

26 Years Ago at MSC

Carpenter replaces Slayton on MA-7

'Erratic heart' cited as cause for substitution

Reprinted from the March 21, 1962, issue of Space News Roundup.

"I didn't expect to view this assignment with mixed emotions," astronaut Scott Carpenter told newsmen last week. "I hate to be a part of something which is such a great disappointment to 'Deke'."

He referred to Thursday's decision of a civilian medical team not to allow astronaut Donald K. "Deke" Slayton to make the next orbital flight. Carpenter, back-up pilot during astronaut John H. Glenn's orbital flight Feb. 20, was chosen in Slayton's place "because we wanted to use his experience in the Glenn flight immediately," according to Public Affairs Officer John Powers.

Commented Slayton, who learned of the decision late Thursday afternoon: "... I assumed I would go ... You feel the same way you'd feel about anything when you get shot out of the saddle unexpectedly."

Dr. William Douglas, personal physician to the astronauts, told a press conference Friday that Slayton's condition was a "grossly irregular" heart beat, without any known cause. "Many people have this condition," Douglas added.

Commenting on the disparity between the Air Force medical board, which passed Slayton for the flight, and the civilian cardiologists who countermanded the decision, Douglas said it was a "difference of opinion."

Slayton noted that he could tell when the condition occurred, but had

flowed when it was apparent with no ill effect. "I have done everything with it that I can do without it," he said, and added that his cure for it was to "get out and run two or three miles."

"In my opinion it isn't anything unhealthy; it's just like having one blue and one brown eye."

Robert R. Gilruth, director of the Manned Spacecraft Center, said in an earlier press conference in Washington that "Deke" is an extremely competent engineer-test pilot and extremely capable of the mission. In no case has this abnormality interfered with Deke's performance."

Officials emphasized the condition was not due to the centrifuge training, during which it first showed up, or to any other part of the astronaut's training schedule.

As to whether it would clear up later, Dr. Douglas said no, that Slayton would probably have the condition "for the rest of his life."

Carpenter steps into the pilot's shoes with approximately one-third of the preparations of the MA-7 flight completed. Asked about the changes he would make, Carpenter said he "might choose a different name than Deke chose," but thought Deke would "still recognize his flight plan."

Asked one reporter Friday night, "When do you start work?"

"Tomorrow," said Carpenter.

"What about the parade?" the reporter asked.

"I start working tomorrow night," conceded Carpenter.



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Astronaut Scott Carpenter, left, replaced fellow Astronaut Deke Slayton on the Mercury-Atlas 7 mission after doctors discovered an irregular heartbeat during a routine medical examination. Slayton continued to play a vital role in the selection and training of astronaut crews, and eventually flew in space as part of the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project.

Deke still in program, say MSC officials

Manned Spacecraft Center officials emphasized last week that the decision to change pilots in the proposed MA-7 flight because of Astronaut Donald K. Slayton's irregular heartbeat "would not eliminate Deke from the program."

"There are many unknowns still in this program; right now we felt that others who are sounder at the moment might be more appropri-

ate," Public Affairs Officer John Powers told newsmen at a press conference Friday. "When we get to the point where there are not too many unknowns, this will not be a disqualifying condition."

"We expect to keep Deke flying right on down the road."

Later in the week, at ceremonies honoring MSC Director Robert R. Gilruth and the seven astronauts in

Hampton's Darling Memorial Stadium, Powers told the crowd:

"Despite what you may have heard to the contrary, we still have a solid seven-man team of pilots—all red hot for flights."

Said Gilruth himself: "In no case has this abnormally interfered with Deke's performance. My own feeling is that Deke is ... entirely capable of the mission."

JSC employees invited to join NASA Fitness Challenge

All JSC employees are invited to participate in the eighth annual NASA Fitness Challenge, which runs through Aug. 31.

The purpose of the challenge is to promote physical activity with a friendly competition between all NASA centers. Participants who meet the standards for the challenge win a free multi-colored T-shirt.

Participants must keep a record of their activities on a log, which also can be used in applying for a Presidential Sports Award. When an employee has met the requirements in one category, they may send it to the fitness staff at Mail Code AW9. The fitness staff will then help with the rest of the application process.

The following are guidelines for the Presidential Sports Award. Participants may log activities in one or more categories. For maximum benefit, the criteria for each activity should be fulfilled within a four-month period.

Individuals who participate in a variety of categories within a four-month period, but not enough to win an award in any one category, should log their activity under either the Cross Training or Sports/Fitness categories.

Aerobic dance: Participate in a minimum of 50 hours of aerobics, aerobic dance, step aerobics, dance exercise, or similar activity. Credit no more than one hour per day and four hours per week to the total.

Baseball: Play baseball and/or practice baseball skills a minimum of 50 hours with no more than one hour credited to the total per day.

Basketball: Play and/or practice basketball a minimum of 50 hours with no more than two hours credited league or part of an organized team.

