

Re: Is USA going to be embarrassed by China getting to Mars first

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- *From:* Cardman <do-not@xxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sun, 09 Apr 2006 13:29:48 GMT
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On 8 Apr 2006 23:32:52 -0700, schumache1234@xxxxxxxx wrote:

I think we have another space race on our hands. America says it is going to the Moon and then on to Mars

Well Mars will be worked in there somewhere, but they could well visit an asteroid or two before Mars.

(I bet the money never comes through for the latter).

I would not discount that quite yet. NASA is working on a step by step system. So once they are on the Moon, and have visited an asteroid or two, then they are already half way to Mars.

NASA can then assemble their Mars base a bit at a time based on their available budget.

The only flaw in NASA's system is that they will abandon their old bases to free up funding for their new base.

Why go to the Moon and especially if the plan is to set up a base which is going to cost a fortune.

Exploration, experience, and some science. NASA is likely to do a poor job. The science could well be more "cool" than scientifically useful, but being on the Moon is sure a lot better than LEO.

We have supposedly been there, so why not push our boundaries a bit further and get on with the real job of landing some people on Mars.

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To go to Mars requires a lot more hardware. It is better to build to a level needed for the Moon first before extending this level to cover Mars later on.

If China simply sets its goal as safely landing some astronauts on Mars with no plan for their return, they could easily achieve this within a few years.

I am sure that China could soon land astronauts on many solar system destinations if they had no plans to bring them back. However, no country has yet desired a one-way trip.

China currently plans to have people on the Moon by 2017 I recall.

We can assume they would provide enough resources so that they could set up a base and be semi-self sufficient .ie enough food to survive their optimistic lifetimes.

It is likely that China will have a lot to learn before establishing a base and where one that is semi-self sufficient is a great deal harder.

Things would be nice though if they could use their huge workforce to send off lots of useful cargo to the Moon.

apparently China already has ten times the number of staff employed in their space industry. India and Russia must also be thinking along the same lines.

Yes, but China's current launch rate and hardware is not currently reflecting this advantage. They are far below Russia and do a good job for competition with the go nowhere quickly Space Shuttle.

So China would need to focus to pose a real threat.

America and Europe would probably be best to rely on private enterprise with a privately funded attempt to land on Mars

Maybe once they have proved their worth.

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which is really not any
more stupid or dangerous than the first attempts at getting to the
South Pole or to the top of Mt. Everest.

You forget the cost.

I am pretty sure that Burt Rutan would be thinking along these lines
(he actually has said this to me) and with the right finances would aim
to achieve this within his lifetime.

Then he is welcome to find profit here. :-]

Cardman

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