

STS-121 MCC Status Report #05

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Mission Control Center, Houston, Texas

07.06.06
STATUS REPORT: STS-121-05

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There is a crew of three aboard the International Space Station today for the first time in more than three years, and for the first time ever that crew includes an American, a Russian and a European.

European Space Agency astronaut Thomas Reiter of Germany was delivered as the newest member of ISS Expedition 13 just hours after Space Shuttle Discovery docked at the station's Pressurized Mating Adapter 2 at 9:52 a.m. CDT, as the two ships flew above the south Pacific Ocean south of Pitcairn Island.

Commander Steve Lindsey piloted Discovery's approach to ISS, halting 600 feet directly below the station to perform the rendezvous pitch maneuver: the shuttle was commanded to do a nose-over-tail somersault so ISS Commander Pavel Vinogradov and Flight Engineer Jeff Williams could photograph the thermal protection system tiles on the orbiter's underside. Imagery experts on the ground will study the high-resolution still pictures for evidence of any damage to the insulating tiles.

Lindsey and his crew—Pilot Mark Kelly and Mission Specialists Mike Fossum, Lisa Nowak, Stephanie Wilson, Piers Sellers and Reiter—greeted the station crewmembers when the hatches between the vehicles were opened at 11:30 a.m. CDT.

After Vinogradov's safety briefing for the shuttle crew, he helped Reiter install his customized Soyuz seat liner into the Russian rescue vehicle and check his pressurized Sokol suit, finalizing Reiter's transfer from Discovery to ISS. Other first-day transfers from Discovery included the spacesuits that Sellers and Fossum will wear on their spacewalks out of the Quest airlock on Flight Days 5 and 7.

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In preparation for the first EVA, Nowak, Wilson and Williams lifted the Orbiter Boom Sensor System with the station's robotic arm and handed it over to the shuttle's robotic arm. During the first spacewalk Sellers and Fossum will simulate orbiter repair tasks while attached to the OBSS/shuttle arm combination to test that 100-foot-long construction crane as a work platform.

On the second spacewalk the astronauts will deliver a spare Pump Module to an external stowage platform before replacing a damaged power and data cable reel assembly in the station's truss. The repair will allow the Mobile Transporter to move along the truss during installation of new truss segments on future shuttle assembly missions.

The next STS-121 mission status report will be issued early Friday morning.

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Jacques :-)

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