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NASA LAUNCHES DUAL DYNAMICS EXPLORER SPACECRAFT

NASA successfully launched two spacecraft aboard one launch vehicle from the Western Space and Missile Center, Lompoc, Calif yesterday morning, Aug 3

Dynamics Explorers A and B lifted off the launch pad at Vandenberg Air Force Base at 5 56 a m EDT atop a Delta launch vehicle The Dynamics Explorer B spacecraft was placed in a low polar orbit, ranging from 306 to 1,300 kilometers (190 to 808 miles), Dynamics Explorer A was sent into a highly elliptical higher polar orbit, ranging from 675 to 24,945 km (420 to 15,500 mi.)

Aug 4, 1981

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DUAL DYNAMICS EXPLORER SPACECRAFT (National
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The two spacecraft, weighing approximately 454 kilograms (1,000 pounds) each, will work in harmony to provide an understanding of the processes by which energy from the Sun flows through interplanetary space, enters the region around the Earth controlled by the magnetic forces from the Earth's magnetic field to produce the auroras (northern lights) to affect radio transmissions and possibly to influence basic weather patterns

They will provide specific knowledge about the interaction of energy, electric currents, electric fields, and plasmas (ionized atomic particles) between the magnetosphere, the ionosphere, and the atmosphere.

Monday's successful launch came after three 24-hour delays for a variety of problems. Originally scheduled for launch Friday, July 31, the first postponement was called when NASA officials discovered a discrepancy in spacecraft A's internal command system. The second 24-hour delay resulted from high winds at the launch site at 40,000 feet, and the third 24-hour delay came Sunday, Aug 2, when an Air Force tracking aircraft operating out of Tahiti could not get one of its engines started.

Scientific data from the low orbiting spacecraft should be available for analysis by the NASA scientists in about two weeks. The data from the high-orbit spacecraft, because of its greater complexity, probably will be available in about 45 days.

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