Madison Scouts

by Dan Guernsey
and Robert Pilot

C.H. Beebe and origins of the corps

In 1937, a group of Madison businessmen watched a performance of the Racine Scouts at the University of Wisconsin Stock Pavilion. Impressed by the possibilities of a top-notch, entertaining youth activity, they decided Madison should have a scout drum and bugle corps as well. The men, led by E. J. Hess, organized the Madison Boy Scout Drum and Bugle Corps and held its first rehearsal February 8, 1938.

The Scouts started with a bass drum, snare and tenor drums, army issue G bugles and a broom stick for a drum major's baton. Members wore official Boy Scout issue uniforms. Hess was the first director, but shortly thereafter Clarence H. Beebe, scoutmaster of troop 20, was appointed quartermaster and executive director. He was the inspiration and driving force behind the corps for 30 years.

From the beginning, the Madison Scouts emphasized showmanship, flash and audience appeal. At first this was provided by a succession of talented, baton-twirling drum majors who attained almost celebrity status among Wisconsin audiences. The drum line got into the act with twirling tenor and bass drum sticks.



Madison Scouts, 1938 *(photo from the collection of the Madison Scouts).*

In 1942, the bell lyre was added to the percussion line. Two years later chrome-plated, single-valve G-D soprano and baritone bugles replaced the army bugles. The corps was becoming truly musical.

During the 1930s and 1940s, the Madison Scouts were essentially a parade unit, but they also had a field show. They took their show to communities in Wisconsin and Northern Illinois and were gaining a reputation for their showmanship and entertaining style. The corps also performed for charities, including an annual show for the developmentally disabled at Camp Waubeek that they continued for 15 years.

The corps was a prominent feature at scouting functions like the Four Lakes Council's annual "camporee." During World War II, the Scouts helped promote war bonds. One hundred fifteen Madison Scouts served in the armed forces and all of them returned home from the war.

In the beginning, the uniform was the official Boy Scout khaki shirt, short pants, knee socks, red neckerchief and the traditional wide-brimmed campaign hat. They were "boy scout" all the way.

In 1945, there were 18 Eagle Scouts in the corps and by 1947, 20 had attained that highest scout rank. In 1947, the corps participated in the most prestigious scouting event, the International Scout Jamboree in Moisson, France. They were the only musical scout unit representing the United States at the event.

The Madison Scouts were fortunate to have had excellent musical instructors during the 1940s who demanded each member know how to read music and play in tune.

As the 1950s began, monumental organizational and programmatic changes took place. A group of parents established an association to support the corps in all of its activities. The first major project undertaken was the establishment of Christmas tree lots that would be the corps' main fund-raiser for the next two decades.

Two years later, the first annual Madison Scouts-sponsored "Drums on Parade" show was held at Breese Stevens Field. This show celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2002. In 1951, the corps was divided into two corps -- the Explorer Scouts and the Boy Scouts. The Explorer corps, or Madison Scouts, would serve the older, more advanced members. The Boy Scout corps, later called the Junior Scouts, would train those under 14 years old for the Explorer corps.

New uniforms also brought the Scouts into a new era. With the formation of the Junior Scouts, the Explorer Scouts adopted explorer green to distinguish the unit from the junior corps' traditional khaki. The uniforms also set the Explorer Scouts apart from the other corps whose uniforms tended to be splashier. The crisp lines of white against forest green -- white neckerchiefs, gloves, belts and military leggings -- provided an often-welcome relief from shiny blouses, sashes, shakos, plumes and leg stripes.

In 1952, Madison purchased French horns, adding a third voice to their powerful horn line.

During the 1950s, the Explorer Scouts grew to about 60 members and it became necessary to purchase the organization's first vehicle, a small truck to carry the corps' equipment. The corps also chartered two buses to travel to appearances.

Don Marcoullier and the 'Madison style,' 1950-1954

In 1950, Don Marcoullier took over as program director and in the next four years set the foundation for what was to become the "Madison style." Marcoullier was assistant director of the University of Wisconsin marching band in the early 1950s and was band director at Edgewood High School in Madison.

He brought with him Roger Muzzy, a UW graduate assistant with a similar background and musical sense. Muzzy took over as director in 1953 after Marcoullier was stricken with tuberculosis, carrying on Marcoullier's spirit of innovation and daring.

Above all, Marcoullier brought a keen sense of general effect and showmanship with him from the UW band; he knew what would really please and entertain a crowd. He introduced the "silent drill," or "scatter drill," in which marchers suddenly stopped playing and then scattered in seemingly random directions; just as suddenly, the members resumed marching and playing again as if nothing had happened.

He introduced the "March of the Wooden Soldiers" with each member mimicking the shuffle of a wind-up toy. In addition, Marcoullier introduced dancing to the tune of the *Can-Can*.



