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TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

NUCLEAR ROCKET SIMULATOR TESTS FLOW INITIATION WITH TURBINE ACCELERATED TANK PRESSURE 50 PSIA; RUN 11

NASA-Lewis Research Center

Test Date: September 30, 1964

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> RL. DICTED DATA Atomic personal of 1954

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NATIONAL AERONATICS & SPACE ADMINISTRATION



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NUCLEAR ROCKET SIMULATOR TESTS FLOW INITIATION WITH TURBINE ACCELERATED TANK PRESSURE 50 PSIA; RUN 11

Lewis Research Center

ABSTRACT

11628 Preliminary data obtained from liquid hydrogen run 11 is presented. This run was conducted to determine if the turbine could achieve

bootstrap acceleration during flow initiation of the nuclear rocket. The pressure rise versus weight flow and pump speed are presented to illustrate the degree of bootstrapping achieved. Pressure and temperature measurements are also presented as a function of time for selected stations and components throughout the system. The run was made by opening the turbine power control valve to maintain a speed ramp of 500 rpm/sec (2%/sec). The tank pressure was main-Heit tained at 50 psia throughout the run.

INTRODUCTION

The over-all objective of the nuclear rocket simulator tests is to study system dynamics and component phenomena during the nuclear rocket initial startup cycle.

Some pump performance data for an acceleration of 100 rpm/sec (0.4%/ sec) obtained in run 10 are shown in figure 3 herein to indicate behavior at slower acceleration rates than run ll. No further reporting of run 10 is contemplated.

The primary objective of run ll was to determine if the turbine could be bootstrapped during flow initiation of the simulated nuclear rocket. Secondary objectives were to obtain pressure and temperature oscillations during system chilldown, the chilldown history of various system components, and low speed turbopump characteristics.

RESEARCH APPARATUS

A detailed description of the B-l Facility and test apparatus is given in reference 1. A schematic diagram of the complete nuclear rocket bootstrap startup experiment is shown in figure 1. For this experiment the turbine discharge line was reconnected to the ejector system. The turbopump package was modified to incorporate check valves in the balance piston bleed return lines.

The turbine power control valve used in this experiment was close loop controlled on turbopump speed employing a proportional plus integral controller to condition the speed error signal. The speed demand input signal was as shown in the figure below:



The speed ramp demand was initiated 10 seconds after the pump discharge valve was opened. This delay time was determined from the cooldown data which indicated that the two phase oscillations at the nozzle inlet had dampened out by this time. It was also determined that at 10 seconds the turbopump windmill speed was approximately 1000 rpm. The initial speed reference was set below this value (at 900 rpm) so as not to step the turbine power control valve open when the valve was switched into automatic control at 9 seconds.

INSTRUMENTATION

A complete tabulation of all measurement item numbers and installation details of the nuclear rocket simulator instrumentation is given in reference 1. The measurements taken during run 11 are listed and described in Table I. The type of transducer used; e.g., resistance thermometers, thermocouples, etc., can be identified from their item numbers and the symbol descriptions given in reference 1.

The digital data recording systems used in run 11 were a 4000 cycle sampling rate digital system with 192 inputs and a 10,000 cycle sampling rate digital system with 100 inputs. High frequency data was recorded on FM tape and on various oscillographs.

An estimated over-all accuracy for each measurement is included in Table I. The accuracy estimates include possible errors in the transducer calibrations, data acquisition system and data processing system. A detailed discussion of the accuracy estimates of the copper constantan thermocouples is given in reference 3.

The data processing methods were the same as those outlined in reference 2.



TEST PROCEDURE

A complete description outlining the test procedure used is given in reference 3. The following is a description of the sequence of events that was used to obtain the desired test conditions for run 11.

