

MOON NEXT TIME ?

Pioneer, America's moon seeking rocket was in the last stages of preparation. The T.V. scanner, with which it was hoped to secure close pictures of the moon, was being put into place. The complete rocket was composed of a Thor (First stage) a modified Vanguard (Second stage) then an advanced Vanguard. The nose housed a complex of scientific instruments to record the secrets of space.

Britain's radio telescope at Jodrell Bank prepared to plot Pioneer's course. Professor Lovell, in charge there, told visiting American scientists he believed the rocket, whether it got near the moon or not, would increase man's knowledge of space. Lovell's staff now had no thought for anything but the immediate exciting prospect of tracking Pioneer. The Jodrell Bank telescope is the best equipped in the world for such work.

Cape Canaveral, Florida, Twenty to five a.m. Pioneer now within minutes of the launching that would make scientific history. Four million dollars of American money and an immense wealth of technical knowledge and know-how were embodied in this tremendous experiment. Being formed on the casing, liquid oxygen fuel being intensely cold. The hopes of thousands nearby and millions throughout the world now centred on Pioneer. And now came the blast-off.

Although Pioneer only got one third of the way to the moon, a comparatively small increase of take-off speed would have made it successful. There's every hope, therefore, that the Americans will get there next time.