

Vanguard tops Scouts in quest for DCI title

by Daniel Buteau

July 31, 1989—Montreal, Quebec . . . The Santa Clara Vanguard continued its quest for the 1989 World Championship title by defeating the reigning champion Madison Scouts at the 17th edition of *Invitation Quebec*, Montreal's annual DCI show. The highly competitive contest also saw the Freelancers right on the heels of the Velvet Knights, and L'Insolite discreetly getting nearer to the Boston Crusaders.

The Vanguard offered a memorable performance where each visual element, including furious running movements and an extremely talented guard, seemed to gel magnificently. This year's musical version of *The Phantom of the Opera* is basically the same as last year's, except for a new introduction coming from the *Prologue* of the London musical and the addition of *Don Juan Triumphant* near the end. First, 91.80.

The Madison Scouts' 1989 show is a masterpiece of musical complements, as the exciting opener of *Make His Praise Glorious Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*. This edition of the perennial Montreal favorite is vintage Scouts, with the admirable auxiliary and flowing, fast-paced visuals. A mad run for the DCI title is definitely not excluded, as Madison showed room for improvement tonight. Second, 88.20

Another obviously hard-working corps, the Velvet Knights excited the crowd with antics of their own. The opening trip to Rio featured a carnival atmosphere with funny-looking banana characters and three plumed dancers. The second segment of the presentation, while much less clean than the opener, showed promise with a zany interpretation of *Night in Tunisia* and the creation of a wild nightclub atmosphere. Third, 82.60.

It must start to smell like top-12 roses in the Freelancers' entourage. They offered a straightforward musical and visual approach, with the big brass music of John Williams and the widespread visual pictures offered during the performance. While the opening and closing segments from *ET* sounded tighter, the new excerpts from *Empire of the Sun* brought a diversified atmosphere from the outer space theme. Fourth, 82.10.

The Boston Crusaders horn line showed much improvement from an early July viewing. True to themselves, the Crusaders were popular with the crowd tonight with the unique Boston marching style, crisp block formations and the sound interpretation of excerpts of *Man of La Mancha*. Fifth, 70.50.

L'Insolite is progressively adding more visuals to complement its strong musical program. Every section is featured in the fresh visual pictures, such as the cymbal line effectively portraying the wheels of the train in, what else, *Take the 'A' Train*. The guard program is also taking more shape, and L'Insolite could vie for a definite improvement in open class rankings in Kansas City. Sixth, 68.30.

In their quest for a new home after the demolition of Verdun Municipal Stadium, the *Invitation Quebec* committee turned to Centre Claude Robillard this year. While the seats were comfortable and the field conditions looked impressive, one wishes they could find a location offering higher bleachers. The increased entry fees sadly inversely corresponded with a decay in viewing quality for the majority of spectators.