



1  
00:00:00,550 --> 00:00:15,910

\h Music

2  
00:00:15,910 --> 00:00:17,570

\h SLATE: What were your first thoughts when named to the last space shuttle crew?

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00:00:17,570 --> 00:00:19,930

\h Chris Ferguson, Commander, STS-135: I don't know, very honored,

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00:00:19,930 --> 00:00:22,040

\h I feel very honored and very lucky.

5  
00:00:22,040 --> 00:00:26,650

\h It was something that built over time because it was never supposed to be an actual mission.

6  
00:00:26,650 --> 00:00:31,100

\h It was going to be a rescue mission and then the rescue mission kind of built

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00:00:31,100 --> 00:00:33,290

\h into becoming a regular mission.

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00:00:33,290 --> 00:00:38,710

\h The first thing I remember is feeling very lucky because no one had clearly targeted me

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00:00:38,710 --> 00:00:42,860

\h or our crew to fly the last mission, we just kind of backed our way into it.

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00:00:42,860 --> 00:00:47,910

\h It doesn't make you feel any less honored because you backed your way into it and we're going

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00:00:47,910 --> 00:00:53,440

\h to do our best to go out and put the absolute best foot forward that the astronaut office to put

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00:00:53,440 --> 00:00:55,440

\h just a wonderful cap on the program.

13  
00:00:55,440 --> 00:00:59,560

\h Doug Hurley, Mission Specialist, STS-135: I was asked originally to potentially be the pilot for

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00:00:59,560 --> 00:01:07,870

\h this flight back in January of last year and as this flight kind of came to being,

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00:01:07,870 --> 00:01:13,610

\h it was a rescue mission to start with, so I knew in January and the flight wasn't officially

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00:01:13,610 --> 00:01:20,090

\h assigned until September, so obviously I was excited, thrilled.

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00:01:20,090 --> 00:01:22,130

\h When the chief of the office, Peggy Whitson, asked me originally,

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00:01:22,130 --> 00:01:25,190

\h you know it was kind of one of these things, you know,

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00:01:25,190 --> 00:01:28,040

\h we think maybe it's a 50/50 chance that this thing will even happen.

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00:01:28,040 --> 00:01:34,780

\h So there was a little bit of, you know, nervousness about that and wondering if it's actually going

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00:01:34,780 --> 00:01:39,960

\h and spending all this time training and working and then find out that it might not happen,

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00:01:39,960 --> 00:01:43,310

\h but it was just, I was tremendously honored.

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00:01:43,310 --> 00:01:45,120

\h Rex Walheim, Mission Specialist, STS-135: For a while there I knew I was kind of getting close

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00:01:45,120 --> 00:01:48,260

\h to the front of the line to being assigned again but I was just wondering whether they'd close the

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00:01:48,260 --> 00:01:52,220

\h line down before I got there, so I really had gone through the process going,

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00:01:52,220 --> 00:01:55,090

\h well, when they didn't have a 135 I thought, well,

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00:01:55,090 --> 00:01:59,670

\h I missed my chance to fly on the shuttle again and then 135 came up and it rekindled my hopes

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00:01:59,670 --> 00:02:02,670

\h and then when I found out I was on the mission I was really,

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00:02:02,670 --> 00:02:05,550

\h really excited because I really wanted to be a part of this mission.

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00:02:05,550 --> 00:02:08,960

\h I wanted to be a part of the last mission whether I'm helping out at the Cape,

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00:02:08,960 --> 00:02:12,800

\h or doing something at Houston or working at one of the abort sites.

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00:02:12,800 --> 00:02:17,150

\h I just want to be a part of it and the chance to actually fly on it, to be on board from the last

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00:02:17,150 --> 00:02:21,910

\h launch to the last wheel stop is a great opportunity and I'm really thrilled about it.

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00:02:21,910 --> 00:02:25,090

\h Sandra Magnus, Mission Specialist, STS-135: I guess surprise was probably the main one.

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00:02:25,090 --> 00:02:28,990

\h I was actually working in D.C. at Headquarters at the time and I got the call to come back and

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00:02:28,990 --> 00:02:34,300

\h start training and I never even thought that I'd be part of the last shuttle crew and I'm working

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00:02:34,300 --> 00:02:40,410

\h with a great team and it's really a lot of fun, but surprise was definitely the first thought.

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00:02:40,410 --> 00:02:42,840

\h SLATE: Will you be focused much on this being the last space shuttle flight?

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00:02:42,840 --> 00:02:45,390

\h Rex Walheim, Mission Specialist, STS-135: I think we will. I mean we're going to concentrate on

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00:02:45,390 --> 00:02:48,350

\h our job, obviously, and so there will be certain segments of the mission where you're just

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00:02:48,350 --> 00:02:50,540

\h concentrating, doing your job, especially during launch and landing.

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00:02:50,540 --> 00:02:53,650

\h But every once in a while, especially during quiet phases on orbit

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00:02:53,650 --> 00:02:55,770

\h and I'm sure we'll look out and go,

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00:02:55,770 --> 00:02:57,080

\h Well this is the last time one of these vehicles is going to fly,

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00:02:57,080 --> 00:03:02,260

\h and then of course after the mission it's really going to sink in but it's one of those things where

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00:03:02,260 --> 00:03:04,820

\h you want to enjoy every last drop of it.

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00:03:04,820 --> 00:03:06,750

\h Doug Hurley, Mission Specialist, STS-135: We are very tightly scheduled and I think we are

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00:03:06,750 --> 00:03:10,960

\h going to be really busy. I think there might be a few moments to reflect, but I think, frankly,

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00:03:10,960 --> 00:03:18,990

\h it'll be on the runway, ideally on the runway here at KSC, and wheels stop and then I think it's

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00:03:18,990 --> 00:03:24,680

\h going to all come rushing in, you know, at one moment, I think.

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00:03:24,680 --> 00:03:26,560

\h Chris Ferguson, Commander, STS-135: We're not going to dwell on it too much until after

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00:03:26,560 --> 00:03:30,220

\h landing and then we'll get a chance, hopefully following a great and successful mission,

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00:03:30,220 --> 00:03:34,240

\h to kind of bask in the achievements of the program overall and really reflect

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00:03:34,240 --> 00:03:39,130

\h SLATE: What does the STS-135 crew patch symbolize?

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00:03:39,130 --> 00:03:41,580

\h Rex Walheim, Mission Specialist, STS-135: We wanted to make it a celebration,

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00:03:41,580 --> 00:03:45,070

\h we wanted to make it a happy patch that really encompasses the history of the Space Shuttle

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00:03:45,070 --> 00:03:51,820

\h Program so in some respects it mirrors the STS-1 patch with the full shuttle on there and we

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00:03:51,820 --> 00:03:56,560

\h also wanted to honor the whole NASA/contractor team, the whole team that has made the

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00:03:56,560 --> 00:04:01,370

\h space shuttle possible and we did that by putting a portion of the NASA emblem in the middle

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00:04:01,370 --> 00:04:05,550

\h with the swoosh on there. And then we also wanted to signify that it was the last mission.

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00:04:05,550 --> 00:04:09,580

\h We did that with the omega. Omega is the last letter of the Greek alphabet so that was kind of

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00:04:09,580 --> 00:04:12,630

\h our way of symbolizing the last mission.