



# Riding Rockets: The Outrageous Tales of a Space Shuttle Astronaut

*Mike Mullane*

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In 1978, the first group of space shuttle astronauts was introduced to the world -- twenty-nine men and six women who would carry NASA through the most tumultuous years of the space shuttle program. Among them was USAF Colonel Mike Mullane, who, in his memoir *Riding Rockets*, strips the heroic veneer from the astronaut corps and paints them as they are -- human.

Mullane's tales of arrested development among military flyboys working with feminist pioneers and post-doc scientists are sometimes bawdy, often comical, and always entertaining. He vividly portrays every aspect of the astronaut experience, from telling a female technician which urine-collection condom size is a fit to hearing "Taps" played over a friend's grave. He is also brutally honest in his criticism of a NASA leadership whose bungling would precipitate the Challenger disaster -- killing four members of his group. A hilarious, heartfelt story of life in all its fateful uncertainty, *Riding Rockets* will resonate long after the call of "Wheel stop."

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