

Last of its kind rocket puts GPS satellite in orbit

August 22 2019, by Marcia Dunn



A United Launch Alliance Delta IV rocket lifts off from space launch complex 37 at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station with the second Global Positioning System III payload, Thursday, Aug. 22, 2019, in Cape Canaveral, Fla. (AP Photo/John Raoux)

A rocket that's the last of its kind delivered the newest, most powerful

GPS satellite to orbit for the Air Force on Thursday.

United Launch Alliance's Delta IV medium-class rocket blasted into a hazy morning sky from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. It was a fitting swan song for the rocket. Company President Tory Bruno tweeted that the liftoff was "hot, straight and normal."

Two hours later, the satellite separated from the [upper stage](#) and the company declared success.

The Delta IV Medium ended its 17-year run with 29 launches. Denver-based United Launch Alliance said it will be replaced by the still-in-development Vulcan rocket. The Delta IV Heavy, meanwhile, will continue to soar.

The newly launched GPS satellite is the second in a series of next-generation navigation spacecraft. It's nicknamed Magellan after the 16th-century Portuguese explorer. Lockheed Martin, also based in Colorado, built the satellite.



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A United Launch Alliance Delta IV rocket stands ready with a payload of the second Global Positioning System III on space launch complex 37 at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2019, in Cape Canaveral, Fla. The launch is scheduled for Thursday morning. (AP Photo/John Raoux)



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