Madison Scouts, 1944, at a War Bond Rally *(photo from the collection of the Madison Scouts).*

During *Alexander's Ragtime Band*, audiences were treated to the brass players directing their bugles up toward them (a trait revived by the Scouts in the early 1970s) and bowing to them at the end of the drill.

In all, Marcoullier was the person most responsible for putting the Madison Scouts on a course that would place them on the cutting edge of the drum corps activity. Under his guidance, Madison emerged as a Midwest power. The early 1950s were a seesaw battle for the top spot.

A powerhouse is born, 1954-1959

In 1954, Madison burst on the national scene and took it by storm. All season long, Madison and the Kilties traded victories, neither corps taking less than second place in any Midwest contest. Madison's brass and general effect scores never dropped below second all season. It all boiled down to the South Milwaukee "Spectacle of Music," the most prestigious contest in the Midwest.

The East recognized this show as the



Madison Scouts, 1950, at Valley Forge, PA *(photo from the collection of the Madison Scouts).*

Midwest championship. Madison's great strengths won out and they were off to their first VFW National Championship in Philadelphia with confidence and momentum.

To the members of the Madison Scouts, the Eastern corps were legends. Only a handful of Scouts had seen a few of them during a 1951 tour. Madison tied with the Audubon Bon Bons for sixth place in the preliminaries. The Scouts were so elated to be in finals that they shoulder-carried their director off the field when the score was posted. To the jaded "legends" of the East, such exuberance over a sixth-place finish was perplexing.

That night was the thrill of a lifetime for the Scouts. It was their first nationals and they performed in front of thousands of fans in Municipal Stadium. Everything was on the line for the Eastern elite, but the Scouts were simply glad to be performing.

Astonishingly, Madison took second place behind Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights. The East was stunned, but the stadium crowd went crazy. Madison received the only standing ovation of the evening and it lasted until the announcer had to ask for quiet for the next corps.

This display demonstrated to the Scouts that bringing ecstatic audiences to their feet could be more thrilling than receiving the highest score. That belief remains to this day an essential part of the Madison philosophy.

From 1954-1959 the corps thrived creatively under the program direction of Stan Stitgen (1954-1955), Paul Haack (1956-1957) and Robert Spevacek (1958-1959). The corps' musical repertoire was expanded greatly and included the introduction of classical music. The Scouts also became famous for cymbal and flag twirling, bugle flipping, head-choppers and playing G above high C on the soprano bugle.

In the summer of 1955, the new bass baritone bugle was added, giving the Scouts four voices. Also, the tenor drums switched from Scottish style to rudimental. Madison had another successful Midwest season and then headed east for the championship.

Fortified with gamma-globulin shots to protect them from Boston's polio epidemic, the corps entered the VFW Nationals and was awarded second place.



Madison Scouts, 1956, in Long Beach, CA *(photo from the collection of the Madison Scouts).*

The following year, the corps toured extensively, visiting Florida by bus in June and California by train in August. At the 1956 American Legion Nationals in Los Angeles, the Scouts placed second for the third year in a row.

Week after week in 1957, the Scouts and the Cavaliers traded first and second place in the Midwest. At season's end, the corps traveled to Florida for the VFW Nationals and placed fifth out of a huge field. The Scouts also produced a studio recording of their drill music for the first time in 1957.

A major step in the evolution of the bugle occurred that year when a rotary valve was added to the single piston. This dramatically increased the options for what could be played on the instrument.

The 1958 edition of the Madison Scouts was a combination of seasoned veterans and talented recruits. Madison went to the VFW in New York City and placed fifth in old Dodger Stadium. This was also the first year that a Madison Scout, soprano player James McCarthy, won a national solo championship. A long tradition of excellence in solo and ensemble competition had begun.

In 1958, color guard instructor John Price, a former Scout French horn player, expanded the color guard and integrated it into the corps' drill. Normally made up of a U.S. flag and three or four other flags, the guards generally stayed out of the way, off to the side of the field. At best, they might be featured at one short point in the drill, if at all.

Price changed that by doubling the size of the guard and giving it an innovative, flashy role as part of the drill. He also entered the expanded guard in national contests and they won the 1959 American Legion National Color Guard Championships. His innovations were to have a profound influence on color guards in the 1960s and beyond.

In 1959, Madison fielded what was perhaps their finest corps of the decade. Percussion and marching and maneuvering scores improved dramatically. For the first time, the corps did not have to rely solely on its brass and general effect to get to the top. Overall, the Scouts finished third at the VFW and fourth at the American Legion National Championships.

Continued success, decline and regrouping, 1960-1969

In 1960, the corps was made up of more than 50 percent new members. That many rookies usually spelled trouble from a performance standpoint, yet it was an excellent year. The Scouts won the state VFW and American Legion titles, placed second to the Cavaliers at South Milwaukee and took fifth at the VFW National Championship. They also won the VFW National Parade Championship and the color guard took second place.

