

Ulysses begins new era for NASA

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. (AP) — Shuttle Discovery sailed out of orbit and landed Wednesday after a four-day flight that boosted NASA's confidence and sent the Ulysses spacecraft on a five-year mission to explore the sun's poles.

"If you criticize our mistakes, then you must also acknowledge our successes," space shuttle director and former astronaut Robert Crippen said after completion of the first shuttle flight in nearly six months.

"I'm elated," he added. "It's been a long hot summer, I'll tell you that. It's nice to be back flying again. It is a high day for us."

About 5,500 spectators cheered as Discovery touched down at 8:57 a.m. CDT, just seconds before the sun rose over hills to the east. It was the third smallest crowd for any shuttle landing open to public viewing.

"Congratulations on a picture-perfect mission," Mission Control's Brian Duffy told the five astronauts.

The astronauts stepped out of the shut-

tle into sunshine an hour after the landing. About four hours later, shuttle commander Dick Richards was given a small gold model of Ulysses. Then Richards, pilot Robert Cabana and mission specialists Bill Shepherd, Bruce Melnick and Tom Akers boarded two jets to take them home to Houston.

About 350 people gathered at Houston's Ellington Field to cheer their return home late Wednesday afternoon. The crowd included about 20 U.S. Coast Guard members who were there to honor Melnick, the first Coast Guard officer to become an astronaut.

"It's great to have America back in space where we belong," Cabana said.

Discovery's 1.7 million-mile flight was the first since April — the longest gap between shuttle missions since they resumed after the 1986 explosion that destroyed Challenger and killed seven crew members.

The latest flight helped bolster morale at the National Aeronautics and Space Ad-

ministration, which has been plagued by hydrogen fuel leaks in the shuttles Columbia and Atlantis and by a flawed mirror that severely impaired the \$1.5 billion Hubble Space Telescope.

"Like any great team, occasionally there's losing streaks," Richards said before flying to Houston. "Today is a day we can say this losing streak is over and we're going on to great things in the future."

The mission wasn't completely free of glitches.

Discovery was launched with incorrect instructions for how it should operate some of its computer programs, a NASA official said Wednesday. But the mistake never posed a threat to the shuttle or its five-man crew, said Milt Hefflin, lead flight director for the mission.

The crew noticed the error on a computer display screen about an hour after Discovery was launched Saturday from Cape Canaveral, Fla., and quickly corrected it, Hefflin said. Automatic safe-

guards would have prevented problems even if the crew hadn't spotted it, he said.

But the mistake is considered serious, Hefflin said, because "if we erred in our procedures on the ground, why did we catch it?"

Six hours after they lifted off from Cape Canaveral, Fla., on Saturday, Discovery astronauts deployed the Ulysses spacecraft on its 1.86-billion-mile mission to study the sun's high latitudes and poles.

Ulysses "seems to be working perfectly well," said Roger Bonnet, director of scientific programs for the European Space Agency, which operates the \$250 million solar explorer in a joint mission with NASA.

Bonnet praised the \$750 million mission as "a symbol of future cooperation between Europe and the United States."

About an hour before touchdown, Discovery's twin braking rockets fired, allowing the shuttle to plunge out of orbit and dash through Earth's atmosphere.

U.S. joins in denouncing Israeli forces

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The Security Council late Wednesday agreed on a resolution condemning Israeli forces for firing on rioting Palestinian protesters in Jerusalem and killing 19 of them. A formal vote was expected soon.

The United States' decision to join in denouncing Israel outraged Jewish groups, who flooded the U.N. Mission to the United Nations with phone calls.

Diplomats said a compromise was struck by the United States and non-aligned nations on the council, in favor of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

They said the resolution would temper criticism of Palestinian involvement in the confrontation in Monday.

In return, the PLO and its allies on the council gave up their demand that the Security Council send its members to Jerusalem to investigate. Instead, Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar will send his emissaries.

"Our hope is that we will be able to take such a proposal, or a proposal like it, to a vote very soon," U.N. Ambassador Thomas R. Pickens said.

U.N. officials said an open meeting and the vote were expected to follow a 9:30 p.m. CDT Wednesday formal private meeting set by the council.

The PLO earlier had been demanding that a Security Council investigative mission go to Jerusalem, a resolution America would veto.

"That's not a resolution we can support in there, you all know that," Pickens had said.

A U.S. veto of the resolution in favor of its ally Israel would have driven a wedge between the United States and Arabs who have banded together to isolate Iraq for its August invasion and occupation of Kuwait, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other Arab states say Israel's occupation of Gaza and the West Bank is just as offensive as Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Bush agrees to increase tax on rich

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House said today President Bush would accept higher taxes on the wealthiest Americans in a trade-off for a deep cut in capital gains rates.

