

Spaceflight and missiles

VOSKHOD'S ONE-DAY FLIGHT



Engineer-Colonel Vladimir Mikhaylovich Komarov, 37

Spacecraft commander, postgraduate student of the Zhukovsky Military Air Engineering Academy

MUCH to the surprise of Western commentators, who immediately and unanimously deduced that something had gone wrong, the flight of the three-man Soviet spacecraft Voskhod was concluded—on successful completion of the set programme, according to Tass—after 24 hours. The landing of the craft was announced on the morning of October 13 in the following Tass statement:—

“The three-man spaceship Voskhod, piloted by Pilot-Cosmonaut, Engineer-Colonel Vladimir Komarov, with crew-members Scientific-Worker-Cosmonaut, Master of Technical Sciences Konstantin Feoktistov and Doctor-Cosmonaut Boris Yegorov, after successfully accomplishing the programme of scientific exploration, landed safely in the predetermined area at 10.47 a.m. Moscow Time today. All the members of the crew of the Voskhod spaceship are well. At the landing cosmonauts Komarov, Feoktistov and Yegorov were met by sports commissioners, correspondents and friends.

“The programme of scientific research, designed for a 24hr flight, was accomplished in full. Valuable information was obtained about the flight of a group of cosmonauts consisting of specialists in different fields. For the first time, scientists were able to conduct observations directly in outer space. The information obtained as a result of the flight is being tabulated and processed.”

The progress of the flight had been reported at intervals throughout the 24hr in Tass bulletins, and directly transmitted television pictures from the spacecraft were shown on Soviet domestic television. The story of the flight begins with the initial announcement; the first two paragraphs of this are repeated here in order to correct

Cosmonauts Komarov (left) and Feoktistov inside the Voskhod spacecraft, as seen by TV viewers in Moscow on October 12 during the orbital flight



Since childhood Vladimir Komarov dreamed of becoming a pilot. In 1942 he joined the special Air Force School in Moscow; after three years he joined the Bataysk Military Flying School and, after graduating, served as a fighter pilot. His superior officers noted that he was a bold and confident pilot who kept his head in difficult conditions. In 1954 he entered the Zhukovsky Academy and, after five years, obtained his engineering diploma.

Air engineer Komarov successfully passed his course in space training and studied to perfection the spaceship's systems. He is a good parachutist, with 77 parachute jumps to his credit. He holds the Order of the Red Star and four medals.

A Muscovite, Vladimir Komarov is married to Valentin Komarova, a graduate of the History and Philology Department of the Teachers' Training Institute in Grozny, Northern Caucasus, who now works as a librarian. They have two children, Yevgeny, 13, and Irina, six.

minor translation errors which appeared in the Soviet Information Service version given in last week's issue.

“At 10.30 a.m. Moscow Time on October 12 the Soviet Union, for the first time in the world, placed in orbit by means of a new powerful carrier rocket a piloted spaceship, Voskhod, with three men on board. The spaceship's crew is composed of citizens of the Soviet Union: the commander is Pilot-Cosmonaut, Engineer-Colonel Vladimir Mikhaylovich Komarov; and the members of the crew are Doctor-Cosmonaut Boris Borisovich Yegorov and Scientist-Cosmonaut Konstantin Petrovich Feoktistov, Candidate of Technical Sciences.

“The aims of the new space flight are:—

“To test the new multi-seat piloted spaceship;

“To check the capacity for work and interaction during space flight of a group of cosmonauts consisting of specialists in different fields of science and technology;

“To carry out scientific, physical and technical investigations in conditions of space flight;

“To continue the study of the effects of different factors of space flight on the human organism; and

“To carry out extended medical and biological research in conditions of a long flight.

“These studies are being made with the help of instruments on board the spacecraft with the direct participation of a scientific worker, a cosmonaut and a space doctor.”

The announcement went on to give the orbit of the spacecraft as 178-409km, inclination “about 65°,” and period 90.1min.

The following information was given in periodic Tass reports during the flight:—

First Orbit Crossing the borders of the Soviet Union on the first orbit, the cosmonauts radioed to Earth “Feeling fine. The assignment will be carried out.” Yegorov carried out a general medical examination of the cosmonauts. The crew had lunch. Komarov reported “Conditions in the cabin normal. Pressure 1.1 atmospheres, temperature 18°C, relative humidity 58 per cent.”