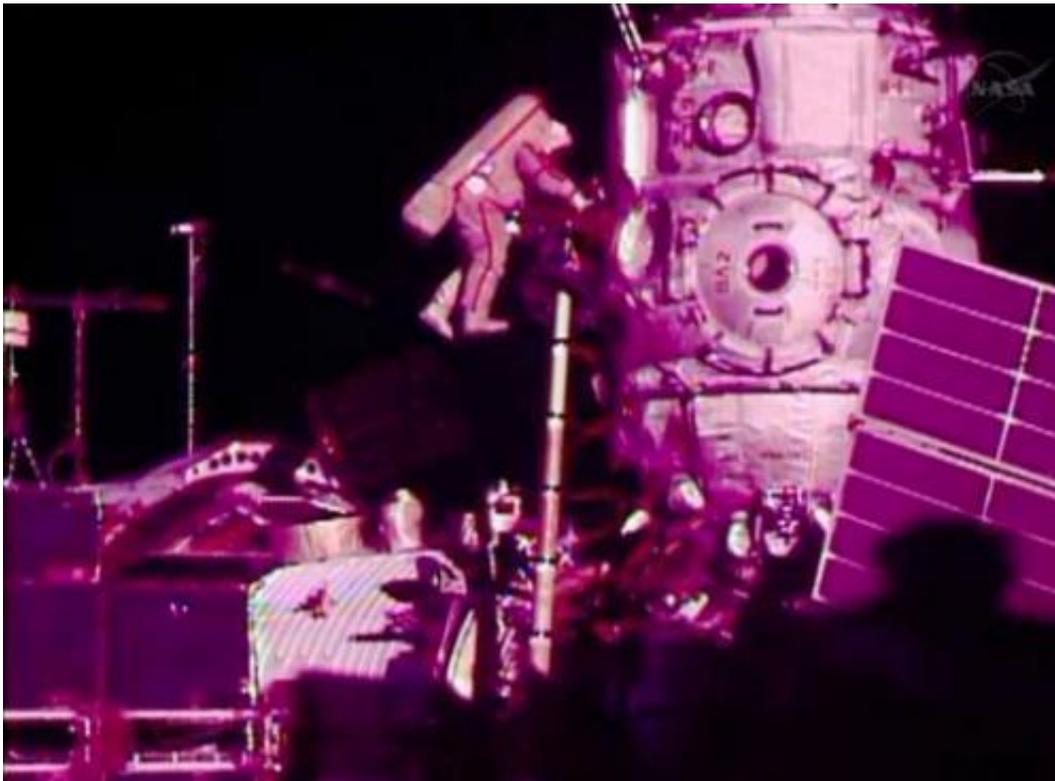


Two Russians turn cable guys in record spacewalk (Update)

August 16 2013, by Marcia Dunn



In this image from video made available by NASA, Russian cosmonaut Fyodor Yurchikhin participates in a spacewalk outside the International Space Station on Friday, Aug. 16, 2013. Yurchikhin and Aleksandr Misurkin are to install cabling for a new lab due to arrive at the station in a few months. (AP Photo/NASA)

In a record-long spacewalk, Russian cosmonauts rigged cable outside the International Space Station on Friday for a new lab that's due to arrive in

a few months.

Fyodor Yurchikhin and Aleksandr Misurkin spent almost the entire seven-hour-plus spacewalk routing 120 feet (36 meters) of power and Ethernet cable. The cable had to be unreeled, then meticulously secured to handrails and hooks.

"Today we are the cable people," one of the spacewalkers commented in Russian as the work drew to a close.

The spacewalk lasted seven hours and 29 minutes, a full hour longer than originally planned in order for the two to get a jump on work awaiting them in yet another outing next Thursday.

It was the longest spacewalk ever by a pair of Russians, surpassing the former record of seven hours and 16 minutes set at the old Mir space station in 1990.

Americans hold the overall record: a nearly nine-hour spacewalk in 2001.

Friday's spacewalk occurred exactly one month after an Italian astronaut almost drowned when leaking water flooded his helmet during a spacewalk.

Luca Parmitano's spacesuit was provided by NASA. Friday's spacewalkers wore Russian-made suits that differ from the U.S. version.

NASA is still investigating last month's close call. The problem appears to be in the life-support backpack. The spacesuit will be sent back for analysis early next year. Until the trouble is identified and resolved, U.S. spacewalks are on hold.

To reach the cable work site on Friday, Yurchikhin hitched a ride on the end of a 46-foot (14-meter) boom operated by Misurkin.

When Yurchikhin asked if he was positioned properly on the boom, Misurkin assured him, "You look great. You look perfect."

"Thank you," Yurchikhin replied. "I don't want to blush."

"It just looks like you're in space," Misurkin said. "Everything is black around you."

The Russian Space Agency plans to launch a new science lab by year's end. It's the last major piece due at the orbiting outpost, active since 1998, and will replace a 12-year-old Russian docking compartment that doubles as an air lock.

Friday's excursion was the third of six Russian spacewalks planned for this year.

The four other space station residents—two Americans, another Russian and Italy's Parmitano—monitored Friday's spacewalk from inside. Russian Mission Control outside Moscow directed the operation.

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