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SALLY RIDE SCIENCE

Barbie hails astronaut Sally Ride with new 'Inspiring Women' doll



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August 26, 2019 (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/barbie-hails-astronaut-sally-ride-with-new-inspiring-women-doll/>) by Sally Ride Science (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/author/mking/>) · Posted in " In the Media (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/category/in-the-media/>) " ·

From CollectSpace.com (<http://www.collectspace.com/news/news-082619a-astronaut-sally-ride-barbie-doll.html>)

Barbie has added to her astronaut wardrobe the flight suit of a real space explorer.

Mattel on Monday (Aug. 26) revealed its new Barbie Inspiring Women Series Sally Ride doll, modeled after the late NASA astronaut.

“Sally Ride was the first American woman, and the youngest American, to fly in space. Her adventurous nature, quest for discovery and pioneering accomplishments inspire girls everywhere to boldly reach for the stars,” a Mattel spokesperson told collectSPACE.

The Sally Ride Barbie is styled after the astronaut as she appeared in June 1983, when the then-32-year-old physicist and former nationally ranked junior tennis player launched as an STS-7 mission specialist on the space shuttle Challenger. The first of Ride’s two spaceflights — Ride flew again on Challenger’s STS-41G mission in 1984 — the first six days she spent orbiting Earth established her place in history as the first U.S. female in space.



The doll is dressed in a powder-blue coverall similar in design to the garment that Ride wore for lift off and re-entry into the atmosphere. The suit is decorated with the American flag, NASA “meatball” logo and STS-7 mission patch, as well as a “Sally K. Ride” name tag. (Absent is the NASA “worm” logo Ride wore on her right shoulder.)

Also included are a communications headset and a launch-entry helmet like the type that Ride wore on board the space shuttle. The doll also sports Ride’s iconic 1983 curly brown hairdo.

Ride died on July 23, 2012 (<http://www.collectspace.com/news/news-072312b.html>), at the age of 61. Mattel worked with NASA and Tam O’Shaughnessy, Ride’s partner, to ensure the Barbie doll accurately represented the astronaut’s legacy.

The Barbie Inspiring Women Series pays tribute to incredible heroines who “took risks, changed rules and paved the way for generations of girls to dream bigger than ever before.” The line was first introduced on International Women’s Day in 2018 with dolls that honored aviatrix Amelia Earhart, artist Frida Kahlo and [NASA mathematician Katherine Johnson](http://www.collectspace.com/news/news-030618a-barbie-inspiring-women-doll-katherine-johnson.html) (<http://www.collectspace.com/news/news-030618a-barbie-inspiring-women-doll-katherine-johnson.html>), one of the agency’s original “hidden figures.”

In addition to Ride, Mattel on Monday also debuted a doll modeled after American activist Rosa Parks, “the mother of the modern civil rights movement.”

The Sally Ride doll and Mattel’s Inspiring Women Series shares a common goal with an effort started by the astronaut to inspire young people (and in particular, young girls) to take up an interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) and to promote STEM literacy. Founded in 2001, the non-for-profit Sally Ride

Science organization is today run by the University of California, San Diego with O'Shaughnessy as its executive director.



The Barbie Inspiring Women Series Sally Ride doll is now available for sale (<https://barbie.mattel.com/shop/en-us/ba/inspiring-women-series/sally-ride-barbie-inspiring-women-doll-fxd77>) from Mattel's Barbie.com. The \$30.99 doll will be offered at Target stores in the United States beginning on Sept. 1.

The Sally Ride doll marks the first time that Barbie has been styled after a real-life astronaut for a mass marketed product. Astronaut Barbie, though, predates Ride's own launch by 18 years. The first Barbie astronaut outfit, "Barbie Miss Astronaut," was sold in 1965, two years after Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova became the world's first woman to fly into space.

In the years since, Barbie dolls have been released with a hot pink spacesuit ("Astronaut Barbie" in 1985), in celebration of the first moon landing ("Astronaut Barbie Career Collection Special Edition" in 1994), as a Space Camp trainee ("Space Camp Barbie" in 1998 and 2008) and as the first woman on Mars ("[Mars Explorer Barbie](http://www.collectspace.com/news/news-080513b.html)" in 2013). Most recently, Barbie was dressed in a Russian Sokol spacesuit-inspired outfit for a line celebrating the past six decades of career dolls ("60th Anniversary Astronaut" in 2019).

In 2017, Mattel collaborated with the European Space Agency (ESA) to make two one-of-a-kind Barbie dolls of Italian astronaut Samantha Cristoforetti. Part of the company's #MoreRoleModels outreach campaign, the dolls have been exhibited at ESA and at International Women's Day events, but were not produced for sale.

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