

External Tank, Solid Rocket Boosters, Readied for Next Shuttle Launch

August 6 2008



Technicians watch as a new fine guidance sensor for the Hubble Space Telescope is moved in preparation for the launch of STS-125 on a mission to upgrade Hubble. Photo credit: NASA/Jack Pfaller

External tank ET-127 and the twin solid rocket boosters, which will fly with space shuttle Atlantis on the next shuttle mission, were joined Aug. 3 at NASA's Kennedy Space Center, Fla. The next processing milestone will be the attachment of the external tank and boosters to Atlantis, scheduled Aug. 18. STS-125, the fifth and final servicing mission to the Hubble Space Telescope, is scheduled to launch from the Kennedy Center on Oct. 8 at 12:34 a.m. CDT.

Technicians working in special facilities at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida continue preparing the instruments and flight equipment for the STS-125 mission, which will upgrade NASA's Hubble Space Telescope. The effort is expected to keep Hubble operating for at least another five years.

In the Orbiter Processing Facility, workers are attaching hard covers onto the windows of space shuttle Atlantis. The covers protect the windows while the shuttle is moved, stacked and rolled to the launch pad.

Another milestone leading to the launch of Atlantis was met Wednesday when crews completed repairs to the damaged flame trench at Launch Complex 39A at Kennedy. Workers applied a fire-resistant concrete over exposed areas of the trench where bricks broke loose during the launch of Discovery on May 31.

NASA's Johnson Space Center reopened today. The center closed Monday and Tuesday while Tropical Storm Edouard passed over the Houston area. Despite the storm, Mission Control remained open to provide guidance for the International Space Station.

STS-125 Commander Scott Altman and Pilot Gregory C. Johnson are practicing shuttle landing procedures aboard the Shuttle Training Aircraft. The five mission specialists for the flight are at Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md., to familiarize themselves with the hardware they will use during the Hubble servicing flight.

Atlantis is targeted to liftoff Oct. 8.

Provided by NASA

Citation: External Tank, Solid Rocket Boosters, Readied for Next Shuttle Launch (2008, August 6) retrieved 26 April 2024 from

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