

CBA Marching Subcommittee
Marching Band Format for Regionals and State

At the December 2011 CBA Marching Committee Meeting, Ken Ovrebo asked me to head up a subcommittee to look at different options for the CBA Regional Contest and the CBA State Contests for 4A and 5A Bands. We were charged to gather information at honor bands, district meetings, and through conversations with our colleagues. The committee members that were involved in helping lead these conversations were, Josiah St. Peter, Matt Arau, Phil Olivas, Ken Ovrebo, Sara Wynes, and WL Whaley.

In looking at different options for how CBA implements the Regional and State Contests, the three overriding factors that *limits* what we do in Colorado as it pertains to the marching band activity are *money, facilities, and location*. CBA has to keep each one of those ideas in mind when making decisions regarding a Regional and especially a State Contest. As we know, the money CBA makes on our State Contest ends up funding 95% of what CBA does the entire year (All State Jazz, CBA Concert Band Festivals, Convention, etc.), so it is important to have a successful State contest where CBA can benefit so that funding continues for all these events. We are all also very aware that we are “stadium poor” in Colorado. Unlike the Midwest and South, we in many instances, share one to two stadiums per district...at best. Having an open weekend for a marching show in the midst of fall sports is a rare event. We are also a state that is divided in a very real way by the east slope and west slope. Considerations have to be made for bands that have to travel and for what is fair in locating our State contests. All three of these factors have to be looked at when making decisions in regards to looking at changes. Having Ken Ovrebo and WL Whaley at many of these meetings hopefully helped directors realize that a good idea often can't be implemented due to one of these factors. A final factor that plays into the conversation is the availability of judges. We just don't have enough “qualified” judges to make some of the ideas that were brought up happen.

We asked directors for “positives” in what we currently have as a system and then “negatives/concerns”. Some of the positives were:

- The Quarterfinals for State was an overwhelming positive. That has made it possible for bands to attain levels at state. Honoring more bands is a plus.
- Having University Bands do exhibitions at state.
- Having State at a venue like CSU or AFA.
- Having 4A & 5A the same day-celebration of hard work!
- Not having Regionals on a weekend connected with another show or using different shows to qualify over a longer period-equity comes into play.
- Cost effective for bands to travel to Regionals.

- It is good to mirror if you will, what athletics does in having regionals.
- Smaller bands can see bigger bands at Regionals.
- The ability to plan for state well enough in advance.
- Groups are being evaluated at the same time (within 3-4 days of each other).

Some of the negatives/concerns:

- Having a Monday Regional
- Having adequate warm-up areas for Regionals and State and having lights when needed.
- Sometimes not an accurate reflection on where they are placed (see handout comparing Regionals to State placement).
- Lack of communication from the **field judge** to the director if there is an issue.
- Early morning at State.
- Unless you stay, don't get to see the top 6 bands.
- Not having enough guides for Quarterfinals.
- **There needs to be a better system for evaluation and feedback on marching judges.**
- Different draws for quarterfinals.
- Double scheduling of Regionals.
- **Inconsistent judges panel-using the same judges.**
- Competing directors judging in their class.
- Number of bands at Regionals-too big for one show (south).
- Confusion for new directors.

The history of changing or looking at these items has come up many times over the past 20-25 years. The last time it came up, CBA changed how state was running and changed to the current model of having Quarterfinals. The committee felt very comfortable at looking at different options as we need to continue to evolve as a functioning organization. The philosophy of trying to always do what is best for the education of kids is at the forefront of every conversation. The committee looked at all of the concerns and tried to brainstorm changes, adjustments, etc. for each item listed, keeping in mind the factors of money, stadiums, judges and location.

The bottom line was that the system that we have currently have in place with our Regional Qualifying, and our State Quarterfinals, Semifinals and Finals for 4A-5A was the best model as of right now, taking into consideration all of the factors previously mentioned. The things that can be looked at for the immediate future to make our shows better for kids and teachers that might address some of the concerns are as follows:

- Working on training and hiring the best qualified people to judge and to try to keep a consistent panel when **have** double shows at Regionals.
 - Working on a better system for evaluation and feedback of judges. That does require directors to provide the feedback.
 - Helping mentor new directors.
 - Clinics for directors.
 - Improving communication.
 - Student centered clinics.
 - Looking at the option of having no automatic qualifiers and having everyone at Quarterfinals. This will require 2 stadiums.
- The attached form is how bands finished at State in comparison to how they finished at Regionals.

I hope this gives the marching membership and the Marching Committee a picture of what our process was as a subcommittee in looking at how CBA Regionals and State events operate and the roadblocks we face as a state when we are scheduling. There can always be improvements to what we do and as long as we are consistently looking at improving our product and what we offer to students and directors in Colorado as an organization, then we will be successful.

Please echo my thanks to those on the committee who helped in gathering data, brainstorming ideas, and listening to the membership. Thanks to Ken Ovrebo for asking to have these things looked at as he takes on the unenviable task of Marching Chair for CBA and our most sincere thanks to Wayne Manzanares for his leadership as Marching Chair for so many years.

If you have questions on any of the items that we have discussed, please feel free to contact any one of us on the committee. My request to you as a membership is to always make your voice heard to CBA, no matter the scope or topic, so that we can improve as an organization to serve music education at the highest level.

Sincerely Submitted,

Doug Dalton

Committee members: Matt Arau, **Phill Olivas**, Josiah St. Peter, Ken Ovrebo, Sara Wynes, WL Whaley

