

STARDUST

www.astre471.org

Volume 18 Issue 1

Jan/Feb/Mar 2007

ASTRE elects officers for 2007

Elections and business meeting:

ASTRE held its annual elections at the club meeting/build session held on January 27th at the Science and Hobby shop in Watervliet. After much soul searching, a field of candidates was nominated, and elections followed. Mark Hutchinson was reelected as President, Fred Talasco as Vice President, Alex DeMarco as Secretary/Treasurer, Jeff Vincent as Senior Advisor, and Chuck Weiss as Member at Large. Congratulations and thanks to all officers for volunteering to serve.

After elections, Bill Appelby suggested that ASTRE's annual field trip be to the New England Air Museum in Connecticut, with an on-the-way-home stop at Countdown Hobbies. After a short discussion, it was agreed that Bill and Fred Talasco will contact the museum to determine just what missiles can be viewed as well as to research a travel route. More to follow...

Mark announced that one of his major goals as President would be to emphasize the growth of the club by reaching out to Schools, Scouting groups, as well as more focused hobby shop recruiting.

Mini Dactyl build session:

The greater part of the January 27th club meeting was a build session led by Jeff Vincent. Jeff has a great deal of experience with competition rocketry, and was kind enough to assemble kits of the Mini Dactyl boost glider for club members to build. Jeff did point out that his version is actually 20% larger than the original Centuri design, as he has found this slight enlargement to produce superior results.

The kits were of excellent quality, with all of the parts cut out and ready to assemble. As this design depends on the proper alignment of the wings and canards, Jeff's preparations were most welcome. The cost was \$10 per kit, and once Jeff's expenses were covered, he generously donated the remaining proceeds to the club treasury. Also included with the parts were assembly instructions, patterns, and tips from Jeff. Club members were quickly assembling their kits, and some were near completion before the build session was over.

See page 7 for a photo of the author's model.

Thanks Jeff for a great build session!!

In this issue...

ASTRE Elections:	p. 1	Launch Laughs:	p.5
Club build session:	p. 1	Guide to rocket collecting:	p.6
Notes from the launch bunker:	p. 2	Rocketips:	p.6
Nemroc 2006 coverage:	p. 3-4	ESTES 2007 catalog info:	p.7
Meet the officers:	p. 5	Saving money on rocket supplies:	p.7
Webwatch:	p. 5	HERMES RV-A10 plans:	p.8-9

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Stardust Is published quarterly by the Albany, Schenectady, Troy Rocket Enthusiasts (ASTRE), Section #471 of the National Association of Rocketry (NAR).

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Newsletter content in this issue by:
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Notes from the launch bunker...

STARDUST and NASA: Return to Flight

NASA's "Return to Space" STS-114 launch of the Space Shuttle Discovery was a new chapter in Spaceflight. It represented a reinvigorated organization, set to move into the future. Likewise, STARDUST is a manifestation of ASTRE's rededication to the promotion of model rocketry in the Capitol Region.

ASTRE's officers have a full agenda planned for 2007: Confirmation of the revised club charter, as well as updated officer duties and range rules, followed by a push to source two additional flying fields. Overriding all of this will be a year long program of recruiting including guerilla marketing (stickers on model rocket kits at local hobby shops and retailers), personal recruitment, and outreach to school and youth groups.

If this sounds like a bold initiative, it is. Like NASA's return to Space, it is also necessary. Although all of the above agenda items are important, they are all the foundation of the final item: recruiting. As our NAR President Mark "Bunny" Bundick says, "A club that does not grow, shrinks."

Although the internet has made near instant communication possible, STARDUST is an important part of the ASTRE, and this re-launch issue (pun intended) is the first of many.

Here's to 2007, and an early spring!
May your igniters never fail, and your parachutes always open.....

— Fred Talasco - editor

Call for Articles

ASTRE is seeking articles for future issues of STARDUST. Have you been itching to write an article, book review, or an event review?

Do you have any modeling or flying tips, jokes, cartoons, puzzles or photos you would like to see published?

If so, please email the editor at:
f.talasco@yahoo.com

Stardust Schedule of Publishing

Stardust Issue.....Submissions by.....Print Date

1- Jan/Feb/Mar.....	Jan 25.....	Feb 10
2- Apr/May/Jun.....	April 25.....	May 10
3- Jul/Aug/Sep.....	July 25.....	Aug 10
4- Oct/Nov/Dec.....	Oct 25.....	Nov 10

Club members who wish to may have ads, pictures, or messages printed in STARDUST, space permitting. Copy must be in good taste with the editor having final cancel option. Non member or commercial ads will be handled at a mutually agreed rate.

