

“Contest of Champions”

Invitational Marching Contest

Established 1962

“Where the important goal is not winning, but the discovery of the very best in each of us.”

Grand Champion - regardless of classification

Reserve Grand Champion - regardless of classification

Honorable Mention - regardless of classification

Tennessee Governor’s Cup

Kentucky Governor’s Cup

Joseph T. Smith Esprit de Corps Award

Outstanding Visual Performance

Outstanding General Effect

Outstanding Music Performance

Each Band Rated Within Specified Classification:

First Place — Second Place “AAA” Classification

First Place — Second Place “AA” Classification

First Place — Second Place “A” Classification

For additional information, contact

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Advisory Board

Reed Thomas, MTSU Director of Bands, Bryan Brau, MTSU Associate Director of Bands, Jennifer Stembridge, MTSU Assistant to the Directors and Contest Coordinator, Heather Baker, MTSU Associate Director, Judging Panel - JR Carlisle, Advisors: Jeff Beckman (retired band director and former contest winner), Craig Cornish (MTSU director emeritus and former contest winner).

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Middle Tennessee State University

DECLARATION OF PURPOSE

The Contest of Champions was conceived and established for the improvement of bands and dedicated to those unusual men and women who pursue perfection, whether it be on the football field or the concert stage.

The “Contest of Champions” is produced and directed by the men and women of the Middle Tennessee State University Band of Blue. Our purpose is as follows:

“To provide a contest vehicle comparable in operation to the perfection of the superior bands who choose to enter the competition.”

“To present a panel of recognized judges utilizing a scoring system agreed to by participants as being acceptable.”

“To present an event that is educationally sound and beneficial to the individual”

“To be a part of a program which is enjoyable to the audience as well as the participants.”

ELIGIBILITY

Up to 28 bands are accepted to compete in the Contest of Champions and bands are selected by submitting an online entry form available at mtsu.edu/coc. Should more than 28 bands enter the competition then entry forms will be evaluated by the board of advisors and accepted at the board’s discretion.

ADJUDICATION

The Contest of Champions uses the Tennessee Bandmasters Association adjudication system. This system is a means to encourage and reward creativity, artistry, and standards of excellence and achievement while providing a vehicle that will educate students and teachers in such a way that they will grow to understand and evolve to the greatest level of their potential. It is our intent that this system will encourage and reward creativity and acknowledge the tasteful and aesthetic appeal of good design through quality composition. This system:

- Acknowledges the joint efforts of designers, instructors and performers through understanding that excellence and artistry are displayed through the design and that those same designs are recognized and credited through the artistry of performance.
- Utilizes a method of subjective evaluation that rewards the achievement of positive qualities and offers continued encouragement to strive for greater achievement.

- Is a POSITIVE system, rewarding successful efforts at every level and is designed to encourage units to develop, maintain and project their own styles. Therefore, we emphasize creativity, originality, taste and excellence. The use of a criteria reference system guide will tell all units the essence of the qualities they must achieve in order to receive their projected “number-grade” goal. Scores assigned by a judge reflect the successful achievement of certain criteria and no longer equates such ideas as “poor, good, fair, etc.”
- Is educational and will promote performers and directors based on successful accomplishments.

Caption style adjudication will be employed in both preliminaries and finals using a 6-person judging panel and the Tennessee Bandmasters Association evaluation system.

- Two judges (one in the press box and one on the field) will evaluate musical performance with a possible twenty points per judge.
- One judge will evaluate music effect worth a total of twenty points.
- One judge will evaluate visual effect worth a total of twenty points
- Two judges (one in the press box and one on the field) will evaluate visual ensemble with each judge having a total of ten points.

CLASSIFICATION

0-80 Musicians*	Class A
81-120 Musicians*	Class AA
121- above Musicians*	Class AAA

Bands may enter a higher classification but not a lower classification. This must be indicated on the entry form to be accepted by the contest officials.

**Musicians are defined as wind, percussion, and electronic musicians.*

RATING PROCEDURE

The resultant sum from adjudicators, less violations if any, will indicate the rating on the following scale:

I Rating	80-100
II Rating	65-79.9
III Rating	50-64.9

- Ratings will be determined as a result of preliminary performance.
- Superior ratings will be announced during the Preliminary Awards.

