



Hello,

I want to thank you for joining us this November 1st for the 2025 Tri-State Marching Championships, Contest of Champions. It is my hope that you and your students have a positive experience and that everything runs smoothly for you. We welcome you to our campus and if there is anything you need, please don't hesitate to ask.

To that end, I ask that you please read through most, if not all, of this packet. There are several things that might be new. We are looking to run a low-stress show and make sure that we operate on time. This requires your cooperation and that of your students, staff, and chaperones/equipment managers.

If you need something the day of the event, my cell number is 813-727-5177, and you can text or call me. However, anyone in a green polo or Marching Thunder gear, should be able to help you out.

Musically,

Christopher Schletter, PhD.
Marshall University
Director of Athletic Bands
schletter@marshall.edu



Director Check-In, Truck/Bus Parking, & Flow

We will have a director check-in table on the 3rd Ave sidewalk in front of the Shewey Athletic building. There you will check in, meet up with your band guides, and receive your director packets, which will include a flow map, performance schedule, and wrist bands from students, staff, and chaperones.

Your buses and equipment trucks **MUST** park and unload in the bus/truck parking area east of the Chris Cline Indoor Facility (on the east side of the RR tracks). **ALL 1A BANDS:** After your performance, please load all your equipment onto your truck and move your bus(es) and truck(s) to the Bus/Truck Overflow lot in the Engineering parking lot (See bus/truck flow map).



Please be aware of your warmup time, transition time, and gate time!! We are running this show in **14-minute intervals**, and all bands must abide by this timing. PLEASE, do not marching your band around to the back sideline and down the 50. Please enter from the north endzone. If this is different than normal for you, please adjust to this process. We need to make sure our show is staying on time.



Performance Beginning/Ending

Please have your drum majors and/or field commanders salute or provide an indication that your band is ready when the announcer asks, "Is your band ready?" Likewise, please have them acknowledge the audience at the conclusion of your performance so that the announcer knows to resume their script and move the show along.

Hospitality Room

The Director's Hospitality Room is located on the Working Press (WP) level of the press box and is in the Kindred Communications box (which will be clearly marked) for your enjoyment. Food and drinks will be provided, if you are interested in some small bites to eat.

Field Turf, Equipment, and Trailers:

Due to our turf field, please be sure that your carts or props with wheels are equipped with tires that are at least 6" wide. Props without the appropriate tires should be carried onto the field and boards placed under the tires. We will provide transportation for your sideline percussion equipment to the stadium field sideline. If there are any special needs in this area, please let us know in advance.

We must be extremely careful not to damage or permanently "dent" the turf during our festival. Damage to the turf by using improper tires will void the warranty on the turf. If you have questions concerning this and/or your equipment, please call me at 813-727-5177.

Drum Major/Senior Retreat

We ask that all drum majors or field commanders line up on the north endzone (the side the bands enter/exit) at the start of the Marching Thunder exhibition (9:30pm). There will be signs along the endzone wall indicating the order in which your students should line up (performance order). If your band program is not remaining at the school, please let us know when you check in to receive your packet so that we are aware and we have you accounted for.

If you have seniors that would like to join your drum majors/field commanders, they are welcome to do so. However, we ask that they line up behind those students accepting awards of behalf of the band.

Tubas, Baris and Marching Thunder

This year we would like to welcome any and all tuba and/or bari sax players from you band to come down to the field with their instrument and join the Marching Thunder as part of our exhibition performance. We invite them to come line up in the front, with our tubas/bari saxes to be featured in one of our favorite pieces Swag Surfin'. The music for your tubas and/or bari saxes will be available [here in this linked DropBox folder](#).

General Guidelines and Reminders:

- **Band guides** will be provided to your band from your arrival through your exit of the field after your performance. If you need additional guidance after that, please find one of our Marching Thunder members in a green polo.
- Unfortunately, there are **no changing facilities** near the stadium. I would suggest to either come dressed or make a stop before you arrive.
- Bands will **enter the stadium from the West Ramp** (front sideline) for their performance and exit from the East Ramp (back sideline) after their performance.
- **PLEASE have your band ready to go at the West Ramp on time (see schedule).**
- Please do not use a drum cadence to march to the stadium.
- Do not begin your show until the official announcer has announced that your band “may enter the field in competition.” Please, have your drum majors/field commander salute (or indicate) that the band is ready when asked.
- **Hash Marks** – We will have the high school hashes marked clearly with white tape. We are going to try to tape over the college hashes with green tape so that the high school hashes are more noticeable.
- No fire batons or pyrotechnics are to be brought to the festival.
- No air horns and artificial noisemakers are allowed in the spectator area.
- We will provide an **extension cord** attached to an electrical outlet on the front sideline at the 50 yard line for your use. If you need an electrical source on the back sideline, please let us know.
- Following the presentation of awards, please have all students exit the stadium as soon as possible. Our athletic department has asked for your help in clearing the stadium as quickly as you can.

Seating

Each band should seat themselves on the West side of the stadium following their performance. There will be no assigned seating. No one will be permitted on the East side of the stadium.

Scoring, Competition Suite, & Awards

Please know that all adjudicator comments and scores will be available on Competition Suite, so be sure to have your account set up. Full recap will be available directly after the award ceremony on Competition Suite.

Overall Scoring will be determined as follows:

- Music GE – 30%, Visual GE 30%, Music Ens. 20%, Visual Ens. 20%

Caption Scoring:

- Percussion 100pts
- Guard 100pts
- Majorettes/Feature Twirlers/Dance 100pts
- Drum Majors 100pts

We have 3 classes of bands: 1A, 2A, & 3A. Trophies will be awarded to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place bands in each class, plus the best-in-class awards for Effect, Music, Visual, Percussion, Color Guard, and Drum Major. Overall awards will include 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place for Majorettes, Feature Twirler, and Dance. A

Runner-up and Grand Champion for the overall competition will also be awarded. In addition, there will be an award for the highest scoring band from each West Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky states (if represented).

Judging Panel

Music GE – Marc Whitlock
Visual GE – Oliver Bullock
Music Ensemble – Steve Visnage
Visual Ensemble – Shavon Garcia
Color Guard – Maurica Smith
Majorettes/Dancers – Adam Abshire
Percussion – Jackson Hall
Drum Majors – Julia Hall

Admission

Admission for the festival will be \$14.00. Cash or Card payment options are available. Children under the age of 5 will be admitted free.

Tickets will be sold at the ticket booth and a ticket table located to the left of the Gate A entrance (northwest corner of the stadium).

Spectator Parking

Premier spectators parking is available at the west stadium parking lot accessible through the 20th Street entrance gate for a **fee of \$10**. Once this lot is full there are alternate parking lots and garages located throughout the campus which are free.