The automatic sequence was initiated when the nozzle exit pressure reached 3 psia. The important events of the automatic sequencing used for run 11 are shown in Table II. At t = 25 seconds from the time the automatic sequence was initiated, the tank pressure was ramped to 35 psig. At t = 45 seconds, the pump main discharge valve was opened with a 1 second ramp. As the pump main discharge valve is initiated, a command signal is given to the various data recording devices to indicate zero time for flow initiation to the system. All figures in this report which have a time scale use this signal as a zero reference.

At t = 55 seconds from the time the automatic sequencer was initiated, the turbine power control valve was opened to maintain a programmed speed ramp of 500 rpm/sec. If during the test, the monitored pump weight flow would reach a predetermined maximum value of 25 lbs/sec, the speed demand ramp signal would be terminated; and the signal would be maintained at the last value it had attained. (The pump weight flow and pressure differential were also monitored on an X-Y plotter during the test. If this X-Y plot would indicate a deep pump stall, the research engineer could initiate shutdown.)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

System Performance

Although the data presented in this report is preliminary, the test verified the bootstrap capability of a nuclear rocket engine system. It is to be emphasized that the heated gas powering the turbine was obtained solely by heating the liquid hydrogen, using the latent heat of the major components of the system.

At approximately 20 seconds, the turbine power control valve was only open 34% of its maximum value, indicating ample power was still available at this time. In an actual startup, the reactor power could have been increased at any time between 5 lbs/sec and approximately 15 lbs/sec. flow.

At approximately 23 seconds, a pump weight flow of 25 lbs/sec was reached and the speed demand was held at 7600 rpm.

At approximately 24 seconds (26 lbs/sec LH₂ flow), the system was cooling down very rapidly and could not maintain the 7600 rpm speed demand. The turbine power control valve began to open to its maximum value, but it compared to the second secon

<u>Pressures at major stations</u>.- The time history of static pressures at major instrumentation stations throughout the system are shown in figures 6 through 16. These figures are reproductions of the 10 KC digital computer plots. These digital plots show the over-all level of the pressure and the magnitude of the low frequency oscillations during the run. High frequency oscillations in the static pressures, which occurred during the first 30 seconds, are shown in figure 4. These high frequency oscillation plots are recorded oscillograph traces of data from FM tapes. The noise on the nozzle inlet manifold static pressure on figure 4 is attributed to the data reduction system.

In general, all pressure oscillations of any consequency were damped out before turbine power was applied. Applying turbine power did not introduce any new severe pressure oscillations. The amplitudes of the oscillations seemed to be at a maximum at the nozzle inlet manifold and seem to be damped upstream and downstream from this station. All oscillations were negligible at the end of the run.

<u>Temperature at major stations</u>.- The time history of fluid temperatures at major instrumentation stations throughout the system are shown in figures 19 through 28. These figures are reproductions of the 10 KC digital computer plots. High frequency oscillations of fluid temperature recorded on FM tapes are shown in figure 17. The noise on the plot of reflector exit manifold fluid temperature is attributed to the data reduction system.

In general, the effect of bootstrapping is to lower the temperature of the downstream stations more rapidly. In chilldown run 6 (where the tank pressure is the same as run 11), the nozzle chamber station indicated liquid hydrogen temperature in about 50 seconds. In run 11, the nozzle chamber station recorded liquid hydrogen temperatures in about 25 seconds.

The oscillations in the fluid temperature at the pump discharge and nozzle inlet manifold stations are due to two-phase flow.

System pressure and temperature profiles. - A cross plot of the static pressure at various stations in the system at several selected times is shown in figure 5. A cross plot of the hydrogen fluid temperature at various stations at selected times is shown in figure 18.

Component Performance

<u>Turbopump</u>.- The startup and bootstrap history of run 11 is shown on the plot of pump differential pressure versus weight flow, figure 2.



