

Expedition 11, Space Tourist Back on Earth

October 11 2005



The Expedition 11 landed back on Earth Monday at 9:09 p.m. EDT after undocking from the international space station at 5:49 p.m. EDT. Commander Sergei Krikalev, Flight Engineer John Phillips and Spaceflight Participant US millionaire businessman Greg Olsen boarded a Soyuz TMA-6 Monday afternoon for re-entry in Kazakhstan.

The station's new crewmembers arrived at the station on Oct. 3. Expedition 12 Commander Bill McArthur and Flight Engineer Valery Tokarev will mark the fifth anniversary of a human presence aboard the station next month. They will stay on the orbital outpost until next April.

Commander Sergei Krikalev and NASA Science Officer John Phillips,

11th crew of the space station, spent more than 179 days in space. Space tourist Gregory Olsen, who flew to the space station with the Expedition 12 crew, spent about eight days aboard the ISS doing experiments. He was aboard under a contract with the Russian Federal Space Agency.

Olsen, 60, paid Space Adventures 20 million dollars for a seat aboard the capsule and eight days of gazing down at the Earth from the ISS station, 230 miles (370 kilometers) up.

The Soyuz TMA spacecraft undocked from the station at 5:49 p.m. EDT. Its re-entry was flawless. It brought the three men aboard to a landing about 53 miles northeast of Arkalyk after 179 days and 23 minutes in space for the E11 crew. The recovery team reached the capsule in minutes.

Krikalev and Phillips will spend several weeks in Star City, near Moscow, for debriefing and medical examinations.

They launched from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan last April 14. During their increment they performed a spacewalk, continued station maintenance and did scientific experiments.

While aboard the station, Krikalev became the world's most experienced spacefarer. On Aug. 16 his cumulative time in space passed the record of 747 days, 14 hours and 14 minutes set by Cosmonaut Sergei Avdeyev. Krikalev previously had completed two long-duration spaceflights aboard the Mir space station, served as a member of the Expedition 1 crew of the space station and flown two space shuttle missions.

By Monday's landing, Krikalev's cumulative time in space had reached 803 days and 9 hours and 39 minutes.

Before closing the last of the Soyuz-station hatches at 2:48 p.m. EDT

Monday, Krikalev and Phillips said farewell to the Expedition 12 crew, Commander and NASA Science Officer Bill McArthur and Flight Engineer Valery Tokarev. That crew launched with Olsen from Baikonur Sept. 30 at 11:55 p.m. EDT to begin its six-month stay in space.

Source: NASA

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