

Rocketman's High Thrust BALLS 08 and LDRS17 video

by Darrell D. Mobley
Sunday, September 27, 1998

I just got through watching Ky and Jodi Michaelson's newest High Thrust Video release, and it was quite an enjoyable experience. Having gone to LDRS myself, but missing BALLS, it was a great way to see what happened at Black Rock this past summer in addition to reliving all the great flights from the Bonneville Salt Flats.

Some of my personal highlights of the BALLS coverage are all the P motors flown there. An interesting flight was had by Paul Robinson and Jim Rosson of the Skidmark rocket, which flew on three M4000 Kosdon motors. One of the motors did not light and this thing looked like an incoming air-to-surface missile as it impacted the desert floor well out into the playa away from the crowd.

For those of you looking for rail launcher ideas, there was some great footage of a launcher built from Unistrut. It featured all bolt-together construction and was very sturdy. It caused me to start thinking of new launcher plans for some of my upcoming projects.

There was some footage of a Rocket Dyne O-3500 flight that got everyone's hearts beating a little quicker. The tapered-core motor features a total progressive thrust profile and the flight was awesome.

For those of you who have not seen Ed Hackett's Hurricane blender, you are missing a cool conversation piece. Utilizing a gas powered motor to spin a food blender, Ed can whip up margaritas in even the most remote areas, proving rocketeers once again are ingenious people. There is a segment on the film showing Ed making world-class margaritas for the BALLS crowd.

The LDRS footage was good and featured some new innovations from Black Sky Research. There was coverage of the new ProPulsion38 re-usable motor system previously mentioned here in the ROL Newsdesk. These motors utilize a one piece molded nozzle/aft closure assembly with the liner built right in. Slide the fuel grains and the delay unit/forward closure assembly in, and screw on the aluminum casing -- ready to fly.

The film also featured the Black Sky pyrotechnic deployment device, a unique approach to deploying a drogue and main from the same end. It was good to see Scott Bartell sporting the latest fashions, which included a Rocketry Online t-shirt! I also caught a glimpse of my 2.152" rocket that flew on an AeroTech J570 to 9,114 feet. It was gone!

Tom Gonser's Pinky and the Brain rocket footage featured one of the most smooth staging transitions I have seen, showing that staging M's can be fulfilling. Up until Max-Q when the sustainer shredded, it was a text book flight.

This is a great video, one that truly shows the spirit of the large launches. It's a must-see, so head on over to <http://www.the-rocketman.com> and order you a copy today. You'll even get to see Ky talking to a real preying mantis!