

HONEST JOHN

SURFACE-TO-SURFACE MISSILE

HONEST JOHN was the U.S. Army's first surface-to-surface unguided rocket used as a long-range artillery weapon. It is stabilized during flight by fins and is provided initial guidance by means of a launching rail. Eight small, solid propellant spin rockets housed in four shrouds behind the warhead are ignited as the Honest John is launched and impart a slow spin to the missile during flight to minimize effects of fin and thrust misalignments (This improves accuracy.).

The Honest John's solid propellant booster was originally developed as a launch booster for the Navy's "Talos" XSAM-N-6 ram-jet anti-aircraft missile but was later replaced by an improved booster. Early experiments with JATO rockets adapted to fly as fin-stabilized missiles were carried out in 1950 at White Sands and led to the combination of the M6 (X202-E2) booster with a 30-inch diameter special warhead to produce the Honest John. The first Honest John was fired at White Sands on June 30, 1951.

The Honest John motor weighs about 4000 pounds. Total weight of an Honest John is nearly 5000 pounds. Its motor produces about 85,000 pounds of thrust for 5.2 seconds giving it a maximum range of approximately 25 miles.

Honest John production was undertaken in 1952 with Douglas Aircraft Company as prime contractor. Hundreds of rounds were fired at White Sands to establish battlefield range tables, wind effects, and mobile launcher design. Considerable difficulty was experienced with quenching the huge cloud of exhaust smoke produced at launch, a factor which might make a launch site a perfect target following launch of a missile. The missile was placed in the hands of special rocket batteries and deployed to many overseas locations.

The M31 series Honest John has been replaced by the M50 series, but still remains a favorite among scale fans.

MISSILE SPECIFICATIONS

LENGTH: 327 inches

MAXIMUM DIAMETER: 30 inches

MOTOR DIAMETER: 23 inches

FIN SPAN: 104 inches

WARHEAD LENGTH: 115 inches

Scale used in MAXI HONEST JOHN kit is 8.85:1.

ABOUT THE MODEL:

Your giant-sized rocket kit is a 1/9th scale model of the free-flight surface-to-surface Honest John, a tactical missile to provide close fire support for ground combat operations. Your Honest John model rocket is designed to be flown with a D12-3 solid-propellant engine.

For best flight performance, it is important to build the model as lightweight as possible. Avoid using unnecessary amounts of glue, body putty and paint. The lighter you build it, the higher it will fly. Due to the model's large size, it should be launched only from a sturdy launch pad. A 3/16" diameter launch rod is required for best lift-off results.

NOTE: Wash all plastic parts, rinse thoroughly and dry before beginning construction.



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