

Hurricane didn't bother the space shuttle

July 11 2005

The space shuttle Discovery, counting down toward a Wednesday launch, easily weathered the outer edge of Hurricane Dennis during the weekend.

Discovery spent the weekend on its launch pad at NASA's Kennedy Space Center as the hurricane's outer squall bands passed overhead, the New Orleans Times-Picayune reported.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration officials reported winds of about 40 mph Saturday afternoon, well below the 69 mph threshold that would have required moving the shuttle to the spaceport's Vertical Assembly Building. Such a move would have delayed the launch by several weeks.

NASA on Sunday began the countdown ahead of Discovery's launch, set for Wednesday. It would be the first U.S. shuttle mission since the shuttle Columbia broke apart on re-entry Feb. 1, 2003.

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