

Re: First Close Encounter of Saturn's Hazy Moon Titan

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From: Robert Hartwick (hartwickr001_at_hawaii.rr.com)

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On Tue, 2 Nov 2004 18:22:23 +0000, Jonathan Silverlight
<jsilverlight@spam.mersea.fsnet.co.uk.invalid> wrote:

>In message <I67CA6.A34@spsystems.net>, Henry Spencer
><henry@spsystems.net> writes
>>In article <[RIjfd.8799\\$ta5.6157@newsread3.news.atl.earthlink.net](mailto:RIjfd.8799$ta5.6157@newsread3.news.atl.earthlink.net)>,
>>robert casey <wa2ise@ix.netcom.com> wrote:
>>>Does the Huygens probe use a parachute system similar
>>>to Genesis'?'
>
>As Huygens is European the pertinent question might be "is it similar to
>Beagle 2 ?"
>
>>
>>There's only the most superficial similarity.
>>
>>The people who have real cause for concern are the folks running the
>>Stardust mission, which uses a reentry capsule built by the same
>>contractor... although there are enough design differences that they're
>>hoping theirs will come down okay.
>>
>>>I've heard (possibly an urban legend) that
>>>Genesis' chute deployment circuits were cross wired, or
>>>the sensor installed upsidedown...
>>
>>It looks very much like the G-switches were installed upside down.
>
>We haven't had the final report, AFAIK, but I gather it was much worse –
>they were drawn upside down and installed "correctly".

Murphy's Law on an 'astronomical' scale! It would be interesting to see pictures of the switches and the drawn versions, to fathom whether this was a mix up–waiting–to–happen or incompetence of a rare degree. I can see how accelerometers might be difficult to test in the assembly room. Future models better be engraved "This side toward planet!"