

SEPT 5 1989 SJ MERCURY NEWS

## Speed of Navy train disputed

Analysis says train was going 14 mph before it hit protester

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The Navy train that ran over a protester at the Concord Naval Weapons Station this week was moving almost three times as fast before impact as the Navy has stated, independent analysis of a videotape of the incident showed Friday.

A San Jose State University physics professor calculated that the train was moving about 14 mph just before it struck S. Brian Willson as he sat on a track outside the station on Tuesday. Shortly after that, the Navy said the train was moving about 5 mph and attempting to brake when it hit

Willson, who was on the track to protest alleged U.S. weapon shipments to Central America.

On Friday, spokesman Dan Tikalsky said the Navy would have no comment about the train beyond that original statement.

Kiumars Parvin, a San Jose State professor, used the time the train took to cover a set distance before impact to determine its speed. Both time and distance were supplied to Parvin by the Mercury News, which obtained a copy of the original videotape from Bob Spitzer, a Palo Alto psychiatrist who

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# Videotape study of train questions Navy

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filmed the incident.

Parvin's finding corresponded with a similar analysis by San Francisco television station KGO (Ch. 7), which said this week that the train was moving about 17 mph. Witnesses also have said that the train appeared to be moving 15 to 20 mph before it struck Willson.

Willson, 46, lost both legs and suffered a fractured skull. He remained in fair condition Friday at John Muir Hospital in Walnut Creek although Scott Rutherford, a friend, said that Willson spent a "restless" night Thursday.

Thousands of protesters are expected to attend a noon rally for Willson today near the track. The Rev. Jesse Jackson is scheduled to speak.

A third investigation into the incident was opened Friday by the Federal Railroad Administration in Washington, D.C. The railroad administration said that, as part of the inves-

*A look at Concord, protesters, Page 4B*

tigation, it will attempt to re-enact the incident, using the same train or a similarly loaded train. Ted Simpson, a spokesman for the railroad administration, said investigators also would interview witnesses and the three-man train crew.

"We're the experts on investigating train accidents," said Simpson, explaining why he thought his agency's probe might produce more information than ongoing investigations by the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department and the Navy.

Most attention has been focused on the Sheriff's Department probe. Those findings will be reviewed by Contra Costa County prosecutors, who will decide whether to file criminal charges. That investigation was expected to be completed by Tuesday, said Lt. Telford Terry, a department spokesman.

A Navy statement released Friday said an investigating team had arrived from Washington, D.C. The team is led by a Navy captain who has authority to call in experts, it said. The statement also said that the Navy was "cooperating fully" with the investigation by the Sheriff's Department.

Military personnel at the Concord Navy station on Friday appeared to be preparing for today's rally by stringing extra barbed wire across the base entrance and exit roads and by covering a sign that read: Naval Weapons Station — Concord. A Marine at the entrance reportedly told a bystander that the Navy feared vandalism.

Both Jackson and Rosario Carillo, the wife of President Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua, were expected to visit Willson this morning. Jackson was scheduled to speak at the rally along with Willson's wife, Holley Rauen, and Duncan Murphy, a protester whose leg was gashed by the train.