

Vanguard puts the skids on Phantom's roll in Ypsilanti

by Roger C. Ellis

July 28, 1989—Ypsilanti, Michigan . . . The long-awaited and highly anticipated meeting of the Santa Clara Vanguard and the Rockford, IL, Phantom Regiment took place on the field of Eastern Michigan University.

The Vanguard emerged with a clear-cut victory in this clash of early-season front-runners. Scoring 90.10, the Vanguard held a comfortable 1.5 point advantage over Phantom, second with 88.60. The rapidly improving Madison Scouts were close behind in third place with 87.60 and garnered the best drum major trophy.

The Sacramento, CA, Freelancers were fourth with 75.10, followed by the Hutchinson, KS, Sky Ryders in fifth with 72.70. The Bettendorf, IA, Quad City Knights rounded out the open class competition with 49.40 for sixth place.

In class A, the Saginaw, MI, Northern Aurora placed first with 52.30, followed by the Sault Ste. Marie, ONT, Bandettes in second with 46.10 and the Hammond, LA, Expressions in third with 32.20. The Wyandotte, MI, Royal Lancers performed in exhibition prior to the retreat ceremony.

In order of appearance, the Expressions presented a light, swing show of Duke Ellington numbers.

The Bandettes have added nice color guard work, performed by the horn line, during their drum solo. Their performance was marred by the sounds of not one, but two, drum lines warming up outside of the

stadium during their closing number. The high, open stadium and the cool, clear evening combined to make this an extremely annoying situation during the entire show.

Northern Aurora drew a rousing standing ovation from the crowd for their *Perils of Pauline* sequence. Dudley Doright struck a responsive chord with the crowd this evening, and the corps was rewarded accordingly with their applause.

The Freelancers' show contained dramatic visual impacts, especially the turns and leg movements in the opening sequence.

The Quad City Knights' show opened slowly and somberly, then changed abruptly into an up-tempo presentation of music by the rock group Yes.

Phantom Regiment was clearly pushing for the top position this evening. Their horns were lush and rich, and their show exuded precision and control.

The Vanguard performed *Phantom of the Opera* to near-perfection tonight, employing quick and frequent changes of pace, brilliant percussion execution and an excellent, gentle yet powerful brass sound to capture the top spot.

The Madison Scouts gave a wide-open, highly charged performance that many fans felt deserved the first-place award tonight.

The Sky Ryders projected a much more serious and somber show that many of their fans seem to be slow in accepting. Time will tell how successful this drastic format change will be for the corps.

The Royal Lancers senior drum corps presented a standstill performance prior to the announcement of the scores. They got off to a rather shaky start at the beginning of *Man of La Mancha*, a new number added to the show for this exhibition, but quickly recovered and went on to enter a strong performance of their remaining numbers.