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Dallas Area Rocket Society ("DARS")

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A Dallas Area Rocket Society Production

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A Newsletter of the Dallas Area Rocket Society



DARS
NAR Section #308
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Dallas Area Rocket Society ("DARS")

S4S 2005
By James Gartrell



Member - National Association of Rocketry ("NAR").

Special points of interest:

- The feature article on Shoot For the Stars spans 4 pages, but there was a lot to cover. It was a fantastic launch!
- Gary Briggs fills us in on the Fall Classic activities as they transpired at the November Turkey Shoot launch. See page 5.
- Check out the specs of Semroc's latest rocket, the upscale Laser-X. See page 7.
- I really appreciate the articles I've gotten lately. I'm sure some folks are getting tired of mine, so your articles are very much appreciated. ;-) I have a few more I've received that will go in the next couple of issues, but I could sure use some more. It has been a while since we've had a good build article. Hint! Hint! Certainly someone's built a rocket lately! ;-)

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Wow!! Woohoo!! Awesome!! That's probably the best way to start this article. DARS' Shoot for the Stars ("S4S") 2005 launch was one of the best launches I have ever attended, and Blake Gartrell seconds that. Actually, I think he said it first! Don Magness was launch director and should be applauded for one of the finest rocket launches hosted in recent times. I don't know who helped him with this, but I'm sure Terri, Don's wife, put a lot of effort into the event. As a matter of fact, she was there for both days of the launch despite having just gotten out of the hospital earlier in the week. So, a big round of applause is also warranted for Terri and anyone else who assisted. I know for sure that Jack and Suzy Sprague put in a lot of time towards the event, as Suzy assisted Terri both days at the check-in table and Jack was always there to make sure all of the equipment worked properly. It was a jam-packed two day event, with something for everyone who enjoys rockets.

Cayl Rogers probably remembers this moment. He displays his 1st place Iron Rocketeer trophy and the rocket that won it for him. He will probably also remember that beautiful Windom field and great weather, too.
Photo by James Gartrell



Saturday's events featured the Iron Rocketeer build and fly session, with a free rocket kit provided by Squirrel-Works for anyone under 18 years of age. In addition were two day events for Cochran flight competition, Squirrel-Works Red Baron glide competition and Red River Rocketry P-Chuter spot landing competition. This, all in addition to the regular flights that come with beautiful clear skies and almost no wind on both days. Heck, Jim Parker put up one of his rockets on an M-motor that touched down just over a hundred yards away from the launch pad! Two near-perfect days for either sport or competition flying. But wait, there's more.

Yep, besides Don having committed to manage the normal launch and 4 contests, he agreed with Royce Frankum to complete his Level 2 certification flight. You see, Don and Royce got their Level 1

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1) certification at the same time last year, and Royce was ready to make the next step. Now the stage for S4S 2005 was properly set.

Day 1 started out sort of lazily with not much flying, so Don and Royce decided to put up their L2 cert flights. Lucky for Don, as that was probably the only time he had available. But their L2 flight is reserved for another story. After their flight, our time was

due for assistance on the range. It was noon.

Folks were steadily putting rockets into the air by then, but before I started range duty I stopped by and snapped a couple of pics of two new rockets John Dyer was testing. I can't wait to do the beta test on those. Woohoo! Both are very interesting models, not your typical design. Nice complements to a growing list of rockets available from Red River

Rocketry. If you haven't checked out his website, you really need to give it a click. The Predator is available on the site now. I flew mine in a drag race with John later in the day—I lost. The base coat on his Predator was gray; whereas, I used the white as pictured on the face card of the kit. Both colors look great on the rocket, but I think the gray must be faster. ;-) Anyway, check out John's site at www.redriverrocketry.com

Chaz Russell was also there with several Semroc rockets he'd put together. They were beautifully finished and impressive in flight. I know he flew at least one of Semroc's SLS kits on an F-motor. Wow! You need to check those out. The SLS kits are upscales of the standard kit. It's hard not to think Centuri when you see someone toting around one of the Semroc kits, especially when Chaz is that someone. He could very well slip in an original Centuri kit if you don't watch closely. If you enjoy stories of the early days of rocketry, stop by and visit with him if you see him at the next launch. Not only does he

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Left—My beta test version of John Dyer's Red River Rocketry Predator.
Right—The Predator takes to the skies! Sweet! It is one fantastic model. Nice stable flights and the angle of the fins lessens the potential for damage on recovery.
Photos by James Gartrell.



