

Silver Taps

when
10:30 p.m. Tuesday

where
Academic Plaza

An honor guard from the Ross Volunteer Company will march to Academic Plaza, where its members will fire three rifle volleys. Buglers from the Aggie Band will play a special arrangement of "Taps."



KELLEY HERMAN

JAN. 13, 1992 - FEB. 12, 2015

A caring friend with a lasting impact

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SOFTBALL

Aggies host UTSA, North Texas ahead of weekend series



Valerie Gunchick — THE BATTALION

Junior outfielder **Alex Masek** fields a fly ball.

A&M has won five out of its last six contests

By **Milkyas Gashaw**

▶ The Texas A&M softball team will continue its home stand with two midweek games against UTSA on Tuesday and North Texas on Wednesday.

The No. 23 Aggies (29-10, 7-5 SEC) are riding high after their series victory against Georgia Tech this past weekend, winning the rubber match on Sunday 11-0 in five innings. The Aggie starters have been effective in this stretch at home, carrying the club to a 4-1 record so far. Junior Katie Marks has picked up her play in the circle, shutting out the Yellow Jackets in her last appearance and holding a 10-1 record on the season.

The Aggies and head coach Jo Evans have been placing a heightened awareness on their defense since they failed to produce in Tuscaloosa two weeks ago. Evans praised freshman Tori Vidales on her incremental improvement defensively at the hot corner this season.

"She is doing such a good job right now moving her feet, being quick and making plays in the 5-6 hole," Evans said. "Before some of those were getting through but they're not now. She's really buckled down and is doing a great job."

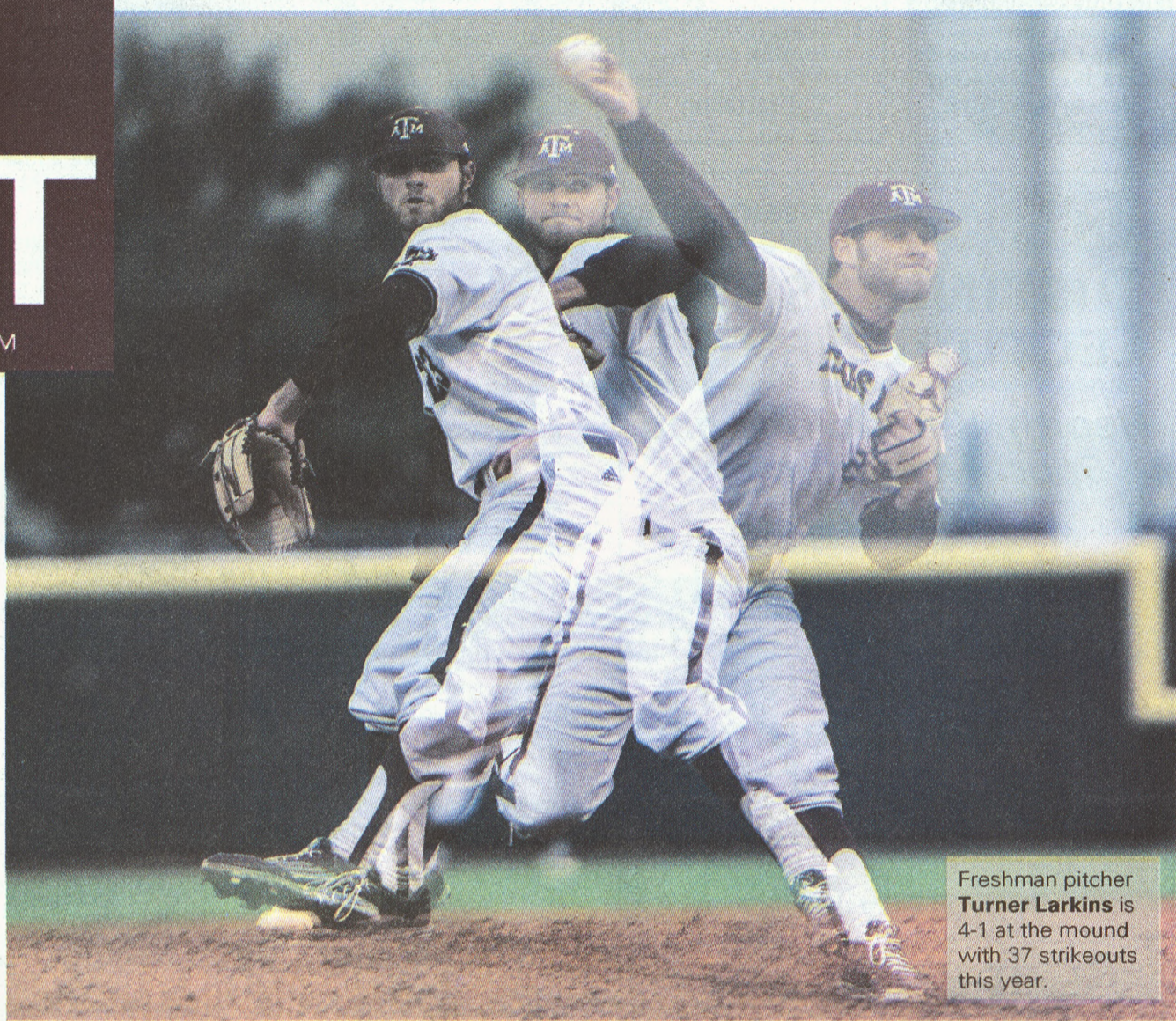
Evans also commented on the play of senior leadoff hitter Brittany Clopton, who has been a catalyst for the Aggie offense all season.

"I'm happy for her," Evans said. "No one fights harder and works harder than Brittany and it's great to see her hard work paying off. She did a great job this weekend getting herself on base."

