

# BLUE DEVILS

## “DEVIL’S PRIDE”

Booster Club Newsletter

August 2009



### CONGRATULATIONS BLUE DEVILS

**13 TIME WORLD CHAMPION  
“A” CORPS AND WORLD  
CHAMPION “B” CORPS**



What an exciting time Finals Week was. For a while, it seemed as though things were just trying to make it more difficult to get through the 2009 season without losing our cool.

First, Ben Davis (our housing site in Indianapolis and about 15 minutes from the stadium) backed out and we finally got

housing at Ball State University in Muncie (1-1/2 hours from the stadium). Then the housing site in Reading, PA cancelled and the staff bus, Lone Star, decided to act up. How Pete Emmons kept from going completely out of it, we will never know.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to Pete for being there and taking care of all the myriad of things that seem to go wrong on tour. We thank Pat Seidling for arranging our stay at Ball State. The school was great!

We got into Indianapolis on Tuesday and were greeted with one of the worst rainfalls in the history of Indianapolis. It was reported there were instances of flooding, trees coming down on houses, power outages and 37,000 lightning strikes in one day! The airport building shook with the thunder. Not exactly how we like to start.

However, the weather cooperated and the balance of the week was almost perfect.





Due to the distance of the school, we were unable to get a lift into Muncie until Wednesday afternoon (*thank you Gail Schultz*). We were now ready to start thinking about things to report in the newsletter when we learned the practice site was about 1 mile away and the Corps had to be bused.

Consequently, we were able to watch only one practice and the only time we got to interact with the Corps members was during meal time. At the rehearsal site it took a while to get to the top of the stadium to watch the rehearsal, but the **high climb** was well worth it.

We were able to see all the patterns and got to see all the changes since the show at Stanford, CA.



## I & E

Wednesday was the Individual & Ensemble competitions.

Congratulations to our first place winners:

The Blue Devils Trumpet Octet (Brass Ensemble - 95.00), Michael Howard (Timpani - 87.00), Nicholas Arce (Multi-tenor - 97.5 and winner of a \$500 scholarship), Sarah Cheon (Keyboard - 98.00) and "B" Corps Member Emily Nunn (Auxiliary - 97.00).

We had quite number of other members placing well in their categories. We are always amazed that these kids are able to perfect not only their regular competition show but their I&E show as well. Not an easy task to accomplish.

## QUARTER FINALS

We got to the stadium in time to see only a very few of the shows. Lucas Oil Stadium is absolutely huge! Getting into the stadium area itself could be a bit difficult as there are so many areas before you get to the entrances to the field.



We were not too happy about some of the comments made by a couple of grown men sitting behind us, but we kept our cool and ignored them. The Corps looked great and came away in first place with a score of 97.95. Second place was Carolina Crown with a score of 96.10.

## SEMI-FINALS

Although we purchased the \$75 ticket, when Looking straight out, right in front of us was the 10 yard line! To our surprise, we still had a pretty good view of the corps.

We did notice the sound did not project very well and because of the dome there seemed to be a bit of an echo. It felt as though the drum lines over-projected and drowned out some of the horns. We felt the Corps' performance did not have quite the energy of the previous night, but they were still great.

Score that evening: 98.40. Second place was Carolina Crown with 97.55 who shortened the margin from the previous evening.



After the performances, the winners of the I&E competitions were awarded their medals. Each winner will also receive a jacket. We were proud seeing that blue on the field. Then all the age-outs from the various corps came onto the field. What a sight this is to see.

There certainly was a mass of kids on that field, and we had mixed feelings seeing so many of our kids. The Blue Devils had 50 age-outs this year (26 one year and 24 multi-year - Guard Captain Corey Oliver aged out at 5 years in the "A" Corps).



Were we ever happy to hear that our fantastic "B" Corps had taken first place in the Open Class Division with a score of 93.55. This group of young people had been a dominating corps since the beginning of the season.

While we were thrilled, we were not totally surprised ... they were good! Well earned - well deserved! The Santa Clara Vanguard Cadets were second with 92.25 Congratulations to the kids and the instructional and support staffs of both of these great corps.