Below, left—A sneak peek at one of John Dyer's Red River Rocketry test rockets on the left next to my Squirrel-Works Callisto.

Below, right—Chaz places one of his Semroc rockets on the pad. Nice model, Chaz!
Photos by James Gartrell.



Dallas Area Rocket Society

-- NAR Section #308

Currently expires: _____
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Name: _____

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New Membership OR Renewal

Single Membership (\$10/yr) (Make checks payable to DARS)

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Member of: NAR # _____ or / and TRIPOLI # _____

Certification Level: 0 1 2 3 (circle one) Certification Level: 0 1 2 3 (circle one)

DARS event notification by: _____ OR phone call at this number _____
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Mail to: DARS Membership, c/o Suzy Sprague, 1104 Ellard Dr., Hickory Creek, Texas 76210-3900

For additional information contact Suzy at 940-321-2132 or 940-497-7009

DARSAPP.doc revised September 2004



The Dallas Area Rocket Society is a non-profit chartered section of the National Association of Rocketry ("NAR"). Its purpose is to promote the hobby of consumer rocketry in the Dallas/Ft. Worth metropolitan area.

Membership in DARS is open to all interested persons. Membership in NAR is encouraged, but not required. Annual dues are \$10.00 for individuals and \$15.00 for families. The entire family, including children, are welcomed to the meetings. Fill out and send the application, above, to join or renew your membership.

The club meets on the first Saturday of each month at 1:00 p.m.

Meetings are held in Plano, TX at:

Plano Late Night Bingo
1805 Ave K (18th and K St.)
Plano, TX 75074

Exit off Hwy 75 to East Plano Parkway (just north of George Bush Turnpike—Hwy 190) and go east, turn left on K St., and turn right into the shopping center just north of 18th St.

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DARS EVENTS:

- Stay tuned! The full 2006 launch calendar will be included in the next issue.

DID YOU KNOW?

Semroc Astronautics has released their latest model, an upscale Laser-X!! It's a whopping 38.3 inches long; 2.34 inch body diameter; laser cut through the wall basswood fins; pre-slotted tube; decals, etc, etc. Woohoo!!



Stay connected! All of us will reach greater heights with your attendance at the club meetings.

near future. Additionally, there was a drawing at the end of the day for contest participants and Richard Benavides, Doug Sams, and Curtis Baumgardner claimed prizes in the



drawing. Curtis showed up Sunday, with his prize rockets completed (painted and decaled) and ready to fly!

On Sunday the weather and attendance improved although we now had winds out of the north at 10-20 MPH. Overall, the flying conditions had improved immensely, and there were several great low and high power flights throughout the day. The contest still only had 7 competitors, but those competitors



brought out 33 models for Sunday. Of those 33 models, Dave Schaefer brought out 12, John Dyer added 7, Gary Briggs and Chas Russell both entered 4, and Doug Sams entered 3. We also had our first female competitor with the LD, Annie Scheidemantle, entering an original 60's Centuri Scorpion. The voting remained close throughout the day, and in the end, bonus points played a role in several of the victories.

In the 60's category, Curtis B., once more reigned supreme with his nicely painted Big Bertha, gaining the most votes for the 16 models entered in the category. In the 70's category, there were 10 models entered, and Gary Briggs took the win with his Centuri F-16, displayed with a Centuri Servo Launcher. In the 80's category 2 models battled it out, with Dave Schaefer's Estes Starship Nova edging out John Dyer's category winner from the previous day. In the



Open category it was the Dave and Doug show. Five upscale models that included 2 Midgets, a Falcon, and a set of Estes Classics, cloned from a Big Betty sale at Hobby Lobby, filled out the field. Doug created a Sprint, an Apogee II, and a Midget from the Big Betty basics. In the end, the difference was a beautiful flight that Dave put up with the Falcon, which clinched the open category. In the contestants drawing, Gary Briggs, Doug Sams, and Curtis Baumgardner took home the additional prizes.