The 1961 corps launched the season with a parade in Atlantic City, NJ. The Scouts had only traveled that far for a parade once before. It turned out to be a disappointing year competitively, with fans and "experts" bewildered by the Scouts' eighth-place finish.

The summer of 1962 was the first time in 12 years the corps changed its uniform style, having received the approval of the national office of the Boy Scouts of America. The new uniform was a military cadet dress style in explorer green with white trim. The corps wore this uniform through the 1966 season. The Scouts, propelled by an outstanding horn line, placed sixth at the VFW Nationals. The 1962 show included the classic *Ballet in Brass*, arranged by the talented Nick Vendon.

Madison celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1963 by fielding another excellent corps. However, the corps did not attend either of the national championships due to financial problems that had been brewing for some time. Madison had quit going to American Legion Nationals some years before and never went again because the American Legion Convention was always after school started.

The Scouts, however, were still attending VFW Championships. The corps did not attend in 1963 due to the distance between Madison and Seattle and because most other major corps were not attending.

The 1964 Scouts endured a season of struggle. Many members left after 1963, resulting in a younger and smaller group. Financial challenges were developing as drum corps became more expensive. In addition, the new program director for the corps was not accepted well by the membership and left mid-season. Madison did not make the finals for the first time since 1954. A high point of the season was an appearance by the corps at the Worlds Fair in New York City.

The 1965 season saw some improvement, but Madison again missed making the top 12 at the VFW Championships, finishing 14th. The Scouts added two contra bass bugles, which first appeared in 1962, to their horn line. Mellophones and euphoniums were also introduced in 1965.

The 1966 corps, although smaller than most of the top units, was quite mature and performed well. Before the end of the year, they showed up uninvited at the National Dream and politely crashed the party. The crowd's hearts were won over by one of the Scouts' best shows of the year.

This season was also the only one in the six-year span from 1964 to 1969 that Madison

made the national championship finals, placing 10th.

In the 1967-1968 period, the corps again took on a new look; they had little money and their uniforms were virtually rotting on the hangers. In an effort to obtain replacements, they secured authentic cadet-style uniforms from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point . However, the new cadet uniforms did little to improve the corps' competitiveness. The scouts finished 15th in the prelims at the 1967 VFW Nationals in New Orleans, LA, and 20th at the 1968 VFW Nationals in Detroit, MI.

In 1968, a revolution occurred in marching percussion. Multi-pitched tenors, bass and cymbal configurations appeared, and tunable marching tympani were introduced. Improvements in the late 1960s were made to the bugle as their key was changed from G-D to G-F.

On January 15, 1968, Beebe passed away. "You can't delve into the history of the Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps without delving into the life of its sparkplug, Clarence H. Beebe," reported the *Wisconsin*



Madison Scouts, August 21, 1968, at VFW Nationals in Detroit, MI *(photo by Moe Knox from the collection of the* Drum Corps World*).*

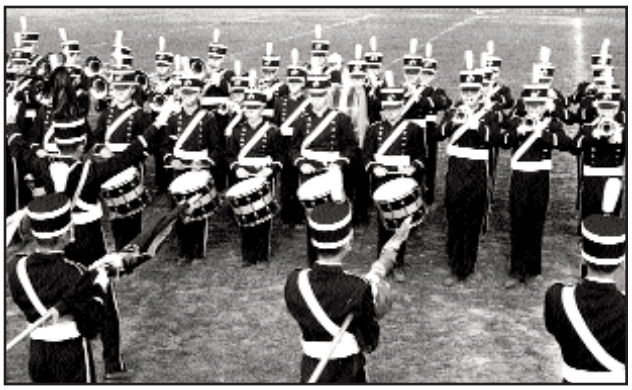
State Journal. Beebe was the conscience and driving force behind the corps. As its leader and mentor, he influenced the lives of nearly 1,000 young men who not only entertained millions of people, but also went on to become productive citizens.

He believed in scouting and received scouting's most prestigious adult award, the Silver Beaver. In 1965, he was the first person inducted into the Drum Corps Hall of Fame. His funeral procession was believed to have been the longest in Madison's history. All of scouting and drum corps was saddened, and Madison, WI, lost a great citizen.

Beebe's death left the Madison Scouts in a state of crisis. In addition to floundering leadership, financial struggles and low placements in 1967 and 1968 contributed to the corps' instability. The crisis culminated in the creation of a rival splinter corps from the Scouts, the 32nd Hussars.

Price, the Scout instructor of the 1959 national champion color guard and the corps' field director from 1967-1968, formed the Hussars in the fall of 1968. He based his new corps in nearby Middleton, WI, but the Hussars struggled financially throughout their brief existence. The corps eventually folded shortly before the 1973 season.

By the end of 1971, some members of the Hussars sensed the inevitable end of the corps and began to join the Scout ranks in 1972. The exodus of former Hussars



Madison Scouts, August 30, 1964, at the World Open *(photo by Moe Knox from the collection of the* Drum Corps World*).*

increased in 1973 and the influx of fresh talent contributed greatly to the Scouts' successes of the mid-1970s.

