

October 2015

WHAT'S UP



Newsletter of the Syracuse Rocket Club / NAR section 566 / TRA Prefecture 53
Volume 10 Number 5

Mark Riffle's
Buzz-A-Bee



PEAK ROCKETRY

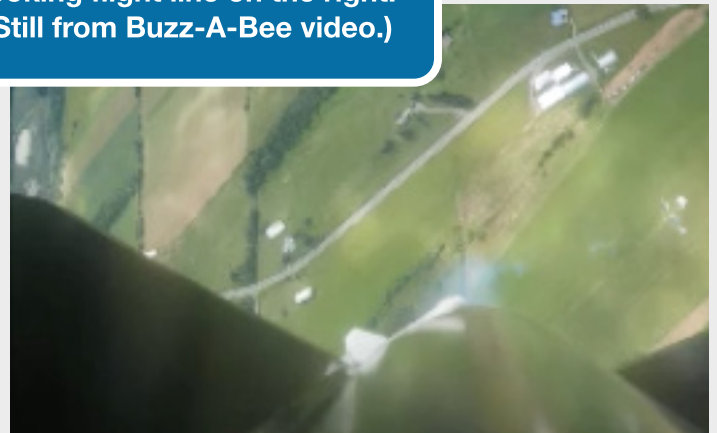
August is peak rocketry, at least in Syracuse: the month when we have our biggest event, the annual Family Launch. Sometimes August even gives us good weather. Like this year... cloudy but calm in the morning, giving way by afternoon to sun and a light breeze. Nice.

We got the pads and big tent up the evening before, so there wasn't a lot to do Saturday before we could start flying. Among the first rockets up were Les Bradshaw's Terraformer, Rich Holmes's Razor, and Kenny Holmes's Magician.

The theme was odd-rocs, and Rich's Ninjago Scimitar was slightly odd, but less so than Gabe's Porta Pot Shot and Les's scratch build, Sour Cream and Onions. Tom Kopp's Nell put us firmly back in the realm of real rockets, or scale models thereof anyway, though with a somewhat odd paint scheme. Mike Dutch got the high power going with his Mega Brute on an H128 Metalstorm. Rich got odd again with Bohica's Dead Ringer, as did Dennis Friend and his Chrome Dome, and

The farm from 2800' — tiny looking flight line on the right. (Still from Buzz-A-Bee video.)

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BACK TO SCHOOL

September's launch was, well, not as windy. As last September's, that is. Wind there was, though, hovering around the 15 MPH mark most of the day. Some rain came in, too: a few minutes of fairly hard rain, and then lingering sprinkles. Nothing bad enough to close the range down, though people did pack up and go home on the early side.

Mark Riffle was present for one last launch before his move to Massachusetts. Also present were the rockets he'd donated to the club, many of which were sold off that day.

Scott Sellers was LCO. The day got off to a less than perfect start with a Monarch — I don't know the owner — that separated at apogee. Its nose cone and parachute were last seen heading for Great Northern Mall. Never mind, we mostly got into our groove pretty soon.

The contest was Sport Scale, with Dennis Friend, Rich Holmes, and Scott Sellers entering. Dennis's was a Phoenix missile, Rich had an Estes D-Region Tomahawk, and Scott's entry was a WAC Corporal with Tiny Tim booster. The two stages would have made for solid mission points on Scott's score card if it were not for the fact that the sustainer failed to ignite on two launch attempts, taking Scott out of the

running. From there it was no contest; the Phoenix and DRT both flew well enough, but the former won handily on difficulty and craftsmanship points.

Dennis's flights also included a Bullpup, a scratch Nike Romulus, and a couple of odd-rocs, Copper Top and Chrome Dome. Dave's Purple People Eater flew on a G40-10, about as close as we got to a high power flight that day. Kevin Gozzi's Twin Chutes flew a couple of times. Tim Catterson launched his Quest Saucer and Blue Thunder. Rich Holmes, in accordance with the launch's scale models theme, flew his scratch cardstock Downscale Patriot and a plastic model conversion that had lost enough pieces to be called a Jupiter C-Minus. His Honest Goon was not exactly scale. Craig L.'s Formula 38 went up on an F35.

