

Success in 'space elevator' competition (Update 3)

November 5 2009



This handout photo from NASA shows David Bashford, right, lead of the LaserMotive team, preparing their robotic climber entry in the \$2 million Space Elevator Games at the NASA Dryden Flight Research Center at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2009. In a the test of the concept, robotic machines powered by laser beams will try to climb a cable suspended from a helicopter, on a course 900 meters (2,953 feet) high. (AP Photo/NASA, Tom Tschida)

(AP) -- A robot powered by a ground-based laser beam climbed a long cable dangling from a helicopter on Wednesday to qualify for prize money in a \$2 million competition to test the potential reality of the

science fiction concept of space elevators.

The highly technical contest brought teams from Missouri, Alaska and Seattle to Rogers Dry Lake in the Mojave Desert, most familiar to the public as a space shuttle landing site.

The contest requires their machines to climb 2,953 feet (nearly 1 kilometer) up a cable slung beneath a helicopter hovering nearly a mile high.

LaserMotive's vehicle zipped up to the top in just over four minutes and immediately repeated the feat, qualifying for at least a \$900,000 second-place prize.

Video: In their first run today and their first ever successful run in any of the NASA sponsored Power Beaming Challenge events, Team Lasermotive qualified for at least a share of the 1st level prize money of \$900,000.

More information: www.spaceelevatorgames.org/

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Citation: Success in 'space elevator' competition (Update 3) (2009, November 5) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-11-success-space-elevator-competition.html>

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