Bicycling: On a bicycle with more than five gears, bicycle a minimum of 600 miles with no more than 12 miles per day. On a bicycle with five or fewer gears, bicycle a minimum of

400 miles with no more than eight miles credited per day. On a stationary bicycle, bicycle a minimum of 25 hours with no more than 30 minutes per day.

Cross training: Complete at least one-half of the requirements for two different categories of this program simultaneously. Activities should develop cardiorespiratory endurance, muscle strength and endurance, and flexibility.

Dance: Dance a minimum of 50 hours in ballroom, square, folk, round, pattern, clogging, country western, or dance combination with no more than one and one-half hours per day.

Golf: Play or practice golf a minimum of 100 hours with no more than three hours per day. No motorized carts may be used.

Jogging: Jog a minimum of 125 miles with no more than two and one-half miles per day.

Judo and Karate: Practice judo or

karate skills a minimum of 50 hours with no more than one hour per day.

Rowing: Boat-Row a minimum of 50 miles with no more than one and one-half miles per day. Wherry-Row a minimum of 100 miles with no more than three miles per day. Shell-Row a minimum of 120 miles with no more than three and one-half miles per day.

Running: Run a minimum of 200 miles. Run continuously at least three miles during each outing. No more than five miles may be per day.

Sailing: Sail a minimum of 50 hours (practice and competition) with no more than two and one-half hours per day.

Nordic skiing: Ski a minimum of 150 miles with no more than 10 miles per day.

Softball: Play softball and/or practice softball a minimum of 50 hours with no more than one hour per day.

Sports and fitness: Participate in a minimum of 50 hours in exercise

activities, or in a combination of exercise and sports activities, with no more than one hour per day. Exercise activity may consist of aerobics, aquatics, dynamics, workout machines, or a combination of any or all of these activities.

Swimming: Swim a minimum of 25 miles with no more than three-fourths of a mile (1,320 yards) per day.

Tennis: Play tennis a minimum of 50 hours with no more than one and one-half hours per day.

Fitness walking: Walk a minimum of 125 miles with no more than two and one-half miles per day. Each walk must be continuous, and the pace must be at least 4 mph.

Volleyball: Play or practice volleyball, or condition for volleyball a minimum of 50 hours with no more than two hours of volleyball or one hour of conditioning per day.

For details, call Larry Wier, Greta Ayers or Anna Callahan at x30301.

Gilruth Center News

Hours: The Gilruth Center is open from 6:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 6:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Friday, and 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday.

Sign up policy: All classes and athletic activities are on a first come, first served basis. Sign up in person at the Gilruth Center and show a yellow Gilruth or weight room badge. Classes tend to fill up two weeks in advance. Payment must be made in full, in exact For more information, call x30304.

Gilruth badges: Required for use of the Gilruth Center. Employees, spouses, eligible dependents, NASA retirees and spouses may apply for photo identification badges from 7:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Friday; and 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturdays. Cost is \$10. Dependents must be between 16 and 23 years old.

Weight safety: Required course for employees wishing to use the Gilruth weight room. The next classes are scheduled for at 8 p.m. May 14 and May 28 (must be on time to receive credit for class). Pre-registration is required. Cost is \$5. Annual weight room use fee is \$90. Additional family members are \$50.

Exercise: Low impact class meets from 5:15 p.m.- 6:15 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. Cost \$24.00 for 8 weeks.

Stamp Club: Meets every second and fourth Monday at 7 p.m. in Rm. 216.

Akido: Introduction to Aikido beginning classes start every month. Class meets Tuesday and Wednesday from 5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Spring Intercenter Run: Competition will start April 6 and end May 6. Employees may walk or run two miles or 10 kilometers. Time sheet will be at the Gilruth Center. T-shirt orders will be taken at the Recreation Office. Cost: \$6 per shirt.

Ticket Window

The following discount tickets are available for purchase in the Bldg. 11 Exchange Store from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Friday and in the Bldg. 3 Exchange Store from 7 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday - Friday. For more information call x35350 or x30990.

Moody Gardens: Tickets are \$9.75 for two of four events

Space Center Houston: Adults, \$10.25; children (4-11), \$7. JSC civil service employees free.

Movie discounts: General Cinema, \$5.50; AMC Theater, \$4.75; Sony Loew's Theater, \$5.

Astroworld Early Bird Ticket (valid through May 31), \$18.50.

Astroworld One-day admission, \$24.25.

Astroworld Season Pass (valid at all Texas Six Flags Theme Parks and Water World), \$57.75.

Stamps: Book of 20, \$6.40.

JSC Picnic: 11 a.m.-7:30 p.m. April 5 at Astroworld. Tickets are \$23.65.

Metro passes: Tokens and value cards available.

Coming Soon: Sea World, Splashtown Water Park, Schlitterbahn Water Park.