

New World Record



Albuquerque balloonist Troy Bradley sets off from Polk Middle School in the South Valley Wednesday morning in his "Operation Skyspan" helium/hot air balloon en route to a world-record-setting flight that reached an altitude of 16,900 feet before landing 38 miles away, east of Moriarty. It was only the second flight for the 8,000-cubic-foot balloon — about one-tenth the size of a conventional hot air balloon — that is extremely sensitive to erratic atmospheric conditions. Bradley, 29, lost 12 pounds in the past two weeks, getting down to slightly more than 132 pounds, and carried oxygen in a plastic bag rather than a metal tank in his effort to achieve maximum altitude — which set an American Aeronautical Association record Wednesday for this small balloon class.

