

Volume 16, Issue 3

Dallas Area Rocket Society ("DARS")

Announcement: DARS Annual Fall Classic Rocket Contest

By James Gartrell



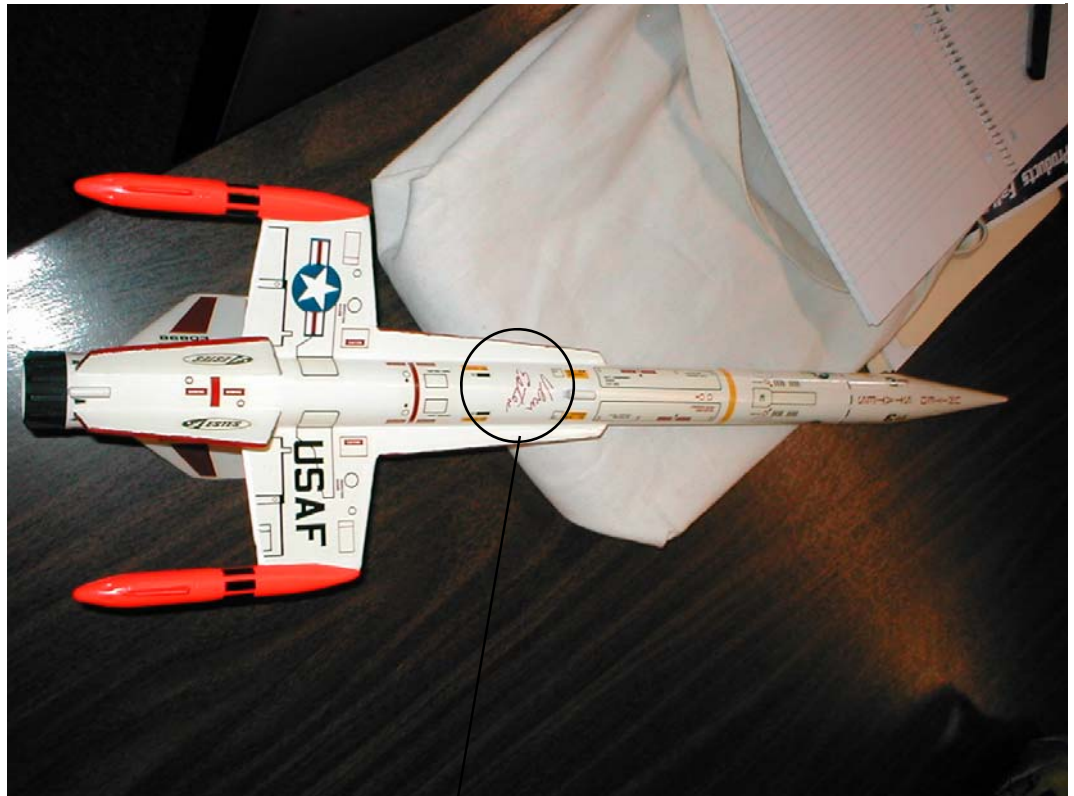
Member - National Association of Rocketry ("NAR").

Special points of interest:

- ALERT! Hobbytown (Walnut) has a summer sale going on—25% to 50% off on reload motors! Don't miss it!
- Have you seen all the clones of old rockets PD Rocketry has for sale? Expert DARS rocketeer, Stuart Powley, recently purchased the A-20 Demon. Ooohh! Find out what he has to say about it on Page 2.
- If you haven't been to a DARS meeting lately, you've been missing out on some fantastic stuff. What's up? Check it out! Page 4.
- More pics from the Frisco field. You or your rocket may be there! Page 5.
- More info on the DARS Annual Fall Classic Rocket contest. Check out all the vendors and the prizes they've donated. Page 6.
- Did You Know! How many consecutive years has DARS been represented in FAI competition. Find the answer on Page 7.