Scott's contest rocket wasn't the only two stage model, nor even the only one to run into trouble. Craig's Taser Twin joined the ranks of those whose booster was recovered but whose sustainer vanished. Another two stage suffered indignity due to its motors getting switched around. The theme for the October launch will be multi stage rockets; we're going to have to start doing better...

(Pictures on p. 3)

BETA TESTING

(Opinions herein are those of the editor, Rich Holmes.)

I don't know about you, but I have no love for Yahoo! Their user interface and web designs have always struck me as clunky, awkward, and confusing. Their clumsy anti SPAM measures have resulted in major disruptions for users of their email service. Their stock's dropped over 40% since last November, and I'm not a bit surprised.

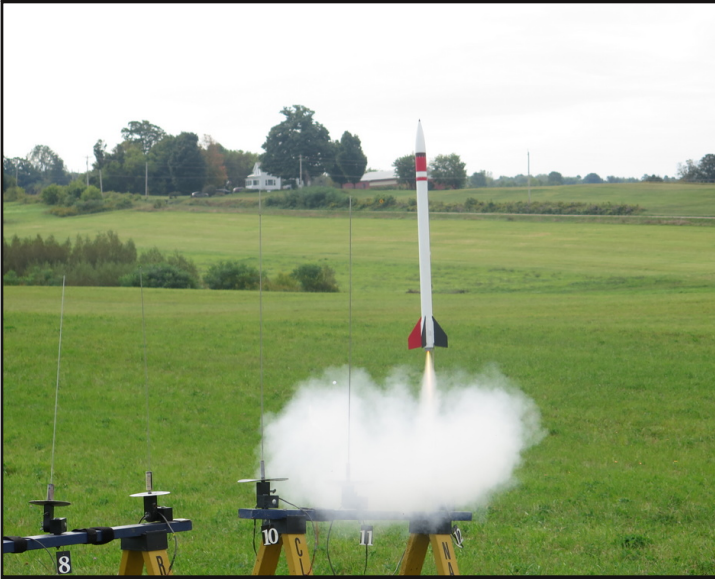
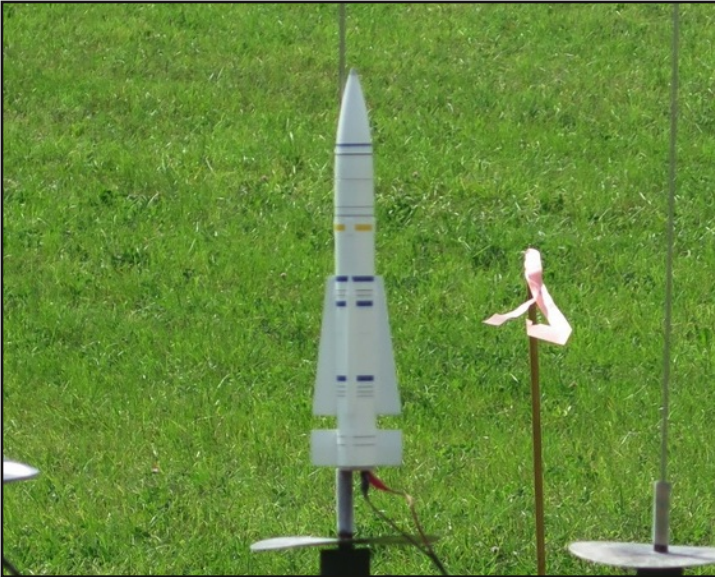
The Syracuse Rocket Club's email discussion list is hosted by Yahoo! Groups, and it's a pain. In theory, once you've signed up, email sent to syracuserocketclub@yahoogroups.com will get distributed to all the list members. In practice... not so much. For me, it's a coin toss: About half the time, Yahoo! will reject my message. Half the time it won't. There's no pattern I can see in what it takes and what it doesn't. (That's if I send the message via email using my Google Mail account. Messages sent from the Yahoo! Groups page always go through. But having to open a browser window, navigate to Yahoo!, log in, find the SRC messages page, and type in the message there — it's a pain.) And don't get me started on attachments.

Yahoo! Groups are free, and that's about what they're worth. I'd rather see the club avoid the big ad-serving companies and use its own discussion list server on a hosted account. A server we have control over. Something that just works.