The information for this plot was obtained from the 10 KC data system and was plotted at one second intervals. Figure 2 shows that the system load line followed by the turbopump was well out of the stall area. This load line can be compared with the load line obtained in run 10, figure 3. (Run 10 was similar to run 11 with the exception that in run 10 the speed ramp was 100 rpm/sec while in run 11 the speed ramp was 500 rpm/sec.) In each case, the estimated stall line plotted was based upon normalized test data obtained from the turbopump manufacturer. During run 11, the turbopump reached a maximum speed of 7570 rpm with no evidence of mechanical problems.

The pump performance during windmilling startup was similar to the data obtained in cooldown run 6 (reference 3). Figures 29 and 30 show plots of turbopump speed and weight flow versus time as obtained from the 10 KC digital recording systems. Figures 4 and 17 show high frequency data from FM tapes of turbopump speed and weight flow.

Included in this report are plots of the turbine parameters obtained from 10 KC digital recording systems. Figures 14 and 15 illustrate the turbine inlet and outlet static pressures versus time.

Figure 31 illustrates the 10 KC digital plot of the turbine inlet flowmeter versus time. Turbine mass flow is the product of the density of the turbine gas and the volumetric flow through the flowmeter. From the period t = 27.7 seconds to t = 28.4 seconds, the output from the flowmeter was limited. Thus, the plot in this range gives erroneous values of mass flow. Figure 32 shows turbine power control valve position versus time.

<u>Pump discharge pipe</u>.- The variation of pipe wall temperature with time at Station C is presented in Figure 33. Unlike previous runs, the temperature indicates a steady drop to liquid temperature instead of a leveling out for a period of time at a temperature about 100°R.

<u>Nozzle</u>.- Nozzle wall temperatures versus times are plotted in figures 34 and 35. A time history of static pressure inside the nozzle exit bell and the vibration load at the nozzle inlet manifold is plotted in figure 36.

<u>Reflector</u>.- Figures 37 and 38 are plots of the dynamic pressure versus time and fluid temperature versus time for various stations at the reflector outlet. The relative cooldown of the various components of the reflector are presented in figures 39 to 43. The temperatures presented are averages of the representative temperatures of each component plotted. <u>Core</u>.- The relative cooldown of the core modulus and fuel elements is presented in figures 44 and 45. The temperatures presented are averages of material temperatures down the length of a module and a fuel element at the center of the reactor. A cross plot of material temperatures vs. length at selected times during the run for a fuel element is presented in figure 46. A cross plot of static pressure along the length of a fuel element is presented in figure 47.

<u>Nozzle Chamber</u>.- Figure 48 illustrates the fluid temperature at the nozzle chamber versus distance from the centerline of the chamber for various times during the run.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

From a review of the data presented in this report, it appears that:

- 1. The turbine maintained bootstrap operation during the flow initiation of the nuclear rocket.
- 2. No significant oscillations were introduced during the bootstrap operation.
- 3. The test verified the bootstrap capability of a nuclear rocket system.

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1 AG 424 1984 1964 - 10*

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TABLE I - INSTRUMENTATION

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TABLE I (Cont.)

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TABLE I	(Cont.)					Ţι
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PT-68	" Pipe Wall	×			See Text	
PT-69	" Pipe Wall	×			See Text	• •
PT-70	" Pipe Wall Sta. C	×			See Text	
PT-73	" Elbow-Inside Radius	×			See Text	•
PT-74	" Elbow-Outside Radius	×			See Text	••••
PT-75	" Pipe Wall Sta. D	×			See Text	••
PT-76	" Pipe Wall Sta. D	×			See Text	••••
PT-77	" Pipe Wall Sta. D	×			See Text	• •
PT-78	" Pipe Wall Sta. E	×			See Text	•
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PQ-E	Quality Meter	×		×		
NP-39	P , Nozzle Throat	×			<u>+</u> 0.6 psi	
NP-40	" Nozzle Exit Bell	×			<u>+</u> 0.4 psi	
	" Nozzle Exit Bell	×			<u>+0.4</u> psi	•
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16		Remarks					:		•••		•			•:	•	•••	•		•		•		••										
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י מחתעו		Item No.	NT-7	NT-9	NT-10	NT-11		NT-13	NT-14	NT-17	NT-18	NT-19	NT-20	NT-23	NT-24	NT-26	NT-27	8C-TN	NT-29		NT-31	NT-32	NT-79	NT-80	NT-81	NT-82	τ Ψ_]	с <u>т</u> т	2-TT		1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	6-11	

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TABLE I (Cont.)