We certainly want to pass along a big THANK YOU to all of our prize contributors: Semroc Astronautics (www.semroc.com), Sunward Aerospace (www.sunward1.com), Squirrel-Works (www.squirrel-works.com), HobbyTown-Plano, Red River Rocketry (www.redriverrocketry.com), and Thrustline Aerospace (www.thrustaero.com). The Fall Classic was a bunch of fun, and it has been suggested that it become an annual event at one of the September-November launches. Additionally, there is some buzz about a contest very similar to this one at NSL this spring. Stay tuned, and dust off those

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have some really nice models, he is another one of those guys that's a walking history book when it comes to the early days of rocketry. He's sort of a shy type, but I guarantee he has some very interesting stories if you can get him talking. :-)

I really do enjoy the smaller models, but there were a couple of high-power guys on the field who also caught my attention. The renowned Jim Parker, Blake's hero, put up a couple of flights on Saturday that were nothing short of spectacular—a norm for Mr. Parker. Also, Rich Krol was there flying some of the Hyper-Tek stuff. Although one flight sounded like the typical fa., well you know what I mean, another sounded like the usual composite flight. I asked Rich what made the difference. I believe he noted that the nozzle design could be changed to a longer burn than typical, which made the difference in the sound of the thrust. Very interesting!

I spotted Jim Parker coming up the flight line carrying one of his high power rockets. I think it had an M-1315 motor in the back. He laid it down by the safety check-in table, so I strolled over to take a couple of photos. Man, the business end of that rocket was impressive. The only thing more impressive was the flight itself. It must have gone up at least 10,000 feet. All you could see was a bright speck in the sky when the initial ejection charge went off. Then, slowly it came more and more into focus until about 1,000 feet when the main ejected. Wow! Jim just had to walk over by the trees at the back of the field to retrieve it. A much shorter walk than normal for a flight to that altitude. Blake said, "How does he do that? Sends a rocket out of sight and then lands it about a football field away from where it took off. That's amazing!" Yep, simply amazing. That's something I've seen Jim accomplish on more than one occasion. Anyway, both days were

terrific for flying whatever you wanted, but the contests were the highlight of both days.

While the Cochran, Red Baron and P-Chuter contests spanned both Saturday and Sunday, my favorite contest was the Saturday only Iron Rocketeer Challenge. Squirrel-Works had put together some generic rocket kits ranging from BT-20 to BT-60 tube sizes that included a balsa nose cone plus a whole package of parts and templates that would allow the challenger to put together any model rocket design he or she could create. There was even a couple of packs that included parts to put together a two-stage rocket, although I don't think anyone decided to take that challenge. Nevertheless, about noon, several under-eighteen rocketeers took on the challenge and selected a rocket pack of their choosing, and on the field, converted their vision into a flying model rocket. Each contestant's rocket was judged based upon originality of design, flight

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Bottom—Left photo: Jim Parker, headed to safety check-in. The photo at right shows the business end of the rocket—nothing but motor.

Photos by James Gartrell.



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 worthiness, and time to complete. Over the remainder of the afternoon the youngsters would bring their rocket up for judging and then fly them as family and fellow rocketeers cheered them on. All of the rockets were just fantastic, and each contestant was hoping they could win first place. Don had designed three different trophies of different sizes for 1st through 3rd place, and Terri had designed certificates to be provided to all entrants. All of the awards were spectacular, but the 1st place trophy caught everyone's attention. It was a retro-styled MoonDog type rocket set onto a tiered block of finished wood. A trophy anyone would be proud to have! The lead changed hands a couple times during the day, and then the final entrant brought up a really well finished and beautifully designed rocket that flew perfectly. At the end of the day, though, all were proud of their trophy or certificate, as well they should be. All of the challengers were winners. Each proved their rocket

building skills by designing, building and flying their own unique rocket right on the field—and they all flew really well. That's rocketry at its best! Congratulations to all!!

