## Competition Season

- Every band runs different.
- Directors pick their shows for the season a few ways. In the beginning, my husband had his own ideas, sometimes he gets his staff involved, sometimes his techs (specialists who he hires to help during the season, we have 300 students, all the eyes we can get help!) and then now he employs the help of his drill writer. Typically bands hire a drill writer (writes where the feet go) and a music writer (compiles the actual music). You can buy "music already done"- i.e. non-bespoke work that a director just goes to a drill writer and buys already "done" - but now they've moved into custom asks, knowing perhaps an idea, or a song, or let their music writer (separate sometimes from drill/marching writer, sometimes not) have the entire vision. This year, our show is completely custom - we have a music writer who was lightly guided but had an overall idea already....and then we have a drill writer who takes the music and makes the show come to life - suggesting props, uniform changes, etc....
- Props "really are necessary". My hubs is not a big visual person, but he appreciates the journey for this one. Because for so many contests, without good visual props, costuming, choreography, etc....there's no way you'll win. Music is TOTALLY first, but visuals make the story come to life.
- There are all different kinds of shows. Really obvious ones "The Ocean"....or "Roman Empire" .....to more ethereal shows that don't have obvious themes. Our show for 2023 (Blink of an I)....it's about how fast growing up goes....and to anyone who is watching, they wouldn't get that, but the music takes you there!
- In every show there's typically a solo or two, or perhaps a solo and small ensemble. Then there's usually one-two dancers who take a feature, some places where the band dances with the dance company, there's a flag or costume change (or two) and perhaps a stage, prop movement, etc...a show is typically made up of three movements, usually preceded by some small "non danced to" introduction music. There's typically an exciting opener, a ballad and then a closer, closers can be both fast or slow - but the other two are pretty standard. Usually there's a mix of classical style music along with something more popular.
- How are points earned? There are judges on the field, and there are some in the stadium box. Depending on what they are judging, that's where they sit. USBANDS, like BOA (Bands of America) or like Local Contests, all have different (yet similar!) scoring methods. Typically a mix of music (usually more weighted) vs. visual (colorguard, props, marching style, overall effect, etc...)
- The more you watch these teams at the contests will give you an idea of "what sells". Each contest typically has it's "standard" - BOA has a "look and feel" of the winners different than what you might see at USBANDS (a smaller one) vs what UIL/The school district come for. Not completely different, but there are nuances.


## $\overline{\text { USBANDS }}$



- In October of 1988, The Cadets Drum and Bugle Corps hosted a marching band competition at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey. Reactions to that event were overwhelmingly positive and numerous requests were received to expand upon the offerings. In response to those requests and with the cooperation, input, and support of NY-NJ-CT tri-state area band directors and instructors, the Cadets Marching Band Cooperative (CMBC) was formed.
- As the organization's footprint grew beyond the tri-state region, the US Scholastic Band Association (USSBA) debuted in 1997 to provide all students more opportunities to perform while representing their high schools and local communities coast-to-coast.
- In recent years, the moniker USBands was introduced to encompass the wide variety of National, State, Regional and local events featuring performances by ensembles in over 25 different states throughout the country. In addition to being the largest competitive service in the nation, USBands continues to pride itself on three pillars of excellence. It is our goal to provide all participating members with excellent and educational adjudication, outstanding customer service, and access to the best venues.
- USBANDS hosts preliminary performances with (sometimes) evening finals performances. These are conducted within one day.
- Following preliminary performances, the results are tabulated, any infractions are deducted, and the scores are ranked to determine which bands will be asked to perform in the finals round (or in some cases, the final scores). The drum majors and color guard officers from each band gather on the field for results.
- WEBSITE: https://www.usbands.org/