SHOW REQUIREMENTS

There are no basic maneuvers required. Bands are expected to present a well-rehearsed aural and visual performance between 6 and 11 minutes, executed only by students from their respective school (K-12).

- Performances are given by students only, including the triggering of sound effects, voiceovers, any/all lighting effects, and other musical or visual items.
- Only these students will be allowed to be on the field during a band's performance.
- An adult may operate a mixing board or wireless mixing device, only for the purpose of managing volumes and balances, and must do so from the track area.

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Bands will perform in class order, beginning with Class A, Class AA, and then Class AAA. Officers of the MTSU Band of Blue, in the presence of the band, will draw performance times for each band within each classification.

Contest officials reserve the right to alter the above procedure in order to allow a band to attend. Various state, regional, and national exams do not constitute a basis for exception (February 1986). A request for this procedure must be submitted in writing prior to the deadline date and signed by the director.

CONTEST FLOW AND WARM-UP

- Bands will be scheduled in 15-minute intervals for performance.
- A 30-minute period in a warm-up area convenient to both parking and performance areas will be provided.
- If bands have a visual or coordinated stretch routine, they must complete it before the scheduled music/equipment warmup times. Any such routines should be done in a location that does not interfere with the contest flow; otherwise, a contest penalty will be incurred. (See violation section.)
- Because of the proximity to Johnny Red Floyd Stadium, no amplified metronomes will be allowed in warm-up locations or parking lots.
- Percussion has a separate warmup location and schedule. Please note that the percussion warm-ups begin and end five minutes earlier than the winds and guard warmups.
- All bands must use the designated warm-up areas. The warm-up monitors will keep bands on schedule and ensure that everyone has their allotted timeframe available.
- As always, we request you be especially vigilant and point your brass sections away from the stadium. Although MTSU staff will be on hand to assist with performance flow, ultimately, it is the band director's responsibility to move their group through the performance flow on time.

PERFORMANCE PROCEDURE

Bands will report to the stadium gate 10 minutes before performance, at which point contest officials will escort them into the South endzone "pre-stage" position. 4 minutes before performance, contest

officials will direct the band to begin setup. 45 seconds before performance time, the band will be announced as such:

“Now entering the field from _____, under the direction of _____, please welcome the _____ High School Band!”

(Slight pause)

“_____’s show is titled _____ and includes the following musical selection(s): _____

(Slight pause)

“The MTSU Contest of Champions is proud to present, in preliminary (or finals) performance, drum major(s) _____, and the _____ High School Band!”

- If the band’s drum majors salute, it should occur as the announcer is reading the sentence above. However, a drum major salute is not necessary to indicate that the band is ready to start.
- The performance of a pre-show during the four-minute set-up/warm-up time will not alter the time of the announcement.
- A quick on-field warm-up is possible, but it must take place within the four-minute setup time.
- Following the announcement, the first note of music or the first step or visual move by a member of the band (excluding any drum major salute) will start the performance's timing. The performance must begin within 30 seconds of the pre-show announcement, or timing will begin automatically after that.
- After the performance, bands should immediately exit the performance area. The band director is responsible for ensuring that the exit does not delay the published contest schedule, which may result in a time penalty or disqualification.
- A band’s exit may overlap with the next band’s four-minute setup time.
- Time restrictions are six minutes minimum and eleven minutes maximum.
- We will tape high school hash marks to the turf.
- It is recommended that bands simulate this process in rehearsal during the week leading up to the contest.

FINALS

Following the preliminary competition, eight bands will perform in the final competition, which will be considered open competition with no classifications. The eight bands will represent the eight highest scoring bands of the day.

- Those bands appearing in the finals will be scored by the same procedure as in the preliminaries. Preliminary scores will not carry over to finals.
- Immediately following the announcement of the finalists, directors should move to section for the finalist director meeting. At that point, we will draw for order of performance in finals and relay information about the final awards ceremony.
- In the event that a particular class is not represented in the final eight, the highest scoring band from that class will appear in the first position(s) in exhibition only.

- Scoring and rules for finals will be the same as for prelims; however, judges will switch captions. Bands must present the same performance for both prelims and finals.

TIE BREAKERS

All ties will be broken in the following manner:

The highest sum resulting from adding together all music judges' scores will break the tie. If the tie remains unbroken, then the highest sum resulting from adding the effect scores will break the tie.

