



Hangin' in there

Workers for Mid-Continental Restoration steady a platform to work on Rudder Tower. Mid-Continental was hired by the Physical Plant to clean and waterproof the exterior of Rudder.

Photo by Fredrick D. Joe

Bush, Dukakis clash in campaign debate

LOS ANGELES (AP) — George Bush pointed to arms control, defense and the death penalty Thursday night to punctuate his campaign-long description of Michael Dukakis as a liberal. Dukakis, seeking a debate-night breakthrough, rejected labels in favor of a "vision of America" and portrayed Bush as an apostle of the status quo.

The two White House rivals also clashed over Social Security in their second and final debate of the race. Bush vowed he'd never cut the federal pension program, no matter what Dukakis said. The Democrat cited unsuccessful Reagan administration efforts to do just that, and said, "I'm sure you'll try to do it again."

Bush was looking to pad a lead in the public opinion polls as the two rivals met on the campus of UCLA.

Dukakis went into the encounter looking for a breakthrough to turn the race in his favor in the final weeks.

On Social Security, on the environment, on ethics in government, Dukakis said repeatedly, "I don't know which George Bush I'm listening to" and accused him of shifting positions.

Dukakis said the campaign would turn on the issues if Bush would "get rid of the labels . . . Mr. Bush has used the label 'liberal' at least 10 times."

The Republican candidate said, "I'm happy with the way it came out," and his campaign chairman said, "I really believe the vice president cleaned his clock."

James A. Baker III said Bush firmed up his own support and "closed the sale with the undecided" voters.

Just as predictably, Democrats rated Dukakis the winner.

"I think it was a clear win for Mike Dukakis. I thought he did an excellent job," Sen. Albert Gore Jr. of Tennessee said.

Whatever else it accomplished, the event marked the end of a long string of debates in the 1988 primary and general election campaigns.

Bush, when asked whether he would agree to a third encounter with Dukakis, said, "No . . . People have had it up to here with debates."

Bush strongly defended his vice presi-

dential running mate, Dan Quayle, and said he could do the job if tragedy thrust him into the Oval Office.

Dukakis replied that Bush had said the selection would "tell all. . . and it sure did."

The high-stakes debate 26 days before the election blended political hardball with poignant moments when first Bush, then Dukakis, recalled the death of their own children, many years ago.

Bush said that as president he would have no conservative litmus test for Supreme Court justices, and wouldn't choose judges who would try to legislate from the bench. He then noted that Dukakis once called himself a "progressive liberal Democrat" in order to get primary votes. He said President Reagan

had made outstanding Supreme Court appointments.

Said Dukakis: "If the vice president of the United States thinks that Robert Bork was an outstanding appointment that is a very good reason for voting for Mike Dukakis on the 8th of November." Bork's controversial nomination was defeated by the Senate. Dukakis said he has appointed 130 judges in Massachusetts based on ability and not because they are liberal or conservative. Bush has never appointed a judge, he noted.

Bush said Dukakis had raided Massachusetts state pension funds to balance the budget, and Dukakis shot back, "You're dead wrong."

Bush used his closing statement to stress his Republican National Convention vision of a "kinder, gentler nation."

On-campus buses start new routes beginning Monday

By Fiona Soltes
Staff Writer

Texas A&M on-campus shuttle bus routes will be modified during the next few weeks as a result of residence hall construction.

Modules for the north side residence halls will be delivered next week, which will necessitate the temporary closing of Houston and Hogg streets, both near Sbis Dining Hall. Asbury Street will become a two-way street to accommodate on-campus traffic.

Doug Williams, manager of bus operations, said the new routes will begin Monday.

"The modules won't be delivered until Thursday, but we'd like to try to get everyone oriented with the new system before the streets actually close," Williams said.

The Rudder and Cotton Bowl routes will remain the same, but the others will change completely, he said.

"Because of safety reasons, Houston Street from University Drive to Asbury Street has been closed," Williams said. "This means none of the current routes can go near the Fish Pond. We've had to find a way around it."

Bus operations has designed four new routes to work around the problem: Coke, Green, Blue and Red.

The Coke route is the only route of the temporary routes that will go inside the campus perimeter. It will cross the railroad tracks at Albritton Bell Tower and go by the Coke Building and the MSC.

The Green route will serve the veterinary school, Ocean Drilling Building, University Drive and Kleberg Animal and Food Science Center.

The Blue route will be similar to the Green route, but will not go all the way to the Ocean Drilling Building.

The Red route will travel the perimeter of the A&M campus as the Cotton Bowl bus does, but it will not go to Bus Operations.

The buses still will be based at Olsen Field.

The Villa Maria exterior bus route also will be modified during construction. The bus will stop on Ireland Street near Zachry Engineering Center instead of on Asbury Street to alleviate some traffic.

