Operation Mars: - what it means

Here are facts about the $200 million Mars Exploration Program of the U. S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Reports due to come in sometime today, (Friday), are expected to result in man's first "closeup" pictures of the surface of the planet Mars.

Additional data on the mysteries of the Red Planet will be coming in through 1967 as Mariner 4 continues in orbit the Sun, the Earth and Mars.

WHAT IT IS

MARS is the "Red Planet", one of the seven "fixed stars" that revolves around the sun; the heavenly body most like Earth in atmosphere and surface conditions.

Size — 1/6th the size of Earth; 4,218 miles in diameter.

Distance from Earth — more than 130 million miles.

Distance from Sun — 142 million miles or 687 days.

Location — now visible to the eye in the southwestern sky from rising at 9 p.m. to setting about midnight.

Additional facts — Mars has two known moons, "live" volcanoes, deep canyons, green and vegetation, canals, sand dunes, deserts, irrigation ditches, four "seasons".

MARINER 4 FACTS

Mariner 4 — An unmanned spacecraft weighing 575 lbs.; 9½ ft. high; 20 ft. in wide, containing mechanisms for TV photos, computers to register various scientific data.

Launched — Nov. 28, 1964, from Cape Kennedy, Fla.

Speed — 11,184 MPH

Routes — An orbiting over orbit around Earth, Sun, Mars; an approximate 350 million mile journey, each orbit.

Schedule — First passed Mars July 14, 1965, 1 p.m. at closest point an altitude of 5,000 miles.

More data to be received through September, 1965. Most data may come in 1967 when the Mariner orbits around the Sun brings it back to within 40 to 50 million miles of Earth.

Areas found, 19 prior — (1) the "sea" desert of Hellas; (2) the sea of Trivium Charon; the one of the darkest areas of Mars; (3) the desert of Zephyria; (4) the desert of Amazonis; (5) the desert of Memnonia.

Many astronomers have reported using results that seem to appear and disappear; And, (6) the Mare Cimmerium or the sea of Sirens — where changes, clouds and a possible volcanic eruption have been sighted; (7) the desert of Elysium; (8) Mare Cimmerium; (9) the desert of Phaethontis, and (10) the Amazonis Sinus. A dark, large curving area in the southern hemisphere of Mars.

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