

REACH FOR THE STARS!

Starchaser visit to West Cumbria sets young minds dreaming...

Over 1,600 West Cumbrian pupils and teachers have enjoyed the thrilling sight of a real man-carrying rocket on their doorstep, thanks to IMechE West Cumbria. The all-British STARCHASER IV/Nova rocket & capsule saw heads turn in amazement as the rocket travelled into the county, and the reception at both schools – Stainburn School & Science College, Workington and St Benedict's Catholic High School, Whitehaven – was enthusiastic and memorable.

Luke Griffith, Starchaser Engineer, was on hand to deploy the rocket into launch position but high gusting winds restricted the angle of lift to only 45 degrees – still a mightily impressive sight. Luke also did sterling work answering the many questions from hoards of excited pupils who gathered round to see the rocket for themselves.

Starchaser founder, MD & Chief Test Pilot, Steve Bennett was able to visit Stainburn School in person to deliver a thrilling presentation outlining the history of Starchaser development, including awesome video footage of the launch of the actual rocket from Morecambe Bay in 2001 – the largest rocket ever to be launched from the UK mainland. From being passionate about rockets as a boy, Steve has relentlessly followed his dream of being able to build and launch a man-carrying rocket. The formation of Starchaser Industries Ltd is allowing the opportunity to bring in more funds to build the most ambitious rocket yet – Starchaser V/Thunderstar, a three-man carrier! Starchaser have clearly achieved miracles on a shoestring budget compared to other teams around the world, one of whom won the \$10m X-Prize on the day of the presentation, but Steve was undaunted. "The technology we are developing at Starchaser will provide low cost, low risk access to space travel for all, as well as providing a highly economic launch platform for future satellites".

An evening presentation also saw an inspirational talk by Stuart Atkinson of Cockermouth Astronomical Society on the history of flight, which highlighted the progress made by mankind in the century since the Wright Brothers, and looked forward to ventures such as Starchaser opening up space for all in the very near future. John Kelly, Starchaser Outreach Presenter, was equally impressive in presenting to pupils at St Benedict's.

The schools combined the visit with their own rocketry workshops, and feeder schools from the area joined the pupils from Stainburn & St Benedict's in sharing the excitement of the visit and the presentations.

IMechE West Cumbria Vice-Chairman, Andy Cumbor was delighted: "It is wonderful to see so many children so excited about this technology, and to realise that they too can play a part – if they are really determined to make their dream a reality. With November 5th fast approaching, West Cumbria can look forward to hearing a lot more rockets reach for the stars, thanks to Starchaser!"



Starchaser makes a hit with Stainburn pupils!



Volunteer astronauts Jonathan & Matthew Brag, Calum Spence & Alastair Martin are ready to fly!

The visit was made possible by the generous support of IMechE North West Region, AimHigher (the new government initiative to widen participation in higher education), Setpoint, British Nuclear Group, Iggesund Paperboard, Trans Haul and the West Cumbria Times & Star.

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