Williams said the routes will return to their original pattern as soon as the dormitory modules have been delivered.

Maps of the new routes have been posted in all interior-route buses.

Elsewhere on campus, construction has been completed on Parking Annex 88, near Jersey Street. The lot, reserved for dormitory students with red parking stickers, will be open for parking during this weekend's football game.

Student found after 1-day search

By Holly Becka
Staff Writer

A Texas A&M MBA student reported missing Thursday night was found at a friend's house Thursday night after the University Police Department received a call telling of her location.

Bob Wiatt, director of the University Police Department, said Sudha Muddepu was reported missing by a friend Thursday after she missed a test.

Wiatt said the department had issued a multi-state missing person notice for Muddepu, who is from Louisiana.

The College Station police report states Muddepu said she had reached her vehicle in the Mud Lot and had unlocked it when she was attacked from behind and blindfolded by someone. The report states her hands and feet were tied and she was placed in her own vehicle and driven away from the Mud Lot.

The report states Muddepu escaped from the perpetrator and drove her vehicle to a friend's home.

The College Station police report calls the disappearance an abduction that lasted from 11:45 p.m. Wednesday until 7 p.m. Thursday.

The investigation has been turned over to the College Station Police Department since Muddepu's abduction occurred in the Mud Lot located at the 300 block of Nagle.

Wiatt said Muddepu had called her roommate at 10:30 p.m. Wednesday from the Blocker Building to say she was coming "straight" home. She did not go home Wednesday night, Wiatt said.

He also said the department received a call after Muddepu was reported missing from someone who said her car was in the Mud Lot at 11:15 p.m. but was gone at around 11:40 p.m.

"All I can say is that she gave us a detailed account about her alleged abduction," he said.

Muddepu's friends had formed a search party and posted fliers in the Blocker Building Thursday to aid in the search. The fliers were taken down after Muddepu was found.

Professor: Bush, Dukakis tie in final debate

By Sharon Maberry
Staff Writer

The second and final presidential debate between George Bush and Michael Dukakis Thursday was a tie, A&M Political Science Professor George Edwards said.

"There were no basic slips and no great victories," Edwards said. "Both candidates have reinforced their own supporters. Those who went into the debate supporting Bush will continue to support him and those who supported Dukakis will continue supporting him. People have very selective perception. They think that who won it is who they supported."

Presidential debates normally do not have a major influence on voters, Edwards said. They usually serve to simply reinforce existing beliefs. Something bizarre must happen to significantly influence a candidate.

One such bizarre event occurred in 1976 in the presidential debate between Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford when Ford made the misstatement that Eastern Europe was not dominated by the Soviet Union, Edwards said. Although most viewers did not pick up on the statement, the press made his mistake very visible.

The immediate polls after the debate reported that it was a tie. However, a few days later, after the press coverage, the polls showed that Carter was a definite winner.

There was no dramatic occurrence in Thursday's debate to significantly sway voters, Edwards said.

"The basic strategy of the Bush campaign has been to label Dukakis as a non-mainstream American and a liberal,"

— George Edwards, political science professor

"If there is a use (of a presidential debate), it is that it offers one more opportunity for everyone to evaluate the candidates," he said. "It is simply that. There is nothing very enlightening about watching two men standing on a stage."

One value of debates is that people can see the candidates in a slightly less controlled atmosphere.

"Normally, all we see is little snippets on the news and candidate advertisements," he said. "The only thing we see is as controlled as possible. When else do we watch them for one-and-a-half hours?"

Edwards said the Bush campaign strategy dwelling on Dukakis' policy of weekend furloughs for convicted criminals has been very effective.

"The basic strategy of the Bush campaign has been to label Dukakis as a non-mainstream American and a liberal," he said. "Once you've got that label, people in Texas won't like him."

"That's why we see these ads being run heavily in Texas. They are not running in every state. They run where they will appeal to people. Dukakis has no chance to win in the South, including Florida."

The facts that most states have a furlough program and that the Massachusetts furlough policy has been changed will not sway Southern opinions about Dukakis, Edwards said.

Congressman Richard Smith, who is the area coordinator for the Bush campaign in Bryan-College Station, said the presidential debate is not a true debate.

"It's a press conference more than anything else," he said. "But strictly on who enhanced their position, Bush is better off now than he was before the debate. He's continuing to define the issues and the differences between the candidates."

"Dukakis did a good job. He is clearly a competent and intelligent individual, but he didn't have the personal touch for the American people that Bush did."

One of Dukakis' biggest successes was avoiding a tough question that no politician likes about which taxes he would raise if necessary. He also blunted some difficult questions by interrupting the journalist, Smith said.

Brazos County Democratic Chairman Ron Gay said that Dukakis added clarity to his campaign by expanding on answers he gave during the first debate.