I've set up a beta test of such a list server. You can subscribe at <http://lists.richsrockets.dreamhosters.com/listinfo.cgi/srcbeta-richsrockets.dreamhosters.com> and try it out by sending a message to srcbeta@lists.richsrockets.dreamhosters.com. (That's all that's being posted there at the moment: test messages.) A few people have done this already and it seems to work. The cost of this is pretty low; the hosting company charges about \$9 a month for the account.

The same account can also host a web based forum, if that's of interest. I'm guessing it's not, but I did set up a test of that too, at <http://richsrockets.dreamhosters.com/phpBB/index.php>.

Granted, it might just be me who dislikes Yahoo! this much. If everyone else in the club is happy with club communications, we might as well keep the status quo. But I'd like to see some improvement; if you would too, try out the beta list and let me know your ideas and if you run into any problems.



September launch photos — Clockwise from top left: Dennis's Phoenix missile; Scott sends one up; Mark's donated rockets; Scott explains gap staging; Dennis's Copper Top; Rich's D-Region Tomahawk

MEETINGS

About a dozen of us were at the meeting on 3 August, where most of the discussion concerned preparations for the Annual Family Launch. Would we get the PA working again in time? How many launch it, take it rockets would we have? Would we need to put up a caution tape barrier around the parking area? Would we resist the temptation to pun when the subject of porta potties came up? (No.)

Karl Weaver showed off a set of 3D printed parts (available at Thingiverse), to be combined with a Pringles can to make a "Redneck Rocket" — so redneck the designer suggests launching it with a fuse, but we know better. James Shattell brought a fin. Just one. It was enough — it was for his Level 3 project, a 12x upscale of the Estes Fat Boy. He's thinking of flying it (the rocket, not just the fin) on an M2505, using a 27' chute to bring it down.

Rich Holmes offered to start putting meeting and launch announcements up on the Facebook page.

At the September meeting Paul Gagnon told us about the rocket he planned to send to 23–30K feet at BALLS. It stands 8.4' tall and carries 18 lb of research fuel in an 82%N motor. Anticipated peak speed: Mach 2+.

Craig showed off his Rocketry Warehouse Formula 38 rocket.

Rich mentioned the mailing list beta test, discussed elsewhere in this issue.

We adjourned to examine rockets and kits for sale. Rollin Bateman, a former SRC member, has gotten out of the hobby and recently sold a large number of kits, motors, and supplies to Scott Sellers; Scott brought them to the meeting for others to examine and buy. On top of that, departing club president Mark Riffle decided not to try moving his cardboard rockets to Massachusetts, so he donated them to the club and James brought them — more opportunities for bargains! (James also brought the monster nose cone for his upscale Fat Boy, made for him by Python Rocketry.) Not all of them were snapped up that evening, or at the subsequent launch. Come to the next meeting for another chance at secondhand rocket Nirvana.



Above: Karl's Redneck Rocket.
Right: James and his big fin.



Moving East



Mark Riffle has accepted an offer to work at Pilgrim Nuclear Plant in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Congratulations to Mark on this new opportunity! But of course he'll be missed.

Mark has served the past three years as President of the Syracuse Rocket Club, succeeding Ron Lioto in 2013. (Before that he was my predecessor as editor of What's Up.) At the time he wrote, "Ron steps down in 2013 having pulled the club up off the ground, cleaned us off, straightened us out and set us back on the pad. He now leaves the reins of the club in the hands of a group of enthusiastic rocketeers." It's no small achievement to have maintained and fostered that enthusiasm for three more years. To quote just one number, in 2012 total club launch impulse was 24,304.375 N-s; in 2014 it was up to 39,543.75 N-s. Now that's progress! Of course 3859.95 N-s of that was Thrust Master Mark's.

Good luck, Mark, and do come back to say hello!



About the Syracuse Rocket Club

The Syracuse Rocket Club (SRC), serving hobby rocketry in central New York, is section 566 of the National Association of Rocketry (NAR) and Prefecture 53 of the Tripoli Rocketry Association (TRA) and was founded in 1997.