|  | Individual Mus ic |  |  | Ens emble Mus ic |  |  | Visual |  |  | Mssic Efeet |  |  | Visusl Effect |  |  | Sub | Total final | Colar Guard |  |  | Tot | Percussion |  |  | Tot |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | CONT | ACHV | Tot | CONT | ACHV | Tot | CONT | ACHV | Tot | RROG | Ftrf | Tot | PROG | PRFF | Tot |  |  | CONT | ACHV | Tot |  | CONT | ACHV | Tot |  |
| $\bar{A}$ | 90 | 88 | 178 | 88 | 85 | 171 | ${ }^{86}$ | 87 | 173 | 86 | 86 | 172 | 87 | ${ }^{86}$ | 173 | 86.7 | 86.7 | 85 | 85 | 85 | 85 | 85 | 87 | 88 | 88 |
| в | 87 | 86 | 173 | 85 | 84 | 169 | 84 | 85 | 169 | 83 | 81 | 184 | 84 | 82 | 168 | 84.1 | 84.1 | 82 | 83 | 82.5 | 82.5 | 84 | ${ }^{86}$ | 85 | 85 |
| c | 86 | 84 | 170 | 83 | 82 | 185 | 83 | 83 | 188 | 85 | 85 | 170 | ${ }^{86}$ | 84 | 170 | 84.1 | 84.1 | 87 | 84 | 85.5 | 85.5 | 81 | 83 | 82 | 82 |
| D | 85 | 83 | 188 | 84 | 83 | 187 | 82 | 75 | 157 | 84 | 84 | 188 | 81 | 79 | 160 | 82 | 82 | 79 | 78 | 78.5 | 78.5 | 79 | 82 | 80.5 | 80.5 |
| E | 83 | 82 | 185 | 82 | 81 | 183 | 85 | 82 | 167 | 82 | 81 | 183 | 83 | 78 | 161 | 81.9 | 81.9 | 78 | 78 | 77 | 77 | 83 | 84 | 83.5 | 83.5 |
| F | 81 | 79 | 180 | 80 | 80 | 180 | 79 | 7 | 156 | 80 | 81 | 181 | 82 | 81 | 163 | 80 | 80 | 78 | 74 | 75 | 75 | 7 | 80 | 78.5 | 78.5 |
| G | 80 | 78 | 158 | 79 | 78 | 157 | 78 | 73 | 151 | 81 | 79 | 180 | 78 | 7 | 153 | 77.9 | 77.9 | 81 | 79 | 80 | 80 | 78 | 81 | 79.5 | 79.5 |
| H | 75 | 73 | 148 | 77 | 78 | 153 | 76 | 74 | 150 | 78 | 74 | 152 | 78 | 76 | 154 | 75.7 | 75.7 | 75 | 73 | 74 | 74 | 72 | 71 | 71.5 | 71.5 |
| 1 | 79 | 78 | 155 | 78 | $\pi$ | 155 | 75 | 72 | 147 | 73 | 70 | 143 | 75 | ${ }^{6}$ | 144 | 74.4 | 74.4 | 77 | 75 | 78 | 78 | 80 | 85 | 825 | 825 |


 How well did the band achieve this, how much showmanship for these elements is displayed and how much does the band express it's message and identity

 mood; and generation/release of tension, intensity, surprise, and excitement.

 harmony that gives them a great quality?
 make up the whole ensemble. Note: The Individual music judge is on the field, the Ensemble judge is in the press box.

 range of this talent is expressed throughout the show and has ebbs and flows.
 achieved at the proper level for this band. Including the ability to establish and maintain ensemble pulse control and rhythmic control, accuracy and clarity through the program




- In Bands of America (BOA) contests, the general format consists of daytime preliminary performances with evening finals performances. Regional BOA contests are conducted within one day; whereas, the preliminary performances for super regional and grand national contests stretch over 2-3 days. Each band is allotted 15 minutes for their performance. The first four minutes are for setup. At 3:15 to 3:30, the announcer starts to introduce the band. Many bands start early so that the announcement is over a kind of "prelude." There is no penalty for this, and you will see most bands taking advantage of this. The actual performance may be between 6 and 11 minutes long, timed after the conclusion of the announcement. Once the performance is done, the band (all students and any adults assisting) has to clear the field in 2 minutes. Violation of any of these timing requirements results in penalties from the Timing Judge that can ultimately deduct points from the overall score determined by the music and visual judges.
- Following preliminary performances, the results are tabulated, any infractions are deducted, and the scores are ranked to determine which bands will be asked to perform in the finals round. The drum majors and color guard officers from each band gather on the field (this is referred to as "retreat") for the announcements of preliminary results and those that qualified for finals performance. Depending on the competition level (regional, super regional, or grand national) and number of participating bands, 10-14 bands will be asked to perform in the finals. Following the finals performance, all members of each band gather on the field for the results announcements.
- WEBSITE: https://marching.musicforall.org/
- BOA contests use multiple judges, assigned to judge either music or visual performance, that record comments and impressions they ultimately relate to number scores. Although BOA has its own specific scoresheets and criteria references for each performance aspect, emphasis is still given to music over visual. Consequently, the weight of the numbers in the BOA scoring system places $60 \%$ of the value on music and $40 \%$ on visual, and at the same time, $60 \%$ of the score is within the area of general effect and $40 \%$ within the performance Area. The point allotment for the field competition from the eight judges is as follows:
- Music Performance (Individual), judge on the field
- Music Performance (Ensemble), judge in stands or press box
- These two are averaged together for 20 points total
- Visual Performance (Individual), judge on the field
- Visual Performance (Ensemble), judge in stands or press box
- These two are averaged together for 20 points total
- 20 points Visual General Effect, one judge in stands or press box
- 40 points Music General Effect, two judges in stands or press box.
- Timing Judge can impose penalty points for violation of timing on the field. These penalties are deducted from the final score tabulated from the other judges.
- The adjudication system used by Bands of America is a single-tier "criteria reference system, in which a band showing proficiency in particular criteria, or meeting certain criteria at a certain level.Each adjudicator is assigned a specific category, or caption. Judges are assigned a specific area in which he or she focuses - in the press box or on the field Bands will receive a recorded evaluation and scoresheet from each judge. The system has a strong emphasis on the Music General Effect, which accounts for $40 \%$ of the total score, as scores for Individual and Ensemble performance are averaged for both Music and Visual categories. According to the Adjudication Handbook a band's achievement (total score) is based on the content of the performance, as well as the quality of the performance. The Ensemble and Individual Performance scores in each category are averaged.
- The manual and contest procedures utilized by Bands of America have been licensed to or adopted whole, or in part, by other organizations hosting marching band competitions. As a result, Bands of America functions as a de facto governing body who determines the adjudication and competitive attributes of marching band competitions throughout the United States. However, Bands of America is not organized as a governing body. It instead operates almost exclusively as an event promoter, producer, host, and music education advocacy organization. Changes to the attributes of Bands of America championships are made by the Music for All board of directors, who regularly appoint an advisory committee composed of directors from participating bands to provide input on all aspects of Bands of America's programs and events.

