



SKYDIVER DURING FREE FALL

One of the 12 Aggie Skydivers who will perform at 11:30 a. m. Saturday at the CE Field at Highway 6 and Farm Road 60 is shown during free fall. The jumper gives his buddies on the plane who have not jumped the "Gig 'em" sign. The exhibition Saturday is part of Civilian Weekend.

For Only \$35 Aggies Jump From Planes

By JAMES SIZEMORE

Would you believe . . . that an Aggie would pay \$35 to jump out of an airplane?

Since 1962 several Aggies have done just that, but they have aal carried with them a nealy folded bundle of nylon called a parachute. These adventurous men represent one of A&M's fastest growing and more interesting organizations, known as the Texas A&M Parachute Team.

Club member Bob Richardson says he was one of the five students who organized sport parachuting at A&M in the fall of 1961, but today's organization represents considerable change.

Official school recognition in 1962 has accounted for much of the change enabling the team to appropriate funds as an official student organization. As A&M was one of the first schools to recognize the sport, the A&M team has an advantage of experience over many schools.

They will get an opportunity to use this experience as the chute . . . sts the 1966 National Collegiate Parachute Meet . . . ne Municipal Airport where the Aggie team

ional Collegiate Parachute Meet in Geneva, took second place and won first place in the meet the same year. No national meet was Aggies have competed in various invitational cessary experience.

books of the fifty-odd present members shows . . . nce in the organization, which has made . . . since 1962. Many have more than 200 David Decker, has more than 300.

are seven licensed pilots, eight qualified . . . one licensed reserve chute rigger. Having possible for the team to train its own new trained around 30 new students this year.

ie tea. . . w students pay \$35 upon joining the organization, which pays for training and the first five jumps as well as use of team equipment. Afterwards, a jumper pays \$3 per jump to cover the cost of aircraft time and fuel.

Throughout the training program, which includes chute packing and jumping techniques, the emphasis is on safety. As a result, the organization has a good safety record with only three incidents involving fractures occurring since the team was started.

The training of student jumpers begins on the ground where jumpers must practice and learn to fall to avoid injury. After ground instruction and chute packing are completed, the students are put out at 3,000 feet with their chutes automatically opened by static line for the first five jumps.

After the first five jumps are completed and done correctly, the new students begin free fall in which a parachutist just delays before opening his chute. While in free fall a jumper may do various maneuvers such as back loops and turns or may pass a baton to another parachutist in free fall. Passing a baton is more difficult than it may seem because jumpers may reach speeds of 120 miles per hour earthward. Obviously, more altitude is required for longer free falls.

When a parachutist ends free fall and opens his chute, he then attempts to guide his parachute to reach a target marked on the ground. He does this by means of open panels in his parachute allowing him to change his direction and get some lateral movement.

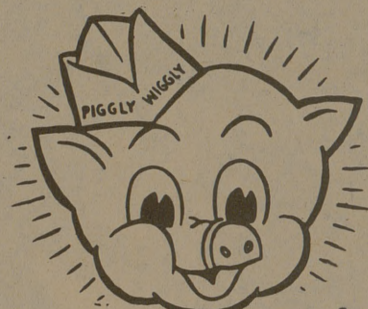
The A&M team has begun a high intensity training program and now practices on weekdays as well as Saturday and Sunday in preparation for the April meet.

Firm acceptances of invitation have been received from as far away as the Citadel, South Carolina, and the University of Montana as well as schools from neighboring states. West Point and the U. S. Air Force Academy are also expected to attend.

A&M will enter 18 jumpers in six three-man teams. Three of the teams will be parachutists with over 50 jumps and the other three teams will be novice jumpers with from 10-50 jumps. The personnel to be included in these teams will be decided this weekend.

ABC television network has considered giving TV coverage to the meet and Mel Chastain of the Educational TV Service has offered assistance although it is not as yet decided whether ABC will cover the event.

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