SRC holds a monthly sport launch in Van Buren once a month, May through October, typically on the third Saturday (weather permitting); see our calendar elsewhere in this newsletter for specifics. Launches are open to the public, with a \$5 launch fee for non SRC members who wish to fly rockets.

SRC welcomes all prospective new members to our monthly meetings. They are held on the first Monday of the month (second Monday if the first is a holiday) from 7:00 to 8:30 PM at Walt's Hobby Town on Dwight Park Drive, near the State Fair Boulevard exit of I-690.

For more information see our website:
<http://syracuserocketclub.org>

SRC officers are:

President/Prefect:	Mark Riffle
Vice President:	Scott Sellers
Secretary/Treasurer:	James Shattell
Editor:	Rich Holmes
Web Master:	Scott Sellers

About *What's Up*

Volume 10 Number 5
October 2015

What's Up is the official newsletter of the Syracuse Rocket Club.

What's Up is published five times a year and is distributed electronically on the SRC website; latest and back issues may be downloaded at <http://syracuserocketclub.org/newsletters.html>. Except where otherwise indicated, material in *What's Up* is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial license. You are free to share and adapt material from *What's Up* providing you give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

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Syracuse, NY 13219

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LIKE US

Another opinion of the editor: I don't like Facebook much.

But there's no getting around the fact a lot of people use Facebook and a lot of people expect a Facebook presence for groups like ours. Yes, we have a web site, but many Facebook users rarely look for web sites; if it's not on Facebook, it might as well not be there.

So the Syracuse Rocket Club is back on Facebook. Well, we never left, but our page was kind of moribund. No more. We're now using it to announce meetings and launches, and to post post-launch photos. Members post messages there. Check it out at <https://www.facebook.com/SyracuseRocketClub>.

What about other social media? Pundits keep saying Facebook is past its prime and other platforms will eat its lunch... someday. So far that seems to be wishful thinking but it might not hurt for us to have a presence elsewhere. Twitter? Instagram? Tumblr? Google+? (Yes, people use Google+! I use it. I like it a lot more than Facebook.) Ashley Madi... no, never mind.

Continued from p. 1

Colton's Big Red flew as his first ever rocket.

Paul Gagnon made the first research flight from our field (at least in this incarnation of our Tripoli prefecture) with his Gitty-Up flying on a J motor.

Tom brought out his Jupiter Espresso, made out of 119 Styrofoam coffee cups. His G motor was perhaps a little less than what was needed, though, and the landing was rough. Good thing we know where to get replacement parts.

Mark Riffle gave us a truly memorable flight: his Buzz-A-Bee went to 2800 feet on a K454SK. Taking the "Family Launch" name a bit literally, he put some of his family on board — some of his late father's ashes. Mark's mom was on hand to help give him his send-off. A camera on board the rocket provided a view from on high.

Rich's Rxiiiab was oddly lacking in fins, a pronounceable name, and, embarrassingly on its first flight, a recovery streamer. It survived to fly again, landing the second time almost in the trash bucket. The heavy nose weight and rear ejection meant it basically lawn darted both times, but benignly. Rich's The Rocket Doctors Recommend Most kept the odd going.

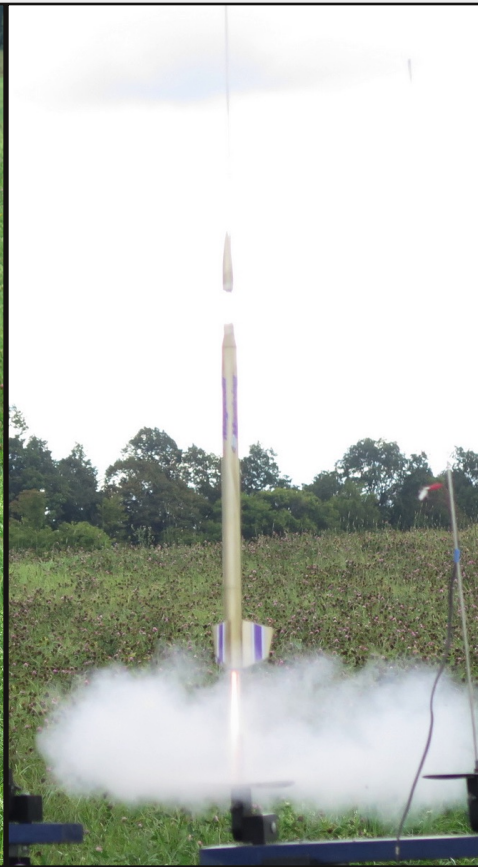
Roger Forrell flew his PK-8 on a G75, Mike put his LOC V-2 up on an I210, and Rich's Excel got up on an I212 Smoky Sam. Mark flew the 4-29-55 on two H123s with two G33s air started, a spectacular display.

