
Subject: Re: JULDAY 5.4 not same as 5.3?

Posted by [Craig Markwardt](#) on Mon, 05 Mar 2001 22:22:19 GMT

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pit@phys.uu.nl (Peter Suetterlin) writes:

...

> I'm still not sure who's to blame, me (i.e. the programmer) or
> IDL/RSI, but in general it does not make sense to take a negative of a
> unsigned number, and IMHO there should also occur an automatic type
> conversion as soon as a minus sign is involved. Currently, you get e.g.
>
> IDL> x=5b
> IDL> print,-x
> 251

We can argue all day about what is correct mathematically.

However I think it is correct from a microprocessor standpoint (ie, that's what the processor does). Further more it satisfies certain identities like:

$(-x) + x \text{ EQ } 0$

And what would you do with a number like `-( 'ffffff'xul )`, ie a number that to begin with is too large to fit into a signed type.

Finally, you would have the people (like me) who would gripe about how IDL changed the type of a variable without asking me first!

Craig

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