

NASA delays shuttle launch

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. - NASA on Thursday canceled the launch of space shuttle Columbia scheduled for Saturday because of a failed electronics part on one of the four telescopes in the shuttle's cargo bay.

The launch will take place "no earlier than next Wednesday," said Bruce Buckingham, a NASA spokesman.

The delay will give NASA a chance to put the shuttle Discovery on another pad and stay on schedule for a launch in early October.

Engineers had been struggling most of the day Thursday trying to establish a telemetry link with an X-ray observatory, one of the four telescopes carried in the cargo bay of the Columbia. At first they could not determine whether the fault lay in a ground link or with the circuits inside the shuttle.

They eventually traced the problem to an "avionics box" on the X-ray telescope.

"We're not exactly sure about how we're going to fix that box," Buckingham said.

The launch of the Astro observatory aboard

the Columbia already had been delayed five years. It originally was scheduled for March 1986, but the Challenger disaster in January 1986 cancelled all flights.

The mission was rescheduled for May 30, but when fuel was pumped into the shuttle tanks, a leak was discovered.

The new problem surfaced after Columbia's payload bay doors were closed Wednesday night.

Program scientist Ed Weiler said full contact with the observatory is necessary for launch. The scientific returns from the flight will not suffer if the flight must be delayed a few days, he said.

"A few days' slip really won't affect it at all. It really won't change it," Weiler said.

The \$150 million Astro observatory will probe some of the hottest objects in the universe during the mission, which will last nine to 10 days. A comet and supernova are among the approximately 150 targets.

Authorities allow inmates to receive KKK newsletters

HOUSTON - The Texas Department of Criminal Justice has granted a Texas Ku Klux Klan group permission to mail such publications as "Negro Watch," "Jew Watch" and "Knighly News" to prison inmate subscribers.

Prison officials said inmates have been receiving Klan and extreme right- and left-wing publications for the past five to 10 years, following a court ruling that opened the door to a more liberal prison mailing rules. But they had not been allowed to receive publications from a Texas Klan group.

Civil rights groups criticized the decision announced Wednesday, saying the publications would only fuel prison violence.

Prison officials said all periodicals sent inmates are subject to review on an issue-by-issue basis.

Gainesville

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be reading this novel in the middle of the night," she said.

The rumor mill generated endless false leads and terrifying new possibilities that hindered the investigation.

"I've never seen it this bad. It's out of control," said Spencer Mann, spokesman for the Alachua County Sheriff's Department.

A 24-hour rumor-control hot line at the Alachua County Crisis Center had racked up more than 4,000 calls since Monday's initial fright.

"They're in full panic," said a female counselor, a UF graduate student who did not want her name used. "The kids are claiming that they're not getting enough information from the authorities."

The most persistent rumors involved the discovery of more mutilated bodies -- but there also were reports of satanism, stolen police uniforms and phony delivery men. Police categorically denied the stories.

Wednesday's discovery of two bodies in Melrose, a small town 20 miles to the northeast of Gainesville, set off a brief panic until police said the slayings were not related to the student killings.

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