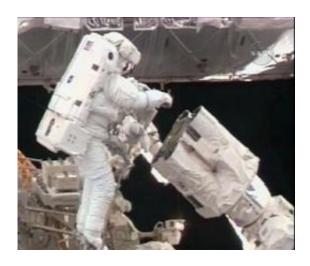


Shuttle, station astronauts relax before parting

March 24 2009



In this image from NASA Television, astronaut Richard Arnold II makes a space walk outside the international space station on Monday, March 23, 2009. (AP Photo/NASA TV)

(AP) -- The astronauts aboard the linked shuttle-station complex are getting some time off before parting company.

The crew will spend Tuesday afternoon recuperating from Monday's third and final <u>spacewalk</u> of Discovery's mission.

The hatches between Discovery and the <u>international space station</u> will be sealed Wednesday, and the <u>shuttle</u> will undock and head home for a Saturday landing.



During Monday's spacewalk, the two educator-astronauts were unable to free a jammed equipment shelf outside the space station.

They used a hammer and pulled with all their might, but nothing worked. NASA says the repair effort will now fall to station residents or the next shuttle. The platform is needed to store spare parts coming on another shuttle mission this fall.

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