UTSA (26-11, 8-3 C-USA) boasts a five-game winning streak with sweeps of Middle Tennessee and a doubleheader sweep of Lamar. The Roadrunners have bats in their lineup that could give senior Rachel Fox and the rest of the Aggie pitching staff fits. Rande Crawford leads the team in homers with 13 and RBIs with 48. Leadoff hitter Jade Smith leads the club with a .425 batting average.

North Texas (14-21, 6-8 C-USA) will most likely start Stacey Underwood at pitcher against the Aggies. Underwood holds a 6-4 record on the season with an ERA of 3.91, both best on the team. Junior Taylor Schoblocher spearheads the Mean Green attack with a .422 batting average and a slugging percentage of .814.

First pitch on Tuesday against UTSA and Wednesday against North Texas is scheduled for 6:30 p.m.



Freshman pitcher **Turner Larkins** is 4-1 at the mound with 37 strikeouts this year.

Tanner Garza — THE BATTALION

NO. 1 TEXAS A&M VS. NO. 15 RICE

All hands on deck

A&M looks to keep its undefeated midweek record alive against Rice

By **Andre Perrard**

▶ With 22 wins in 23 home games, the Olsen Field faithful have cheered the Aggies on to win after win this season. Now, the nation's No. 1 team faces its stiffest home test to date — the No. 13 Rice Owls.

Since rising to No. 1 in a couple polls, the Texas A&M baseball team has won three straight games and comes off a doubleheader sweep of Kentucky in Lexington. A nine-game homestand begins Tuesday against Rice.

The Owls (22-12, 11-4 C-USA) come in off a series win against Middle Tennessee on the road. Their lineup includes big-time hitter John Reeves. He leads the team in RBIs (35) and home runs (four). Reeves is swinging the bat with a .377 average. Another player of note is Kirby Taylor, who is hitting .405 with 23 RBIs. Leon Byrd

BASEBALL

where
Olsen Field

when
6:30 p.m. Tuesday

is second on the team in RBIs with 28.

For A&M (30-2, 9-2 SEC), the story of the season has been the very deep and talented lineup. Eight Aggie hitters have more than 20 RBIs, led by Mitchell Nau (29). A&M has tallied 36 home runs, and Ronnie Gideon and Logan Taylor each have six to their name. Every Aggie in the starting lineup has hit a home run this year. Nick Banks has been presenting a hitting clinic this season, hitting .431, which is the best in the SEC and fourth-best in the nation. The Aggie offense is also

BASEBALL ON PG. 4

A&M pros weigh in on Germanwings crash

By **Nikita Redkar**

▶ As investigations of the deliberate March 25 Germanwings airbus crash continue, debates have arisen concerning flight safety and advancement of aircraft technology.

Flying from Barcelona, Spain, to Dusseldorf, Germany, Germanwings airbus A320 was intentionally crashed into a remote region of the French Alps, killing all 150 passengers.

The person responsible for the crash was 27-year-old German co-pilot Andreas Lubitz, who locked the aircraft's captain out of the cockpit.

John Brak, agribusiness senior and flying instructor at Brazos Valley Flight Services, said the situation could have been avoided with more stringent airline regulations.

"I believe almost all airlines in the United States require two people in the cockpit at all times and if either the pilot or copilot steps out, some other crew member substitutes in their place," Brak said. "Such regulations are not in place for a lot of foreign airlines."

Brak said pilots must go through an extensive background check before flying.

"If you have ADD or ADHD, you can't obtain your medical certificate and therefore you can't fly," Brak said. "You can't fly if you have a history of depression and suicidal thoughts. And according to the latest reports on this case, [Lubitz] had all those things during training."

At one point, flying was commended as so safe that pilot error was considered to be the last major risk. However, aerospace engineering professor Ramesh Tal-

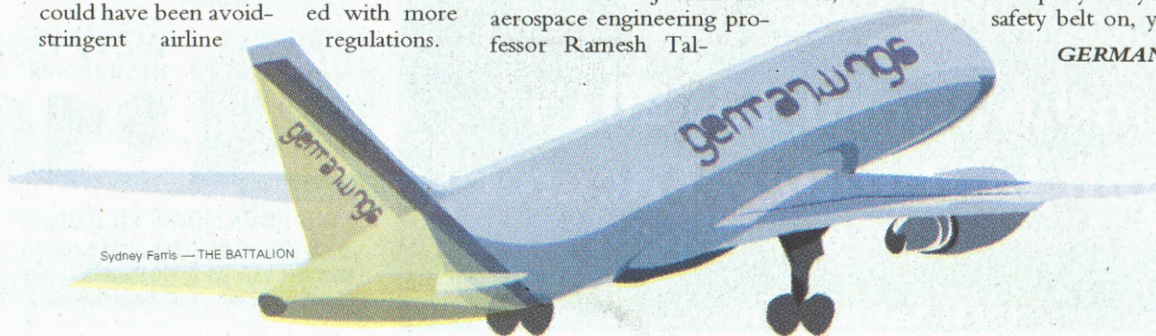
reja said these days, flying is so safe that intentional pilot error is considered to be the biggest major risk.

"The airbus A320 is described as a work horse," Talreja said. "This aircraft has flown so many places, covered so many miles safely — there is no doubt of its safety. It is as safe as an aircraft can ever be."

Talreja, whose research focuses on the failure of aircrafts and their composite structure, said the plane was pre-programmed for descent at a certain level.

"During a regular crash, the most significant occurrence is that the aircraft cannot be controlled," Talreja said. "It shakes much more than the average turbulence and eventually flips sideways — dives down rapidly. If you don't have your safety belt on, you can be flying all

GERMANWINGS ON PG. 2



Sydney Ferris — THE BATTALION