

Space Shuttle Discovery Rolls Out to Launch Pad

March 3 2010



Space shuttle Discovery has completed its 3.4-mile trip from Kennedy's Vehicle Assembly Building to Launch Pad 39A. Image credit: NASA

Just before midnight last night, space shuttle Discovery began its slow roll from the Vehicle Assembly Building to Launch Pad 39A at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Riding aboard the crawler-transporter, the shuttle completed the 3.4-mile trip and was secured to the pad by 7 a.m. EST.

The seven astronauts for Discovery's STS-131 mission, who are at Kennedy for their launch countdown dress rehearsal this week, were on-hand for the beginning of the move. The crew will continue prelaunch training today.

Commander Alan Poindexter is set to lead the STS-131 mission to the [International Space Station](#) aboard [space shuttle Discovery](#). Joining Poindexter will be Pilot Jim Dutton and Mission Specialists Rick Mastracchio, Clay Anderson, Dorothy Metcalf-Lindenburger, Stephanie Wilson and Naoko Yamazaki of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency.

Discovery will carry a multi-purpose logistics module filled with science racks for the laboratories aboard the station. The mission has three planned spacewalks, with work to include replacing an ammonia tank assembly, retrieving a Japanese experiment from the station's exterior, and switching out a rate gyro assembly on the S0 segment of the station's truss structure.

STS-131 will be the 33rd shuttle mission to the station.

Provided by JPL/NASA

Citation: Space Shuttle Discovery Rolls Out to Launch Pad (2010, March 3) retrieved 22 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-03-space-shuttle-discovery-pad.html>

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