

NWIC Space Center News 5/9/11

We came, we saw, we had lots of fun and we came home with a First Place in the Altitude Prediction portion of the First Nations Launch Competition and Mariya earned her National Association of Rocketry Level 2 certification, a feat not accomplished by many.

Getting up and organized for the 5:00 am flight on Thursday was an exciting event in itself. We stopped at Seatac, Chicago, and finally arrived in Milwaukee at 6:30 Central time. The team did a quick run through of their presentation that was to take place on Friday about 1:30.

Friday saw some opening introductions and the presentations by the eight teams. We were second to present. Needless to say, the team did an outstanding job. They knew the topic, they presented the information in a relaxed, yet professional manner, and they covered all of the items that the reviewers and judges wanted covered. I am certain that we were the best of the bunch.



Our rocket, Sad Tibbers, was examined for the required safety inspection and passed with flying colors. Several teams were still completing their rockets. A pizza dinner was followed by the team heading off to do various activities, swimming, hanging out, or whatever. Several helped the other teams get their rockets ready.

Saturday was cold, a bit breezy, and mostly overcast. We had volunteered to launch first as part of our game plan to set the bar high for the rest of the participants. We were quite confident of our rocket and its abilities. The rocket was assembled, the science experiments setup and turned on, the parachutes packed, the altimeters set, the explosive charges built and installed, and the motor installed.



Then the loooong walk out to the launch pad. Sad Tibbers was placed on the launch pad, Kyle removed the altimeter safety interlocks and armed the altimeters, and Mariya installed the igniter.





We then took the walk back to the safe area and watched as the Launch Control Officer announced our flight and did the countdown. Sad Tibbers rose into the sky on a tail of red flame and flew to an altitude of 3024 feet.



We predicted 3330 feet and were within 91% of our estimate. That was good enough for us to place first in the altitude prediction portion of the competition. Our rocket performed flawlessly; its drogue parachute ejected at apogee and the main parachute ejected 700 feet above ground to bring it safely and slowly to ground.



We have a GPS tracker in the rocket which helps us locate it when it's on the ground and out of sight. Sad Tibbers landed about 650 yards from the launch area and as we were walking to it, the GPS unit showed it moving!?! When we reached it, there

were several hunters who had picked it up and moved it to the road so that we could find it easier. Thanks to them.



A great adventure! A great opportunity to meet other Tribal College Students and seven other teams from Navajo Technical College (2 teams), Haskell Indians Nation University, Fon Du Lac Technical Community College, and three AISES teams, University of Minnesota, Azusa Pacific University, and a second Haskell AISES team, eight teams in all.

We all feel that we should place quite highly in this event. We won't know until early June because we have one more report to write and turn in and get evaluated.