

8 July 2008

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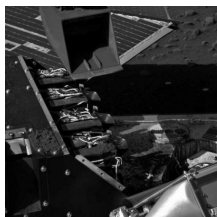


Image showing the robotic arm of Phoenix directly above the Wet Chemistry Lab Cell 1
NASA/JPL-Caltech/University of Arizona

Phoenix's Robotic Arm Delivers Second Sample

Additional soil scraping tests scheduled for today

NASA confirmed that the robotic arm of the Phoenix Mars Lander delivered its second sample for analysis to the wet chemistry laboratory of the spacecraft. While the first sample test of the lander failed to detect any chemicals that may be essential to the appearance and evolution of life as we know it on the Red Planet, the results of the second test will act as a scale for the accuracy of the ones obtained during the first analysis performed nearly two weeks ago. The wet chemistry laboratory is part of the Microscope, Electrochemistry and Conductivity Analyzer of the spacecraft. NASA has scheduled for today several tests involving optimal methods that can be used in order to scrape soil and ice samples with the help of the robotic arm. Hopefully, this second undertaking will be successful, since the preliminary tests of the spacecraft's instruments indicated that compact samples couldn't enter the Thermal and Evolved-Gas Analyzer, no matter how much the screen of the instrument was shaken. Photographs of the samples before, during and after the scraping phase will act as an accurate indicator to whether or not the process was successful, so that the investigation team can command the lander to go to the next phase of the research - the delivery and analysis of the sample. Also, before the next phase begins, NASA has scheduled a series of tests on Earth to ensure that the ice samples do not sublime before entering the TEGA instrument, given the outcome of the first experiment. The Phoenix Mars Lander touched down on the Red Planet on May 25th and after nearly a week of preparations it started looking for signs of water ice and other chemicals that could be essential to life. So far, it has failed to find any as its official three month mission, carried out by NASA in collaboration with the University of Arizona, which built the spacecraft, is approaching its second half. The Canadian Space Agency, the University of Neuchatel, the Copenhagen and Aarhus Universities, the Max Planck Institute and the Finnish Meteorological Institute also contributed to the building and operation of Phoenix, while the mission is led by Peter Smith of the University of Arizona.