

NASA gives 'go' for space shuttle launch on March 11

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. - NASA senior managers completed a review Friday of space shuttle Endeavour's readiness for flight and selected March 11 as the official launch date for the STS-123 mission. Commander Dominic Gorie and his six crewmates are scheduled to lift off to the International Space Station at 2:28 a.m. EDT. During the 16-day mission, the crew will deliver and install the first section of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency's Kibo laboratory and the Canadian Space Agency's two-armed robotic system, Dextre. Five spacewalks will be conducted during the flight. Endeavour's launch date was announced after the conclusion of Friday's Flight Readiness Review. During the two-day meeting, top NASA and contractor managers assessed the risks associated with the mission and determined the shuttle's equipment, support systems and procedures are ready for flight. Gorie will be joined on STS-123 by Pilot Gregory H. Johnson and Mission Specialists Robert L. Behnken, Mike Foreman, Rick Linnehan, Garrett Reisman and Japanese astronaut Takao Doi. Reisman will remain on the station as a resident crew member, replacing station flight engineer Leopold Eyharts of the European Space Agency, who will return home on Endeavour.

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