

newspaper in space

BY ROSS McGUINNESS

OTHER papers may claim to be 'soar-away' or 'out of this world'. They may even name themselves after celestial bodies. But Metro has beaten them all to the heavens – by becoming the first newspaper in space.

At 8.01am yesterday, a Soyuz spacecraft blasted off from Kazakhstan heading for the International Space Station – with a special edition of Metro on board.

It was taken by Richard Garriott, the first British-born space tourist, who will be carrying out a series of experiments thought up by British school-children as part of a Metro competition. For the next ten days, the 47-year-old will join an 18-strong crew that includes a Nasa astronaut and a Russian cosmonaut.

The Metro edition shows Mr Garriott on the front page in his space suit, and contains details of the winning entries in the children's experiments competition. Mr Garriott is travelling courtesy of Space Adventures, the only company that sends tourists into the great beyond. 'It's great to sport the British flag in space,' he said before lift-off.

Although born in Cambridge, the latest space tourist is a US citizen who was raised in Texas, and is the son of



astronaut Owen Garriott. 'I'm now feeling my British heritage a lot more than I used to, feeling proud of it. I hope British people will be proud of me too,' Richard said.

'I'm elated, elated,' said Owen Garriott, shortly after launch. Richard's mother, Eve, and his girlfriend, Kelly Miller, shed tears of joy and relief at the successful launch. 'This is cool, this is cool,' Ms Miller said.

A key figure in the video game industry, Mr Garriott established his own games publisher, Origin Systems, which he later sold to Electronic Arts.

A little bit of history as British-born adventurer blasts off with Metro

Mr Garriott's poor eyesight meant he could not become a Nasa astronaut. He paid a reported £20million for his voyage. 'I'm really happy for him. It's one of the things he's wanted to do most in his life. He's like a kid in a candy shop,' said Ms Miller.

The Soyuz is due to dock tomorrow with the ISS. Mr Garriott is to return to Earth on October 24 in a Soyuz capsule with cosmonauts Oleg Kononenko and Sergei Volkov, whose father, Alexander, also travelled to space – making him the first professional second-generation space traveller.



Adventurer: Richard

WHAT THE CHILDREN DESIGNED

HOW do you fly a magic carpet in space? Could you gargle and spit in a sink? And can you drink while standing on your head in zero-gravity? These are just a few of the tests suggested by our younger readers that Richard Garriott will be undertaking while on his adventure. Zoe Brown, aged ten, wanted to see if he could skip in space. Zoe,



Jump to it: Zoe Brown's skipping test will be tried by Richard in orbit

a pupil at Grove Primary School, Romford, east London, said Richard would need a rope, somewhere to bounce, and 'plenty of self-confidence and belief'. Jack Fox, also ten, from North Bridge House School in Regents Park, central London, asked how astronauts keep entertained, so Richard has taken playing cards, watercolour paints and magnets to keep himself busy.

Infinity and beyond for £2,500



Float on: Play being an astronaut

WHILE space tourists pay out as much as £20million, you can experience the thrill of weightlessness for a mere £2,500. Space Adventures, the organisation that put Richard Garriott into orbit, offers zero-gravity flights at a facility in either the US or Russia. For about £6,000, you can also experience the force of gravity in a simulation of re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere. The next best thing to being in orbit, however, is the spacewalk. Costing £17,000 for

two people, participants wear a spacesuit underwater, outside a full-scale model of the ISS, to recreate the sensation of walking above Earth. Founded in 1998, Space Adventures was responsible for the world's first space tourist. In May 2001, US businessman Dennis Tito went to the ISS. He was followed a year later by South African Mark Shuttleworth. The first female space tourist was Anousheh Ansari from Iran, who went up in September 2006.

AS SEEN ON THE BBC

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