The helicopter recovery duration contest had good entries from Roger and Scott Sellers, but Rich's Rose-a-Roc took first place with 117.86 seconds. As for Rich, he took a long walk.

There were over 120 flights for the day, which was a lot, but they weren't the only things going on. Lots of rocket kits were handed out as raffle prizes. We took in \$162 in raffle ticket sales and donations. Of course there was food. Peter and Diane Plumley cooked up burgers and dogs, and people brought pulled pork, salads, chips, and lots of desserts. There was enough food for both lunch and dinner, the latter occurring between the end of the waiver period and the start of the third annual night launch. We saw several rockets go up and saw most of them come down thanks to onboard LEDs and glow sticks. Wisely, the big tent, high power pads, and some of the other infrastructure got taken down before it got dark, so the post-night launch teardown went quickly and easily. Off we went home, with at least some of us contemplating next year's oddities...

Night launch





August launch photos — Clockwise from top left: Bill Barzee and Abby Riffle help out a young rocketeer; Kenny's Magician; Les's Sour Cream and Onions; a spectator; Mike's Mega Brute; Paul watches the skies.



More August launch photos — Clockwise from top left: Tom's Jupiter Espresso; Rich's The Rocket Doctors Recommend Most; raffle in progress; Pigasus; Noah and Eva's drag racing Berthas

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Mon. October 5th at Walt's HobbyTown: **Club Meeting**. Discussion topic: Winter project for 2016
- Sat. October 17th at Weigand's Field: **SRC Sport Launch**. Last of the season! Theme: Multi-stage rockets. Contest: Random Duration (Duration will be set by a roll of the die at start of launch). Launch Director: TBD.
- Mon. November 2nd at Walt's HobbyTown: **Club Meeting**. Discussion topics: Planning for SRC Displays at Walt's Secret Santa Sale. Nominations for 2016 Club Officers.
- Sat. November 21st at Walt's HobbyTown: **Annual Secret Santa Sale**. Club will have a table and launch demos.
- Mon. December 7th at Walt's HobbyTown: **Club Meeting**. Discussion topics: Holiday Celebration - Annual Club Awards. Election of 2016 Club Officers

SRC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	Time	Location	Event
Oct Mon. 5th	7:00–8:00 pm	Walt's HobbyTown	Club Meeting
Sat. 17th	10:00 am–3:00 pm	Weigand's Field	SRC Sport Launch
Nov Mon. 2nd	7:00–8:00 pm	Walt's HobbyTown	Club Meeting
Sat. 21st	8:30 am–5:00 pm	Walt's HobbyTown	Walt's Annual Secret Santa Sale
Dec Mon. 7th	7:00–8:00 pm	Walt's HobbyTown	Club Meeting
Jan Mon. 4th?	7:00–8:00 pm	Walt's HobbyTown	Club Meeting. Check web site to confirm date.

Please check web site (<http://syracuserocketclub.org>) for changes, cancellations, and last minute events!
Go/no go status of each launch will be posted on the web the evening before.

Directions to Walt's HobbyTown: From I-690, take Exit 5 (State Fair Blvd./Lakeland). Turn right onto Van Vleck Rd. Take the first right onto Dwight Park Dr. Walt's is immediately on your right.

Directions to Weigand's Field: From I-690, take Exit 2 (Jones Rd.). Turn left onto Jones Rd. Take the first right onto Van Buren Rd. After 1.6 miles turn left onto Connors Rd. After 1.0 miles turn left onto Canton Street Rd. Launch site is about 0.4 miles on your left; look for sign. Park in designated area. Please do not drive onto field without launch director's permission.