

**The following history was provided by an eastern Oregonian who marched locally  
from 1963 thru 1971.**

**We thank him for his generous donation of Pacific Northwest Drum Corps history.**

### **ATHENA FALCONS DRUM AND BUGLE CORPS**

The Falcons did have a full field drill set up and did compete in a couple of drum corps competitions (Cavalcade of Drums/Oregon American Legion State). The uniform parts I remember: they had light blue blouses and wore light blue shakos (their last years), possibly light blue color slacks, don't recall their shoe style. One of the charts they played was the theme from "Oklahoma." They used some (or maybe all) bugles that had two horizontal pistons (rather than the regular valve/rotary combination everyone else used). The G-D piston was in the normal position on the right, but on the left side of horn, there was a small piston used to activate the F-rotary (rather than the lever that was normally used to operate the rotary). Still needed both hands to operate the horn. They had a standard to small size drum line (for those times) and about 15 to 18 or more (or less) horns (chrome bugles).

The Falcons also had an American Flag Section with a small color guard. Note: Prior to and including the very early 1960s, most corps used smaller color guards, usually having no more than 3 or 4 people escorting the American flag, including one or two who carried real rifles with disabled firing mechanisms (assigned the task of guarding the colors: the American flag - where the term "color guard" comes from). In later years, corps guards were expanded to multiple rifle members (no longer real guns) and multiple flag members (carried custom designed flag styles), and were incorporated into corps' drill routines (for general effect). They became almost totally independent of the American flag section (still followed rules to properly respect the colors, however). After removal of the American flag section in the 1970s, the term "color guard" was still used for rifle/flag marching members, but a little out of context now as there are no longer any "colors" to guard.

For many years, there was a large billboard set up just outside of the city of Athena that read:  
"City of Athena, home of the Falcons Drum and Bugle Corps."