

Cosmonauts Will Watch Olympics on International Space Station

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Koichi Wakata looks somewhat like a skier while floating on the International Space Station.

The astronauts sailing off into space tomorrow for a six month stay on the International Space Station will share at least one experience with us terrestrials left down below.

Thanks to quality communications equipment, the crew of spaceflight Soyuz TMA-11M will be able to watch the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, crew commander Mikhail Tyurin said at a press conference Wednesday.

"We'll be able to watch everything, it's true, not online, but with a certain delay. In the same way that we watch the Games on television in normal life," Tyurin said, Interfax reported.

In the spirit of the Games, the astronauts have even developed a special technique that will allow two members to pass an Olympic torch, which will be carried into space for the first time in history, while they are floating outside the station.

Instruments must be tethered to astronauts during space walks, so the crew had to work out the routine in a water immersion facility to make sure that they could pass the torch and its safety wire together.

Asked whether the Russian, American, Japanese and European crew members will root for their own countries in the race for Olympic medals, Tyurin said that they are, first and foremost, an international group that enjoys sports generally.

Japanese crew member Koichi Wakata added that he sees a resemblance between astronauts and Olympic athletes.

"We are conquerors of the cosmos, which all told is a certain mission for all mankind. The Olympics Games assigns its participants a mission that they must complete, and this is similar to what we do, working on board the International Space Station," Wakata said.

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