

Post Band Camp Tips From the Pros to Remember and Consider

Clay Stansberry

1. Double and Triple check your Transportation for games and contests and have a backup plan ready to go at a moment's notice.
2. Have a plan to deal with holes or a soloist getting sick. Someone always sprains an ankle or can't march due to a family emergency. Make sure the kids are prepared for this.
3. Don't be afraid to re-write something that is not working in the show, musically or visually! Check transitions and make sure they make sense - changing problematic parts earlier rather than later is key.
4. Have a friend, fellow teacher, etc. come to your rehearsal (or send them a video) and get some outside feedback sooner, rather than at the first contest. It really helps to get a new set of eyes on the product to see if the show makes sense and works.

Rick Shaw

1. Music is 60%!!! The band may sound great in the auditorium or in concert arc but, do they in sets? Take large open forms from the show and use them from time to time for music rehearsal rather than a concert arc. Record and review these rehearsals as well as turn away from the group and listen. Great way to test your front ensemble/electronic balance.
2. Don't make a home out of the tower or the top of the building. Get down on the field and in the sets regularly to find what you see and hear at that level. It's the individual adjustments that will make a difference on the whole.
3. Once the show starts coming together, make adjustments to the orientation. Move the 50 yard line by 5 yards, flip and perform using the back 50 as the concert side, or use a different practice field if available. Kids get used to landmarks and focal points as references that don't exist when they go to a new environment. Don't make that first show the first time they are off of their dots.
4. Be sure props are designed and mobile (or immobile) on all surfaces. How heavy are they? Are they manageable? Do they roll too freely? (sand bag, sand bag, sand bag!!!), will they hold up in the wind and what is the plan if it is too windy or too wet?
5. Have designated parent(s) for the entire season to manage wear on props and uniforms. Just because the suit was in good condition after uniform fitting doesn't mean it will be at Regionals. Just because the wheels worked on the props upon completion doesn't mean they will after three shows.
6. Is the guard trained to toss into the wind or pull tosses altogether? Have they been trained to maneuver a silk that might get wet and heavy?

Ward Durrett

1. Get a cable tester and double check all your PA cords; microphone (with XLR plugs); speaker (with 1/4" Neutrik/Speakon plugs); patch cords (with 1/4" plugs) and even AC/Power cords. All these can be repaired economically if you have the time, or just replaced not-so-economically if you don't. Inspect the cables for shredding and breaks too. Blowing any dirt or dust from your mixing console with compressed air would be advisable as well.

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2. Check your wireless units to make sure they DON'T operate in the 600MHz band. The FCC sold those frequencies to the television industry a few years ago and the chances are pretty good your signal will get canceled out. Guaranteed way to lose a featured soloist!
3. Go over all your mallet keyboard (Marimba, Vibe, Xylophone, Bell) frames and tighten down all the thumbscrews. Over time these adjustment screws will loosen up no matter how sturdily the frame is constructed. Also inspect the bar cord for breaks and/or tears on those same instruments. Parachute cord is the pretty much accepted replacement material!
- 4) If you're satisfied with your present percussion and guard staff, tell them you appreciate them and maybe get them to commit to the long term. There are just too few of them around anymore. If you can pay them more, that wouldn't hurt either!

W L Whaley

1. Plan for Band Weather/Rain Out: Make sure you have secured (admin and building manager) and approved inside rehearsal spaces for the day(s) you will get rained out. This **will** happen to you on the most important rehearsal you have planned. Be prepared and get accomplished as much as you can by being indoors.
2. Marching fundamentals should be done every rehearsal with long tone exercises and battery. Move and play as much as possible during warm up—except for stretches. Don't move without playing. Remember—you can't play great if you don't move well.
3. The choices that are made by the Guard have a direct impact on your Effect, Visual Ensemble and Visual Individual scores. Don't allow overprogramming, tosses and equipment, to influence the overall performance. ***Students must be trained to catch equipment when it leaves their hands. If they cannot catch 90% of the time----take out the toss! There is no effect in watching students pick up equipment they dropped.
4. Plan a MENTAL HEALTH DAY into your schedule. Everyone will appreciate it!
5. Make sure suspended cymbals/crash cymbals **never ever** overpower the melody or winds. **Never—Ever!!** Consider mic placement. Suspended cymbals should rarely if ever be amplified.

TONE---TUNE---TIME—TOUCH----quality will always be rewarded