	Remarks	Meter M-9				
	Estimated <u>Overall Accuracy</u>	+0.6 psi +1.2 psi +0.8 psi +9.0°R at 40°R	see Text See Text See Text See Text See Text See Text	+9.0°R at 40°R +0.4°R at 40°R +9.0°R at 40°R +1.5 psi	±0.09 psi ±0.10 psi	See Text See Text See Text See Text See Text
rument	<u>Oscil</u> .					
Insti	FM	× × >	×	× ×		
cording	<u>10 KC</u>	× × >	× ××	* * * * *	××	. :
	L4 KC	×××	< × × × ×	E E	r r	× × × × ×
(Cont.)	Description	P. , Nozzle Chamber "s " " " Bleed Port "fl, Bleed Port	Tw, Nozzle Bleed Port	T _{f1} , Reflector Inlet Plenu "f1, " " " " P, Reflector Inlet Plenu "s " Reflector Inlet Plenu	∆r kerlector Inlet/Reflecto Pass ∆P Reflector Inlet/Reflecto Pass	T , Reflector Segment at (" " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " "
TABLE I	ltem No.	NP- 21 NP- 22 NP- 24 NR- 7 NT- 60	NT- 61 NT- 62 NT- 62 NT- 64 NT- 78	RR-601 RR-610 RR-612 RP-140 RP-141 RP-603/	00 RP-604∕ 68	RT-98 RT-99 RT-100 RT-101 RT-104

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TABLE I (C	ont.)				¢.	「ない」ともある		# .		1
ļ					Rec	ording	Instru	ment		8
ltem No.	Desci	<u>ription</u>			4 KC	<u>10 KC</u>	FM	<u>Oscil</u> .	Overall Accuracy Re	<u>Remarks</u>
RT-105 T	",Reflec	tor Segm	lent	at 0'	×				See Text	
RT-106 "	=		: :	= 1 = 1	×				See Text	
RT-107 "			=	11 11	×				See Text	
RT-108 "	11		F		×			·	See Text	
RT-109 "	F		=	=	×				See Text	•.
RT-110 "	1		F	=	×				See Text	•
RT-111 "	11		11	=	×				See Text	
RT-112 "	E		۴	11 11	×				See Text	
RT-113 "	11		۲	11 11	×				See Text	•
RT-116 "			=		×				See Text	•••
RT-117 "	Ħ		۲		ĸ				See Text	•
RT-118 "	11				×				See Text	•
RT-119 "	11		:	11 11	×				See Text	•
RT-120 "	F		۴	11 11	×				See Text	•:
RT-121 "	ŧ		۲	11	×				See Text	•
RT-126 "	11		:		×				See Text	
RT-194 "	11			240	: : 0	×			See Text	•
RT-196 "				=		×			See Text	
RT-199 "			÷	F		×			See Text	•
RT-206 "			۲	F		×			See Text	
RT-208 "	11		=	F		×			See Text	•
RT-211 "	11		۲	F		×			See Text	•
RT-223 "	11		=	300	× °				See Text	•
RT-234 "	F		۲	F	×				See Text	•
RT-235 "	F		==	F	×				See Text	
RM-317 T	F1, Contro	ol Drum	.06"							
	Tunul	ns				×				
RM-319 "	F	F				×				
RM-321 "		F	=			×				

