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A striking portrait of the first X-15 research aircraft landing at Rogers Dry Lake, California. As reported on this page, the third X-/5 is now flying

Missiles and
SPACECRAF T LO G

By special arrangement with the US National Aeronautics and
Space Administration, Flight is adopting a standardized presenta-
tion of data for all major successful spacecraft launchings. The
style is shown on page 9 of this issue, where Mercury-At las 5 is the subject of the first entry in our Spacecraft Log. In the heading panel the basic information comprises spacecraft name, inter-national designation, date and place of launch and the agency or Service responsible for directing the project.

SPAC E WOR K A T FARNBOROUG H

The newly formed Space Department at the Royal Aircraft Establishment. Farnborough, reported on page 2 of this issue, will co-ordinate research and development "on all kinds of satellites, on ballistic and upper-atmosphere research rockets such as Black Knight and Skylark, and on the equipment that will be needed for Britain's contribution to the European Launcher Development Organization." The formation of the department represents a redeployment of existing staff from the former Guided Weapons Department under Dr A. W. Lines.
No immediate increase in staff or expansion of activity is envisaged following the creation of the Space Department, although an increased activity will doubtless result if and when the proposed European Launcher Development Organization is formed.
The second new group at RAE, the Weapons Department, repre-sents a combination of the former Armaments Department and the military section of the Guided Weapons Department. The new departmental head, Mr D. J. Lyons, was previously acting head of the GW Department, and the Weapons Department will now be responsible for "the evolution of missiles and airborne armaments of varying kinds."
The Instrumentation and Ranges Department, under Mr E. W. Pye, will co-ordinate RAE trials work at all ranges in the United Kingdom, and will provide instrumentation and data-handling services throughout the establishment.

Artist's impression of NASA's Orbiting Geophysical Observatory, experi-ments for which have now been selected (news item overleaf)

Spaceflight

Model of the Mark 2 steerable radio telescope to be built at Jodrell Bank with the aid of a £236,000 DSIR grant

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THIR D X-1 5 FLIE S

The first flight of the third X-15 research aircraft took place on December 20. Rain had halted all X-15 flights, but by December 20 Rogers Dry Lake at Edwards AFB had dried out sufficiently for their aircraft to land. The No 3 aircraft was turned over to the joint NASA-Air Force-Navy project on September 30, after being rebuilt by the contractor, North American Aviation, following an explosion on June 8, 1960, during a ground engine run. It had not been airborne previously.
On its maiden research mission, it reached a speed of 2.425 m.p.h., and an altitude of 75,000ft. The flight was primarily to check out the aircraft and its systems, including the new adaptive flight control system designed by Minneapolis-Honeywell (Flight, November 30). It is expected that No 3 aircraft will be used primarily to evaluate new systems, and for the majority of high-altitude flights scheduled in the future, with the sole exception of 250,000ft design-altitude missions. The December 20 test was flown by Neil Armstrong, a