Annual convention a success:

The Central Massachusetts Spacemodeling Society (CMASS) held the 2nd annual, newly reborn NEMROC 2007 Model Rocket Convention on the weekend of Oct 7-8, 2006 in Amesbury MA.

This event had was one of the largest model rocket conventions in the country when it ended in the early 1990's. Now it is back, and CMASS presents a number of parallel educational seminars, vendors, forums and workshops encompassing all aspects of Sport Rocketry as well as a launch. The first day's events are held at Amesbury Middle school, and the launch is held the following day at a local town park

Saturday's schedule included sessions on: 'Mission Driven' model rocket design and construction, model and high power rocket propulsion, model rocket history, cardstock rocketry, model rocket scratchbuilding, hybrid rocket motors, the 'Sugar Shot to Space', TARC, two (!) Kiddie build sessions presented by Fliskits, and a showcase presentation of the new rocket magazine 'Launch' by editor/owner Mark Mayfield.

Jim Flis (c) discusses the future of model rocketry with Mark Mayfield (r) of LAUNCH! Magazine



CMASS provided Hot Dogs, soda and chips for very reasonable cost at lunch time on both Saturday and Sunday at the launch.

Several vendors attended NEMROC providing model rocketry supplies and information. Fliskits had a large display of kits and parts, which included as a huuuge 2-stage high power Tres as well as some 'sneak peaks' such as an upcoming helicopter, and a Micro-Maxx glider. (See below)

A small portion of the Fliskits booth at NEMROC 2006



Fliskits micro-maxx glider prototype.



Excelsior Rocketry also had a full table of models built and decorated with their decals. They brought along their ALPS printer, and were printing decals for customers to order, right there at NEMROC!

Excelsior Rocketry's display at NEMROC 2006



NEMROC day 2....

Although the first day of NEMROC was about education, day 2 was all about flying! CMASS flies at a large open local town park. This park is so large, that it was shared with a model airplane launch, with no interference between the two events!

CMASS launches are large. There were almost a dozen low power launch pads, and three high power pads! The line at the RSO table had 5-15 flyers all day, but no one waited more than a couple of minutes. These guys are efficient! In addition to club flyers, a troop of Cub Scouts attended with their families. All in all, there were well over 200 people at the event, and over 500 model rocket launches, punctuated by many high power launches. Many attendees brought picnic lunches, and CMASS fed the rest! This was a true family event with kids, Moms, Dads, Grandmas, and little Sisters... All enjoying a day of rocketry and fun!

CMASS safety inspection was quick and efficient



The Vendors from Saturday: Fliskits and Excelsior Rocketry attended the launch as well. Fliskits not only had their fine line of rockets, but they also brought along a Fliskits 4th anniversary 'birthday' cake that was shared with all. Excelsior rocketry flew demo models, and thanks to an automotive power converter, printed decals right there in the middle on the launch field!

All-in all, CMASS was a fun event with events for everyone. If you have never been to a large rocketry event, this is a great event to start with.

FLISKITS (l) and EXCELSIOR (r) tents on the launch field



Meet the ASTRE officers



**2007 ASTRE President
Mark Hutchinson**

I've been building and flying rockets since the old matchstick and tinfoil days. Would that make that "pre-aluminum" model worth more, Fred? I started building model rockets with an Estes Alpha III starter kit around 1982. My rockets were packed up for several years until I pulled them out to show people at work. Several flights later, they needed some repairs, and I stumbled on an online message about some rocket club making a bulk tube purchase. I soon saw many strange and wonderful designs at ASTRE meetings. I was hooked again, and joined ASTRE around 1998. I've been the VP, Stardust Editor, and Website editor. I got my Level 1 certification in 2001 at NARAM-43 in Geneseo. I built a somewhat unconventional PML 'Matrix' payload with 12 total fins, including strakes and canards, and painted it in pearlescent Black with green swirls and flames. One of these days, the streaming letters will go on it...

Best thing about volunteering for office? Interacting with the public on a more professional level, such as TARC, promoting at the Air Shows and talking with schools. There are no real drawbacks. I get more out of it in seeing faces light up when I show people different models besides just 3FNCs and getting kids to believe in themselves.

Webwatch:

The Rocketry Forum

URL: <http://www.rocketryforum.com/>

The Rocketry Forum (popularly known as TRF) is just about the most friendly model rocketry space on the internet. The website is divided into a number of sub-sections: Low power, Mid power, High power, propulsion, support and recovery, product reviews, scratchbuilding, vendors, etc.