The crisis diminished in 1969 when William Howard became director. A Scout alumnus of the early 1950s under Marcoullier and Muzzy and a member of the Drum Corps International Hall of Fame, Howard rebuilt the Scouts by reviving the corps' successes of that decade. This rejuvenation included a return to the Explorer Scout uniform of the 1950s -- a symbolic, but effective way to circumvent the corps of 1967-1968.

The stable leadership and new identity paid off. Although the corps failed to make finals at the VFW Nationals, the Illinois Drum Corps Association presented its "Comeback Corps of the Year" award to the vastly improved Scouts. Under Howard's leadership, the 1969 Scouts were on the mend after several years of fiscal struggle and identity crisis.

The Scouts reborn -- 1970-1975

On March 1, 1970, the Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps Association, Inc. became the not-for-profit corporation created to support both the Explorer and Boy Scout corps. Howard was named executive director and also continued as director of the Explorer corps. He rejuvenated the 1970 Scouts by returning to the wide open, exciting, crowd-pleasing shows for which they became famous in the 1950s.

In many respects, the 1970 show was a revival of the "Madison style" established by Marcoullier in 1950. The "Marcoullier revival" included the scatter drill and members imitating wind-up toy soldiers in the Scout classic from the early 1950s, *March of the Wooden Soldiers*. In addition, corps members skipped off the field in the Scouts' popular closer, *Ding, Dong, the Witch is Dead*; the youthful prance was a playful variation on dance moves introduced by Marcoullier in 1950.

The 1970 show also included a new arrangement of the corps' theme song, *You'll Never Walk Alone*, first heard in the early 1950s.

The summer of 1970 was the beginning of the Scouts' rise as a major brass power. Ray Baumgardt, the corps' brass arranger from 1970-1979, created not only the famous Madison sound of that decade, but also influenced horn arrangers throughout the drum corps activity. This prowess resulted in championships.

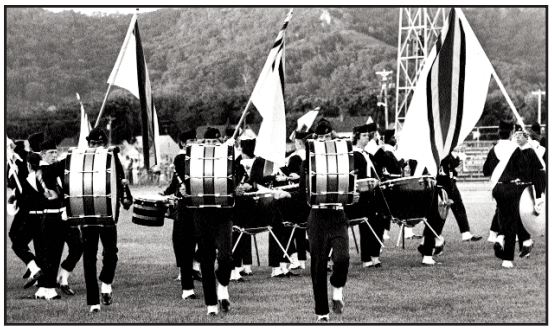
In August 1970, the Scouts won their first major national championship at the U.S. Open. The $1,500 first-place money was the largest sum they had won up to that time. The corps went on to place seventh at the VFW Nationals -- its first appearance at finals since 1966.

The 1971 show kept alive the spirit of innovation and daring that Marcoullier had established with the Scouts 21 years earlier. The 1971 show featured the total theme concept of "Scouts in Fantasyland," including "Alice in Wonderland" and members donning costumes.

Howard's daughter, Bonnie, the only girl ever to march in the Scouts, played the role of Alice. She was accompanied on the field by a sprightly rabbit, a spindly Pinocchio and motley array of color guard members as the Seven Dwarfs. These child-like elements, along with skipping in *Ding, Dong, the Witch is Dead*, were coordinated with the classic Marcoullier traits of the scatter drill and mimicked toy soldiers in *March of the Wooden Solders*.

The corps placed second at the U.S. Open and then traveled to Dallas, TX, for VFW Nationals, where they placed 10th. Despite the lower finish, the Scouts were one of only two horn lines that season to receive a perfect 5.0 in music analysis. The other was Sandra Opie's Argonne Rebels from Kansas. Both repeated this remarkable achievement in 1972. In so doing, Baumgardt firmly established the Scouts as one of the preeminent horn lines in drum corps of the early 1970s.

The summer of 1971 also saw the formation of the controversial Midwest Combine and its Eastern equivalent, the



Madison Scouts, July 6, 1971, in La Crosse, WI *(photo from the collection of the* Drum Corps World*).*

United Organization of Junior Corps. These two groups were formed to give the top drum corps the ability to control their own destinies. Up to this time the VFW, American Legion and other individual sponsors had controlled the aspects of judging, show

schedule and pay scales for the corps. Madison was a member of the Combine along with Santa Clara Vanguard, First Federal Blue Stars, Troopers and the Cavaliers.

