

Space shuttle scheduled for morning lift

By HARRY F. ROSENTHAL
Associated Press Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — NASA officials, stung three times by launch postponements, declared yesterday that the space shuttle Discovery is ready to fly and ordered a go-ahead for the ship's first voyage this morning.

That decision allowed the final countdown to begin, aiming for a launch at 8:35 a.m. EDT — 24 hours late. No weather problems were in prospect.

Discovery's computers were given new commands to get around the electronic problem that prompted the latest delay, and NASA said the program will work "under even the worst-case conditions."

The shuttle's reputation as a dependable delivery system, damaged by the series of delays and three failures of satellites to reach orbit, rests heavily on a successful flight for the third orbiter in America's fleet. On its six-day mission, Discovery's crew of six, including the second American woman in space, is to deploy three satellites for paying customers.

"There's been a history of teething problems in getting orbiters off on the first launch," said Kennedy Space Center spokesman Richard Young of Discovery's tardy debut. "We've come to anticipate this sort of thing."

Top officials of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration approved a computer "patch" designed to insure that critical commands are carried out in the first 10 minutes of flight.

Spokesman David Garrett said experts tested "a worst case scenario" — one in which the shuttle's boosters and tank fail to drop off on command by the ship's computers. In such a case, the astronauts would have to switch manually — to a backup computer — in less than four seconds — to shed the excess baggage, or the shuttle would have to ditch in the ocean.

The problem was simulated in Houston by veteran astronaut Brewster Shaw.

"One time he missed and the second time he got it," Garrett said. He said experts were trying other

commands to give the shuttle pilots more time but Discovery will be launched even if that solution is not found.

After the announcement Tuesday night that the flight was being delayed, commander Henry W. Hartsfield said through a NASA spokesman: "We were all disappointed of course, but we agreed that the scrub was the right decision. All of us are ready to go this morning."

Hartsfield and pilot Michael Coats used the extra day on Earth to make proficiency runs in the brilliant blue central Florida sky in T-38 jet planes. They and the rest of the crew spent the day with their families, then went to bed at dusk.

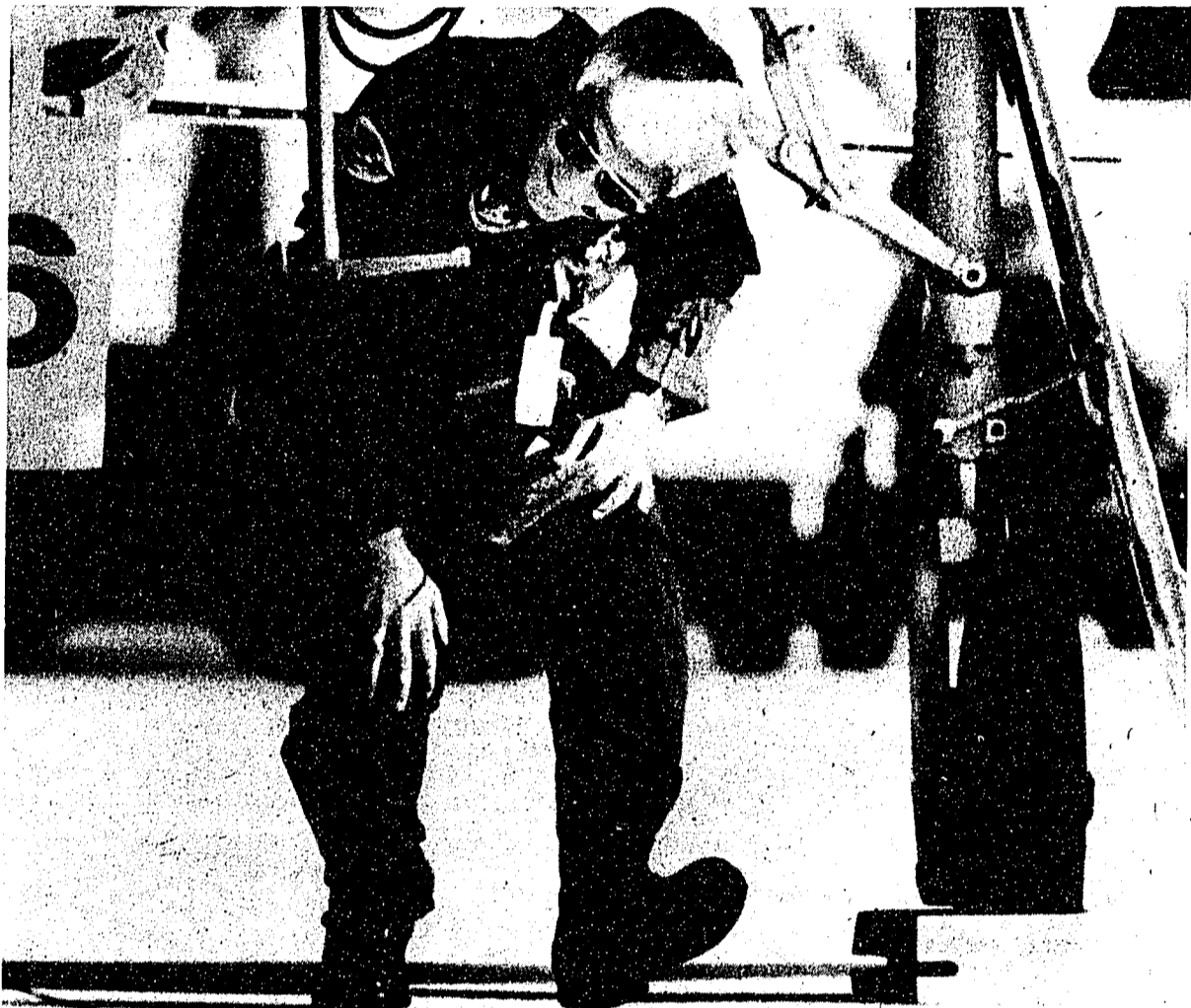
Others in the crew are mission specialists Judith Resnik, Steve Hawley and Richard Mullane, and payload specialist Charles Walker. Hawley is the husband of Sally Ride, the first American woman in space.

