

LIFTOFF

*Behind a rocky headland or a windswept, sandy beach,
Loom the lofty launch sites that provide celestial reach.
From here we mount the heights to gain knowledge 'gainst the odds,
By seeing what has ever been reserved for mythic gods.*

*There begins a quiet cadence in muted meeting rooms,
To negotiate the means to the end that will presume.
The tempo quickens with the booster stack and the payload preparations.
The integration's done and all are at their stations.*

*The clock begins the count and the team begins to weave,
The matrix of the booster, Range and payload whence orbit they'll achieve.
Through the voice nets and the VDLs, TM and radars ready,
Safetys green, the boosters go and the payloads holding steady..*

*The process hits T-0's mark and breath is in remission,
As the countdown net intones: "one... mark... ignition."
A flash of light, a hint of flame, then a bloom of smoke and steam.
A delay of thunder and a pounding chest, and the liftoff of a dream.*

*An orange gout of flame, the solids' billowing trail,
The hammer of the first stage thrust make daily issues pale.
Next hold and wait, the MFCOs watching now,
To track the thrusting booster or crack an errant scow.*

*Now quiet waiting for the distant word of a healthy orbit made.
The release of long anticipation and internal debts are paid.
Another step in man's quest to space is confidently laid.*

*Bob Wyckoff
Launch Site Support Engineer
NASA OSS*



Delta at Dawn — NASA's Jason1 and TIMED Satellites into Orbit

Jason, A Joint US/French Oceanography Mission Will:

- Monitor World Ocean Circulation
- Study Ocean/Atmosphere Interaction
- Improve Climate Prediction And Observe Events Like El Nino

TIMED, Will Study The Mesosphere And Lower Thermosphere / Ionosphere

Boeing Delta II Vehicle Launched From Vandenberg Air Force
Base At 7:07 AM, December 7, 2001.