

LAUNCH REPORT

May 7, 2006

The beautiful weather must have done it, because a large crowd turned out for the SPAAR Sport Launch on Sunday, May 7.

First of all, a big **WELCOME!** to our newest members who were there – Dave Pinkerton and his wife, Frank Molinaro and Frank Jr., and Josh Fetzer and his dad. The Pinkertons are from Lancaster, and the Molinaros and Fetzers are from Lebanon. Glad you are with us!

Larry Gerlach conducted a pre-launch flyers meeting to introduce the “newbies” and to get them up to speed on how we do things. He showed them our flight card system, our launch set-up, conducted the swearing-in ceremony, and reminded them that all new members must do their utmost to annoy and harass the club President, Dale Greene.

The flying got started with the Molinaro’s *Black Diamond* and *Pluto Probe*, and they never looked back. Between Frank and Frank Jr., they put up a total of 18 flights! Frank did warn us ahead of time not to expect too much from his Estes *Space Ship One* scale model. He was right. As he said, the real one flies much better. Hope you guys had fun. By the way, did we mention that Larry “Count DeMonet” Gerlach expects \$5.00 per flight? Those vacations aren’t cheap! [OK, OK, just kidding.]

After attending the April launch “just to watch”, Dave Pinkerton went out and picked up an Estes Canadian Arrow and some D12-5’s. Dave flew rockets in the past, so this was his reintroduction to the hobby. Ah yes, once addicted to the smell of black powder, always addicted. He had three straight good flights. Welcome back to rocketry, Dave!

Josh Fetzer & Dad simply have to start giving their models names, that’s all there is to it. The LCOs got tired of making up names for them. But really, who cares about names when they fly good and you have a nice time, right?

Ron Saul showed up with a horribly ugly LOC *IRIS* that most people would be too ashamed to be seen in public with. Ron even admitted that he was almost too embarrassed to bring it out in the daytime, but he did and flew it anyway, three times in fact. It’s a darn good thing it flew better than it looked. OK, here’s the real story – Ron finished this *IRIS* in a beautiful black and yellow color scheme that would make most of us drool – except for one teensy-weensy spot where the masking tape made a boo-boo. No one would have even noticed if Ron hadn’t started pointing it out to everyone as soon as he took it out of his truck. If you want to see ugly rockets, stop by my place sometime, Ron!

One of these days, Larry Gerlach is going to lose, crash, or blow up his 35+ year old Estes *Big Bertha*, and he’ll wonder why we’re all standing there shaking our heads. He

came real close when the almost equally ancient Estes B8-5 CATO'd in his Estes *Baby Bertha*. Too close for comfort there, Larry.

Rick Hackman had a good day – five flights, five successes. No models thrashing around under power on the ground, no one running for cover. A pattern could be emerging here. Mark Beever had a nice flight on his LOC *Viper III* on three Estes D12-7 motors. The 7-second delay was just right for the calm conditions. Jim Cox flew one of the new Aerotech 38mm G79 reloads in his *G-Force*. Even though he didn't get full parachute deployment, the model landed safely. Quite a feat for such a big rocket. Speaking of feats, Mike Brubaker put an Estes E9-8 in a *Black Brant II*, which went way out of sight but was recovered. A fantastic thing to see.

Thanks go out this time to Chris Land, for pulling range duty just about all day. Larry Gerlach, Jim Cox and Mike Brubaker also worked the tables, and everyone pitched in to set up and tear down. Let's hope our launches this summer have the same great weather and the same great attendance!