Walker, an engineer with the McDonnell Douglas Corporation, is the first non-astronaut chosen for shuttle flight under a NASA policy that allows commercial customers to have one of their own people on board to operate their payloads. He will run a machine to make a drug which is not publicly identified for proprietary reasons.

On the first launch attempt for Discovery on June 25, a computer malfunction stopped the countdown at nine minutes to launch. The next day, four seconds before liftoff, computers detected a fuel valve problem and shut off the engines. Both times the crew spent hours lying on their backs in the cockpit waiting for a liftoff that never came.

The latest problem involved commands from the shuttle's four computers to an electronic device called a Master Events Controller. The computers not only command the separation of the boosters and fuel tank but also trigger the firing of the boosters and shatter the bolts that lock the shuttle to its launch pad.

The space agency had planned to launch six shuttles by the end of August, but Discovery's flight will be only the third this year.



Henry Hartsfield Jr., commander of the space shuttle Discovery, walks under the wing of a training plane yesterday morning at the Kennedy Space Center before making a practice flight.

AP Laserphoto

B-1 bomber prototype crashes

By LEE SIEGEL
Associated Press Writer

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — An unarmed B-1 bomber prototype crashed and burned yesterday while on a low-altitude test flight over the Mojave Desert, killing one crew member and injuring two others, the Air Force said.

It was the first crash of a B-1 bomber, said Air Force Col. Alan Sabsewitz.

"The crew escape capsule successfully separated and landed near the crash site," the Air Force said in a statement. "Two survivors were air-evacuated to the Edwards Air Force base hospital for treatment."

It wasn't immediately clear how the one crew member died. His body would remain in the capsule until the coroner could take charge of the scene, said Senior Airman Tom Bernas.

The plane was seen trailing smoke before it went down at 10:30 a.m. near Boron, 75 miles northeast of Los Angeles, a guard at the nearby U.S. Borax plant said. She wouldn't give her name.

The crew members' names were withheld until relatives are notified.

The charred and mangled wreckage was scattered in a circle roughly 200 feet in diameter, and was still burning six hours after the crash, according to Associated Press photographer Doug Pizac. A scorched white cylinder that appeared to be the escape capsule lay at the outer edge of the wreckage, an orange and white parachute draped nearby, he said.

The crash, which ignited at least three small brush fires that were extinguished quickly, came less than a week before a B-1B prototype was to be unveiled. The plane that crashed yesterday was an earlier B-1A prototype, Pentagon officials said.