What makes TRF is so special is the community. This site is chock full of just about the most helpful rocket folks on the net. Beginners are welcomed, and the community replies with patience to just about any questions.

Reps from many rocket vendors regularly post, including ESTES, QUEST, FLISKITS, SEMROC, as well as just about all of the 'Fred in the shed' small firms.

Do you need to know what glue to use? Or what 'C grain' balsa is? Log onto TRF and the gang will help you out in no time.

Launchpad Laughs

**HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE NEW
RESTAURANT ON THE MOON?**



**THEY SAY THE FOOD IS GOOD
BUT THERE IS NO ATMOSPHERE!**

A Beginner's Guide to Model Rocket Collecting:

Why does anyone collect model rockets? For many, there is the thrill of owning a kit you had as a kid... Or the one kit you always wanted as a kid, but never could afford! Some collectors like the original packaging, and some even collect every kit produced by a given company!

Most of us grew up with ESTES kits, so let's start there. The majority of ESTES kits were sold in a clear plastic bag, with a paper hang tag. The most valuable kits should be unopened, with no holes. Watch out for kits that have been slit at the top or bottom that have been sealed with clear tape. The parts should be in good shape: the tube should be round, the nose cone should have no dents, and no balsa should be split. The facecard should also be in excellent condition with no tears or creases.

Opened kits are still valuable. If a kit is opened, yet unbuilt, the value is about 50% less than that of a sealed kit. If the model have been partially built, it is often worth even less to collectors, but may be in demand by those who wish to actually build it. (Oh the Horror!!)

Rocketips

this month's tip by: Fred Talasco

Rocket painting 'handle'

Here is an easy way to make a 'handle' to hold your rockets while painting: Pick up a 1/2" dowel at your local W mart or craft store. You can cut it to a comfortable length if you like. I prefer about 1 foot long. Then insert the dowel into an spent 18mm engine casing and then insert onto your rocket. If your model is 24mm powered, you can place a spent 24mm casing over the 18mm casing

To make a quick rocket stand, cut the dowel to about 5 inches long, and drill a 1/2" diameter hole in a 4-6 inch length of 2x4 . Insert the dowel, and add your empty motor casing

ESTES Collecting Basics: or Who is this Damon guy anyway?

ESTES model rockets are the most common, and some of their kits are the most sought after. Collectors divide ESTES history into three basic segments: Pre Damon, Damon era and Post Damon. The Damon corporation purchased ESTES from Vern Estes in late 1969. In turn, the Damon corp. sold ESTES to an investor group in 1990.

Of the above three eras, products offered during the 'Pre-Damon' era are the most collectible. Many collectors consider this era the Golden Age of model rocketry, and the high prices paid on EBAY for Pre-Damon kits certainly supports this.

OK, so how do you identify a 'pre-damon' kit? One simple way, is that after DAMON bought ESTES, the words 'a subsidiary of Damon' were added to ESTES literature packaging, especially the header (face) card and the hang tag. Undoubtedly, for a short time after the DAMON buyout, older packaging was used up. Some early DAMON kits have a mix of pre and post buyout packaging. Bottom line, if the kit says DAMON anywhere, it is a DAMON era kit. The first ESTES kits was the Scout. It was originally sold inside the same red tube used for mailing rocket engines! Other early ESTES kits were bagged with no hang tag, and the facecard was part of the kit instructions.

OK, so to sum up the basics;

The most collectible kits are sealed, and unopened, with the packaging and parts in good condition. ESTES kits are divided into the pre-Damon, Damon, and post-Damon periods, with pre-Damon kits being the most valuable.

Next issue we will delve a bit further into model rocket collecting with a look at Centuri kits.

A pre-damon hang tag



ESTES 2007 releases

Estes 2007 catalog released

ESTES 2007 model rocket catalog was released in late February. Advanced rumor and speculation was rife on the internet: what kits would suffer the axe, and what new kits would be available? The greatest buzz concerned the latest in the series of re-releases of vintage kits.

First: on the chopping block

#1434 Max Trax Starter Set
#2193 X Prize Eagle
#1676 E9-P motor
#1750 Gnome Bulk Pack Rockets

And... Drum roll please.....

