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WEDNESDAY, JULY 3, 1996 (11:57 AM EDT)

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MISSION: STS-78 -- LIFE AND MICROGRAVITY SPACELAB (LMS)
Flight Day 14

VEHICLE: Columbia/OV-102
LOCATION: Orbit
OFFICIAL LAUNCH DATE/TIME: June 20 at 10:49 a.m. (EDT)
TARGET KSC LANDING DATE/TIME: July 7 at about 8:38 a.m.
MISSION DURATION: 16 days, 21 hours, 49 minutes
CREW SIZE: 7
ORBITAL ALTITUDE and INCLINATION: 173 statute miles/39 degrees

Note on STS-78 Boosters: While disassembling the STS-78 Reusable Solid Rocket Motors (RSRM) at KSC on Monday, engineers observed that hot gas had seeped into the J-joints in the motors field joints. In some areas, the hot gas had penetrated through the J-joint to, but not past, the capture feature O-Ring. This potential condition was anticipated during motor design and certification, and was completely tested during the redesign activity. The flight safety of the STS-78 was not compromised by this occurrence and all aspects of the motor's performance completely met design specification requirements.

The STS-78 motors are the first occurrence with combustion product penetration into the J-joint. As with all first occurrences in the RSRM program, engineers and managers are assessing this situation closely to understand the cause. At the present time, we are continuing with normal preparations for STS-79.

This issue will be addressed at today's 2:30 p.m. Mission Status Briefing.

MISSION: STS-79 -- 4th MIR DOCKING & SPACEHAB DM

VEHICLE: Atlantis/OV-104
LOCATION: Pad 39A
TARGET LAUNCH DATE/TIME: July 31 at about 11:29 p.m. (EDT)
LAUNCH WINDOW: 7-10 minutes
TARGET KSC LANDING DATE/TIME: August 9 at about 8:05 p.m.
MISSION DURATION: 8 days, 20 hours, 35 minutes
CREW SIZE: 6
ORBITAL ALTITUDE and INCLINATION: 196-245 statute miles/51.6 degrees

NOTE: Launch pad validations and the main engine flight readiness test are complete. Work on Atlantis today includes final hydraulic testing and the frequency response test.

KEY STS-79 OPERATIONAL MILESTONES (dates are target only):
Helium signature leak checks (July 8)
Install Spacehab Double Module into orbiter (July 9)
STS-79 Terminal Countdown Demonstration Test (July 18-19)
Close payload bay doors for flight (July 18)

MISSION: STS-82 -- HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE SERVICING MISSION-2

VEHICLE: Discovery/OV-103
LOCATION: Orbiter Processing Facility bay 2
TARGET LAUNCH DATE: February 13, 1997
LAUNCH WINDOW: 61 minutes
TARGET KSC LANDING DATE: February 23, 1997
MISSION DURATION: 9 days, 22 hours
CREW SIZE: 7
ORBITAL ALTITUDE and INCLINATION: 360 statute miles/28.45 degrees

NOTE: Preparations have begun to remove the ferry flight equipment from Discovery. The tail cone will be removed next week. Access to the aft, mid-body and crew module continues.

KEY OPERATIONAL MILESTONES (dates are target only):
Initial power-up (July 9)
Remove tail cone (July 9)
Open payload bay door (July 16)

PREPARATIONS FOR ORBITER MAINTENANCE DOWN PERIOD

VEHICLE: Endeavour/OV-105
LOCATION: Orbiter Processing Facility bay 3

NOTE: Preparations continue on Endeavour for its first Orbiter Maintenance Down Period (OMDP). Delivery to Palmdale, where Endeavour will remain for about eight months, will occur around the first of August. Once Endeavour returns to KSC, its next mission will be the first International Space Station assembly Space Shuttle flight, scheduled for launch from KSC in late 1997.

KEY PRE-OMDP OPERATIONAL MILESTONES (dates are target only):
Final payload bay closing (July 12)
Rollout to SLF for ferry flight to Palmdale, CA (July 29)
Depart KSC (July 30)

-- end --

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