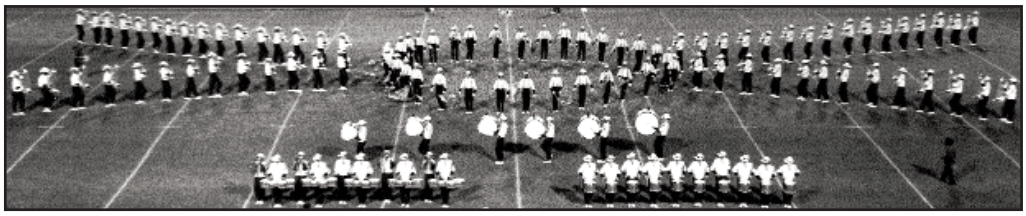
That summer was also significant in that it ushered in the era of extended touring. Up to this point, only Western corps had experienced being on the road for weeks at a time. Prior to the 1972 season, the Combine and its Eastern counterpart joined forces to create Drum Corps International.

In 1972, the Scouts' show recreated some of the most memorable events that shaped "Old Glory's" destiny. They also featured various historical flags of our country. The Scouts failed to make finals at the first DCI Championship, placing 14th in the preliminary competition.

For 1973 it was the year of a major image change. To overcome the relapse of 1972, the corps created a new style that was contemporary, fast-moving and extremely powerful. The corps invigorated its new image by reviving the big-band classic from the 1962 show, *Ballet in Brass*.

Madison reinforced its spirited image with *God Bless the Child*, the tune that many consider to be the quintessential Scouts song of the 1970s. Indeed, the corps' 1973 show established what Scouts alumni fondly celebrate as the corps' enduring identity: the "Madison Green Gods."

The newfound esprit de corps in 1973 continued unabated for nearly 30 years, including the great championship corps of 1975 and 1988. The new image was largely the creation of James Elvord, a Scouts alumnus and DCI Hall of Fame horn instructor of the corps. Elvord, in effect, created a new Madison style by translating the corps' traditional crowd appeal into a fresh, contemporary sound: fast, hard-driving and breathtaking.



Madison Scouts, 1983, at DCI Midwest in Whitewater, WI *(photo from the collection of the* Drum Corps World*)*.

Moreover, Elvord's remake of the Scouts was inspired, in part, by one of the greatest horn lines of the 1960s: Col. Truman Crawford's Chicago Royal Airs. Uniform changes also enhanced the new image, as white Aussie hats, gauntlets and braided sashes were added to the traditional Explorer Scout uniform. The Scouts also featured a rifle line for the first time.

The new identity achieved impressive results. Madison attained its highest ranking in 14 years, a fourth-place finish at the DCI Championships. They also captured their first brass trophy.

Under the instruction of Baumgardt and Elvord, the Scouts' horn line dominated the brass caption from 1973 to 1975. The success of the 1973 season fulfilled Howard's vision of making the Madison Scouts once again a national powerhouse, a status the corps had not enjoyed since the 1950s. Thus, in 1973, the Scouts were fully reborn.

Glory and heartbreak were combined in 1974. The Scouts won nearly all of the major titles they sought. Sadly, the DCI title escaped them and they placed second. However, the corps chalked up 20 first-place finishes out of 25 contests. Madison never placed lower than second -- the best record of any major corps.

Despite the disappointing loss at DCI, Elvord's horn line went undefeated, capturing its second consecutive DCI brass trophy. In addition to *Ballet in Brass* and *God Bless the Child*, the 1974 Scouts strengthened their potent image with *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*, another Scouts classic of the 1970s.

The Scouts were recognized for their excellence by becoming the first corps invited to represent the United States at the prestigious International Festival of Youth Orchestras and Performing Arts in Great Britain. The season also marked the Madison Scouts' first hockey team.

The first official DCI yearbook was written and designed by Madison members, and for the first time a woman, Jeanne Beckman, served as chairperson of the board of directors for this all-male corps. Keyboard instruments in the form of xylophones and bells were reintroduced after having not been used since 1962.

The year of the Scouts was 1975. Madison had at last achieved the title of DCI champion. They did it in indisputable style, going nearly undefeated for the season, losing only DCI Midwest prelims. The powerhouse show featured *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*, *MacArthur Park*, *Rhapsody in Blue*, a *Dueling Banjos* drum solo and *The Way We Were*. On the same night, Madison's horn line was awarded the high brass trophy for the third straight year.

An exciting drum corps first was the PBS nationwide live telecast of the DCI Finals. Another monumental achievement of the 1975 season was that the corps purchased its own fleet of three used motors coaches to transport the 128-man corps on its ever-increasing tour schedule.

Continued successes -- 1976-1988

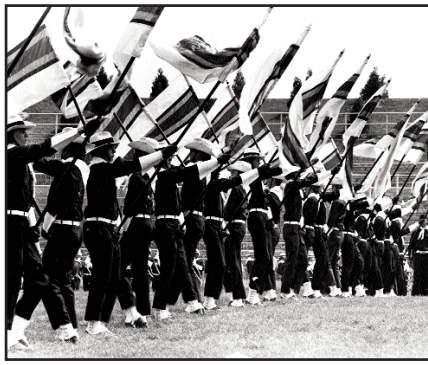
The 1976 corps put everything it had into keeping the DCI title, but show design problems kept them out of contention in the first half of the season. The defunct show included *Shaft*, a marching version of *MacArthur Park*, a disco drum solo called *Pick up the Pieces* and *Mahogany*.

