

Mercury-Scout-1 (MS-1)

Mercury-Scout-1 (MS-1) was a small satellite designed to be put into orbit with a communications package to verify the readiness of the worldwide Mercury radar tracking network prior to manned Mercury missions. On 1 November 1961 it was launched by a Blue Scout-2 rocket but the launch failed. The rocket was destroyed by the Range Safety Officer 43 seconds into the mission after it developed erratic motions that caused unusually high aerodynamic loads. A replacement was never built since the MA-4 (13 September 1961) and MA-5 (29 November 1961) missions together showed that the network met all requirements.