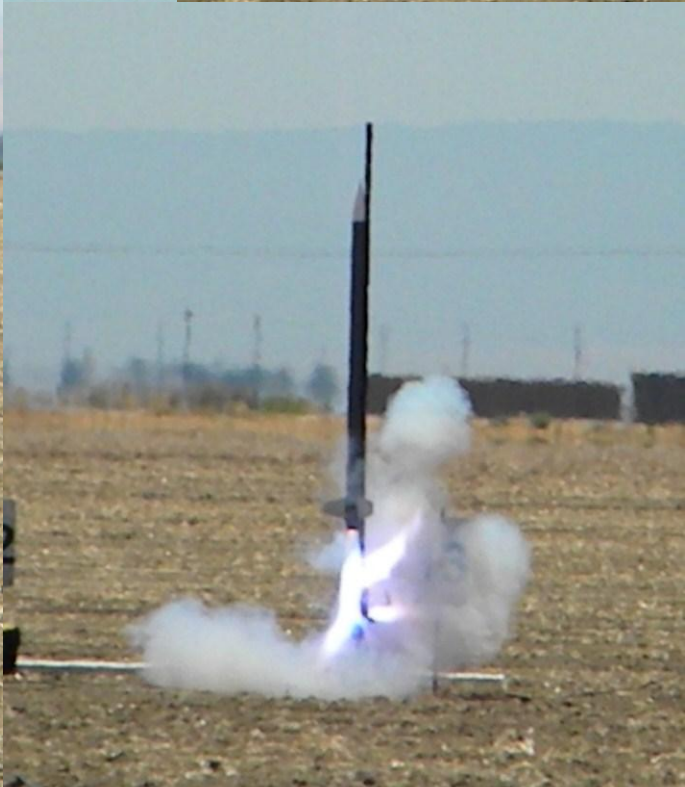
A group of dedicated rocket enthusiasts braved the heat and the bugs to launch 34 flights into the clear California sky. Among the more interesting flights were those made by Bob Parks of San Jose who came to test some of his competition rockets. He flew his Whistling Death, which used helicopter recover, twice using C6-3s. The rocket flew great, but appeared to be upside-down as it returned to earth (page 7). He made five tests of his piston launch system, which used magnets to hold the rocket down until pressure had built up. The rocket carried a model airplane altimeter to record data, and Bob used a high speed camera so that the flights could be analyzed in detail. There were some initial problems with the rocket getting off the piston, but these were corrected by changing the way the igniters were used.

This month's contest, which was to see how high a rocket could get on G impulse, produced just three entrants but some interesting flights. Jimmy Franco managed to get 313 feet out of Estes Sidewinder powered by a C6-5. Robert Zylstra went for the multi-stage approach, loading his 3F Geewiz with three F39 motors. Unfortunately the second stage was never found, and the top stage motor never lit. While the upper stage was recovered it was damaged, so the flight to 2252 feet was disqualified. Jim Bassham of Yuba City had the winning flight, sending his Have Blue to 3096 feet on a G75. A rematch is scheduled for the September launch. You might want to use a bigger motor Jimmy.

Rob Diehl of Clovis flew his black Madcow Patriot on a H123 skidmark motor in a level 1 certification attempt. He also flew a red Cheetah on a G80. Bill Taylor of San Francisco tried to get his Level 1 NAR certification using his Physics Wins rocket, an unpainted Wildman kit. On his first flight, using a H225, the parachute did not deploy. He tried again using an I motor and an enhanced ejection charge, but the rocket drifted out of the launch field and had not been found at the end of the launch. James Dougherty flew his 4 inch Nike smoke on a J360 skidmark motor. Aaron Hagadorn flew his Pterodactyl Jr. rocket on an I303 blue motor to 6464 feet in an attempt at the mile high contest. He also flew his burgundy and orange See Ya rocket on an I303. Michael Levi flew his 6 feet tall Predator from Always Ready on a L990. Jimmy Franco of Selma flew his Terminus Eldorado on a J575 and his Architecture of Aggression on 2 E20s. His son Chris Franco flew his black and yellow Carbon Heights on an I540. Ben Sandoval flew his scratch built Monster rocket on an I212. Will Swenson, Ron Swenson, Kenneth Powell and Ryan Coleman also flew rockets.

Aaron Hagadorn photos:





## Poll question of the month

Do you love flying rockets enough to drive out to the middle of nowhere to a giant dirt field in 103 degree heat just for a few seconds of joy?

Jimmy Franco

Yes, I do not only for rockets but to see and be with all the different personalities, the camaraderie and to admire the love of the sport from everyone. It was miserably hot and to see everyone trying to beat a record, certify a level, test flight to see if there rocket can withstand certain forces, children getting so excited when there flight went well and that guy with his pressure thingy was nothing but passion and love for the sport.

Jack G

I could not think of a better way to spend a day heat index does not matter. We are all friends there to help everybody. I would have to say even with the heat I managed to pull off to great flights and both recovered great. We had some great flights yesterday and some slight mishaps. Do not get discouraged we all been there. Learn and keep going. We also had a good turn out for the temps that we endured. KEEP FLYIN!!!!!!!

Aaron

My car thermometer reported 108 degrees as the outside temperature out on the dirt.

Our L-engine cataclysm was even more fun cause, well actually shreds are kind of satisfying is some Neanderthal way.

Here's a photo of the Predator going up on a L990-blue-streak yesterday two seconds before it came apart (son Adam caught this photo). That rocket is seven feet and the flame is almost as long. Altimeter reported that it made it to Mach 1.6 before the top half of the rocket flew off. I got all the pieces back and we'll be flying it again after some major repairs.

Michael



Great hobby, great folks, fire, smoke, a few things going boom... what could be better ;-)

GW

Honestly I had second thoughts Friday while recovering from Thursday, boy was it hot. But even my wife knew I'd go before I did LOL. Had a great time. Specially launching my Gnome, or should I say my Sons Gnome. Looking forward to August, lots to do between now and then. Till then.

Yeah, thanks everyone for coming out, it was a great time. You guys are all so cool and so is the launch so I guess it balances out even in 100+ weather :-)

You Betcha! It was my first time flying, and I LOVED it!! Can't wait to come back...

I live in SF and drove out there for the fun! It was GRRRRRREAT !

- Bill

Of course!

I didn't even fly and had fun!

Richard

Yes, I didn't fly anything either and still had fun.

Jim Norton

Short answer, YES!

Yup-yes- right on-in a heart beat- LOVE IT

Jim Norton Photos:



