

3:48 PM—Glassmen, 12th place from last night, almost twice as large as last year. The show "bounces" along in a super-charged "happy mode." If I tap my toes any harder to *Key to Her Ferrari*, I'll bruise them. Through *Jive Samba*, *Caravan* and *Swing Low*, they never let up. This is a show one wants to sing along with. A good, solid show for a younger corps.

Bluecoats received an 87.00, just 1.7 over Crossmen. Are Bluecoats low or Crossmen high, or what?

4:05 PM—Spirit of Atlanta. A lot of people are trying to comprehend Atlanta's new direction—away from easily recognizable music to the obscure. Like last year's *Petrouska*, this year's *Interstellar Suite* either glistens like a pearl or sinks like a rock. It's rather dark and ominous, and would make a great soundtrack to a *Star Wars*-type movie. The guard is really subtle, preferring subtle dance moves to wild equipment aerobatics. The individual elements of the musical production are quite exciting, but at times it seems too many of those elements are too similar to each other to allow for any one melody to jump out that I can whistle on my way back to my hotel. (Opinion alert—I like the corps—really, I just wonder about the music. I know you can't do *Sweet Georgia Brown* every year, but I miss THE Spirit of Atlanta.)

Glassmen's score—78.70

Spirit of Atlanta's score—83.90—lower than Crossmen by 1.3. Atlanta could be on the "bubble" tomorrow. If Freelancers and Sky Ryders outscore them, they could be in trouble.

4:39 PM—Cavaliers. Opening statement of *Gloria* is one of most lovely works put on a field. Drill, as always, is beyond description in regards to musical interpretation. Images Diabolique, verges on being downright Satanic. Effective, yes, barbaric, yes, stimulating, yes. On paper, it seemed the corps might have went too far, but on the field the work is wonderfully exhilarating. It's "beat and blast" at its contemporary best. The finale to *Gloria* left the audience breathless as the drill rapidly evolved from on picturesque set to the next. Exhausting and thrilling to watch. Cavaliers are one of the corps which can be just about anywhere in the top half of finals.

4:56 PM—Colts have undergone a big style change from happy-go-lucky dance hall jazz to contemporary college band jazz. It's a bit hard to whistle, and for many is an

acquired taste. The melodies are somewhat angular as opposed to lyrical. The corps has made remarkable progress over the course of the season in "selling" the show to an audience who expected from them the type of music we're now getting from Bluecoats. It will be interesting to see if Colts move ahead with this new identity in 1990, or fall back on the type of show which placed them in 18th in 1988.

Cavaliers outscored Cadets by 0.2 with a 94.90. I have to move them up in the pack, assuming they'll be ahead of Madison and possibly even Blue Devils. Star of Indiana is on soon. That will put things in a powerful tighter perspective.

5:13 PM—Sky Ryders have quite a powerful sound as they explore the heavy classics of Hindemuth and Orff. Many were sad to hear that Dorothy went upscale; and traded her tickets to the musical for symphony hall tickets. After a solid start to the season, the corps got kicked around quite a bit as they rested on a scoring plateau from which they seem to have recently rescued themselves. I loved the Sky Ryders of the past few years so much that I'm not quite ready to say the style change was needed, yet I understand the corps' desire to grow. However, the music is a bit on the "heavy" side. (I wanted to say "ponderous," but thought I'd be misunderstood.)

Colts' score—73.60.

5:30 PM—Suncoast Sound. To think this corps almost didn't make it out on the road at all this year, and in fact missed several shows of the first part of the season due to financial problems. God bless them for their perseverance. The barefoot guard in black is quite well-versed in modern dance, high-lighted wonderfully in *Native Rites*. The horns move around fast enough that a major accident seems inevitable. The gull props in *Simple Song At Sunrise* really do look like birds hovering over the corps. Suncoast managed to come up with a show this year which was appealing to just about everyone.

Sky Ryders scored 83.80, 0.1 under Atlanta and 1.5 under Crossmen. If this holds up for tomorrow, they will be out of finals.

5:47 PM—Blue Knights possess George Zingali's only junior corps drill this year. Besides being pleasant to listen to, they are a joy to watch. *Moorside March* and *Punchinello* fit the identity of this corps to a "T." The *Punchinello* ballad section is quite lovely, followed by a fast-paced closing movement which brings the show to a rousing conclusion. I wouldn't be too surprised if they were in finals in two or three years. They have quite a nucleus to build from, but need to find the right combination of ingredients to make their

cake rise in the oven.

