$1,000,000 in damages

Explosion rocks Cambridge Electron Accelerator

By Bob Herrits

For a few seconds following the explosion and fire in the Experimental Hall of the accelerator in Cambridge last July 5, Fred E. Gale, a cryogenic technician on the staff of the Cambridge Electron Accelerator, rushed back to the scene of the explosion and fire where he turned off the telephone and laid three of the injured to safety.

Gale was injured in the explosion, three of them seriously. One died two weeks later. Damages were estimated at $1 million.

The explosion and fire occurred at 9:32 am. On July 5, in the region of and adjacent to the liquid hydrogen bubble in the Cambridge Electron Accelerator Experimental Hall. By 4:00 pm several intense local fires were burning on the floor of the Hall, and insulation from the severely damaged roof was burning. The fire on the floor was contained by 5:00 am, but water was continued on the burning roof until 10:00 am or later.

Major damage occurred to the roof, which was flammable. A pressurized reinforced concrete part. After being set off by a line of commutator and a tar and gravel water topping. The explosion lifted and dropped the concrete panels on the girders where the panels broke and shattered, dropping large quantities of rubble and tar on the floor and contributing significantly to damage of equipment. The burning roof required the use of much water which flooded the floor in a 16 inch depth and added to equipment damage.

Danger from falling debris forbade access to the Hall by investigating teams until July 11. The removal of the rubble has also impeded the investigation.

(Continued from Page 5)

\[SWINGLINE RAZZLEMENTS\]

It should be mentioned that within a week of the publishing of this article, Sockol was besieged with calls by girls who had shot him down or stood him up. He began begging forgiveness. The power of the press...

At the time of the explosion the accelerator was in operation for two experiments, and the technical team from the MIT Bubble Chamber Group was in the Hall monitoring a program for filling the chamber with liquid hydrogen for the first time.

The Bubble Chamber was in the final stages of a 10 day continuous program of cooling down and filling with liquid hydrogen for the first time, and was about 95% filled (about 300 liters). The cryogenic system for the Bubble Chamber used helium as the working fluid in the expansion engine located adjacent to the Bubble Chamber. Low temperature helium gas was circulated through condensers in the upper portion of the Bubble Chamber, liquefying the hydrogen gas. The hydrogen from a battery of compressed gas tanks outside the building went through pressure reducing valves, a part flow and flow control valves to the Bubble Chamber.

Facts disclosed in the investigation to date are not considered sufficient to draw conclusions as to the origin of the initial fire or explosion. Hydrogen from the Bubble Chamber system and flammable gas from some other source in the Experimental Hall both must be considered.

Inside Incomm... (Continued from Page 4)

We have received several requests for additional copies of the Freshman Picturebook, but I must report that all 1300 copies are sold.

Note: Members of the Institute Committee, and all subcommittees, including Secretariat, should drop by the Incomm office as soon as possible and record on the forms provided their addresses and class-hour schedules.

Next week's column will include a summary of this year's Undergraduate Association Budget. I hope we shall be inside the Student Center by then.

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