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TABLE I	(Cont	(•:							
				Rec	ording]	Instru	ment	7	
No.		Description		LI KC	<u>10 KC</u>	FM	<u>Oscil</u> .	estimated <u>Overall Accuracy</u>	Remarks
RT-77	, L	Graphite Cyl	inder 0 =1;	02	×			See Text	
RT-78	****	- - -	=		×			See Text	
RT-79	F	F			×			See Text	
RT-94	=	=	" 0=350°	×				See Text	
RT-95	=	E	11 11	×				See Text	
RT-96	F	-		×				See Text	•••
RT-97	F	F	11 11	×				See Text	
RT-263	F	Control Rod	0= 0 م	×				See Text	
RT-264	÷		۴	×				See Text	
RT-265	F		11	×				See Text ^f	
RT-266	F		۲	×				See Text	
RT-267		11 11	Ŧ	×				See Text	••
RT-268	F	11 11	۲	×				See Text	
RT-269	F	11 11	Ŧ	×				See Text	
RT-270	=	11 11	۴	×				See Text	•••
RT-271	11	11 11	۴	×				See Text	•
RT-274	=		60°	×				See Text	
RT-283	F		120°	×				See Text	
RT-290	Ŧ		180°		×			See Text	
RT-292	F			×	×			See Text	•
RT-293	F	11	F		×			See Text	•
RT-295	F		۳		×			See Text	
RT-301	=	н П	240°	×				See Text	•
RT-310	F	-	300°	×				See Text	
RT-380	Ľ,	Pressure She	11 0= 180°	×				See Text	•
RT-383	ш н	=	1 230°	×				See Text	
RT-386	F	=	290°	×				See Text	
RT-388	=	11 11	350°	×				See Text	
RT-389	F		350°	×				See Text	
RT-390	F	=	350°	×				See Text	
RA-0	ь0	Pressure Shel.	l Radial				×		
RA-270	F	11 11	E				×		-
RA-A	60	Pressure She.	ll Axial				×		19

CONFERENTING

TABLE I	(Cont	(.						20
I			Reco	rding I	nstru	ment		
Item No.		Description	t KC	10 KC	FM	<u>Oscil</u> .	ь <i>s</i> тımated Overall Accuracy	Remarks
RR-619	T_{fl}	Reflector Outlet Plenum		×			+9.0°R at 40°R	
RR-622 RR-624	= =		×	: × ×	×		= =	
RP-82	Pt,	Reflector Segment, 0 188" Hole	>				+].2 nsi	
RP-85	۲	Reflector 0.06"	< ;					
RP-88	11	Annurus Reflector Segment,	×					
RP-94	1	0.188" Hole Control Drum,	×				= :	
RP-97	ŧ	0.188" Hole Control Drum.	×				F	•••
		0.06" Annulus	×				11	••••
RP-100 RP-145	= =	Impedance Ring Passage Reflector Outlet	×				E	•••
2		Plenum		×	×		<u>+</u> 1.2 psi	••
RP- 146	F	Reflector Outlet	×				F	
RP-147	F	Reflector Outlet	,	×			+1.0 psi	
RT-242	T _{fl} ,	Reflector Segment, 0.188" Hole	×	:			See Text	
RT-245	F	Reflector 0.06" Annulus	×				See Text	
RT- 248	Ħ	Reflector Segment, 0 188" Hole	×				See Text	
RT-254		Control Drum 0.188" Hole	: >				See Техt	
RT-257	11	Control Drum 0.06" Annulus	<				See Text	
RT-260		Impedance Ring Passage	<				See Text	

