

Golden Knights highlight Military Day

Precision sky-diving by the U.S. Army's famed Golden Knights will accentuate Military Day activities Saturday at A&M.

The U.S. Army Parachute Team will jump onto the Main Drill Field in front of the Memorial Student Center following the 2 p.m. Corps of Cadets review and Fish Drill Team exhibition, according to Col. Thomas R. Parsons, commandant.

Members of the world record-holding Golden Knights will be at the Friday Combat Ball to talk with TAMU cadets.

A presentation to President Jack K. Williams will follow the Saturday afternoon demonstration.

It will include four jumps by nine parachutists, in which free fall speeds of 120-180 m.p.h. are achieved. A mid-air baton pass, cutaway, diamond track and four-man formation jump will be from 13,500 feet, weather permitting, from a specially fitted and painted C-47. The jumpers' parachutes will open at 2,000 feet.

Two jumpers will lead off with a mid-air baton pass. Then a single sky-diver will perform a cutaway, in which he deploys a main chute at 3,500 feet altitude, collapses it and cuts away. After another free fall to 2,000 feet, he will open another parachute to land.

The third jump will feature two Golden Knights in a diamond track formation marked by smoke grenades attached to their boots. All nine jumpers will be discernible during free fall by smoke plumes from grenades.

Four Golden Knights in a diamond formation jump ends the demonstration. Ten seconds after leaving the aircraft, they come together and free fall 60 seconds within inches of each other, in the shape of a diamond.

At 3,000 feet the quartet will "bomb burst" to achieve separation for opening their chutes at 2,000 feet.

Introduction of the team and presentation of the baton to Dr. Williams will conclude the 35 minute demonstration. The aircraft carrying the Golden Knights will take off at Easterwood Field about 45 minutes before narration begins.

The Golden Knights are the Army's top display

unit. As roving ambassadors they make 150 to 200 exhibitions a year, from London to Honolulu.

Soldiers first, however, the three-unit parachute team helps develop and test new parachuting equipment and techniques for the nation's airborne forces, space program and other governmental agencies. The team is composed of two demonstration units and a competition group.

The Golden Knights have produced two world and seven national champions. The group currently holds 87 of 128 men's world parachuting accuracy marks.

Composed entirely of volunteers with an average of 850 jumps each, the Golden Knights have participated in development of three new canopies. One is the parafoil, a wing-like chute that can be steered and glides four feet horizontally for every foot of descent. In an updraft, the parafoil gains altitude.

The Knights use para-commander chute for demonstration jumps. Highly steerable for accuracy, it has 36 slots, vents and louvers which direct air trapped under the canopy rearward to provide forward motion.

Slots on both sides can be manipulated by the jumper to make the chute turn a full 360 degrees in three to five seconds.

The group began in 1959 as the Strategic Army Corps Sports Parachute Team. Two years later it became the U.S. Army Parachute Team with the Department of Defense-designated mission of promoting Army esprit and providing highly skilled parachutists for demonstrations and national and international competition. The nickname Golden Knights was adopted in 1962 and the team took on the additional mission of research and development in tactical uses of free-fall parachuting. They have since grown to a present authorized strength of 52 men.

To become a Golden Knight, a man must have made at least 200 free-fall jumps and be a volunteer from the Army's airborne or Green Berets.

The Golden Knights say that, in a parachute, they can do everything in the air that an airplane can, except go back up.



The Golden Knights, shown here using the new para-wing, will perform at A&M Saturday as part of Military Day. They will jump onto the Main Drill Field following the 2 p.m. Corps of Cadets review and Fish Drill Team exhibition. The Golden Knights are members of the U. S. Army Parachute Team. The para-wing, more of a glider than a parachute, enables a jumper to glide two or more feet horizontally for each foot it sinks.

Grad researches new rifle device

Development of a device to allow a given caliber rifle to shoot a sub-caliber bullet has been recommended through studies of a graduate in systems and engineering.

Daniel T. Whitt analyzed, fabricated and tested a sabot he successfully fired in a .30-06 Springfield carrying .22, .25 and .30 caliber bullets.

His thesis for the master's degree in systems engineering included research into possible markets and acceptance of the device, which was first used in 1848 to adapt spherical, exploding artillery shells to existing guns.

Whitt said that plastic sabots (pronounced sa-BOW) for shot-

guns are made by a California firm.

The plastic sabot was investigated in World War II but not used because of materials and manufacturing problems. A metal "husk" bullet was tried in 1962. It too was ineffective, because rifling crimped the metal husk to the bullet causing tumbling and inaccuracy.

Whitt believes a plastic sabot is now possible due to recent innovations in plastic materials and injection molding techniques.

In his study, the systems engineer now with Martin-Marietta Corp. in Denver experimented with both solid and split plastic sabots. Twenty-three test shots

at 15 to 50 yards on the Brazos Valley Gun Club range at the TAMU Research Annex revealed acceptable accuracy with the split-type sabot. The Springfield rifle had open sights.

"The split sabot grips the bullet while in the barrel due to compression by the rifling lands," he explained. "After the sabot bullet leaves the muzzle, rotation and air pressure cause the sabot to drop off the bullet."

Whitt listed sabot advantages to include greater muzzle velocity, flatter trajectory and better down-range energy from a given bullet mass. Also it would increase rifle barrel life due to lower chamber pressures and less friction. The versatility of

shooting several sizes and types of bullets and powder loads from one gun is another advantage.

"By use of the sabot, a shooter might have to buy only one large caliber gun to shoot several bullet sizes," he emphasized.

Whitt, who received his first degree in aerospace engineering at A&M in 1969, noted higher muzzle velocities are possible for a given bullet because rifling marks which weaken it are placed on the sabot, not the bullet.

Whitt's research, directed by Dr. Charles A. Rodenberger of the Aerospace Engineering Department, took a new approach to education known as technological entrepreneurship.

Navy recruiting team looking for Navy Reserve candidates

There are approximately 35 officer candidates in the Navy Reserve presently on the A&M campus and the Navy is having a hard time locating them.

The Navy recruiting team headed by Lt. Larry Tackatt, now in the Memorial Student Center, knows of 20 officer candidates in the A&M student body which have been processed through its office but needs to contact students who have entered the program through their home recruiting offices.

The occasion is a meeting of the Golden Wings and Anchor Club, composed of students affiliated with the Navy Reserve Officer Candidate program at

8:00 p.m. March 1, in the Cushing Library Conference Room.

Navy Officer Candidates who have not been contacted about the meeting are asked to please attend and make your presence known.

If there are any questions, please contact Demp Dobson, president of the Golden Wings and Anchor Club, or BTC Ronald Walter at the Navy Recruiting Station in Bryan.

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The English Proficiency Examination for Junior and Senior Economics majors will be held Tuesday, March 14, at 4:00 p. m. in Room 108 Nagle Hall. Economics majors must pass this exam to be eligible for graduation. Please come by Room 115, Nagle Hall, by Friday, March 10, to sign up for the exam. 82112

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