SpaceShipOne Flight 16P

Crew: Melvill. Fifth powered flight of Burt Rutan's SpaceShipOne and first of two flights over 100 km that needed to be accomplished in a week to win the $10 million X-Prize. Spacecraft did a series of 60 rolls during last stage of engine burn.

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SpaceShipOne coasted to 103 km altitude and successfully completed the first of two X-Prize flights. The motor was shut down when the pilot noted that his altitude predictor exceeded the required 100 km mark. The motor burn lasted 77 seconds, 1 second longer than on the June 21st flight. Melvill was prepared to burn the motor up to 89 seconds, which indicates significant additional performance remains in SS1. During the motor burn the spacecraft began to roll uncontrollably, but Melvill pressed on despite advice from the ground to shut the motor down and abort the attempt.

Apogee: 103 km (64 mi).
First Launch: 2004.09.29.
Last Launch: 2004.09.29.
Duration: 0.0167 days.

Associated People

- **Melvill Melvill, Michael Winston 'Mike'** (1941-) South African-American test pilot rocketplane pilot. Flew on SpaceShipOne Flight 15P, SpaceShipOne Flight 16P. More...

See also

- Manned spaceflight Category of spacecraft. More...

Associated Programs

- **X-Prize** The X-Prize competition was an attempt to promote commercial civilian spaceflight in a manner similar to the prizes handed out in the early days of aviation. Ten million dollars was to go to the first team to fly a vehicle capable of launching three people into space (defined as an altitude of 100 km in a suborbital trajectory), twice in a two-week period. The vehicle had to be 90% reusable by dry mass. For the purposes of the two flights, the competition accepted flight by one person and ballast equivalent to two others at 90 kg per passenger. The flights had to be completed before the end of 2005. More...