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---|---|
| The PD Rocketry A-20 Demon A Kit Review | 2 |
| Reloadable Motors—No Fear! | 4 |
| Flying Frisco, Again | 5 |
| DARS Events | 6 |
| Did You Know? | 7 |
| DARS Officers | 7 |



OK, it's time to dust off those old classic rockets, like Bill Gee's Interceptor signed by Vern Estes. If you haven't heard by now, Estes has re-issued this classic rocket, along with another of my favorites, Der Red Max. Yep, they're available now. You might have to search to find one, but they're out there, just in time for the DARS Annual Fall Classic Rocket contest. Gary Briggs, contest director again, is hoping we will beat the record number of models folks brought out to last year's contest. With all the latest re-issues from Estes, that should be easy to do. Some great prizes have been rounded up for the event, too! Categories this year are the same as last year: 60s, 70s, 80s, and Open (for upscales, downscales and those not specifically identified to the other three periods), and a Best in Show. Don't miss out! Be there, September 22nd! It's going to be cool!!

Photos by James Gartrell



The PD Rocketry A-20 Demon A Kit Review

By Stuart Powley

When I was but a lad of about 12, I purchased an Estes A-20 Demon. I remember building it pretty quickly (a really good finish wasn't quite as important to me back then as it is now) and being impressed with its good looks. The foil wraps combined with the yellow and black body and white nose just reeked of "cool." The decals seemed perfect. Every once in a while Estes just plain gets it right with a rocket, and this was one of those. Unfortunately, I last saw that particular model streaking toward the sky and into oblivion about a year after I built it. I mourned the loss for a respectable amount of time for a 13 year old (a couple of hours, I think), and then went on with my life.

Years later (a little over 30) I decided to clone a new Demon. The problem was that the nose cone and the foil wraps were not readily to be had from Estes. I finally found places to order them from, but never got around to it. Then I found PD Rocketry. For those of you who don't know, PD Rocketry specializes in dead on clones of Estes kits. I saw that they had a Demon and thought about ordering it, but since I had never ordered anything from them, I put it off.

I then read a review of the kit on Essence Rocket Reviews and it was so positive that I decided to go for it. The price was quite reasonable, being about what Estes would charge for it if it were produced today; actually, probably less. I hit the PayPal button and waited.

I didn't have to wait too long. It came within a week or so, which is a good turn around time in my book. My initial excitement over finding the package on my front doorstep turned to worry when I noticed that the US Postal Service had done a number on

it. The box it was in should have been sturdy enough to protect it under normal circumstances, but obviously something large and heavy had been placed on top of one side; something very large and heavy.

I opened the remains of the box to find a nicely bagged kit with a hang tag. I quickly looked through the plastic and was relieved to see that there was no apparent damage. However, when I actually opened the kit I saw that the main body tube, a piece of BT-55, had a rather impressive (or depressive) crimp in it. No other parts were damaged and I decided to just write to PD to get a new one. I was willing to pay for it, since it wasn't their fault that the postal service seems to have no idea what the word "fragile" means, but they e-mailed me right back and said that they would send me a replacement for free. I appreciated the customer service!

I then took a look at the other parts of the kit. The nose cone was very light balsa with a fairly large grain that I worried might be a pain to smooth out. As it turns out, though, a couple of coats of thinned Elmer's wood filler took care of it nicely, so my worries were completely unfounded. The fin stock was a sheet of uncut balsa, which was in great shape. The decals were crisp and well printed as were the foil wraps. In fact, even the body tube was nice, with small grooves - it was just a little bent.

Since I had to wait on the new body tube, I decided to do a couple of things out of order from the instructions (which are copies of the actual Estes instructions). I first sealed the nose cone and was very impressed with the results. It's incredibly light and smooth. I then

thought, "You know, there's really no reason to put off putting on the payload section wrap." and so I did.

The foil wraps in the kit are slightly different than the ones I remember from the Estes kit, but since that was 32 years ago I could well be mistaken. The wraps are exact in their printing, but you have to cut them out of a solid foil sheet. This was no problem and the payload section wrap fit perfectly, even down to the slight overlap that the Estes instructions said it would have. There was a note included with the kit that explained that the ink on the wraps is not water-proof, and that you need to put a clear coat over everything once you are done. I had no problem with the clear coat idea (I do that anyway) but I was worried that the wrap might smear as I pressed it around the payload section. Again, my fears were completely unfounded, and everything went perfectly.

