

at Aggie football games

Group provides care

by Tracie L. Holub
Battalion reporter

For the Texas A&M Emergency Care Team (TAMECT), Aggie football games mean doling out Band-aids and aspirin, treating heat stroke and heart attacks.

Matt Menger, special events coordinator, said the majority of calls the medics at the first aid stations (on each deck of Kyle Field) receive are heat related.

"When the weather is hot, the people don't eat — they drink Friday night, they don't get enough sleep and don't eat and so when they come to the game they get sick," Menger said. "The majority of the calls in the weather is hot are from people fainting."

Heat related cases aren't the only calls the medics.

"When it's cold, a lot of people come to the games with new clothes on and wear open-toed shoes and no hat," Menger said. "They wear their open-toed shoes and their nice neat dresses — and they freeze to death."

"It's very important to wear warm clothes to those games," he said. "These types of cases increase when it is raining. That's when it is really important to prepare by dressing right."

Menger said the team also has dealt with heart attack cases and with women almost ready to go into labor.

"The first game is a good example," Menger said. "We had a lady that said she was due to

have her baby about a week before the game. We couldn't believe she was here. When we told her the best thing we could do was to call the ambulance to take her to the hospital, she decided to just go home. Right when her husband heard that, he ran out of here like a shot to get the car."

There are five air-conditioned first aid stations at Kyle Field. Dr. Claude Goswick, director of health services, said these stations are an improvement over previous facilities.

"Before any of the stations were built, the north endzone station was in a 10-by-13 foot room with one cot in it, whenever it rained the roof would leak," Goswick said. "If people were on the cot and it was raining, we would have to put plastic over them so it wouldn't rain on them."

Goswick said even after the north endzone first aid station was built there still were problems.

"At the first game after we moved to this new room, about '73, all 12 chairs and 6 tables were full, Goswick said. "It was humid and very hot and people were coming in a steady stream. On top of all this, the air conditioner froze over. That was some day."

"One time last year a woman came here and she had diamonds on all over. The air conditioner wasn't working and she gave us \$400 for a new one."

Menger said that although im-

provements have been made, he still would like more stations at the stadium.

"I have dreams of having 6 or 7 stations here," Menger said. "I would especially like to see one more at the south end first deck because that is where most of the students come in. The main problem with having one there is location; there is really no place to put one. It would be nice, though."

Although the majority of the care teams' duties at football games are routine, they also have disaster plans ready if something catastrophic was to happen.

"We have disaster plans for many different situations that could happen at one of the games," Menger said. "Some of our scenarios are a plane crash in Kyle Field, a collapse of the stadium — God forbid if that ever happened — and a train derailment with a dangerous chemical aboard. We also have a plan for food poisoning because that could be a huge problem if that ever happened. It is very unlikely that anything like this would ever happen, but we want to be prepared for anything."

Being prepared for anything is a goal of the health care team, even if the preparation means sacrificing personal pleasures.

One pleasure that members of the team miss is watching the football game.

"Most of the team stays in the first aid stations during the game waiting for calls," Menger