Here is what is new since the 02-15-06 price list:

#1412 X-15 Starter Set
#1899 Astrovision Digital Camera Launch Set
#1896 Puma
#0651 Der Red Max
#1807 Snitch
#1895 Patriarch
#1960 Nova Payloader
#2027 Pop Fly
#2029 Converter
#2050 Super Neon
#2169 Dragonite
#2182 Wacky Wiggler
#1295 Mean Machine
#2037 D-Region Tomahawk
#2121 Liquidator
#1793 UP Aerospace SpaceLoft
Bulk Pack Rockets

Der Red Max has created the most 'buzz' online, and reports are that the list price will be just under \$20.00, and that the decals are real waterslide, and not stickers.

If you would like your own catalog, go to:
<http://www.estesrockets.com/>
Then click on 'Contact Information' in the left column, then 'Contact Details'. Fill out the form and ask for a catalog.

Rocketry deals

How to save money on model rocket supplies:

Model Rocketry is a rather affordable hobby. The list price for an Alpha III starter set is only \$25.99. This is not bad when this is compared to an R/C airplane, or even a new video game system.

Despite the affordability of model rockets, there are a number of ways to save money on model rocket supplies without sacrificing quality.

1) Walmart: Yes, Walmart carries a limited range of model rockets and motors at discount prices. It is important however to know the list price of what you are buying, as Walmart's 'one price fits' all policy is not always a great deal. For example, all motors are \$5.00 for a three pack. This means that A10-3Ts (list \$6.99) are the same cost to you as C6-5s (list \$8.29). The biggest drawback to buying at Walmart is the limited selection.

2) Coupons: If you live near a Michael's Craft store, check your Sunday paper for coupons. They typically have a coupon for 40% off a single non-sale item, and on holiday weekends they typically have a 50% coupon.

3) The Internet: Many online retailers offer deep discounts. Try froogle.com, and search for the rocket or motor you are looking for. Just remember that you will pay for shipping.

A Mini Dactyl built at the club's January meeting.



HERMES RV-A10

Skill Level 2

Model design by Fred Talasco



Recommended engines:

- B6-4
- C6-5
- D21-7

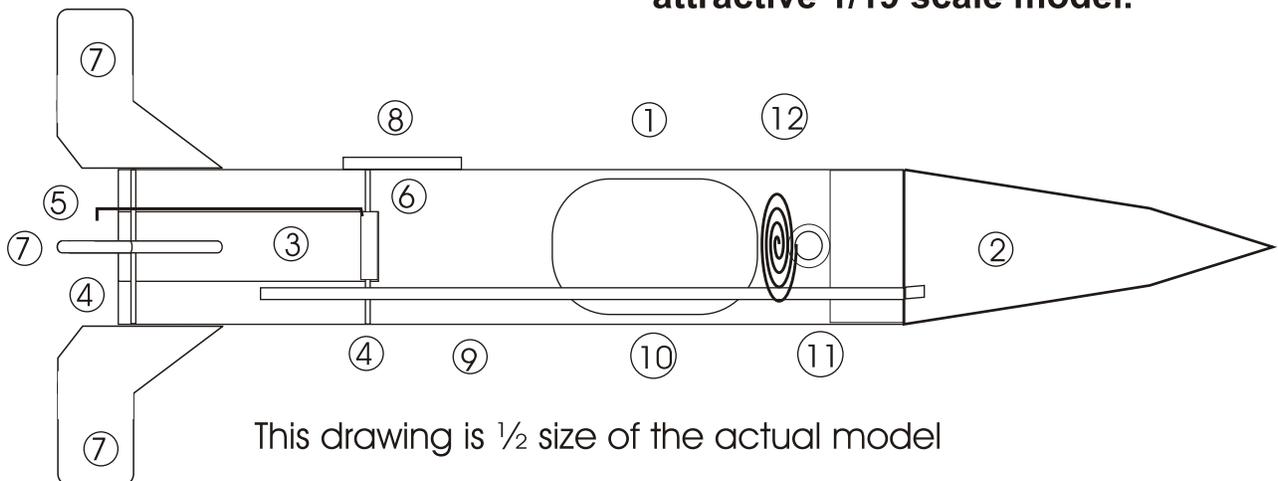
A 1/19 scale model of the first successful large scale solid fueled rocket

Parts List:

- 1) Body Tube: BT-60 8.3" long
- 2) Nose Cone: custom cone 3.9" long
- 3) Engine mount tube: BT 20J 2.75" long
- 4) Centering Rings: (2) BT-20 to BT-60
- 5) Engine Hook
- 6) Engine Block
- 7) 1/8" Balsa Fin Stock
- 8) Launch Lug
- 9) Conduit: 1/8" square balsa stock, 7" long
- 10) 16" Fliskits Parachute Kit
- 11) Screw Eye
- 12) Shock Chord

The Hermes RV-A10 was Designed in the early 1950s for the US Army by Thiokol - GE. Although only 4 full scale test flights were flown, the polysulfide-perchlorate powered rocket was the first successful large scale solid fuel rocket, and is the direct ancestor of both the Space Shuttle's solid fuel boosters, and the AP model rocket motors used today.