Next I turned my attention to the fins. The fins in the Estes kit were die cut (laser cutting wouldn't be around for quite a while) but PD gives you a fin pattern to mark the fin stock with so you can cut out your own. Actually I kind of prefer this to the die cut method because sometimes the die would actually crush part of the fins. The fins are a very simple design and cutting them out was no problem.

I sealed the fins using the thinned wood filler before the body tube got to me. I usually do it in that order anyway, so it was no big deal. Again, they filled very nicely and came out quite smooth. It was interesting to realize that I've been working with bass wood for so long, that the balsa seemed a little foreign. Suffice it to say that it doesn't take nearly as much sanding to shape it.

About this time the new body tube arrived. It was packed in a mailing tube that probably would have protected it if the mail truck had rolled over it. Also, it was rolled up in foam wrap. PD was taking no chances with this one. It was perfect in every way.

Having my body tube, I went ahead and built the engine mount and installed it. I went strictly by the directions (mainly for old times' sake) and even measured things! The fins went on next, and I actually fudged on the nostalgia here by using CA glue with wood glue fillets. Actually, I guess if I was being a real purist I would have used sanding sealer instead of wood filler, but I kind of hate the stuff. That being said, I went ahead and used the enclosed shock cord mount. PD gives you sewing elastic instead of the typical Estes rubber band. The only part of the Estes shock cord system I've had fail is the rubber breaking (never the mount pulling loose) so I felt pretty good in mounting it that way. After adding the launch lugs, I was ready to paint.

I scrounged around in my rocket room and actually found all three colors of paint that I needed (plus primer!). I guess having already done the Scamp upscale and the Goblin paid off. The only color that wasn't on either of those rockets was gloss white, but I had some anyway. The paint scheme is pretty simple. I painted the white nose separately (using my crimped BT-55 to hold it) and sprayed the rest of the model yellow. After it had dried I masked off one fin (I looked in the '77 Estes catalog to see which one) and painted it gloss black. That was it. Now it was time for the decals.

The decals provided are obviously made from a scan of the Estes originals. They have crisp, clean lines and went on very well. They were probably some of the easiest decals

I've worked with. I actually had to reposition the top black band to make it line up with the wording on the side, and I was able to completely remove it and replace it without tearing it at all. It was a bit nerve wracking, though. The only issue I have with the decals is that they are all printed on clear backing. That's no problem for the majority of the graphics, but the top band and two Estes logos really should be printed on white backed paper. Still, the result is striking.

I then put on the last of the foil wraps. They were easy to cut out and apply. The only thing that was a little difficult was putting on the bottom band. It butts up against the bottom of the fins, so you can't just stick one end of it on and roll it around the tube. You have to carefully curve it under the fins, make sure it is straight,

and then stick it on. You only get one shot at this, and I was very lucky! I then coated the entire bird in clear and I was done!

The end result is striking. It's pretty much a dead ringer for the original, and it brings back quite a few memories for me. PD Rocketry did a great job on this kit, and I'm sure I'll try some of their other clones in the near future. They have quite a few. Check out their website if you haven't already. Now if I can just fly this thing without having the same results as I did as a kid...



Above—Stuart's A-20 Demon takes off at the Frisco Field.

Right—A close-up of the completed model. Photos by Stuart Powley.



Reloadable Motors—No Fear!

By James Gartrell

If you haven't made a DARS meeting lately, you've been missing out on a lot of great presentations. Don Magness, DARS President, recently changed the format of the meetings, reducing the time we spend on club issues and instead focusing on our mission: promoting consumer rocketry. Tim Sapp has taken on the responsibility for arranging the presentations each month. The result has been a lot of great presentations from members, and perhaps even non-members in the future, on various aspects of rocketry. The July meeting was another great one. Royce Frankum and Tim Sapp teamed up to reduce our fears about reloadable motors by explaining how they work and the differences between different sizes of reloads and the motor casings of the various manufacturers. It was fantastic!

