

## PASSES:

The passes of the MIR complex now befall in the nighthours. These days between 2100 and 0600UTC. Gradually the passes shift to earlier periods and this means that soon we can again hear radiotraffic in the eveninghours. Not so long after that we can observe MIR visually (weather permitting). After the docking of Progress-M3 to MIR (3 March 1990) still some radiotraffic in 1 or 2 morning passes. On 8 March 1990 during orb. 23234, at 0720UTC, Serebrov said that they intended to accomplish their work with Progress-M3 that day. Now they can do some routinework with camera-s and telescopes. Soon they have accomplish a lot of important operations: they undocking of Progress-M3 and the redocking of Soyuz-TM9 from the forward to the aft docking port. This to free the forward one for the reception of the Module-T (to be launched towards the end of March). During this 6th MIR expedition no EVA had been planned, but there is a possibility that they will have an EVA to do. They have to repair the protecting cover of the Soyuz-TM9. The fact that this cover seemed partly loose has been discovered during the redocking operation on 21 February 1990. After the redocking the cosmonauts got orders to take a good look at the S-TM9. The part of the cover which came loose has to protect the landing module from micrometeorites and radiation.

Some facts about which had been some doubts:

1. During the redocking of the S-TM8 (12 Dec. '90) and that of the S-TM9 (21 Febr. 1990) the cosmonauts indeed flew around the complex. So these times they did not follow the procedure to turn the complex 180 degrees and just wait with the Soyuz. This due to the fact the the complex is very heavy and asymmetric.
2. After the orbit corrections on 17 and 18 Jan. 1990 the orbit was: ap. 413, per: 385KM. On 3 March 1990 the orbit set out to be somewhat lower as a result of the normal drag. ap: 405, per: 382 KM.
3. The supposition (of a soviet journalist) that Module-T would get the name Kvant-3 for its mission, has been overruled: Module-T will enter space-history under the name: KRISTALL.

Chris v.d. Berg. NL-9165/A-UK3202