

## This Year's Pumpkin Hurl-Off goes New Tech

Last year, fans loved the competition between the American Chunker team from New Hampshire and The Big Ten Inch team from Pennsylvania. There is nothing like watching a pumpkin fired from a cannon that flies over 4,000 feet into Great Salt Bay. The cannons use high air pressure charges stored in a pressurized tank to shoot the pumpkins out of their 10" barrels. In past years, the action was slowed down at times by the equipment used to pressurize the cannons and to measure the distance. Not any more.

This year -- thanks to Reilly Well Drilling -- the time to fill the cannon's air tanks should be cut in half. Reilly's is providing a 60,000 pound truck used for well drilling powered by a rotary air pump that can produce 400 psi of pressure and up to 1,000 cubic feet of air per minute. This should allow the teams to reload in 10 minutes or less. Of course, each team has their own "secret recipe," held with the same degree of secrecy as Colonel Sanders' original fried chicken recipe, in terms of how they fill their air tanks and how much pressure they use. For 2011, plenty of air will be available to them.

More shots will make the competition more enjoyable for both the fans and the teams. Plus, it is a true competition between two teams that know each other and like to compete with one another. The Pumpkinfest is also a

warm-up event for both teams before they compete at the world championship in Delaware this November.

The competition is rather straight forward. After firing practice rounds earlier in the morning to dial in their cannons, each team gets to fire three shots in competition. The team that fires the longest shot wins. Each shot will be measured using state of art surveying equipment provided and operated by New England Positioning Systems, LLC. They claim that they can accurately measure the distance to within the width of a golf ball. In addition, they can do it very quickly.

The Damariscotta Pumpkinfest Hurl-Off is best viewed on Bayview Road in Nobleboro. The event will be held on Saturday, September 8 from 9 a.m. to Noon. It is an event that is not too be missed.