

Space robot fixes itself, takes selfie as funny livetweet happens on the ground

May 28 2014, by Elizabeth Howell



Dextre, the Canadian Space Agency's robotic handyman aboard the International Space Station. Credit: CSA/NASA

In a thrilling demonstration of space robotics, today the Dextre "hand" replaced a malfunctioning camera on the station's Canadarm2 robotic arm. And the Canadian Space Agency gleefully tweeted every step of the way, throwing in jokes to describe what was happening above our heads on the International Space Station.

"Dextre's job is to reduce the risk to astronauts by relieving them of routine chores, freeing their time for science," the Canadian Space Agency tweeted today (May 27) .

"Spacewalks are thrilling, inspiring, but can potentially be dangerous. They also take a lot of resources and time. So Dextre is riding the end of Canadarm2 today instead of an astronaut. And our inner child is still yelling out 'Weeeee...!' "

The complex maneuvers actually took a few days to accomplish, as the robot removed the broken [camera](#) last week and stowed it. Today's work (performed by ground controllers) was focused on putting in the new camera and starting to test it. You can see some of the most memorable tweets of the day below.

The cookie you see in the first tweet is part of a tradition in Canada's robotic mission control near Montreal, Que., where controllers have this snack on the day when they are doing robotic work in space.

Incidentally, the Canadian Space Agency [bet NASA a box of maple cream cookies](#) in February during a gold-medal Olympic hockey game between the two countries, which Canada won.

Here's a photo of a model of the camera #Dextre is retrieving, with a familiar object for scale...;) t.co/MKAar13m8H #InsideCSA

— CanadianSpaceAgency (@csa_asc) May 27, 2014

Strike a pose. t.co/McXIBJiDdb #Dextre—CanadianSpaceAgency (@csa_asc) May 27, 2014

As seen here, #Dextre picks up objects by their fixtures—custom handles for his grippers t.co/kVdecG7Sro

— *CanadianSpaceAgency (@csa_asc) May 27, 2014*

#Dextre has released his grasp of the camera and is backing away
t.co/IIbbSszPeR

— *CanadianSpaceAgency (@csa_asc) May 27, 2014*

You give a robot a new camera to play with and what's the first thing it does? #Canadarm2 #selfie! t.co/owdxnVdy4y

— *CanadianSpaceAgency (@csa_asc) May 27, 2014*

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