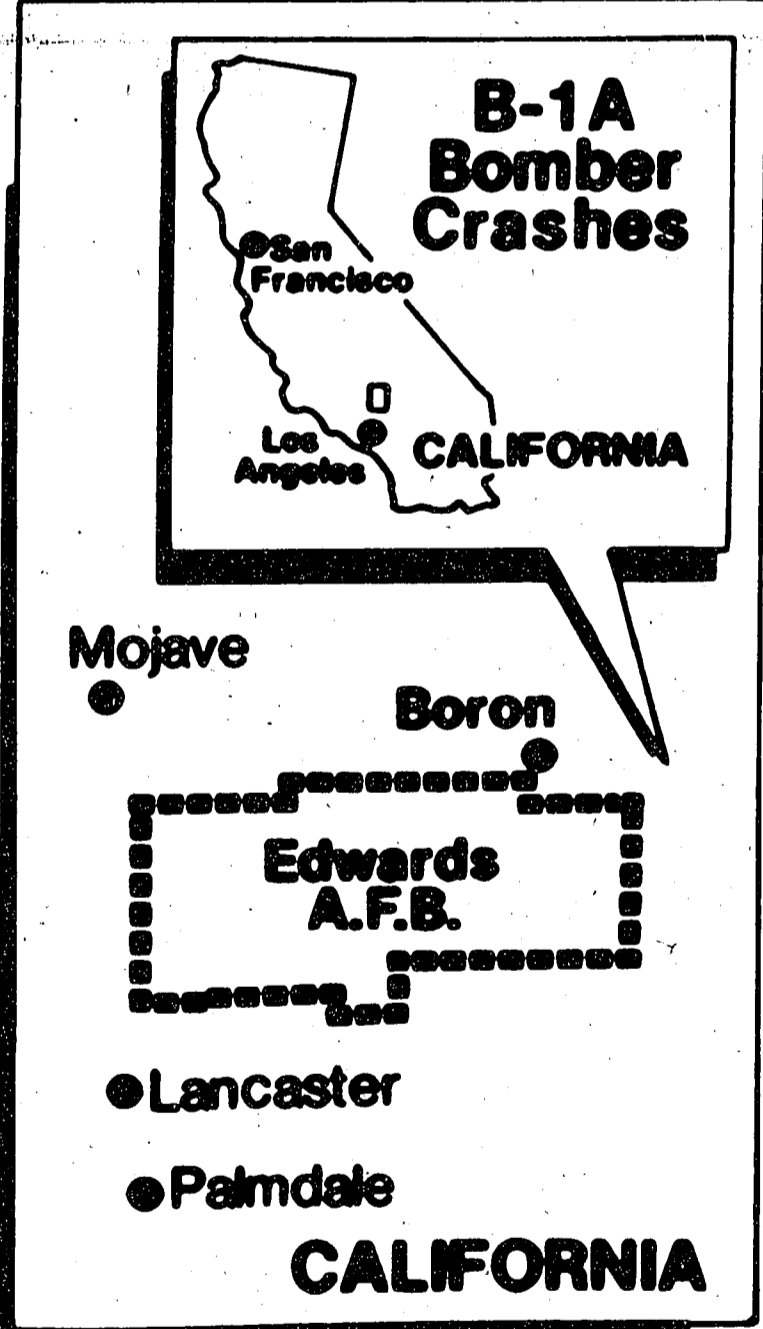
The four-engine plane was engaged in "extremely low-level, extremely low-speed" tests on its 127th test flight, a 3-hour, 45-minute mission, said Air Force Lt. Col. Ron Greer in Washington.

"There were absolutely no warheads on the ship," Bernas said.

A board of officers will investigate the accident, the Air Force said.

Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, had flown in the same plane Aug. 22 when he was on a visit to Edwards, said Dale Butland, a press spokesman for the former astronaut.

The swing-wing strategic bomber has four jet engines and a crew capacity of four. The plane that crashed was one of the original B-1 prototypes, first flown in June 1976. In 1978, it set the B-1 speed



record of Mach 2.22, or more than twice the speed of sound at about 1,400 mph.

Military authorities quickly restricted the crash area and surrounding airspace to emergency and military personnel only.

Sally Kinnear, a warden's secretary at the nearby Boron Federal Prison, said prison employees saw the plane fly overhead.

"We just saw the column of smoke," Kinnear said. "It's about 10 miles east of here in the middle of the desert."

She said the prison also sent out an inmate crew and ambulance to assist firefighters and rescuers. There was no danger to the prison.

After being rejected by the Carter administration in the late 1977, the controversial B-1 project won a new lease on life from President Reagan and Congress as a replacement for the nation's

aging B-52 bomber defense.

According to the Air Force, the downed plane was prototype No. 2 of only four B-1A's. Only No. 2 and 4 were based at Edwards, and of those, only No. 2 had the escape capsule. Prototype No. 4 has separate ejection seats for the crew. Prototypes 1 and 3 are in storage, the Air Force said.