In a desperate attempt to shoot for the top, the staff decided to scrap the entire show during the corps' Western tour. The new show revived the championship glories of 1975, but replaced *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue* with *Stars and Stripes Forever* and the *Dueling Banjos* drum solo with *Ease on Down the Road*.

While on the Western tour, corps members learned the new music by day on the bus while performing the old show at night. When the corps returned to Madison in early July, the Scouts pulled out of all of their mid-season shows and went into a three-week marathon camp to learn the new drill and clean the entire show. No corps had ever attempted such a complete overhaul to win the national championship.

The Scouts nearly pulled it off, placing second at the DCI Championships. However, the cost was high as many staff and marching members quit due to burnout at the end of the season.

In the 1970s, the Scouts continued to face financial problems as the economic climate became more demanding. By the mid-1970s, running a drum and bugle corps had become a full-time job. In 1977, Scott Stewart became the first full-time director. He marched with the Scouts from 1968-1974 and served as a staff member in the 1975-1976 season.



Madison Scouts, 1973, at DCI Midwest in Whitewater, WI *(photo by Wilson Leong from the collection of the* Drum Corps World*)*.

The 1977 staff was composed of eager alumni. Despite the lack of experience, the corps was able to maintain its level of excellence and placed sixth at DCI.

In 1978, the Scouts built on the experience of 1977 and produced one of their finest corps to date. For the first time since 1975, the corps defeated every major competitor and captured fourth place at an exciting championship in Denver. The drum line featured 12 snares, their largest line ever, and placed first at DCI Prelims. The corps continued to replace its valve-rotary horns with the new two-valve bugles, which had been legalized the previous year.

Frustrating is probably the best way to describe the 1979 season. The Madison Scouts entered the season with a talented corps and a show that was designed to compete with the California powers. Although it was well-accepted by the crowd, it was panned by the judging community and questionable revisions were made.

The corps dominated competition until mid-season, but it was all down hill from there. The final outcome was an eighth-place

finish at the DCI Championships.

True to form, the Scouts bounced back from the disappointments of 1979 and charged into the 1980 season. The corps toured the United States and Canada and appeared more frequently than in recent years in their hometown. Madison captured several national titles and placed sixth in a hotly contested DCI Championship.

That was also the year the development of an almost complete alumni staff became a reality. Howard stepped down as executive director. Stewart, who had already taken on the responsibilities of program director after the previous season, replaced Howard.

The 1981 Scouts dominated competitively for most of the season, chalking up 24 first places, six seconds and three thirds. The judges didn't see eye-to-eye with the corps -- or the crowd -- coming down the stretch. The final result was third place.

The summer of 1981 was also the year percussion equipment was first allowed to be grounded on the front sideline and the "pit" was born. On the business side, a booster club was established and the Madison Scouts Foundation became a productive entity.

In 1982, the corps placed fifth at DCI and featured an incredibly talented dancing color guard. The guard uniform was slightly altered to enhance the dance image and this proved to be a tasteful change.

After years of effort, the corps finally established a successful bingo game. Bingo, performance fees and souvenir sales became major income generators for the corps.

In 1983, Madison presented a complex and demanding program that proved difficult to perfect. The Scouts rose to the occasion with an incredible performance at the championships. The guard was awarded the best color guard trophy. At the finale, Madison surprised everyone by taking the field with no equipment and singing *You'll Never Walk Alone* to the crowd.

The corps made a major uniform change in 1983, which consisted of a white Eisenhower-style jacket, green pants, mint green shirts and white and red accessories. A semi-trailer equipment truck was purchased to accommodate the ever-increasing amount of equipment the corps needed.

Membership in the corps reached the average age of 20 -- an all-time high. Only 12 members were under 18, and 34 aged out at season's end.

The 1984 season was one of continued growth in all areas. The corps set new standards in the activity with its positive approach and healthy philosophy. It was rediscovering that education and social development, as well as performance level, were the top priorities of the organization.

On the competitive side, the corps held its position in the top five in a year that produced five of the greatest drum corps of all time. Only 2.4 points separated these groups at the championships. Financially, the Scouts became a phenomenon in the drum corps world by eliminating all their debt and operating with a positive cash flow.

The 1985 season was a banner year in the history of the Scouts. Not only was the corps spectacular in performance and successful in competition, but it also received long-deserved publicity and attention in.

Much of this was due to DCI being held at Camp Randall Stadium. This proved to be the most successful championships in the history of DCI, with much credit going to the local Madison committee. More than 100,000 people attended the six-day event, including prelims, the parade and finals. The corps also enhanced its reputation by appearing locally with the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra and at the Badger State Games.

