



Curiosity Offside!

HiRISE captured this image on 27 June 2014, when Curiosity had just crossed the edge of the 3-sigma landing ellipse. Now, what is a 3-sigma landing ellipse? That's a statistical prediction of where on Mars the rover might end up landing, given uncertainties such as atmospheric conditions during entry and descent. "3-sigma" means 3 standard deviations, so the rover was very, very likely (to about the 99.9% level) to land somewhere inside this ellipse. Just don't tell FIFA referees!