

GO FOR LAUNCH! X PRIZE FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES TEAMS READY TO COMPETE FOR \$10 MILLION

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The American Mojave Aerospace Ventures Team announces launch dates for SpaceShipOne and the Canadian da Vinci Project Team announces roll-out date for their completed spaceship.

The X PRIZE Foundation announced key next steps today by two of its top competitors for the ANSARI X PRIZE. The American Mojave Aerospace Ventures, LLC Team (a partnership between Paul G. Allen and Burt Rutan and his team at Scaled Composites) announced today that it has given its official 60-day notice and has scheduled its first competition flight on September 29th, 2004, at the Mojave Airport Civilian Aerospace Test Center in Mojave, California. To win the \$10 million, SpaceShipOne will need to make a second flight within two

weeks, by October 13th, 2004.

In addition, the Canadian da Vinci Project Team, based in Toronto, Canada, announced its plans to roll-out its completed Wild Fire spacecraft for public viewing and photo opportunities on Thursday, Aug 5th, 2004, at its Downsview Airport hanger in Toronto. The da Vinci Project Team, widely heralded as a contender for the \$10 million, will pursue its own ANSARI X PRIZE space flight attempts this Fall.

Also introduced to supporters and press was Amir Ansari, representing the Ansari family, the benefactors who titled the ANSARI X PRIZE, and Astronaut Rick Searfoss, the Chief Judge of the competition. The announcements took place at the Santa Monica Municipal Airport in Santa Monica, California, at 10:30 am PST.

"Eight years ago, under the Arch in St. Louis, we kicked off the X PRIZE competition. Today I'm pleased to announce that the first team is ready to make an attempt to claim the \$10 million, with other teams close behind, said Dr. Peter H. Diamandis, Chairman and Founder of the X PRIZE Foundation. "The American Mojave Aerospace Ventures Team and the Canadian da Vinci Project Team are just two of the 26 competing groups who will someday make it possible for spaceflights to be conducted from commercial spaceports across the globe. When the ANSARI X PRIZE competition is won, it will herald the start of a new renaissance of spaceflight in which the general public will have their chance to fly next."

If successful, Mojave Aerospace Ventures will make history by launching a privately financed, manned spaceship to 100 km altitude, twice within two weeks, each carrying a pilot and the weight and volume equivalent of two additional passengers. On June 21st, Mike Melvill, a pilot for Mojave Aerospace Ventures, became the first commercial pilot to enter suborbital space, earning astronaut wings and a spot in the

Guinness Book of World Records. Similar to the June flight, the competition launches will take place at the Mojave Airport Civilian Aerospace Test Center in Mojave, California. The public is invited and encouraged to attend the historic events. Parking passes for public attendance can be purchased on the X PRIZE website (www.xprize.org).

"The idea of competitions have always had a rich heritage in our society," said Paul G. Allen, sole investor of SpaceShipOne and partner in Mojave Aerospace Ventures, LLC. "This competition has proven that there are many different ways to attack the challenges set out by the ANSARI X PRIZE. From the start we have approached SpaceShipOne with a 'can-do, home-brew' attitude. We are grateful that our previous flights have brought even more attention to the ANSARI X PRIZE and given more momentum to the groundswell of excitement that is continuing to build for the long-term potential of affordable space exploration."

"I want to thank the X PRIZE Foundation for providing the inspiration in 1996, to get us little guys thinking about private development of manned space flight. Last month our team demonstrated that private companies can indeed conduct space flights without government help." stated Burt Rutan, Team Leader of the Mojave Aerospace Ventures Team and designer of both the White Knight and SpaceShipOne. "We are hopeful to complete both qualifying flights and to win the ANSARI X PRIZE."

Wild Fire, the Canadian da Vinci Project Team spacecraft, is also launched at high-altitude into suborbital space at 80,000 feet from an unmanned, reusable helium balloon. The Canadian da Vinci Project Team, considered one of the top ANSARI X PRIZE competitors, will reveal its Wild Fire space vehicle to the public for the first time on August 5th, 2004, at its Downsview Airport Hanger in Toronto.

"The da Vinci Project Team has made huge strides in the past year and we're excited to finally share Wild Fire with the public," noted Brian Feeney, da Vinci Project Team Leader. "We're in the commercial tourist race for the long haul and while working with an all-volunteer team, we've been able to accomplish major aviation and space milestones in pursuit of the ANSARI X PRIZE."

In addition, Colonel Rick Searfoss, pilot and commander of three Space Shuttle missions, was introduced as the Chief Judge of the ANSARI X PRIZE. "We have met with the Mojave Aerospace Ventures Team and we are prepared to ensure that the flights are well monitored and that all rules are followed carefully," said Col. Searfoss. "As an experienced astronaut, I can tell you that I'm personally excited to see the beginning of a new generation of spaceflight."

About the ANSARI X PRIZE Competition

Currently, 26 teams from around the globe are competing for the \$10 million ANSARI X PRIZE. In order to win the competition, teams must build a safe and reusable space vehicle able to carry one pilot and the weight equivalent of two passengers, 100km (62 miles) into suborbital space. The vehicle must be privately financed and safely flown twice within a two-week period. The first registered ANSARI X PRIZE team to complete this feat will win the \$10 million prize and a spectacular 5-foot trophy.

Source: [X PRIZE Foundation](#)

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