The uniform scheme was revised -- white jackets/green pants to green jackets/white pants -- and the accessories were brightened.

A mutually beneficial relationship with the Yamaha Corporation of America was started. The corps also took another step forward in its financial security plan and established an equipment reserve for future capital purchases through its foundation.

DCI returned to Madison in 1986. In surveys, the Scouts continued to be rated as the most popular drum corps in the activity by fans and show sponsors.



Madison Scouts, 1997 *(photo by Alan Winslow from the collection of the* Drum Corps World*).*

Camp Randall Stadium hosted a Green Bay Packers game for the first time and the Madison Scouts were the featured halftime entertainment on the Sunday before DCI.

In 1987, the Scouts completed their two-year capital fund drive that raised more than $180,000 for the purchase of replacement coaches. These vehicles gave Madison the distinction of owning some of the newest buses in the activity. The DCI World Championships returned to Madison for an unprecedented third year due to the incredible success the first two years.

In a year that featured possibly the strongest group of DCI finalists ever, the Scouts landed a hard-fought sixth place.

The corps continued its summer tour schedule, traveling more than 10,000 miles in eight weeks. The Scouts made more than 50 appearances in contests, exhibitions, concerts, clinics and parades. In the off-season, appearances included the governor's inauguration, the Madison Holiday Parade and the annual spring open house that had been started in 1983.

The 1988 season will certainly go down in history as one of the corps' greatest years. Not only did the Scouts celebrate a very special 50th anniversary, but also successfully completed a spectacular 16-day tour of Europe and also captured the DCI title.

Anniversary festivities included an alumni reunion, special promotional items and the return of "Drums on Parade" to Madison. The Scouts visited Germany, Holland and England in late June through early July. The corps conducted clinics, hosted competitions and performed for the marching music activity in Europe.

The second tour took the corps to Kansas City, MO, for the DCI Championships. The Scouts not only won the finals, but also walked away with the semifinals top score after one of the finest performances in the history of the activity.

Every aspect of that program was strong, but the visual style and execution set new standards. New uniforms, which brightened yet maintained that special Madison image, added to the effectiveness of the production.

The People's Corps -- 1989-2002

At the 1989 finals, the corps was, as usual, one of the crowd's favorites, but ended up in seventh place in a group of seven championship-caliber corps. The major disappointment of the season was that, because of political maneuvering, the Scouts were not allowed to appear last in finals as defending champions, breaking a tradition that had existed for decades.

"Drums on Parade" was held at Camp Randall Stadium for the first time. The Scouts also began their long-term relationship with the First United Methodist Church. Each spring a special service is written and features a performance by the corps.

In 1990, the Scouts traveled more land miles and toured longer than they ever had before. Every area of the country except the Northwest and Southeast was visited. The corps took its first trip to the West Coast since 1976 and survived the rainiest second tour in memory. All of this was accomplished smoothly and with virtually no vehicle breakdowns -- a positive indication of how far the organization had advanced.

The alumni project began generating significant financial support. The corporate name was changed to the Madison Drum and Bugle Corps Association, Inc., taking out the word Scouts.

The 1991 Scouts thrilled audiences everywhere they appeared with another well-conceived, exciting program. Rehearsals continued to be held at East High School in the winter and at Camp Randall Stadium and Lafayette High School in the summer. Out-of-area members lived at the Regent dormitories when not on tour.

In Drum Corps Midwest, seven of the directors of the top 23 corps were alumni of the Madison Scouts.

Building on the successes of previous

years, Madison received nothing but rave reviews from the very first show in 1992. Their finals performance at the DCI Championships in their hometown was nothing less than sensational.

Much capital equipment was purchased in the early 1990s, including a custom staff vehicle, a cook truck, a promotions vehicle and an equipment trailer. The outfitting of the brass section with three-valve bugles, which had been approved in 1990, was also completed. The illness and death of longtime cooking crew chief Ollie Mae Banks saddened the whole organization.

The 1993 corps performed more than 60 times while on its way to Jackson, MS, for the championships. In Jackson, Madison performed brilliantly despite a driving rainstorm. Madison is the only corps to claim the dubious distinction of being rained on during DCI Finals.

The corps continued to attract applicants from the throughout the United States and from a number of foreign countries. Australia joined England, Scotland, Japan, the Netherlands and Canada as countries that produced members of the Madison Scouts. Forty-eight members, an all-time high, successfully participated in DCI solo and ensemble competition.

The corps produced a two-volume compact disc, "Through the Years," which traced the musical history of the Scouts from the early 1950s through 1992.

The summer of 1994 saw the Scouts reach yet another level of excellence in the development of their unique philosophy and their approach to show design. The program elicited standing ovations at every stop along the tour that took the corps to the West Coast, the East Coast and just about everywhere in between.