- The University Interscholastic League (UIL), formed in 1910 by The University of Texas, exists to organize and govern educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and mu: competition administered by schools in Texas on an equitable basis. This equitable competition on a state-wide basis is achieved by classifying schools by enrollment size into six conferences within which schools of comparable size compete. The UIL conferences, in order of largest to smallest enrollment sizes, are 6A, 5A, 4A, 3A, 2A, and 1A.
- There are four rounds to the UIL competition typically held on two different days, only those advancing the state will attend those competitions:
- Area contest preliminary round (open class)
- Area contest final round (open class)
- State contest preliminary round (open class \& military class)
- State contest final round (open class \& military class)
- Schools of similar conference size compete in music contests against one another first within regions, then within larger areas, and ultimately at the state level. The regional marching contests occur for all conferences annually; however, the area and state marching contests for conferences only occur every other year. Cinco Ranch High School is classified as 6A. The 6 A conference schools compete at the area and state levels each year.
- UIL Contest Scoring
- The regional UIL marching contests are scored against a standard using "division" ratings on a scale of I-V, similar to those given to bands for concert and sight-reading performance in the spring. These are defined as Division I (Superior), Division II (Excellent), Division III (Average), Division IV (Below Average), and Division V (Poor). For even-numbered years, scoring a Division I at the regional marching contest qualifies the band to advance and compete at the area marching contest.
- Depending on the number of schools competing in the area contest, there may be up to two rounds of competition, a preliminary round and a final round. The state contest always consists of a preliminary round and a final round. The area contest restricts the number of bands that qualify for advancement to the state contest based on the number of bands competing, which could vary greatly between the areas as well as each time we compete at the area level.
- Success at the area and state marching contests is decided based on rankings of the competing bands compared with one another. To determine this, five judges (three for music performance and two for marching execution) record comments on the performance and assign a number score to record their impression of each band. Specifically, each of the judges evaluates stipulated attributes of the performance using specified rubrics (see the next page).
- Each judge characterizes the band's performance as Good, Excellent, Superior, or Exemplary for each of these attributes. In addition to categorizing attribute performance, each judge assigns a number score from the range of numbers allowed for the associated scoring category. The cumulative number scores from the five judges are added together to provide the final performance score. These scores are then used to rank the bands to determine either qualification for advancement to the next round or final contest placement.
- Website: https://www.uiltexas.org/music/marching-band/marching-band-scoring-and-advancement-procedure
- The following procedure will be used to rank the bands at area and state:
- In the five-judge system the adjudication panel will consist of 3 music judges and 2 visual judges. In the seven-judge system the adjudication panel will consist of 4 music judges, 2 visual judges, and 1 content/design judge.
- At the conclusion of each contest round (prelims and finals) each judge's raw score will be used to determine that judge's ranking of the bands. In each conference the band receiving the highest numerical score from a judge will be assigned first place by that judge, the next highest score will be assigned second place and so on until a ranking (ordinal) for each band is determined by all judges.
- Each judge's ranking (ordinal) for each band will then be added together. The high and low will NOT be eliminated. All scores will count.
- The final ranking will then be determined by assigning the band with the lowest ranking (ordinal) total first place, the next lowest ranking (ordinal) total second place and so on until the band with the highest ranking (ordinal) total is listed last.
- Ties will be broken by using judge's preference.


 VISUAL ADJUDICATION SHEET



## Region Contest


 beyond the region contest shall declare either open class or military class for the next round(s) of competition. Any varsity marching band that has followed the $p$ p
executive secretary the intent to advance beyond the region contest and that receives a Division 1 rating at the region contest shall be certified for advancement.


 for each two bands receiving a division 1 rating ranked below third place shall be certified for advancement to the state contest.
 the music judges and one of the visual judges will also advance to the final round.
 receives a ranking of three or higher from at least two of the music judges and one of the visual judges will also advance to the final round.
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## Advancement from Area Contest to State Contest

- The State Marching Band Contest will be held every year
 the area contest, one band for each five bands that qualifed for advancement to the contest shall be certified for advancement to the state contest.
 band that receives a ranking of three or higher from at least two of the music judges and one of the visual judges shall also advance to the state contest.


## Area Contest Champion and State Contest Champion


 (ordinal) totals.