Royce started the presentation by walking us through the components of the smaller reload motors, 18mm to 29mm. I don't know anyone who has flown as many of these as Royce, so

he is certainly an expert. He quickly showed the components of the reload, how they're installed and how the forward and rear closures of the reload motor are installed. Then, he explained the different nuances involved as you move up the scale to high power reloadables, 38mm to 54mm. Many people may not be aware of the differences in the delay elements when you move from the smaller reloads to the larger reloads. Moving from a delay specified by a set number of seconds to a delay that is expressed as medium or long can be confusing when purchasing the reload. Similarly, reloads from one manufacturer are not necessarily compatible with the reload cases of another manufacturer. I, for one, didn't realize there were so many differences. There was way too much info for me to convey to you in this article. Suffice it to say that it is important to ask one of our club experts, like Royce or Tim, before you decide to make a purchase of the larger reloadable motor systems.

Since Royce hasn't yet gotten into the 75mm and larger motors, Tim picked up the presentation of these even larger motors, plus he covered the hybrid motors. Certified to Level 3 and an experienced hybrid flier, Tim is certainly qualified to cover both subjects. I am always amazed by the size of the larger reload motors. Most of them are bigger than any rocket I've ever flown! If you've ever heard Tim give a presentation, you know you're not only going to learn a lot, but you're going to have fun doing it. He is a great speaker, and outside of talking about Jesus, there probably isn't anything he loves more talking about than high power rocketry. If you missed his presentation, you missed a lot. Catching up with him to find out what you missed may be difficult, too, as he is always busy doing something.

There are a lot of advances in rocketry all the time, so if you want to stay on the leading edge come to one of the next meetings and get the scoop from an expert.

Below left—Royce Frankum appears dwarfed by the large reload casings in the foreground as he explains one of the reload motors.

Below right—Tim Sapp explains what most would consider one of the larger reload motors, but it certainly isn't the largest he flies.

Photos by James Gartrell.



Flying Frisco, Again! By James Gartrell

OK, last issue I told you about the new Frisco field. Hopefully, you've had a chance to get out and fly a few rockets out there. And, hopefully, it wasn't the August launch! Everything was going fine until a microburst of wind came in and tried to take off with all of the shelters. That was really wild. A heavy rain followed up almost immediately after that, so we only got to fly about three hours. We were all soaked by the time we got everything loaded up. Bob Korman, Roadrunner Rocketry, and Doug Sams were real troopers. Even though they had all of their stuff put up, they were helping everyone else until everything was off the field. Way to go, Bob! Way to go, Doug!

I did manage to fly the Hawks Hobby Super Trident that I won at the last Classic Kit contest. I built mine to launch up to 24mm F motors, so it weighed in about 40% over the factory weight. I was a little worried about putting it up on the recommended Estes E9 motor, but it did fine. Arced over about 20 degrees off the pad, but the chute popped out just past apogee. It looked great coming down on the huge 30-inch dark red ripstop nylon chute. Whoopee! For everything that comes in the kit, it's a great value. I had just completed an Aerotech E-18 reload when the microburst hit. Not many photos, but I hope you enjoy what I did manage to get.



Top left—I didn't get the young man's name that was flying the Estes Screaming Eagle, but it is very nicely done.

Top right—Bob Melton came down all the way from Oklahoma to fly his Jupiter-C upscale. I don't remember the name of the manufacturer, but it sure looks great. Bob always makes 'em look good.

Middle—Club Vice President, Royce Frankum, looks like he's in some kind of predicament!. Love ya' man!

Left—Sam Barone preps his very nice looking SR-71, converted to fly on 24mm motors, while Doug Sams admires his latest Estes Midget clone and Club President, Don Magness watches on.

Right—My Hawks Hobby Super Trident is ready to fly. It is one huge rocket! Sweet!!



DARS Events By James Gartrell

The DARS Classic Rocket contest is right around the corner. We were able to secure some great prizes from sponsoring vendors again this year, too! Everyone that wins an event should be well pleased with their prize. They are awesome!

Red River Rocketry donated one of the P-Chuter Xtreme kits. Woowee! You don't fly this rocket, it zooms! Everything about this kit is top quality. It seems someone's flying one at every launch!

