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\$10 Million Ansari X Prize: LIVE COVERAGE OF SPACEFLIGHT COMPETITION

The cash designed to inspire space travel was won Oct. 4, 2004 as SpaceShipOne, a privately built three-person craft, made a required second flight above 62 miles (100 km).

'Milestone for humanity'
- John Spencer, Space Tourism Society president



[SpaceShipOne Wins \\$10 Million Ansari X Prize in Historic 2nd Trip to Space](#)

04 October, 2004: MOJAVE, CALIFORNIA - The craft soared to 69.7 miles (112.2 kilometers), exceeding the 62-mile level necessary to win the X Prize. Analysts say the flawless flight heralds an exciting future of space tourism. [Story first posted at 10:56 a.m. ET and updated later in the day.]

- [Free Ticket to Space Announced](#)

Check here or on the SPACE.com home page later today for a report on the post-flight press conference, from our reporter at the Mojave Spaceport.

How the Day Unfolded
Exclusive updates provided by SPACE.com's Leonard David, live from the Mojave Spaceport.

10:52 a.m. ET: **Ignition** - SpaceShipOne dropped dramatically from the White Knight mothership and fired its rocket engine for the trip into space.

10:32 a.m. ET: Temperatures aloft are unpredictable, affecting how well the White Knight carrier plane can climb the final 4,000 feet prior to dropping SpaceShipOne, an analyst said.

10:26 a.m. ET: The White Knight carrier plane now must work hard to climb in the thin air. Separation is due in about 15 minutes (corrected time estimate).

10:21 a.m. ET: **Brian Feeney**, who leads a rival X Prize effort called the [da Vinci group](#), wished the SpaceShipOne team well this morning and vowed not to stop his own effort. "Even if the prize is won today, we will fly," Feeney told SPACE.com. "We're moving our program as fast as we can. We'll announce a launch date in a short period of time. Feeney was wearing a gold-colored outfit to promote GoldenPalace.com, his team's sponsor. But Feeney's mission has been a largely volunteer effort, while SpaceShipOne is backed by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen. "Not everyone has a billionaire available to them," Feeney said this morning.

10:12 a.m. ET: White Knight and SpaceShipOne have reached about 25,000 feet, more than halfway to the drop point, said commentator Gregg Maryniak.

10:06 a.m. ET: SpaceShipOne and the White Knight mothership can be seen on [live video](#) soaring above the desert, with a chase plane just behind. All systems appear to be "go" so far.



9:52 a.m. ET: **Airborne** - SpaceShipOne is airborne, slung under its White Knight carrier plane. The pair now begin the long flight to about 47,000 feet, where SpaceShipOne will be dropped. Then it will fire its rockets and head spaceward. [Flight Plan / Story](#)

9:43 a.m. ET: The White Knight carrier ship with SpaceShipOne underneath have begun heading for the runway.

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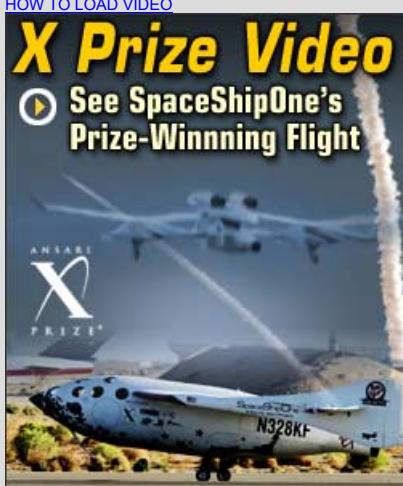
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X Prize Video

See SpaceShipOne's Prize-Winning Flight



In partnership with the X Prize Foundation, SPACE.com carried live streaming video as SpaceShipOne made its historic flight today. The video is now archived here.
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After launching the [video link](#) you must pick from the "Choose Video" menu a narrowband or wideband webcast.

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X Prize Gallery
Check out some of the designs for this space race!



IMAGE GALLERY
SpaceShipOne's Heart-stopping Flight



9:34 a.m. ET: What's the mood of the crew this morning? "We're ready for this," Kevin Mickey, an engineer with Scaled Composites, which built SpaceShipOne. "There really was a calm mood, yet excitement of course."

9:21 a.m. ET: Peter Diamandis, chairman and president of the St. Louis-based X Prize Foundation, marveled at the fact that SpaceShipOne fits in a two-car garage. "It's amazing that it's been made to look so routine," he said of the craft's flights into suborbital space.

9:15 a.m. ET: Eric Anderson, president of Space Adventures, a company that is marketing future space tourist flights, said this morning: "Things are happening at a faster clip, faster than what the public expected. There's a huge amount of latent energy about to be released into commercial space. This is a bigger event than [Dennis] [Tito's flight](#) because it's showing that the technology is coming to meet the market."