VIOLATIONS

Any band violating a printed rule published in the contest rules will be penalized by 5 points. Specific violations are as follows:

- Failure to adhere to the 6-to-11-minute performance time limits
- Obstructing physically or musically the performance of the next band
- Delaying the contest
- Having anyone other than a student or a director in the performance area during the actual performance.

Failure to report to the proper place on time will drop a band to last on the performance schedule, or, according to the discretion of the contest officials, be cause for disqualification.

AWARDS

GRAND CHAMPION

The award-winning band score must reflect the highest score of any band in finals regardless of classification or state. The band will receive a Contest of Champions coat of arms and a grand champion flag. Each member of the band will receive a patch representing a replica of the coat of arms. The director will be awarded a personal gold medallion in recognition of outstanding accomplishment, and join the "Legion of Masters" with associated lifetime privileges.

RESERVE GRAND CHAMPION

The reserve grand champion represents the second highest score in finals regardless of classification or state. The band will receive a trophy indicative of their outstanding performance. The director will receive a sterling silver medallion in recognition of outstanding accomplishment.

HONORABLE MENTION

The honorable mention score will reflect the third highest score in finals regardless of classification or state. The band will receive a trophy indicative of their outstanding performance. The director of the honorable mention band will receive a personal bronze medallion in recognition of meritorious accomplishment.

FINALIST CUP

All bands competing in finals will receive a silver cup in recognition of outstanding accomplishments.

TENNESSEE AND KENTUCKY GOVERNOR'S CUPS

These trophies will be awarded to the highest scoring Tennessee and Kentucky bands participating in the Contest of Champions. The trophy becomes the possession of the recipient for a period of one year, at which time the trophy will be presented to the new winner. A wall plaque will also be presented to the winner as a permanent acknowledgment of accomplishment.

CLASSIFICATION AWARDS

A first- and second-place trophy will be presented to the two highest scoring bands in Class A, Class AA and Class AAA as a result of preliminary competition. These awards will be presented at the conclusion of the preliminary competition.

SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE AWARD

Bands receiving the rating of superior within their classification will receive a superior award.

JOSEPH T. SMITH "ESPIRIT DE CORPS" AWARD

Awarded in the preliminary round, this honor recognizes the band that best embodies the legacy of the Contest of Champions founder and MTSU Director of Bands Emeritus. The plaque and distinction will be awarded to the band who displays the most respect, discipline and enthusiasm for the contest, themselves and other competing bands.

FINALS AWARDS

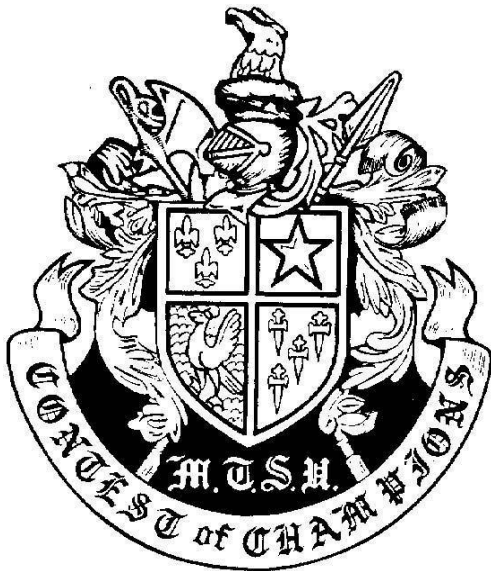
Following the exhibition performance of the MTSU "Band of Blue," all bands appearing in the finals portion of the contest, including exhibition, will assemble in an Olympic-style, no-equipment mass band entrance.

MISCELLANEOUS

- The Contest of Champions uses Competition Suite for all judge commentary and scoring.
- Contest guides will be assigned and at your disposal from the time you arrive. Guides will be on duty at the warm-up and performance area. Guides are provided to assist; however, it is the band director's responsibility to ensure the band adheres to the schedule.
- Vomitory measurements for prop purposes are:
 - Height = 11.8 inches.
 - Width = 104 inches at the bottom, tapering to 94 inches at the top.
- Hash marks on Jones Field are 60 feet from the sidelines. This is standard under NCAA rules.
- Video recording is not allowed. Still photography is confined to the spectator area.

- If the preliminary contest is delayed by weather for any significant length of time, then the board will make a determination on whether to proceed with a final competition. If the final portion of the contest is cancelled then all awards will be based on the preliminary competition scoring results.

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