

Re: Martian windshiled wipers

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In message <Xns9622766818AD0ceebeecheesterstartco@195.121.6.84>, CeeBee <ceebeecheester@start.com.au> writes

>Some time ago the Mars Rover team reported an unexpected powerup of
>the Spirit rover, maybe due to a dust devil to cross the solar
>panels, wiping away some dust.

>Today APOD showed a picture of a possible dust devil near Spirit.

>

>I had the idea of fine dust not only covering the panels, but
>actually sticking to it as well, due to the very fine structure of
>the dust particles.

>

>I wonder if a mechanical device – the Rover equivalent of solar
>panel windshield wipers – would be a good or viable design / weight
>/ energy tradeoff for extended missions. Or a budgetary tradeoff for
>that matter.

>

I doubt it, especially given

- a) the rovers are well past their designed mission life.
- b) future rovers are likely to be nuclear powered.
- c) the rovers are either taking care of themselves, or something is caring for them.

Any mechanical wiper is just another moving part to go wrong and perhaps do more harm than good.

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