

Deep Impact craft may get second mission

July 5 2005

Scientists were evaluating Tuesday whether the Deep Impact Flyby spacecraft is capable of embarking on a second comet interception.

Jubilation over Monday's successful launch of an impactor device into the comet Tempel 1 turned to cold analysis for scientists at NASA and Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corporation in Boulder, Colo., which manufactured the two-part spacecraft.

Ball Deputy Director of Programs in Civil Space Systems Monte Henderson told Space.com engineers were attempting to determine how much dust and debris from the collision hit the Flyby craft.

If little damage has been done, Henderson said the craft could be redeployed to send it on a 3.5 year cruise to Comet Boethin, which orbits the Sun every 11 years. It was discovered Jan. 4, 1975, during a routine comet-hunting scan by the late Rev. Leo Boethin of the Philippines.

Based on fuel and trajectory, the redirection would have to take place before July 24, Henderson said.

Copyright 2005 by United Press International

Citation: Deep Impact craft may get second mission (2005, July 5) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2005-07-deep-impact-craft-mission.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.