"I was glad to see Dukakis clarify his stand on defense," Gay said. "He showed that he has a reasoned approach to the defense policy and he is not

against unilateral defense.

"Those answers showed that Dukakis has given a great deal of thought to the problems facing America and how he would solve those problems. It was surprising to me that Bush doesn't seem to have given very much thought to what he'll do when and if he wins."

Both candidates scored strong points when they talked about the children they had lost and what they suffered, Gay said. Their love of family was evident.

Mexican national storms Consulate, takes U.S. hostage

VERACRUZ, Mexico (AP) — A gun-wielding man complaining of mistreatment by Mexican authorities stormed into the U.S. Consulate Thursday and took the consul hostage, officials said.

U.S. Embassy spokesman William Graves said Edwin Culp is being held by a Mexican national. We have notified Mexican authorities and they have been in touch with the individual who is in Culp's office.

Culp is not a foreign service officer but a civilian consular agent serving as consul, Graves said.

The building housing the consulate was surrounded by about 50 federal, state and local police officers late Thursday night, according to Jose Antonio Herrera, night editor of El Dictamen.

A federal judicial police spokesman in Veracruz said Cmdr. Isidro Landa Mendoza was at the consulate. The spokesman could not provide details on the status of negotiations.

U.S. Embassy duty officer Robert Hugins said the man who seized Culp was identified as Francisco Delfin Perez of Cordoba, which is near Veracruz.

Expert: U.S. tops Soviets in space race

By Alan Sembera
Senior Staff Writer

The United States still is ahead of the Soviet Union in the space race despite the two-and-a-half-year delay in the U.S. space program caused by the Challenger explosion, according to a Texas A&M expert on Soviet technology.

Richard E. Thomas, head of A&M's Center for Strategic Technology, said that although the delay caused by the Challenger mishap has hurt the U.S. space effort, the superiority of Western technology has helped the United States retain its overall advantage.

But Thomas said the Soviets put a greater emphasis on their space program, which receives a vast amount of funding and involves some of the country's best scientists and engineers.

"It is a truly national effort, somewhat in contrast to our program which is a combination of the Air Force and NA-

SA," Thomas said. "I think the Soviet program carries almost the same kind of commitment to it as we had in the '60s when we challenged them to a race to the moon."

It is difficult to compare the progress of the Soviet space program with the United States' program, Thomas said, because the countries concentrate on differing aspects of space technology.

"Their program has emphasized putting large structures in space," he said, "and they have emphasized manned operations in space. They hold many records for cosmonaut endurance and that sort of thing."

"They have a very active program aimed at putting man in space and keeping him there."

The Soviet's MIR space station plays a large role in the man-in-space program, he said.

The MIR station was launched in 1986 to replace the aging SALYUT-7 space station.

Thomas said it seems that MIR will be manned constantly, with a rotating crew. The constant occupation will help the Soviets learn more about how living in space affects the human body, he said, which will enable them to create better life-support systems.

The Soviets are emphasizing such areas of space technology in an attempt to "industrialize" space, Thomas said.

"They talk about wanting to do manufacturing in space in the low-gravity environment," he said, "which is a great boost in terms of developing superpure metals or superpure medicines."

To help achieve the industrialization, the Soviets also are working on a space shuttle similar to the one built by NASA.

Thomas said the Soviets did not disclose that they were working on the shuttle program until about four years ago. When the shuttle finally appeared, he said, it was almost an exact copy of NASA's shuttle.

The Soviet shuttle is almost exactly

the same size as our shuttle, he said, and it has the same delta-wing shape.

"It has a different propulsion system arrangement on it so it's not an exact duplicate of ours," he said. "I'm sure that inside it's different, but nobody knows."

He said he did not know when the Soviets would launch their shuttle.

"They move ahead very deliberately," Thomas said, "they don't take many risks."

"There was some speculation that they might try to launch their shuttle before we got the Discovery off the ground, but they didn't get that done."

"There's some indication that they're having computer problems on board that shuttle."

The Soviets also need to make another test of their new SL-X-17 heavy lift booster before they can launch the shuttle, Thomas said. This booster, called "Energia," will be used to launch the shuttle into orbit, he said.

They have only tested the booster

once, in May 1987. The test was successful, Thomas said.

The Energia booster is a heavy-lift vehicle that can lift more than 100,000 kilograms into a low orbit. Previously, the Soviets' largest booster could lift only 19,500 kilograms. The United States' largest lift vehicle, the space shuttle and its boosters, has a payload of about 26,000 kilograms.

But the superiority of the Soviet boosters can be deceiving when trying to compare their capabilities to ours, Thomas warned, because more does not necessarily mean better.

"Because of technical problems," he said, "their satellites don't last as long as ours, and they aren't as capable. Microelectronics is an area where they're very deficient, so they have to put up larger packages."

The Energia booster represents an advantage in one aspect, however, because

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