Features include 18mm power, parachute recovery, and scale-yet sturdy- 1/8" thick balsa fins. No special building skills are required to assemble this accurate and attractive 1/19 scale model.



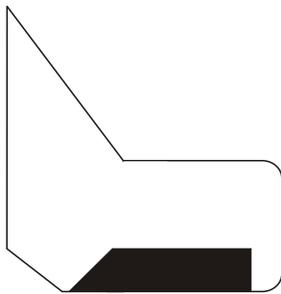
This drawing is 1/2 size of the actual model

HERMES RV-A10

Construction is straightforward. Below are a few tips:

- 1) Use 3/8" Auto pin striping tape for stripes on body and fins.
- 2) Assemble and paint bottom part of conduit black. Attach conduit with CA (super glue) after painting and striping body. Center conduit between two fins. Top 1/4" of conduit is orange and is attached to the nosecone.
- 3) Rocket is orange-red overall, with two black fins. Orange fins have black fin tab markings as per below pattern.
- 4) 3/8" black tape rings body at top of tube, and just above fins. Two vertical stripes connect tape rings, and are centered between opposite fins. Two spirals start at meeting point between bottom ring and the stripe that will house the conduit. The spirals go 1/2 way around body, ending at top ring/stripe joint.

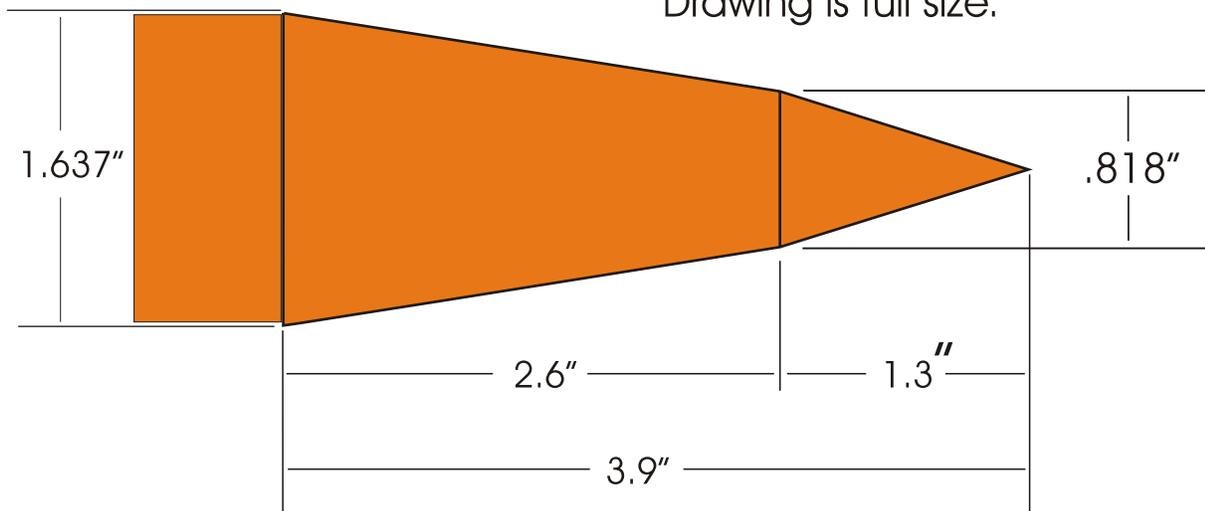
Full sized fin pattern



Fin tab marking pattern
apply to both side of orange fins

- 5) Cover launch lug with a strip of pinstriping tape.
- 6) This is a stable design. To be sure your model is also stable, install a C6-5 engine and add weight to nose if the center of gravity is more than 8" from the nose of the rocket.
- 7) Recommended engines:
B6-4 (approx 350 feet) or
C6-5 (approx 800 feet)
If you use plywood centering rings, and epoxy for internal construction:
D-21-7 (approx 1600 feet)

Custom Nosecone dimensions
Drawing is full size.



STARDUST

The newsletter of the ASTRE Model Rocketry Club

In this issue...

ASTRE 2007 Elections
Nemroc 2006 coverage
Beginner's guide to model rocket collecting
ESTES 2007 catalog info
HERMES RV-A10 model plans

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