9:11 a.m. ET: The glow of dawn is evident at the Mojave Spaceport. The White Knight carrier plane and SpaceShipOne were pushed out of their hanger at about 4 a.m. local time (7 a.m. ET).

9:07 a.m. ET: In the [live webcast](#), X Prize commentator Laura Greene noted that the Russian Sputnik satellite launched 47 years ago today.

8:51 a.m. ET: Conditions look favorable. Temperature is 53 degrees Fahrenheit and winds are out of the East at 6 mph, according to Accuweather.

8:13 a.m. ET: Burt Rutan has said he's hopeful his SpaceShipOne today can top the flight of X-15 pilot, Joe Walker. On August 22, 1963, Walker reached a height of 354,200 feet -- about 67 miles -- the highest altitude reached the X-15 program, a joint NASA/Air Force effort prior to the space shuttle program.

8:05 a.m. ET: Weather - The weather here is crystal clear, no wind, and the stars are twinkling. The airport is lit up and crowds are maneuvering their way into view sites.



7:47 a.m. ET: **Pilot Picked** - SpaceShipOne will be piloted today by 51-year-old Brian Binnie, officials said this morning. Binnie is a program business manager and test pilot at Scaled Composites, which built the vessel. He has 21 years flight test experience including 20 years of naval service in the Strike-Fighter community. He has logged more than 4,600 hours of flight time in 59 different aircraft and is a licensed Airline Transport Pilot. The choice may surprise some who have been following the race for the Ansari X Prize. SpaceShipOne was piloted by Mike Melvill last week in its [first X Prize flight](#), and Melvill flew the craft in its [maiden voyage](#) to space in June.

7:41 a.m. ET: **The Plan** - SpaceShipOne's schedule this morning:

Takeoff, while attached to White Knight carrier plane: 10 a.m. ET (7 PT)

- Ignition of rocket after release from carrier: 11 a.m. ET (8 PT)
- Landing back at Mojave: at 11:30 a.m. ET (8:30 PT)
- Press Conference to announce official altitude: 1:30 p.m. ET (10:30 a.m. PT) [Flight Plan](#)

X Prize News Prior to the Winning Oct. 4 Flight

- [What NASA Thinks of the X Prize](#)

[SpaceShipOne Rolling Rumors: Rutan Sets the Record Straight](#)

Oct. 2, 2004: Burt Rutan, the spacecraft's chief designer, addresses "incorrect rumors about the rolls" that occurred during the first X Prize flight.



Victory at Hand [Second Shot at X Prize Slated for Monday](#)

Oct. 1, 2004: SpaceShipOne will try to soar into space and snag the Ansari X Prize starting at 10 a.m. ET (7 PT) Monday, Oct. 4, just five days after its first flight.



The Competition [As X Prize Slips Away, Canadian Still Vows to Launch](#)

Sept. 30: The leader of the rival da Vinci team is committed to launching a piloted rocket into suborbital space after delays, even as SpaceShipOne appears set to capture the \$10 million purse.

The First X Prize Flight

"I thought it was kind of cool."

[SpaceShipOne Was Not Out of Control, Builder and Pilot Say](#)

7:04 pm ET: MOJAVE, CALIFORNIA - The unplanned spin of SpaceShipOne during its trip into space Wednesday was caused by a known deficiency.

Tense Time at the Top

[SpaceShipOne Succeeds in Trailblazing First Shot at \\$10 Million X Prize](#)

11:28 a.m. ET, Sept. 29: MOJAVE, CALIFORNIA - In a frightening mission that could nonetheless herald a new era of space tourism, a privately built, three-person rocket ship flew to space and back today. It was a wild ride.

Special Report

[SpaceShipOne's Wild Ride](#)

Our archive page captures the excitement and fear that unfolded during SpaceShipOne's first Ansari X Prize flight, in video, images and words.

Prelude to the X Prize

[The First Crewed Civilian Space Mission](#)

SpaceShipOne already made history on June 21, with Mike Melvill being the first civilian to pilot a craft into space. It was a successful test run for the X Prize flights. SPACE.com covered the historic event with pictures and reports from the scene.

**Recent Space Tourism News**

- [Going Private: The Promise and Danger of Space Travel](#)
- [New \\$50 Million Prize for Private Orbiting Spacecraft](#)
- [Virgin Galactic to Offer Public Space Flights](#)
- [Now Boarding: Zero-G Flights for Everyone](#)
- [The Rise of Space Tourism](#)

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**[What is This?](#)**

- [Zoomview: Mount St. Helens - On the Verge](#)
- [Image Gallery: SpaceShipOne's Wild Ride](#)
- [New Wallpaper: Spacewalkers, Part 2](#)
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