## FINALS



This is always a very exciting and busy day with everyone getting their instruments and uniforms ready. Sheryl Miles made sure the bags were available for the Corps members to put their medals, cameras, etc. so they would have them during retreat.

Gail Schultz distributed the member shirts to the Corps (*"Clean clothes!!" Is what we usually hear*). As has been our tradition, each of the age-outs were given a thank you note from President Mary Cloyd and the Booster Club thanking them for their dedication and wishing them well in their life after drum corps.

Time to leave: We weren't sure we were going to get to the show as there was some confusion about our ride – and we got left at the school! Oops! The Devil's Food crew was still there cleaning up, so we pitched in and very gratefully accepted a ride from Keith Hales and the food crew – PHEW!!

When we got to the stadium, we spent time locating the Blue Devil buses in the parking lot. Normally we would locate the Corps and stay with them to go into the stadium, but we had no idea of where they were. Once we found the drum majors, we decided to stick with them as we knew they knew where they were going.

Thanks to Erik Skinner, we found a place to set all the medals and age-out flowers.

When the Blue Devils entered the field, they came through a cloud

of blue smoke. Not sure how this was done, but it was impressive. If the Corps lacked a bit of energy the night before, they certainly had it back and then some for this performance. Oh, were they fantastic!! So many people kept making comments such as, "No doubt who won this year," "They have it hands down," etc.

Thinking back to last year, we tried so hard not to get our hopes up, but we knew they did a first-place performance. Right after the performance, the members circled up listening to Dave Gibbs, and then rushed over to retrieve their medals, etc.



Pinning the age-out flowers on the kids is an extremely emotional time, both for the members and for those doing the

pinning.

It's a subtle way of having to say goodbye to kids we have grown to know and love dearly. Then the scores: We are normally OK until it gets to about the 4<sup>th</sup> place announcement – then 3<sup>rd</sup> – and (holding the breath, closing the eyes and saying "please, please, please") – "2<sup>nd</sup> place and receiving the silver medal with a score of 97.50 – Carolina Crown." ALRIGHT!!

And then hearing, "Receiving the GOLD medal, the 2009 World Champions with a score of 99.05 – THE BLUE DEVILS."

Elation, cheers and tears! The next best thing to hear is "Blue Devils, the field is yours!" They never took it for granted they were going to win. It was obvious, however, their attitude all along was one of going out on the field and doing their absolute best – and that they did.

The Blue Devils took all captions with the exception of the Jim Ott Brass award, being .1 behind Carolina Crown. Our exceptional percussion line had the first DCI undefeated season since our neighbors, Santa Clara Vanguard, had the honor in 1974!

Oh, the joy of watching these



young people when the scores were announced and as they took the field for their well-deserved "Victory Gig."

At that point we heard a couple of boos from an isolated section of the arena (very poor taste), but that didn't bother us one bit. After the first 3 notes of "When A Man Loves A Woman," the crowd went wild.

Then the Corps did their entire show with an exuberance beyond WOW and a smile from ear to ear.



Going to the buses, we saw many of the chairs being autographed by Corps members and happy to see our kids being congratulated by members of a good many of the other corps.

Pep Manning and the food crew had Devil's Food set up in the parking lot with some great "after-show" food and drinks for the kids and guests.



**From the DCI site:** "In a moment they will never forget, 150 drum corps members joined the ranks of those who can call themselves World Champions Saturday.

With a score of 99.05, just a tenth of a point shy of the all-time record, the Blue Devils were

named Drum Corps International's 2009 World Class World Champions after completing an entirely undefeated season.



Their success mirrored that of their Open Class counterparts, Blue Devils B, who earned the gold medal in the Open Class Finals competition earlier in the day after their own perfect season. The optimism and excitement of '1930' shined through the Blue Devils' last performance, which earned them the right to proudly wear the Champion medals around their necks and call themselves the 'best of the best' in marching music."