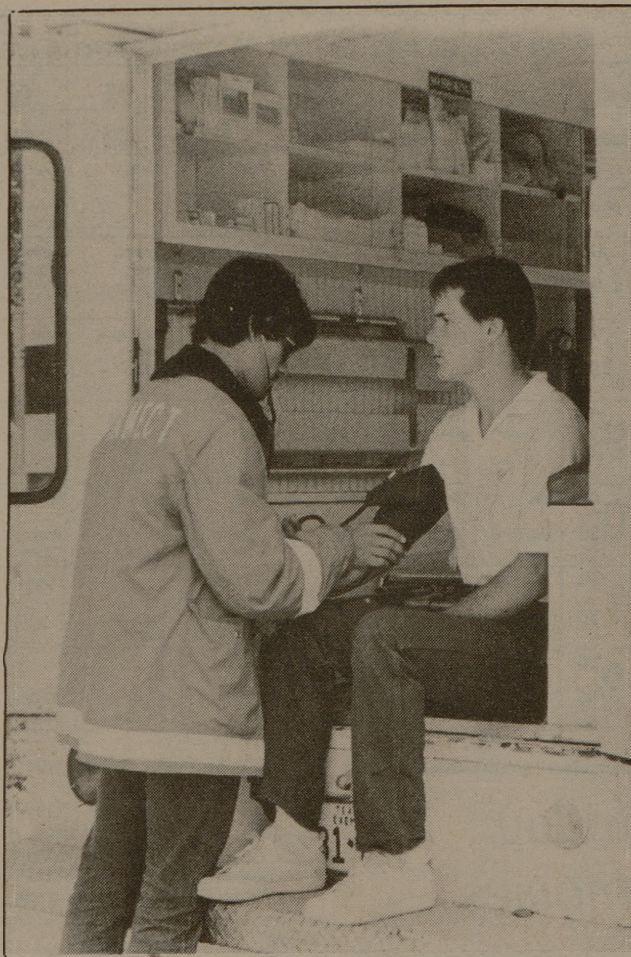


photo by Dave Scott

Members of TAMECT check blood pressure as part of their duties, which also includes manning the stadium's first-aid stations during football games.

said. "Some of them might go watch the band, but they'll run back to the station right afterwards because things get real

busy after halftime. About the only time they watch the game is

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Air controllers guide Aggie fans

by Jamie Hataway
Battalion reporter

One by one, planes lazily dropped from the sky, bringing droves of Aggie football fans. From the control tower of Easterwood Airport, air traffic controllers issued a nonstop flow of directions and instructions. It was game day at Texas A&M and airport employees were ready and waiting.

On Saturday, Oct. 6, five people were hustling in the control tower, making sure each plane buzzing around in the sky landed safely. One person scanned the surrounding skies with binoculars, some spoke their air language on radios, while another answered a beeping transmitter and gave requested weather reports.

"It's like this every time there's a home game," air traffic controller Scott Taylor says. "It's a pain sometimes. They're impatient and we're impatient and there's nothing we can do."

But the controllers managed to sort through the traffic. As the

Aggie flag waved from the tower top and Kyle Field loomed in the hazy background, each plane waiting to land glided safely to the ground.

"One of the unfortunate things in air traffic is that nothing stops," Taylor says.

Stop it doesn't.

Dale Peterson, air traffic control manager, says that between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., about 200 landings and take-offs had taken place. If spread out over a long period of time, he says, that's not a heavy load, but planes usually come in clusters.

Taylor agrees and says sometimes 10 to 12 aircraft may be waiting to leave. And just as many may be waiting in the air, which can result in a tricky job of preventing collisions while waiting to land.

As one plane headed toward the blocked runway being used for parking, a controller says over the radio: "There should be someone out there shortly to provide fuel and transportation for you."

People were busy down on

the ground too.

Easterwood's line service is responsible for fueling the planes and bringing passengers from the parking area to the terminal. White vans scurried around, gathering and depositing anxious fans, most being greeted by family or friends.

Fuel trucks went from plane to plane preparing them for the trip home, wherever that might be.

E.A. Winter, a secretary in the line service office, says that on an average day, about 1,500 gallons of fuel will service the visiting planes. On game days, about 5,000 gallons is needed, she says.

In the Flight Service office, where weather reports are checked on and flight plans are made, three men leaned over the counter in a bored manner. All were pilots, two from San Antonio, one from Corpus Christi. Flight Service, along with handling the weather, also has to handle these guys.

"Boy it's been busy today," said one of the pilots.

"Oh, it's always like that on game days," said the flight service attendant.

"Is that what's going on?" the pilot asked. "Is there a football game tonight?" Everyone laughed.

"It looked like Houston over on Texas Boulevard," the pilot says.

All three pilots were able to show a football ticket, but apparently they found the airport more interesting than the game.

As game time arrived airport employees heaved a sigh and caught their breath. But it was short-lived. At 5 p.m. it was a madhouse again.

With a scattering of raindrops spilling from overcast skies, pilots frantically rushed around, checking the weather and trying to get a slot to take off.

Meanwhile, Carl Hellums, of Uvalde, was looking for his pilot. After several minutes of "wondering where in the heck he is," Hellums saw his pilot

casually stroll up.

"What's the weather look like?" Hellums asked.

The pilot says, pointing to the west: "Oh, it will be OK as soon as we get past that bank over there. We've got a 6 p.m. slot out."

Hellums and two friends were waiting with many others to get a spot on a runway.

But similar to setting off a stack of dominoes, air traffic controllers were getting the planes out, one after the other, just as they had landed.

"I never saw so many planes in my life," one lady says as she watched the planes scatter in the distance.

The crowds slowly dispersed, most carrying a stack of Aggie cups and excitedly commenting on that day's victory.

The white vans began to slow their hurried pace, as fewer people needed rides to their planes.

With one last glance to the east, through the treetops, Kyle Field is the only thing in sight.