BLE I (Cont.)	ţ	•	-	-		
F	Rec	ording	Instru	ment	Estimated	
	LL KC	10 KC	FM	Oscil.	Overall Accuracy	<u>Remarks</u>
82/58 △P Reflector Segment Pass-	>				See Text	
85/ △P Reflector Shell Segment	< ×				+0.25 psi	
144 88/58 ∆P Reflector Exit Passage 94/ ∆P Control Rod Passage	××				= =	•••
103 07/70 AB fontuol Rod Hole	7				÷	•••
100/ AP Imped. Ring Passage	< ×				<u>+</u> 0.3 psi	
121 P., Core Inlet Plenum 123 " ^S , " " "	×	××	×		<u>+</u> 1.0 psi	••••
342 T _{fl} , Core Support Plate Flow Passage	×	×	×		See Text	•••••
392 " Core Support Plate Flow Passage	×	×			See Text	
403 T , Reactor Dome	××				See Text See Text	•••
	< ×				See Text	
31 P _S , Fuel Element Inlet Plenum		×			+1.0 psi	
32 = = = = = = = = = = = = = = = = = = =	×	;			= =	
1/NP-50 △P Fuel Element #1 P_/		<				
Chamber Ps Chamber Cham	××				<u>+</u> 0.25 psi "	
2/NF-50 " " "	<				<u>+</u> 0.15 psi	
H/NP-50 " "	×				2	
5/NP-50 " " "	×				isd DI.U-	
6/NP-50 △P fuel Element #/ P _S Chamber P _S	×				<u>+</u> 0.25 psi	2
7/NP-50 " " "	×					1
8/NP-50 "					ISG CI.UT	

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TABLE I	(Cont.)		ר יי יי גי		+			22
T+cm		Vec	f Birth.10	nJ 1811	liellt	1 1 1 1	~	2
No.	<u>Description</u>	4 KC	10 KC	FM	<u>Oscil</u> .	Estimated <u>Overall Accuracy</u>	Remarks	
RP-9/NP RP-10/N RP-28/2 RP-31/3 RP-31/3 RT-1 RT-2 RT-3 RT-4 RT-4 RT-3 RT-3 RT-32 RT-33 RT-	-50 $\triangle F$ Fuel Element #7 Ps/ Chamber Ps " 9 $\triangle P$ Fuel Element Inlet/Exit Plenum " " " 8 " " " " 7 , Fuel Element #1 "" ' " " " " " " " " " " " " " Tm ' Fuel Element #1 "" " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " "	* * * * * * * * * * * *	× ×			+0.15 psi +0.10 psi +0.4 psi +0.4 psi 5ee Text See Text See Text See Text See Text See Text See Text See Text		
RT- 34 RT- 35		<				See Text See Text	•••••••••••	
EP-1 ET-1 ET-2 ET-3 ET-3	Ps, Ejector Inlet Ts, Exhaust Duct "w" " "		×		* * * *	±0.15 psi		
E C BAR DMMV7	Main Valve Command Switch Hermes Timer & Mail Valve Command Barometer	××	× x	×	× ×		Ec Marker	
TPCV	TPCV Position		× × ×		×		Coded Out	

ALL DESCRIPTION OF

TABLE I (Cont.)

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	<u>Remarks</u>	
	Estimated <u>Overall Accuracy</u>	
Recording Instrument	4 KC 10 KC FM Oscil.	× × × × × × ×
	<u>Description</u>	TPCV Limit Switch Speed Set Pressure Valve Position Vent Valve Position Pressure Measured Fwd. Turbine Oil Flow Aft Turbine Oil Flow
Ttem	No.	TPCV-L SS TSPV PM 1 2 2





TABLE II - AUTOMATIC RUN SEQUENCE





FIGURE 1 - Nuclear Rocket Cold Flow Experiment in B-1 Facility.



















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35*0000 39*0000 +0*00

8*3330 IS*8000 IP*050 SC*0940





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	-913			87 6. 72 88 5. 483 7. 683 6 37 8: 68 69 8	s the
E CONTRACTOR	N. RR	<u>2</u>			da versu
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		D TEMP	PERAIL		1 + 2 5 + 2
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Figure 32. - Turbine power control valve position versus time (item no. TPCV).

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Figure 33. - Pump discharge pipe wall temperature at station C versus time (item PT-70).





Figure 34. - Nozzle wall temperature at X = 25.7 versus time (item NT-10).









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Figure 39. - Reactor pressure vessel average temperature versus time (item no's RT-388, RT-389, RT-390).







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