Wow. Suncoast Sound score 86.90, 3.1 higher than Sky Ryders, 3.0 higher than Atlanta, 1.6 over Crossmen, and a remarkable 0.1 under Bluecoats. This is going to be more interesting than I thought.

6:04 PM—Star of Indiana. This corps is a legitimate threat to anyone who wishes to lay claim to a top-three position. The British theme has been working quite well for them. Horns sound incredible today. When I saw the show the first week of the season, they were in danger of sounding like a concert band. However, they've done a great job turning the symphonic music into a drum corps vehicle. *Fantasia On the Dargason* seemed quicker than normal tonight, adding to the dynamism of the performance. Closing strains of *Crown Imperial* were "on" to a degree I didn't think was possible. Star can't be dismissed from any equation.

Blue Knights score—81.40. They will likely be on either side of the cut-off for being promoted to tomorrow's semifinals.

Star of Indiana was just announced with a 93.70, in third place a full point under Cadets. Shows what I know.

7:06 PM—Freelancers. What a comeback! Full-sized, flashy, brassy; the old Freelancers are back. After a striking and aggressive *E.T. Fanfare*, they progress into the little known *Empire of the Sun*. *Empire* isn't too melodic, but there's lots of energy and drama leading into the blastissimo ending before the lovely *Empire* chorale. The inverting zig-zags are simple, yet one of the most memorable drill maneuvers on the field. I expect them to be in finals.

7:23 PM—Velvet Knights are Velvet Knights are Velvet Knights. Running on the field and playing the *Jaws* theme, the corps let us know we could expect just about anything as the corps gorilla peeled the giant banana to reveal a guard member underneath. (If you weren't in Kansas City, you read it right... gorilla... uh huh.) *Yo Mambo* provided many visual highlights as a Brazilian carnival was recreated, with bright plumage a-plenty. *Velvet Knights in Tunisia* gave us many mere V.K.-isms... too numerous to mention. However, behind the wackiness is one solid drum corps that sometimes tends to get lost in the madness.

Freelancers' score—87.90, which puts them above Bluecoats. They invaded the class which Bluecoats appeared to own by themselves.

7:40 PM—Limited Edition is a new kid on the block, with what many consider to be the definitive version of *Carmina Burana*. It's wonderfully coordinated with special visual effects which interpret the meaning of each (Continued on page 9)

movement. Of special interest was the fish hand puppets swimming in a sea of blue banners. Pictograph flags announced the introduction of each movement with appropriate graphics. Props further carried out the theme, helping the audience to follow the story line. A beautifully-conceived show.

Velvet Knight's score—88.10, just 0.2 above Freelancers, and 1.1 over Bluecoats. It looks like they're sitting in eighth, with Bluecoats in 10th. Not what I expected. Still, I expect some flip-flopping tomorrow when these corps go on next to each other.

7:57 PM—Dutch Boy. They came so close last year, but just haven't materialized as a significant threat for finals yet this year. Still, anything can happen. The Cole Porter show (*Begin the Beguine, I've Got You Under My Skin* and *Night and Day*) is great crowd-oriented literature. Everyone knows the music, and you can snap your fingers to it. If only it didn't sound like variations on the same piece of music. The guard is most effective in their portrayal of darkness and light in *Night and Day*, with contrasting skirts illuminating the time of day. This is a good corps, deserving of being in finals, and

deserving of a show with greater musical variety.

68.20 for Limited Edition.

8:14 PM—Santa Clara Vanguard. Need I say more! They've only lost one show all season (to Blue Devils), and have been executing remarkably well all summer. *Phantom of the Opera* is done more purist than last year. The show is treated as one big medley. The evolution into the swirling triangle at the end of the opener is a classic move. I didn't realize until now just how fast the corps moves across the field. They appear to be really nailing the performance. Just noticed the drums and horns are all wearing Phantom masks. The emotional hits are all working as well if not better than desired. Gosh, everything works in this show. The final "disappearance" is chilling. I wonder if they'll add a surprise for finals.

Dutch Boy's score—85.40, 0.1 over Crossmen, 1.5 over Atlanta, 1.6 over Sky Ryders... they could be in finals.

8:31 PM—Railmen have got to be grateful just to be in quarterfinals. They were fifth in class A prelims, moved past Kiwanis Cavaliers to place fourth in class A finals, than moved past Black Gold in open class prelims to take the final open position for tonight's show. Being realistically in 25th place, with only 28 horns, they can't be too thrilled following Santa Clara; but then, just being in the show is accomplishment