

**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.

TRI-CITIES WATER FOLLIES PARADE/CAVALCADE OF DRUMS

Most people who were in the parade have fond memories of the long parade and the heat. In the first few years, most corps tried the parade in full dress uniforms, but the heat and distance of the parade had its toll on the uniforms (the drum corps competition was later on that night and there was a possibility of a inspection - meaning you could get docked (a tic) for poor uniform condition). So, eventually everybody dressed in t-shirts/cutoffs/tennis shoes for the parade. The parade itself started on the east end of the park, then traveled west down a long hot road that was only feet away from the Columbia River on the right side, and on the left side was a mostly treeless park with grass that hasn't seen water in quite a while.

For a long way, you didn't see too many people in the park watching the parade (until you got to the announcing booth - where most of the people had gathered). What was interesting about the parade, was that on the Columbia River, some recreational boaters had anchored their boats close to shore and were decked out in swim suits and sipping on cold drinks while watching the parade (which made things feel even hotter). It almost felt like more people were watching the parade from their boats than were watching the parade from the park (and there were probably less than half a dozen boats at most).

There was a funny moment at one parade, though. Because all the corps were pretty much dressed the same, you couldn't tell one from the other (other than music/drum styles and size that identified an individual corps). While the Rangers were marching past the announcing booth, the announcer boldly and proudly announced: "From Seattle Washington, The Shamrocks Drum and Bugle Corps!" No one in the audience noticed or cared, but it was funny for those of us who knew.

The competition was held in the early evening (7:00 PM). The format on the field (looking from the stands) had white lines highlighted on each of the goal lines (Starting Line and Finish Line), sometimes there was a line highlighted on the 50-yard line. In addition, were lines highlighted about 10 to 15 yards behind the starting line (called the Inspection Line) and a line 10 to 15 yards behind the Inspection Line (called the Ready Line).

The first corps would file orderly onto the field and line up on the Ready Line, then would receive authorization to move to the Inspection Line (for inspection). After that process was

completed, the corps would then proceed to the Starting Line and begin their competition routine (but not before authorization was received to enter the field of competition).

Each of the lines (on the left side of the field) could not be stepped on or over until the corps received permission to do so (penalties were assessed if rule was violated). If a corps member stepped on or over the Starting Line, the corps would not only receive a penalty for that, but it would have started the timer (a counting of the allotted field time a corps was allowed), which would then create another penalty for the corps going past their time allowed.

Corps could lose the show or lose their placement positions before they even played their first note, if they didn't follow the starting area rules (poor inspection results on the Inspection Line would also reduce total score results). Sometimes point penalties happened to northwest corps (the big corps at the national level also had point penalties assessed at times).

When the corps finished their show (the moment when the first corps member stepped over the Finish Line, which stopped the timing and judging), and completed their final fanfare note, they would file off the field in single file around and behind the competition field. The next corps would almost be halfway into their off the line production before the first corps had completely left the field.

The Pasco competition normally had around 3 corps on the field at the same time, but in the bigger national shows, there could be up to 5:

1. The corps that just completed their show and was exiting the field.
2. The Corps actually on the competition field.
3. Another corps waiting on the Starting Line.
4. Another corps waiting on the Inspection Line.
5. Another corps waiting on the Ready Line.

After all corps had completed the competition portion, they would then form into parade formations and proceed to assigned positions on the field for the retreat. Only one assigned corps played (mostly provided a standardized marching tempo for the other corps) and allowed time for the other corps to set up the mass retreat formation (where the scores would then be announced).

After the score announcement ceremony, each corps (one at a time, beginning with the highest placing corps) would play their signature chart while marching in parade formation towards and then in front of the stands: called "Pass in Review," or "Parading or Trooping the Stands."

The Pasco competition would usually last no longer than 3 hours - from beginning to end. In the late 1960s, the Inspection Line and Ready Line were discontinued at all competitions. The competition format was changed again in later years (with longer shows and fewer corps), and

followed a new process: where only one corps at a time would be allowed on the field (to set up grounded equipment, allow time for corps entrance, performance, and exit, and then removal of preplaced equipment).