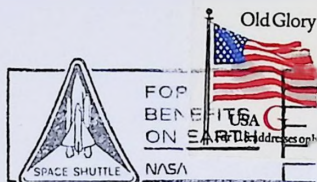


SPACE SHUTTLE
STS-73/COLUMBIA



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SPACE SHUTTLE (STS-73/COLUMBIA)

During the longest scheduled Space Shuttle mission to date (16 days) the seven-member astronaut crew of STS-73 will conduct scientific investigations with the 18 experiments that make up the United States Microgravity Laboratory-2 (USML-2) primary payload on an around-the-clock basis. The purpose of these experiments is to continue the microgravity research in fluid physics, combustion science, materials science and biotechnology that was conducted during the STS-50/USML-1 mission in June 1992.

THE STS-73 CREW—Two space veterans and five first-timers make up the STS-73 crew. Mission Commander Kenneth D. Bowersox (Cdr., USN) is on his third spaceflight, having served as pilot on both STS-50 and STS-61. Shuttle Pilot Kent V. Rominger (Lt. Cdr., USN) became an astronaut in 1993 and has a master's degree in aeronautical engineering. Payload Commander Kathryn C. Thornton has served as mission specialist on three shuttle flights and holds a doctorate in physics. Mission Specialist Michael E. Lopez-Alegria (Lt. Cdr., USN), an astronaut since 1993, also has a master's degree in engineering and has been both an instructor and engineering test pilot. Another mission specialist and astronaut since 1993, Catherine G. "Cady" Coleman (Capt., USAF), holds a doctor's degree in polymer science. Payload Specialist Albert Sacco Jr. (Ph.D) is the head of a chemical engineering department and is a principal investigator for USML-2 crystal growth experiments. Payload Specialist Fred W. Leslie (Ph.D), a research scientist, is co-investigator on the USML-2 Geophysical Fluid Flow Cell experiment.

THE STS-73 CREW INSIGNIA—The 10-sided crew patch of STS-73 depicts Shuttle Columbia in the vastness of space. In the foreground are the classic regular polyhedrons that were investigated by Plato and later Euclid. The Pythagoreans were fascinated by the symmetrical three-dimensional objects whose sides are the same regular polygon. The tetrahedron, the cube, the octahedron, and the icosahedron were each associated with the "Natural Elements" of that time: fire (on this mission represented as combustion science); Earth (crystallography); air and water (fluid physics), and an additional icon—the infinity symbol—was added to further convey the discipline of fluid mechanics. The shape of the emblem represents a fifth polyhedron, a dodecahedron, which the Pythagoreans thought corresponded to a fifth element that represented the cosmos.