

10,000 cheer Cadets, Bush to top honors

by J. P. McAleese

August 6, 1989—Meadowlands, New Jersey . . . The Cadets of Bergen County and the Bushwackers were both winners in the *Drums in the Meadowlands* contest held in Giants Stadium in the Meadowlands Sports Complex. The Cadets took honors in the DCI portion of the show and the Bushwackers topped a field of four DCA corps. The contest was co-sponsored by the Hawthorne Caballeros and the Cadets of Bergen County, with support from WCBS-TV, Channel 2 in New York.

A responsive crowd of over 10,000 cheered every corps in this show. The New York metropolitan fans certainly remembered the famous "Dream Contests" as they applauded the only "Junior-Senior" matchup this season. A warm and humid night did not dampen the enthusiasm.

The Cadets of Bergen County, NJ, powered through their production of *Les Miserables* with a fevered pitch. The show becomes more emotional as the season progresses. The show seems to change dramatically at each contest, as the fans try and guess what kind of ending the Cadets

will perform. Tonight's closing segment was a large peace symbol moving to the center line from the left. The result is a little too obvious, and the audience reaction to the company front ending at the DCE finals made it clear which the fans prefer. Score—92.60.

"The Madison Scouts are doing *Slaughter*." That's all everyone was saying about the defending champions before the show, and the Scouts did not disappoint. The Scouts ripped through their show with poise and confidence and looked strong enough for another shot at the title. The Scouts finished second with a score of 89.60.

The Bluecoats from Canton, OH, made their presence known with a polished and stylized show that was tailored to the Bluecoats' strengths. Strong jazz brass arrangements and solid percussion helped the Bluecoats finish third with a score of 86.70.

Was there a disappointment for the fans this night? Yes, and it came when the placement was announced for the Freelancers. Outside of the hometown Cadets, the Freelancers of Sacramento, CA, stole the hearts and minds of the fans. Maybe it was the intricate block-style drill with revolving patterns, company fronts, and angled-formations. Maybe it was the traditional-style heel-toe marching. Maybe it was the dynamic horn line. Probably it was all of the above. The Freelancers received the first standing ovation of the night, and the longest chorus of sympathetic "boos" for

their fourth-place finish (86.00). They now have friends in New Jersey.

The Velvet Knights of Anaheim, CA, were a welcome attraction to an area that still aches over the loss of the Bridgemen. This year's production has less antics and props than in the past, but is no less entertaining. The Velvet Knights took fifth place with a score of 82.10.

The Florida Wave from Southern Florida proved again that they are the definition of consistency. They executed a stylish, professional program that entertained the audience and kept them competitive with the rest of the field. You can count on this corps year after year. Sixth place, 76.80.

L'Insolite from St. Jerome, QUE, rounded out the DCI field for the evening with a nice production of their trademark *Take the 'A' Train*. L'Insolite came very close to breaking 70 tonight as they finished seventh with a score of 69.90.

The DCA, or "Senior" portion of *Drums in the Meadowlands* featured four New York City area corps in competition. The Bushwackers of Harrison, NJ, took first place by performing a repertoire that included pieces from diverse artists Don Menza, Pat Methany, Joe Jackson and Maynard Ferguson. The Bushwackers look to be in good form and ready to defend their DCA title. Score—88.90.

The Sunrisers performed the crowd-pleasing *Rhapsody in Blue* and proved they will also be a contender this year. The arrangements were solid and the presenta-

tion reflected the mood changes in Gershwin's classic. The Sunrisers finished second with a score of 85.70.

The Hawthorne, NJ, Caballeros performed a repertoire of Stan Kenton music and made it fit the Cabs' style perfectly. The Cabs marched a strong show and showed signs of putting all of the pieces together. The Cabs finished in third place with a score of 83.80.

The New York Skyliners seemed a little smaller this year, but the high-volume horn line sounded as large as ever. Sky had the crowd clapping and chanting through their production of *Hava Nagilah*. Sky is intent on finishing higher than last year's sixth place at championships, and they seem to have the material they need to do so. Sky finished in fourth place with a score of 81.10.

The East Coast Jazz of Malden, MA, performed an exhibition at the beginning of the evening and showed how far a corps can go in just its first season of competition.

In the intermission between the DCA and DCI portions of the show, a staff member from the Cadets of Bergen County read a chilling list of corps that have folded or gone inactive over the years. The numbers are staggering. Different parts of the crowd reacted after each corps name was announced—fans and alumni remembering favorite corps. The message from the Cadets of Bergen County was simple—there are very few active corps competing today compared to a few years ago, and even a successful corps like the Cadets needs financial help.