ISS Crew Wraps Up Successful Spacewalk

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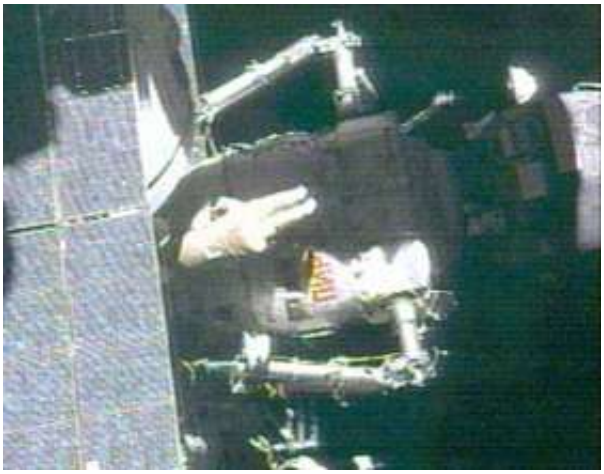

Expedition 14 Commander Michael Lopez-Alegria in front of the Pirs docking compartment toward the end of the spacewalk on Feb. 22. Image credit: NASA TV

Expedition 14 Commander Michael Lopez-Alegria and Flight Engineer Mikhail Tyurin retracted a stuck antenna on a cargo spacecraft during a 6-hour, 18-minute spacewalk that ended at 10:45 a.m. CST Thursday.

On Oct. 26, the antenna failed to retract when the Progress vehicle docked to the station's Zvezda Service Module. Moving the antenna was necessary to ensure it would not interfere with the Progress undocking in April.

Lopez-Alegria and Tyurin had planned to release the antenna latch with a punch and a hammer. When clearance issues prevented that, they cut

struts supporting the antenna. That enabled them to partly retract the antenna and secure it with wire ties. They reported it had about six inches of clearance from Zvezda, adequate for undocking.

Early in the spacewalk, Tyurin had problems with his spacesuit's cooling system, which caused his visor to fog up. But he and Lopez-Alegria were able to complete a number of other tasks. They began the spacewalk by photographing a Russian satellite navigation antenna and changing out a Russian materials experiment. They also inspected and photographed an antenna for the Automated Transfer Vehicle (ATV). The European cargo craft has more capacity than the Progress and is scheduled to make its first trip to the station later this year. The spacewalkers also photographed ATV docking targets.

They photographed a German robotics experiment, inspected, remated and photographed hardware connectors and inspected retention mechanisms and bolted joints on a hand-operated Strela crane that helps transport people and equipment outside Pirs. They also stowed two foot restraints on a ladder at Pirs before ending the spacewalk.

The spacewalk from the Pirs docking compartment was conducted in Russian Orlan spacesuits. It was the 81st for station assembly and maintenance, the 53rd from the station, the 20th from Pirs and the fifth for this station crew. This was the 10th spacewalk for Lopez-Alegria, a U.S. record, and the fifth for Tyurin.

Source: NASA

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