

Station Crew Ready for Wednesday's Spacewalk

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Earth's limb and airglow form part of the background for this scene of solar array panels on the International Space Station that appear to be intersecting. Image credit: NASA

The Expedition 16 crew aboard the International Space Station wrapped up preparations Tuesday for a 6.5-hour spacewalk scheduled to begin early Wednesday.

After completing a daily exercise regimen, Commander Peggy Whitson and Flight Engineer Dan Tani configured cameras for use during their spacewalk. They later participated in a conference with specialists in Mission Control, Houston, for a final review of spacewalk procedures.

To complete the day's preparations, Whitson and Tani are "camping out" overnight in the Quest airlock. This procedure protects against

decompression sickness as they go to the even lower pressure of spacesuits on Wednesday.

Most of Wednesday's spacewalk will focus on replacement of a motor, called the Bearing Motor Roll Ring Module, which drives the starboard solar wings as they tilt along their axis to follow the sun for optimal power generation as the station orbits the Earth.

The spacewalk is slated to begin at 5:20 a.m. EST. Live coverage on NASA TV kicks off at 4 a.m.

Also on Tuesday, Flight Engineer Yuri Malenchenko completed a repress of the station's oxygen from the supply aboard the docked Progress 27 cargo craft. That Progress vehicle will undock from the station Feb. 4 to make way for the arrival of Progress 28 and its cargo of food, supplies and oxygen on Feb. 7.

Source: NASA

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