

5-Year-Old Girl Drowns In Raging Santa Cruz

By DEAN FAIRCHILD

Debra Nancy Schlottman donned a pink, flowered dress early yesterday and trudged barefooted to see the turbulent Santa Cruz River. But at about 12:30 p.m. the blond 5-year-old was pronounced dead on arrival at St. Mary's Hospital. She had drowned in the swirling waters she went to see.

Debra became the object of search parties about 10:40 a.m., when her mother, Mrs. Lottie Lucille Schlottman, notified city police Debra was missing.

Patrolman Walter Jacobs, first to the scene near the girl's home, 1110 S. Santa Cruz Lane, searched futilely for the victim. The Southern Arizona Search & Rescue, Pima County sheriff's deputies, South Tucson Police and civil defense units — about 100 men — began scouring the area.

At 12:05 p.m. four men found her. They were Juan Pena, 40, of 3810 E. 3rd St.;

E. L. Martinez, 32, of 1144 N. Riverview Rd.; Manny Encinas, 22, of 309 E. 32nd St. and Greg Ganez, of 1333 El Rio Dr.

They drove the girl to the hospital where she was pronounced dead on arrival. The four had found her west of the University of Arizona farm on the Casa Grande Hwy.

Members of the search party said the rains Saturday night had swollen the Santa Cruz, which was gouging out banks and sweeping debris and trees and shrubs along its path. Police estimated the body traveled about five miles from the point where Debra fell into the water.

Debra was born in Lubbock, Tex. The family has lived in Tucson for three years. In addition to her parents, she is survived by two brothers, David and William; and four sisters, Mary, Patricia, Barbara and Diane. Funeral arrangements will be announced by Bring's Funeral Home.