Drum corps history was made in Indianapolis as this was the first time two corps from the same organization had won the championships!! (... and both undefeated, thank you)

2009 was a year of tons of sick kids throughout all the corps. Blue Devils were no exception. Many of the shows were performed with holes as kids were too sick to march.

With the chairs being used throughout the show, every member had to know when to pick up the missing member's chair and where it should be placed. Think about the logistics of this action.

Not once was there a problem with a misplaced chair - unbelievable.

Even though not all were 100%, there was a full corps performing on Finals night.



While in Muncie, it was decided to take several of the kids to the hospital to be checked out for the flu-like symptoms and various injuries all at the same time in a bus. Somehow the townspeople thought the Blue Devils had brought the swine flu to their town. Kids were checked (and released), but the hospital said they were ready to vaccinate the entire 150 members if need be.



A very special thanks to Yvonne Moss who spent a great deal of time on tour in various hospital emergency rooms, taking care of sick members and working with kids who just didn't feel well.

Our Devil's Food crew has always been known for making sure our kids are fed well. However, they absolutely outdid themselves during Finals Week. Corps members had the best of the best to eat - pork chops, meatloaf, roast beef, etc.

We were so pleased to see the roast beef on Saturday as this was a tradition many years ago that seemed to have been lost over the years. When we explained to the kids that roast beef, mashed potatoes, gravy and green beans was always served on Finals Night, a big



smile would come across their faces. It was fun relaying some of the history of the Blue Devils to the kids as they thoroughly enjoy hearing it.

We had quite a bit of perishable food left over by Saturday. Yvonne Moss contacted the local hospital and found a Mission where we could take the food. Talk about people being absolutely thrilled. We were able to give them many items they could not afford to purchase. It was a good feeling knowing a great number of people would eat well because of Yvonne's efforts.

Thank you to Carol Vargas and all the wonderful people who helped on Devil's Food this year.



Another special thanks goes to our former members Ronny Hirata, Amado Segobia, Cathy Clark, Karl Tonander, Erron Garrett, Matt Dillon, Everett Lopez and Anthony Chang. Through their contribution again this year, the Corps members were treated to tons of fruit and snacks to take on the bus during the long trip into Indianapolis and ice cream, brownies, etc. for snacks when they got back to the school.

A very special bond has been established between many of the

Corps members and Ronny, Amado and other alumni this year. How great is that?

Thank you to one of the finest instructional staffs in the world. You consistently come up with ideas that are innovative, creative and extremely enjoyable.



And another thank you to Wendy & Rick Bernard who took care of altering the uniforms (which were now too large and to all the members of the support staff and the friends, parents and Booster Club members who took the time to help out in various ways throughout the entire year.

To Bill Seeley for coordinating the drivers, to drivers Toby B., Warner V., Dan D., Pep M., Keith H. and the Muskingum bus drivers for the safe journey for our kids and once again being part of the Blue Devil family.

To Gail Schultz and her Promo crew for all their hard work in making sure we had great products to sell to the public and making sure we had good locations at the various show sites.

People like our Promo crew.



We thank the marching members of the Corps. This was a year that included a lot of trips to the emergency room with all the dreaded flu-like symptoms, ankle problems, knee problems, etc. Through it all they gave their all.

Each and every one has our utmost appreciation and respect. It has been a real privilege to have been able to meet and be a part of the lives of these young people.



We cannot say thank you enough to Pete Emmons and Sheryl Miles for all their hard work during a very difficult tour season. Very few people realize how much work and time goes into making sure the Corps gets through tour. Pete and Sheryl both have the love and total respect of every kid in the Corps.



And then we had the After Finals Brunch at the Adam's Mark Hotel

in Indianapolis on Sunday that is sponsored by your Booster Club.

We got a big kick out of the Devil's Food crew and Driver Warner Vargas showing up all wearing the surgical masks! How appropriate for this year.

Thanks to John Christensen for making sure we had the performance video to show (always a highlight).

