



TARC 2015 Highlights and Frequently Asked Questions

TARC Teams & Students

- 700 teams representing 48 states, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C. participated in TARC's qualifying rounds this year
- The Top 100 teams advancing to the Finals hail from 27 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands
- Nearly 1/3 of the students coming to the National Finals are girls, including seven all-girl teams

Rockets & National Finals Rules

- Rockets must fly to 800 feet and back with a flight duration of 46 to 48 seconds
- Rockets must carry one raw egg and return it to earth uncracked with parachute assistance
- Rocket must land in two separate segments with the egg in one and the motor in the other
- The final round at the National Finals challenges the top 42 teams from the first round with new rules that require their rockets to fly to 775 feet within 45-47 seconds
- Teams' final scores are determined by the total of their two individual flights

What is the Team America Rocketry Challenge?

TARC is the largest student rocket contest in the world — approximately 5,000 students participate each year. The competition gives middle and high school students a chance to pursue further study and careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and is a critical piece of the aerospace and defense industry's strategy to build a stronger workforce development pipeline.

What makes this year's competition unique?

This year's rules require teams to build and launch a rocket carrying a raw egg to 800 feet and return it to Earth uncracked within a flight duration of 46 to 48 seconds. A new requirement this year calls for the rocket to separate during flight, safely returning the motor and the egg to the ground detached from one another in separate segments of the rocket.

How do teams qualify for the National Finals?

Teams can launch up to three qualifying flights and the best two are summed for the score. Flights are monitored and scored by a National Association of Rocketry official— scores are determined by how close the rocket comes to the required height or time — and teams with the top 100 scores move on to the national finals.

When and where will the National Finals take place?

The National Finals will take place Friday and Saturday May 9-10, 2015. Students will come to Washington D.C. Friday, May 8 for the Rockets on the Hill Reception and Capitol Hill visit, and then compete in the Final Fly-off Saturday, May 9 at Great Meadow in The Plains, Va., about 50 miles west of Washington, D.C. If necessary, we scheduled a rain date for Sunday, May 10.

Who is eligible to participate?

Students currently enrolled in grades 7-12 can participate. Each team must have 3-10 students, and each school or sponsoring organization cannot enroll more than five teams.

What happens to TARC alumni after they graduate high school?

TARC increases students' engagement and participation in STEM-related activities, areas of collegiate study and ultimately careers. According to 2014 survey data, 71% of TARC participants say the program increased their interest in taking high school science and math courses. 68% say they are more likely to pursue college studies in a STEM field, and more than half say they are more interested in an aerospace career. Among team advisors, nearly four out of five say that TARC increased student interest in studying STEM.