Bush's decision was disclosed after two days of confusion over his position on taxes and came as Congress struggled to cement a \$500 billion deficit reduction package of tax increases and spending cuts.

Rep. William Archer, R-Texas, said that under the plan the top income tax rate would be raised to about 500,000 of the nation's wealthiest taxpayers. The rate would be lowered for about 4.5 million who earn slightly less, he said. The tax on capital gains would be cut for all who make profits on the sale of stocks, real estate and other investments.

Bush's new tax policy faced an uncertain reception in Congress, where many Republicans philosophically oppose any increase in tax rates, and some Democrats are reluctant to raise the capital gains tax.

There was no immediate reaction from Democratic leaders.

But within an hour of Bush's decision being made public, the White House sought to lower expectations for such a deal — and suggest the Democrats would never get along.

Richard Darman, White House budget director, said Republicans had proposed a hike in tax rates on the wealthy during budget negotiations last month but said it was rejected by the Democrats.

Under the proposal, the original tax rate on the wealthiest Americans would be raised from 28 percent to 31 percent, but only if Congress lowers the capital gains rate to 15 percent.

Capital gains — profits from sale of stocks, real estate and other assets — are currently taxed at the same rate as other income.

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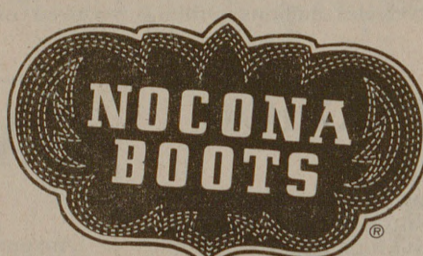
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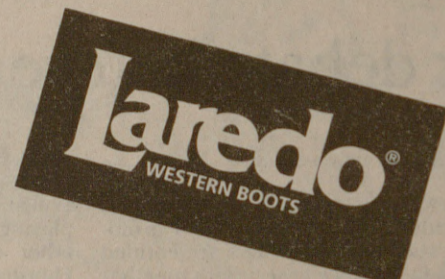
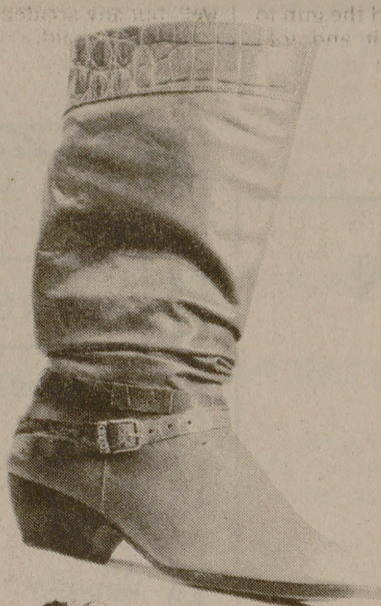
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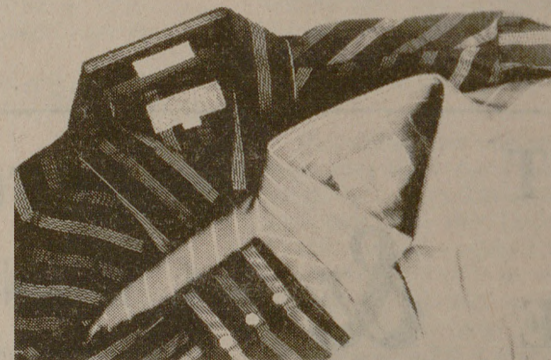
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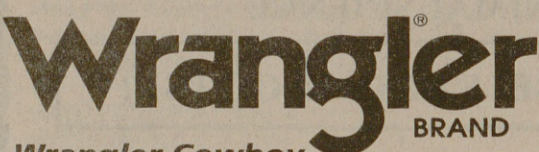
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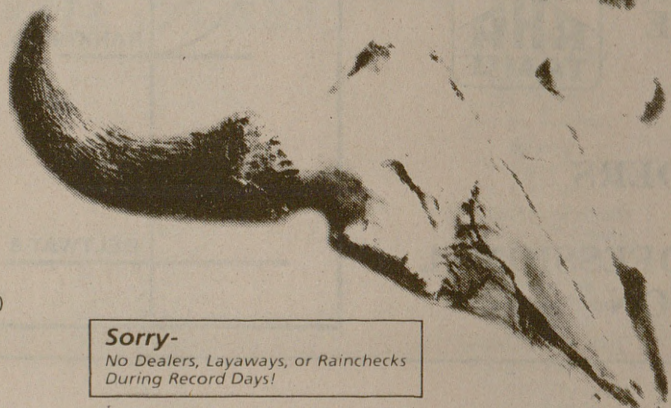
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