Pete Emmons gave a wonderful talk and said exactly what was needed to be said... especially telling the kids to get busy getting ring sizes for the "purple" ring. (*Purple in this case will indicate an undefeated season!*).



We were aiming for around 200 people to attend. The vast majority of the members were able to attend, and we were very happy to see so many parents, friends and alumni joining us. Our total count: 260! We came home Happy Campers. Yes, "Happy Days Are Here Again."

If you attended any of the shows and have taken any pictures that would be great for the yearbook, please contact the Blue Devil Hall at (925) 689-2918 as soon as convenient.



Our next event: 2009 Awards Banquet to be held Saturday,

November 28 at the Marriott Hotel in Walnut Creek, CA. More information will be forthcoming.

We are hoping to keep the cost the same as last year (\$35). It should be a good evening.



## PERSONAL COMMENTS OF THE 2009 CORPS

12<sup>TH</sup> Place - Troopers (75.10) – "Western Side Story": While having been a fan of the Troopers for many years, we were happy to see them coming back up in the competition. When we saw them earlier in the year, they performed a very enjoyable show and we were happy for them. Their drill was better than in the past.



We may have missed it earlier, but we were totally disappointed to see that the corps decided to join the "blood and guts" groups by having one of the Indian ladies slash the throat of a trooper. While they may have gained a tenth or two in their score, they lost a long-time fan! Totally ruined it for this observer.

11<sup>th</sup> Place – Blue Knights (86.45) – "Shiver": With sounds of the wind and the snow-colored uniforms, we could almost feel

the cold. Another well performed show. For some reason, we always have a special feeling for this corps.

10<sup>th</sup> Place – Glassmen (87.75) – "Journey of One": Interesting show and well performed. Really enjoyed watching it.

9<sup>th</sup> Place – Phantom Regiment (89.90) – "The Red Violin": Sorry the focus was on the story line so much and not the corps. The jilted girl got lost just being with the rest of the guard and should have had more solo work.

The audience loved the "Lady in Red" getting smacked, but in our opinion the ending gave the wrong message. We personally felt this was not an appropriate venue for this show. Phantom's horns always project well.



8<sup>th</sup> Place – Blue Stars (90.05) – "The Factory": Way too many stationary props on the field. The tables would have been way too big and heavy to move during the performance. We watched this show from one of the entrances and could not see a lot of what was being done. From what we could see, the corps did a very good job working in the spaces they had, but we felt they might have been a little too confined to do more.

7<sup>th</sup> Place – Boston Crusaders (90.70) – "The Core of Temptation": Tons more energy than the show we watched earlier in the week and corps-wise quite enjoyable to watch. But here, again, the story line took away from the corps.



The guard actually performed their show quite well; however, some of the guard body movements were not exactly wholesome – again, in our opinion.



6<sup>th</sup> Place – Bluecoats (93.1) – *"Imagine"*: The audience always loves the Bluecoats, and Finals was no exception. To a certain extent, having the entire corps change uniforms made them sort of disappear as they looked too much like the guard. We would have preferred to have the corps not doing the uniform change. Their show was well received and they got a resounding "Bloooooooo."



5<sup>th</sup> Place – Santa Clara Vanguard (95.65) – *"Ballet For Martha"*: (Martha being dancer Martha Graham) This show was clean from the very beginning of the season and ended even cleaner. The guard was elegant in their

gowns, the corps' drill was smooth and very enjoyable.

Many fans missed the "Vanguard" yell and the traditional cymbal "V." We found the show not necessarily complex but very clean and very well done. Excellent job.

4<sup>th</sup> Place – Cavaliers (96.15) – *"The Great Divide"*: Sorry, we were not too taken with this show. The guard uniforms were not particularly attractive, but the uniforms, ropes and ladders did depict mountain climbers. Having watched another corps earlier in the week doing basically the same theme rather ruined it.



3<sup>rd</sup> Place Holy Name Cadets (9.20) – *"West Side Story"*: We were very pleased to see the Cadets going back to being Cadets. . The show was very well done, albeit once again doing "West Side Story." We have not been too enthusiastic about the last few shows produced by this corps, so this was a pleasant surprise. With the exception of the aforementioned shows, we have always enjoyed watching the Cadet guards.