The Cochran event probably had the stiffest amount of competition. First place changed hands several times on both Saturday and Sunday. Bob Wilson persevered though with his Estes Dagger, I think, that flew on a variety of F motors, usually flying out of sight. Jack Sprague almost took the event with an Estes Gauchito on an F motor, but suffered a separation. Unbelievable!

Red River Rocketry sponsored the P-Chuter Spot Landing contest. The sleek design of the P-Chuter doesn't look like a rocket you would typically use for a spot landing event, but it is a nice looking rocket. ;-) Others may have thought the same, as there weren't many entries for the event, but it probably was just as well. Bill Gee doesn't fly a lot of rockets since he's always taking pictures of all of

our rockets, but he sent up his P-Chuter and landed it almost on the mark. Not much room to beat that one.

Squirrel-Works sponsored the Red Baron glider competition. There weren't a lot of competitors in this event either, but it took a unique twist as it somehow expanded to involve a little collegiate rivalry as well. John Dyer flew his Red Baron decked out in Texas A&M colors and Jack Sprague was flying his decorated in UT Longhorn orange. The last we saw of Jack's rocket it was headed for Oklahoma and still going up—maybe there's a puzzled OU grad with an orange rocket glider wondering what the heck is going on. ;-) Needless to say, Jack took the event.

Congratulations to everyone! It was a fantastic event, and certainly one I will remember for a long time to come.

Bottom—Left photo: The Iron Rocketeer Challengers pose with their rockets. Very nice!!!

Top right—Bob Wilson receives his 1st place trophy for the Cochran event. Well deserved!

Middle right—Bill Gee receives his 1st place prize for the Red River Rocketry P-Chuter Spot Landing event, a Predator. Woo Hoo!!

Bottom right—Jack Sprague receives his 1st place prize for the Squirrel-Works Red Baron Glider competition, the Mega Red Baron. He'll probably fly that one to California!

Photos by James Gartrell.



The Fall Classic – Old Rockets Rule Again

By Gary Briggs (Photos by Doug Sams)

The idea for the event that eventually turned into the Fall Classic started out in August this year on DARS-General. In the run up to the Shoot for the Stars event some discussions got started around the desire to see some old rockets and possibly even some old hardware that we used to launch those rockets so many years ago. Doug Sams was the LD for the next launch, and being an old rocket kinda guy, he asked several of us to work on putting together an activity for the upcoming launch. So began the development of the proposed rules and the required logistics to support the event. Several DARS members participated in the development of the event, including James Gartrell, Don Magness, Bob Wilson, Doug Sams, Gary Briggs, and Dave Schaefer. Things were all staged up for Shoot for the Stars and then Hurricane Rita came along and ruined our fun. We reset our sights on the Turkey Shoot and hoped for better weather in November.

The event was basically designed to get as many old rockets from the attics, closets, and display cases, and out where they can be enjoyed by as many folks as possible. It was

created to highlight those classic decades of model rocketry of the 60's, 70's and 80's, and we included an open category to handle upscales, downscales, and other rockets that fell outside of these decades. The main competition was based on votes from the flying public for their favorite in each of the 4 categories. In addition to the popular vote, contestants had the opportunity to earn bonus points for things like providing documentation showing a rockets year of introduction, flying the rocket, or displaying the rocket with period launch gear.

Saturday, November 12 was not a great day for flying historic models. Although temperatures were in the 70's, winds were out of the south gusting from 20-30 MPH. There was also a 1,000-foot ceiling and a threat of rain. Undaunted, 7 hearty souls showed up with their 16 models ready to compete. Realizing that things were unlikely to improve for the day, we ran an accelerated schedule, registering the rockets, voting, and handing out awards in about 2 hours. Curtis Baumgardner's Big Bertha took the 60's category even though it was a late entry for the day and the

only model he entered. Doug Sams took the 70's category with an Estes Omega clone. John Dyer took the 80's category with his Estes Argosy,



and Bob Wilson took the open category (with the only open category entry for Saturday) with an Estes Bandit. I am sure we will see that rocket flying on an F motor in the

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