Red Arrow Hobbies donated an Estes Interceptor and Nova Payloader, plus their fabulous Hobby Tube Assortment. The Estes kits are classics already, and you'll have just about everything you'll need to build a variety of clones for next year's event if you win the assortment pack!

Squirrel-Works Model Rocketry is donating three kits. I don't think we've confirmed which ones yet, but any three Squirrel-Works kits is pretty fantastic. Plus, when you're done building the kits you can use the face cards to adorn your hobby room! They are true works of art!!

John Dyer visited with Jim Flis while he was at NARAM 49, and Jim was gracious enough to donate some kits for the event. If you've been to Jim's site lately, you should notice he's uncovered an old stash of MPC kits. Woohoo! He donated three of the ASP-1 Minirocs!

Pemberton Technologies has donated a matching numbered set of their newest line of low power kits, the Little Bucky Jones and Space Ark Jr. Awesome!! Sci-fi fan or not, you'll love these kits.

There's a new vendor you may be missing. Mercury Engineering Co. has donated the Mutant Daddy, one awesome 3" rocket. You need to see this rocket to appreciate it. Click the ad to link to their website.

Once again, Hawks Hobby is donating one of their Super kits for the contest. I think their donations each year are what has influenced Gary Briggs to keep doing the contest. He hasn't confirmed what their donation will be, but any kit in their line will be awesome!

Be sure to pass along a big THANK YOU to our vendors with your next order!



Mercury
ENGINEERING Co.

Rockets Engineered for Performance



www.mercury-rockets.com

Celebrating 5 years
Of innovation
And excitement!

"Aim for the sky, and try not to miss!"



Flis
KITS
Inc.

Model Rocket Kits

fliskits.com

Tired of flying the same old rockets?
Ready to try a kit that doesn't just fly great, but looks cool too?
Then check out the selection at



THE SQUIRREL WORKS
MODEL ROCKETRY

www.squirrel-works.com



Red River Rocketry
FLYING MODEL ROCKETS

Rocketry Is Our Passion!

- Original Designs
- Laser Cut Fins
- Water-Slide Decals

Order Your Rocket Kits Online Today!

www.redriverrocketry.com



**Hawks
Hobby**

UPSCALE CLASSICS

" Just Lookin' To Have Some FUN!!! "

www.hawkshobby.com
sales@hawkshobby.com
 281-217-3217

RED ARROW HOBBIES

For the best deals on model, mid and high power rockets,
 model rocket engines, reloadable rocket motors and
 rocketry building supplies.
www.redarrowhobbies.com

**HobbyTownUSA
Dallas , TX**

*Best Rocket Selection
In The Metroplex*

10% OFF FOR DARS !



214-987-4744

8041 Walnut Hill Ln #870
 Dallas TX 75231
 Next to Dave & Busters

DARS Officers

| | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| President | Don Magness |
| Vice President | Royce Frankum |
| Treasurer | Cheri Scholes |
| Secretary | Terri Magness |
| NAR Senior Advisor | Doug Sams |

DID YOU KNOW?

DARS is lucky enough to have a gold medal FAI champion in our midst, Tony Reynolds. I'll bet a dollar to a donut that he'd love to take a serious competitor under his wing. DARS has been represented for the sixth consecutive World Championship. The Reynolds family will be there again in 2008 at the World Championships in Barcelona, Spain. Tony will be flying S6 (Streamer), and his sons too: Ben flying S4 (Boost Glider) and S6 (Streamer), and George flying S6 (Streamer) and S3 (Parachute). Go USA!! Send me a note if you're interested, and I'll connect you up with Tony.

DARS

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. Go to the website and fill out and send an application to join or renew your membership.

The club normally 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.



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

Kinko's Makes



Outdoor Vinyl Banners!

Valwood Branch at: 13940 N. Stemmons Freeway Suite A, Farmers Branch, TX 75234
Telephone (972) 406-116, Fax (972) 406-9998, www.kinkos.com

Dallas Area Rocket Society (“DARS”)

James Gartrell
1006 Canton Rd.
Cleburne, TX 76033



Permission to reprint articles is given as long as proper credit is given to author and DARS.

WWW.DARS.ORG

SHROUDLINES

A Dallas Area Rocket Society Production