

# NAA NEWS

National Aeronautic Association



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### SpaceShipOne Team Named 2004 Collier Trophy Winner

**Arlington, VA** – SpaceShipOne, the first-ever privately financed, manned spacecraft has won the prestigious Robert J. Collier Trophy Monday, taking its place alongside the greatest advances in aviation history.

The Collier Trophy has been awarded each year since 1911 by the National Aeronautic Association “for the greatest achievement in aviation in America...”

SpaceShipOne went into space for the first time on June 21, 2004, when Mike Melvill piloted the craft 100 kilometers above the Earth’s surface, an altitude considered to be the beginning of space. In the fall of last year, SS1 made a pair of return trips to space within a week of each other to earn the \$10 million Ansari X-Prize, given to the first team to prove that civilian manned spaceflight is feasible.

The amazing vehicle was designed and built by a small firm in Mojave, California, Scaled Composites, LLC, which was founded in 1982 by aircraft designer Burt Rutan. The cost of the project, about \$26 million, was covered by investor Paul G. Allen, the co-founder of Microsoft.

Capable of carrying a pilot and two passengers to space, SS1 is made primarily of graphite and epoxy. It reaches space much like a rocket would, traveling straight up at many times the speed of sound after being released from its carrier ship, White Knight. It featured the revolutionary idea of a “carefree” re-entry into the Earth’s atmosphere, by reconfiguring its wings, which are then moved back into position to allow the pilot to glide the craft back to Earth.

It is the second time Rutan has been a part of a Collier-winning team. He designed the Voyager aircraft that made the first-ever non-stop, non-refueled flight around the world. It won the Collier Trophy for 1986.

This year’s trophy citation specifically mentions Allen, Rutan, pilots Mike Melvill and Brian Binnie, and Mission Control Director Doug Shane “and the entire SpaceShipOne team.”

Past winners of the prestigious trophy include Orville Wright, Howard Hughes, Chuck Yeager, Scott Crossfield and the crew of Apollo 11.

The formal presentation of the trophy will be held on April 19 in Washington, D.C.

National Aeronautic Association is a non-profit organization devoted to promoting understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States. Marking its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2005, NAA certifies all national aviation records, and all world records set in the U.S. It is the oldest national aviation organization in the country.

For information on the National Aeronautic Association:

<http://www.naa-usa.org>