Boeing Delta II Launches NASA Solar Eruptions Study

A Boeing [NYSE: BA] Delta II rocket today launched a NASA spacecraft to provide a new perspective on solar eruptions.

NASA's Solar Terrestrial Relations Observatory (STEREO) spacecraft will capture images of solar eruptions and other related events from two nearly identical observatories.

A Delta II 7925-10L vehicle launched STEREO into orbit. Lift-off occurred at 8:52 p.m. Eastern time from Space Launch Complex 17B, Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla. Following a 25-minute flight, the Delta II placed STEREO in a highly elliptical, near escape orbit to complete the mission.

"STEREO is another exciting mission for NASA to help them gain a better understanding of our universe," said Dan Collins, vice president and general manager, Boeing Launch Systems. "Our Delta team takes tremendous pride in our work, and we are extremely pleased to help NASA reach its goals."

STEREO's observatories are offset from one another in orbit. This placement allows STEREO to obtain 3-D images of the Sun and trace the flow of energy and matter from the Sun to the Earth. This unique 3-D imagery will allow scientists to examine the structure of solar eruptions and learn more about their fundamental nature and origin.

The mission's Delta II 7925-10L configuration launch vehicle used a Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne RS-27A main engine, nine ATK solid rocket motors, an Aerojet second stage engine and a 10-foot diameter payload fairing.

The next Delta launch is DMSP F-17 for the U.S. Air Force aboard a Delta IV rocket planned for November from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.

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