

Local high school marching bands rule the field

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Staff Reporter
CENTRAL VALLEY

Inter-school rivalries are prevalent throughout Spokane. From the Greasy Pig to the Rubber Chicken, heated feuds between high schools can be found on the diamond, the track, the gym floor and the field.

However, no scrimmage over the 40-yard line can surpass what goes on from end zone to end zone every weekend in October.

Nope, marching band is a sport in itself. Two of the best marching bands in the Northwest can be found in Spokane. One lies in the valley, while the other lies up north. Either way, both Central Valley and Mead duke it out like none other on football fields across the state and beyond.

"The feeling is unlike anything you could ever experience," CV senior drum major Randi Wilson said. "The teamwork, the achievement, the experience...they're all worth it."

And they should. Marching bands across the region get together weeks before the school year starts to begin rehearsing for their shows. Learning their music and routines for up to ten hours a day, the bands work diligently for a level to impress the judges and blow opponents out of the water.

Not even the summer heat can hinder these squads from attaining what they work so hard to get—to win sweepstakes at the big shows in the fall.

"It's tough," Mead mellophone section leader Noah Bratcher said. "It's really tough. Up here in the Northwest, there's tough competition, even from local bands like CV. It's really a lot harder than it looks."

CV clarinet section leader Anna Highly agrees. "For us, it's a

sport that requires both physical and mental strength. We need all we have to take down squads like Mead to win sweepstakes."

And it has been a bitter struggle these past couple of weeks. Though CV and Mead are sometimes in different division classification, all of the division scores are merged for the ultimate sweepstakes competition. CV took the title at both the Cavalcade of Bands in Pasco and the Pacific Northwest Marching Band Championships at Joe Albi Stadium in Spokane, but Mead had

its vengeance by clinching the accolade at the McKenzie Classic in Vancouver.

Both bands feel they have been firmly solid through the course of the season. "We have a lot of new people, but they've all been really quick to learn and get with it,"

Bratcher said. "We've been working hard and working strong; we are and have been ready for anything any other bands throw at us."

Wilson agrees. "If anything, we've been consistent. Our shows have been just exactly as we want them. We're getting done what needs to be done, and we'll definitely keep that up as the season comes to a close."

Other local schools have done well in competitions as well, Cheney and Mt. Spokane among them. The Cheney Blackhawks took 1st place in their division at the Cavalcade of Bands and Pacific Northwest Marching Band Championships, while the Mt. Spokane Wildcats won and came in second in their divisions at those two competitions as well.

The University Titans have also done well, placing first in their division at the Cavalcade of Bands.

"The feeling really is something else," Wilson said. "I don't think any other sport lives up to this one. Under the football stadium lights, all you can do is look up, and smile, because you realize all that you've done to be there."



Emily Thomsen/Moscow High School
Moscow high school marching band members line up with their instruments, hopefully, twenty-two and a half inches apart.



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