

Endeavour 'Go' for Wednesday Launch



Pilot Charlie Hobaugh exits the shuttle training aircraft after a training session at Kennedy Space Center's Shuttle Landing Facility. He and STS-118 Commander Scott Kelly were at the facility to practice landings for their upcoming mission. Photo credit: NASA

Space Shuttle Endeavour is in good shape and on target for launch Wednesday, according to members of NASA's Mission Management Team. Members of the team, known as the MMT, met Monday to review the launch status, and confirmed that the countdown is proceeding right on schedule.

"I'm very proud of the team for overcoming all the difficulties in the countdown and the preparation for flight so far," said Wayne Hale, Space Shuttle Program manager. "The flight crew is down here well-trained and ready to go fly, and based on the review that we had today, we're ready to go fly in two days."

Weather is not expected to stand in the way of a Wednesday evening liftoff. Currently, there's only a 30% chance that isolated showers or anvil clouds could prevent launch. This prediction remains the same in the event of a 24-hour delay.

The countdown began on time at 8 p.m. EDT Sunday. Late Monday night, workers will load propellants into the onboard reactant tanks for the shuttle's three fuel cells. When that operation is complete early Wednesday morning, the pad will be reopened for initial pad closeouts and checks of the orbiter's three main engines.

The 22nd flight to the International Space Station, STS-118 will be the first flight for Endeavour since 2002, and the first mission for Mission Specialist Barbara Morgan, the teacher-turned-astronaut whose association with NASA began more than 20 years ago.

Source: NASA

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