2<sup>nd</sup> Place Carolina Crown (97.50) – *"The Grass is Always*

*Greener"*: We felt the green plumes, drums, drum heads, guard uniforms, etc. were a bit over done and rather blended too much into the field. However, the corps did an outstanding job and we were happy for them as this was the first time they have medaled in their history. Not only did they take the Jim Ott Brass award, they also won the Fan Network poll. Our congratulations.

1<sup>st</sup> Place Blue Devils (99.05) – *"1930"*: Outstanding performance from all three sections. A great many people finally realized what the Corps was actually doing when standing on the chairs, playing their instruments.

Can't repeat the comments made when the drum line stood on the chairs on one foot while drumming (crude, but positive). The same reaction came watching the incredible guard during the opening. No one could have asked for a better performance; these kids gave their all and then some!



Our only disappointment: With the announcer and the crowd cheers, it was impossible hear the absolutely beautiful opening segment of music.

General overall thoughts:

This appeared to be the year of a ton of company fronts and long, loud notes from the horn lines. Granted they were well done, but while these are always crowd

pleasers, when too many corps do the same thing, they lose a great deal of the impact.

Also, there were so many corps depicting story lines and having the couples so visible that it got to the point that the focus was on the couple involved and not so much on what the rest of the corps was doing. We did not feel this was really fair to the corps members.

We were also not overly pleased with some of the story choices; i.e., cheating boyfriends, a "lady of the evening" some of the guard body movements – and, of course, the throat slashing. Not to say the shows weren't well done (which they definitely were), we did not feel these were family-oriented shows.

While all the shows were well received by the audience, many comments were overheard from both younger and older people about the appropriateness of some of the shows' content. We did watch more of the drills rather than guards and found them all interesting and well performed.

Having seen "West Side Story" done in so many different ways, we have a feeling it might be time to retire this theme – or give a 2 point penalty to the corps using it again. There were no "Spirit of Disney" awards this year.

Most of the corps had the brass and percussion sections doing a

lot of choreography rather than straight marching ... and, without exception, this was well done and fun to watch. Great visual effect.

Any negative comments stated above have absolutely nothing to do with the corps members' performances. Each and every corps appeared to be giving 100% and then some and gave the audiences what they came to Indianapolis to see.

Comments are directed more toward the show content itself, definitely not the kids. We have so much respect for every corps. Every corps had kids who had either been sick/injured or were sick/injured on Finals night and still gave it their all. No one can ask for more than that.

Lucas Oil Stadium: Huge! There didn't seem to be very many people at Quarter Finals, a few more at Semi-Finals and a much larger group for Finals. However, it was hard to tell how the turnout was for the shows as the arena is so large, even a large audience would appear small.

The air conditioner worked! It actually was very cold during our first two nights. The third night (Finals), we were sort of numb and really didn't feel much of anything one way or the other.

In listening to members of the audience, many people were not too pleased with the way the sound projected to the upper tiers (which we noticed from the 3<sup>rd</sup> tier). Although we did not

have the preferred seating, much to our surprise, our view of the show was fine.

Some people have indicated they probably would not be coming to Indianapolis each and every one of the remaining eight years and would like to see DCI schedule Finals for other cities as in the past.

We wonder how being in the same city for so many years will affect attendance. Are we willing to go back to Indianapolis for Finals Week next August? Where the Blue Devils go, there we shall be – no matter where!

**Mark your calendars !!  
Indianapolis, IN  
August 12-14, 2010!**

**NEXT MEETING**

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1**

**I-HOP Restaurant  
Martinez, CA  
7:00 P.M.**

**OFFICERS:**

**Mary Cloyd**  
*President*

**Yvonne Moss**  
*Vice President*

**Sonja Williams**  
*Secretary*

**Pat Worley**  
*Treasurer*

**Katie Wills**  
*Membership*

**Penny Ross/Norma Merrill**  
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