

Endeavour Cleared for Tuesday Landing

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(From left) STS-118 mission specialists Barbara Morgan, Dave Williams and Commander Scott Kelly talk to schoolchildren from the La Ronge, Saskatchewan area. Image: NASA TV

Mission managers announced today that Space Shuttle Endeavour is cleared for landing. The decision came after a thorough review of imagery and data collected during late inspection of the orbiter on Sunday.

In space, the seven-member STS-118 crew is preparing for its return to Earth aboard Endeavour after a successful stay at the International Space Station.

The crew completed tests this morning of Endeavour's systems and

engines that will be used for re-entry and landing. Other preparations include stowing equipment and a 30-minute deorbit briefing. The crew will also have some off-duty time to prepare for Tuesday's landing opportunities.

In other activities, crew members took time out of their schedule at 11:46 a.m. today to field questions from Canadian schoolchildren from the La Ronge, Saskatchewan, area.

Endeavour's first landing opportunity on Tuesday is at 12:32 p.m. EDT at Kennedy Space Center, Fla., with the deorbit burn occurring at 11:25 a.m. A second opportunity is available at the Florida spaceport at 2:06 p.m. The deorbit burn would occur at 1 p.m.

Three opportunities are available Tuesday at Edwards Air Force Base in California. The first calls for landing at 3:37 p.m., with the deorbit burn at 2:30 p.m. The second calls for the deorbit burn to occur at 4:06 p.m. and landing at 5:11 p.m. The third opportunity would have the deorbit burn at 5:43 p.m. and landing at 6:48 p.m.

White Sands Space Harbor in New Mexico will not be called up for a possible Tuesday landing there.

Meanwhile, mission managers continue to monitor Hurricane Dean as it moves westward in the Caribbean Sea.

The STS-118 crew members spent almost nine days at the international outpost. They continued the on-orbit construction of the station and transferred tons of cargo between the two spacecraft. The STS-118 crew conducted four spacewalks at the station. The two major objectives were the installation of the S5 and the replacement of a failed attitude control gyroscope.

Source: NASA

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