In 1995, the Scouts featured a completely Spanish-flavored program subtitled "A Drum Corps Fan's Dream." The show featured an incredible array of effects designed to drive audiences wild. Madison delivered one absolutely spectacular performance after another. The crowd responded with appreciation, admiration and unbridled emotion.

The 1996 and 1997 Scouts added fuel to the fire they had started in 1995 by presenting "A Drum Corps Fan's Dream, Part Dos" and "The Pirates of Lake Mendota." The DCI Championships took place in Orlando, FL, both years and the Scouts were featured in special performances on the main stage at EPCOT Center during DCI week.

Madison received the Spirit of Disney Award at the 1996 and 1997 Saturday night finals, citing the corps for being the most creative and entertaining group of the evening. When the score for Madison was announced each year, the surprised and disappointed crowd reacted with booing, but followed it with full standing ovations so boisterous and persistent that the announcer was unable to continue.

The Madison Scouts celebrated their 60th anniversary in 1998.

After overwhelming the crowds in 1997 with "Pirates of Lake Mendota" and burning down stadiums in 1995 and 1996 with hot Latin-flavored shows, the corps explored a new direction in 1998. The production, dubbed "Power, Pizzazz and all that Jazz" presented an all-jazz program that featured three very different approaches to the jazz idiom.

Following a mood-setting warm-up, the opener was a fast-paced, straight-ahead, modern big band number called *Lupon*, which was based on the theme music from a popular Japanese cartoon.

The next piece, *Swingin' Pete . . . Sweet*, was a Madison original that blended classical and jazz stylings and was a take-off on *Peer Gynt Suite No. 1* by Edvard Grieg. The closing number, *Remembrance*, was a jazz-rock fusion powerhouse by Paul Hart.

The 1999 production was based on the music of "Jesus Christ Superstar" by Andrew Lloyd Webber. The corps did not attempt to follow the story line of the original work. Instead, the Scouts presented fresh arrangements coupled with exciting visual interpretation of the feelings evoked by the music.



Madison Scouts, 1996 *(photo by Christopher Lewis from the collection of the* Drum Corps World*).*

The reputation the corps has earned as one of the most entertaining, crowd-pleasing groups in the activity is well-deserved. The Scouts' goal in programming has always been to offer fans an innovative, never-play-it-safe show where showmanship and communication with the audience are essential ingredients.

It is impossible to think of the Scouts in the DCI age without giving credit to Stewart. Perhaps more than any corps active today, the Scouts have had their share of current and future DCI Hall of Famers. Many of them have fanned out across the drum corps world to participate in the success of other DCI champions.

Stewart emerged over the years as the single common uniting influence over the wondrous legacy that became the Madison Scouts. The philosophy he developed in Madison spread to the whole of drum corps and the Scouts, as much as any corps could be, became "America's drum corps."

Stewart's single-minded devotion to the concept of entertainment endeared him to drum corps purists, but he began to find drum corps had turned in a new and different direction; one that he felt didn't serve the best interests of the activity; one that was dragging drum corps away from the fans to some misguided notion of abstract art.

Stewart spoke against it often and with passion. Like many men who came to brilliant prominence, after a time he saw his influence wane and his Scouts, still wedded to the concept of "fans first," declined in the placing. True to his ideals, Stewart paid no attention and unswervingly led his corps to show after show designed around the fan. And the fans appreciated it.

In the summer of 2002, the impossible occurred. In their own hometown, the Scouts saw their streak come to an abrupt and unexpected end and, for the first time in 29 years, DCI Finals went on without the Madison Scouts. The effects of this are still reverberating through the drum corps world.

As in many instances in the world when the unthinkable happens, change is warranted. Stewart stepped aside in the fall of 2002 and in doing so ushered in the next generation of leadership who will now take over the task of preserving the national treasure that is the Madison Scouts.

Stewart's place in DCI history, like his beloved Madison Scouts, has been assured for some time. He takes his place now among C.H. Beebe, Bill Howard and all the influential heroes of drum corps.

Text compiled and revised by Robert Pilot and Dan Guernsey. Chuck Eikle, Scott Stewart and Dennis Spurlin wrote the original text. We thank these writers, along with Gary Scott and Dan Scerpella, for their contributions.



Dan Guernsey marched with the Madison Junior Scouts in 1970 and the Madison Scouts from 1971-1977. He was one of the seven dwarfs in the 1971 "Alice" show, before moving on to the drum line, playing tympani from 1972-1974 and multi-tenors from 1975-1977. He was also DCI multi-tenor individual champion in 1976 and 1977.

He is currently an assistant professor of art history and humanities at Florida International University-Miami. His interests include exercise, reading and travel.



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He produced the three-video set, "The Madison Scouts -- The First 60 Years" documentary.

He lives in St. Paul, MN, with his wife, Wendy, two dogs and a cat. He teaches television production at Harding High School in St. Paul. He is also a licensed real estate appraiser.