Congress approved Reagan's request for \$8.3 billion for 34 B-1 planes in fiscal 1985. Eventually, the Pentagon intends to buy 100 B-1s at a cost now projected at about \$28.3 billion.

A ceremonial rollout of the B-1B prototype was scheduled Sept. 4 at the Rockwell International Corp. plant in Palmdale, near Edwards AFB. Rockwell is the prime contractor for the B-1.

The new prototype looks the same but is designed for more effective evasion of Soviet radar and defenses and will be more heavily armed.

Former student still incarcerated

By TERRY MUTCHLER
Collegian Staff Writer

David E. Schmidt is still waiting.

Schmidt, a former University student, is being held in the Centre County Jail where he has been since the first week of May in lieu of \$100,000 bail.

Schmidt was arrested April 5 and charged with theft of trade secrets, theft by unlawful taking or disposition, receiving stolen property, possessing instruments of crime, possessing wiretapping equipment and possession of marijuana with the intent to manufacture or deliver.

Assistant District Attorney Dennis Pfannenschmidt said Schmidt pleaded guilty at his May 3 preliminary hearing to 19 counts of burglary and one count of receiving stolen property. He added that Schmidt will remain confined until bail can be posted or until the probation office completes its pre-sentencing investigation.

"They (the probation office) will look into Schmidt's background and his circumstances as part of the pre-investigation," he said.

The office of probation would not comment on the case.

According to Pfannenschmidt, bail was originally set at \$250,000, but was lowered at Schmidt's preliminary hearing.

"His attorney (James Bryant) asked for the amount to be reduced. The magistrate went over our objection and lowered the bail to \$100,000," Pfannenschmidt said.

Pfannenschmidt explained that the district attorney's office thought the \$250,000 bail was fair because Schmidt had stolen master keys to the University valued at that amount.

The next official action that will take place for Schmidt will be sentencing, Pfannenschmidt said. But, he added that "with a case of this complexity, it's hard to tell when he will be sentenced — it may be months."

Bryant was not available for comment yesterday. Pfannenschmidt said that he and the district attorney's office are "fairly pleased" with the case results thus far.

Phone-in registration successful

By T.J. MARTIN
Collegian Staff Writer

As a result of the University's new phone-in registration process, 6,100 students were able to make revisions in their schedules for Fall Semester without leaving their homes, University Registrar Warren R. Haffner said.

Any student who had submitted a request for registration, formerly called a pre-registration form, and had received an incomplete schedule was eligible to use the system.

Haffner said 8,479 upperclassmen and 1,401 freshmen received incomplete schedules. He defined an incomplete schedule as one in which an undergraduate registered for 15 or more credits but received less than 15 credits.

However, freshmen were advised to use the on-line registration in the Intramural Building on Aug. 21, he said.

"Maybe more than 6,100 called," Haffner said. "There may have been some that called — we don't have a record of those yet — that tried some different things and were unable to complete their

schedules."

Students who wanted to complete their schedules could call a toll-free number between July 25 and Aug. 16, he said. Eight operators manned the phones from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Incomplete schedules with instructions on how to use the phone-in registration process were mailed to students before complete schedules were mailed, in order to give those with incomplete schedules the opportunity to complete them, Haffner said.

"We mailed those out in three different bundles so that the phone calls would come back spread out over a period of time," he explained. "The (phone) lines were busy almost all the time from about the third day on until about Aug. 15."

Haffner said, however, that the operators probably could have handled more calls during the phone-in registration process.

"Another thing that probably should have been obvious, but wasn't to us in the beginning, is that most students called more than once," Haffner said.

After finding that a course they

wanted was not available, students would hang up, look for another course or another section of the same course and call again, he said.

One such student was Kevin Gallagher (sophomore-earth and mineral sciences) who said he found out during his first call that all sections of the speech communications course he wanted to take were filled. He called a second time to register for a different course.

"I guess it was about as smooth as it was going to get," Gallagher said about the new process.

However, after students added one or more courses to their schedules, they were not permitted to call again to add or drop an additional course, Haffner said.

Linda Jones (sophomore-business administration) was able to complete her registration with one call by waiting until 9:30 p.m. to call and by having a list of courses in case some of the courses she wanted to take were full.

"I guess (the phone-in registration process) is okay," she said. "I think it was better than drop-add."

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Partly cloudy skies this morning. Chance of a late afternoon storm. High of 84. Cloudy tonight, chance of a shower. Low of 65.....Dan Zimmerman	