## Report from the 2016 WGI Color Guard Advisory Board Meeting

May 20-21, 2016

Las Vegas, Nevada

The Color Guard Advisory Board (CAB) meets post-season to discuss and vote on proposals and other color guard related issues, as well during the season as it relates to relevant issues. Recently, 20 additional votes were added to the CAB consisting of the top five A/Open finalists. In 2016, Washington High School (Scholastic A) and Francis Howell North High School (Scholastic Open) obtained positions on the CAB and were represented by Julie Bunkley and Sara Barnett (Washington) and Kim Kras (Francis Howell North).

The meeting was held in Las Vegas, NV on Friday, 5/20 and Saturday 5/21. On Friday afternoon, the A/Open Caucus was held, followed by a full meeting with representatives from the Color Guard, Percussion, and Winds Advisory Boards and Executive staff. After this meeting, the CAB convened separately to discuss the agenda and goals for the weekend. On Saturday, The CAB convened and began with discussing new issues for the upcoming season, and then began discussing and voting on proposals. Finally, the CAB meeting ended with a "Two Corner" discussion regarding judging issues, which the information from will be provided at the Judge Meeting in July.

Information from the meeting can be found here: <a href="http://wgi.org/featured-story/05232016-Report-from-2016-Advisory-Board-Meetings.html">http://wgi.org/featured-story/05232016-Report-from-2016-Advisory-Board-Meetings.html</a>

This report serves as a medium to inform the membership of MCCGA about issues discussed at the CAB meeting and things to consider for the future about membership in WGI. Ultimately, the goal is to strengthen the voice of members in the local circuit at the regional and national level.

## **Composition of the Board**

The CAB is comprised of the 15 scholastic and independent world finalists (n=30) and the top five Open and A class finalists (n=20). In the world class, a member can achieve Primary Status by making finals for three consecutive years.

### A/Open Caucus

On Friday afternoon, the top 5 finalists in Scholastic A, Independent A, Scholastic Open, and Independent Open (n=20) met with Dale Powers (Color Guard Director) and the A/Open Representative, John Leonard, to discuss the 2016 proposals and other relevant issues. Throughout this meeting, the goal was to understand the majority opinion from the A/Open members about each issue, especially those related to A/Open proposals.

The format change for A Class Finals was discussed at length and survey results presented. Out of 50 respondents, 34 voted to keep Finals as it was in 2016, but open response data and discussion reveal additional perspectives:

- Seems to be consensus that people like the additional finalists and performing on Saturday, but do not like performing somewhere other than UD
- Dale said there is no way logistically to do both
  - o Fire marshal requires certain amount of time between events
  - o Can't accommodate 24 + 20 A finalists at UD, even on Friday night
- It was not discussed that the survey results share the primary issue with a site other than UD is that it did not feel like a Championship event.

### **Forward Looking**

The addition of A/Open members to the CAB is an important step in hearing the voice of the largest membership in WGI. However, there is only ONE overall representative to the Advisory Board during the season. This position is crucial for the growth of this component of the activity. However, it does not appear that this role is being utilized to its full potential. I encourage directors and staff to reach out to the A/Open Rep with their questions and concerns and ensure their voices are heard at these meetings. The A/Open Rep reported not having much input from the members of the A/Open class. This individual is through which your voice will be heard. There is a movement in WGI at present to better suit the A/Open classes, yet many remain unheard. In fact, many in the world class CAB membership did not know who the rep was, or who the A/Open team membership was, though expressed a great desire to learn and understand these perspectives and needs. This is unfortunate and can easily be remedied by making your voice heard.

# Judge's Report

Curtis Costanza offered information regarding judging.

- Judges are all evaluated on 1) numbers management, 2) commentary quality, 3) professionalism
- Had the fewest judge evaluations than any other year
  - o Encourages members to fill out this information
  - o Considering a way to streamline it via competition suite
- Educational shift: they now have two managers (upstairs and downstairs)
- Discussed the world class insight sheets (world class units were able to submit a 1 page sheet explaining their program for judges to read. One instructor said, "in world class our duty is to educate the judges." Judges indicated this was helpful during the season)
  - o Discussed the implications of including this for A/Open class
- Considering critique for SRA units

## **Proposals**

The results of the 2016 WGI proposals can be found here: <a href="http://www.wgi.org/files/2016-CAB-Proposal-Results.pdf">http://www.wgi.org/files/2016-CAB-Proposal-Results.pdf</a>

This year, all CAB members had a vote and way in which members voted on each proposal is listed in an effort to increase transparency. Numerous proposals did not receive discussion and were not voted on. As presented in the above report on proposals there is no information about WHY certain proposals passed or did not. Below is some of the discussion regarding relevant proposals:

- <u>Proposal 4</u> (24 finalists will be made up from 12 units from each semifinals site, therefore not needing to average scores):
  - Many felt the averaging "leveled" the playing field for groups considering the volume of units in SA.
  - Many felt reducing the number of semi-finalists defeats the purpose of being more inclusive.
  - Dale presented information that in the past two years since this rule change, 3 units would have made finals without averaging than with.
- Proposal 7 (snaking the seeding into rounds for Champs):
  - Using the current model keeps the scoring neighborhoods more in line across so many rounds and reduces the suppression of scores.
- Proposal 13 (Chief judge at Regional Champs):
  - The primary issue is having enough judges to have a Chief Judge available to address concerns when everyone on the panel must be attending World Championships. Curtis Costanza (Chief Judge) said with several judges on sabbatical they are having trouble filling the panel for Regional Champs weekends. In 2016 they added only 4 new judges.
  - Many felt they would allow for judges of "championship quality" who are not attending championships to judge at Regional Champs events in order to have a non-working Chief Judge present

#### • Proposal 19 (promote top 5 A units):

 With the increase of A finalists to 24 in Scholastic A and 20 in Independent A, the membership reasoned that this proportion of finalists was worthy of promotion into Open class.

### • Proposal 21 (IO age limits)

- Many did not see the rationale in some units suppressing promotion based on limiting their age group
- Some argued that age does not matter for Scholastic teams so it shouldn't matter for independent

### • <u>Proposal 22</u> (secondary affiliations)

- The rule as written is confusing and has been limiting the use of certain judges in ways that don't align with the spirit of the rule (for example, Adam Sage can't judge Blessed Sacrament because he works with Boston Crusaders in the drum corps season and they provide the truck for Blessed Sacrament during the winter).
- Many felt as worded, there were too many limitations on the types of relationships occurring now versus what the rule intended to prohibit.

#### Proposal 26 (combining schools)

- Some discussed the combining of schools in their local circuits as going against the intentions of the rule when it was first passed by creating "super" groups
- Ron Nankervis said a rule like this is related to scholastic eligibility and would affect all
  units at WGI, including percussion and winds, so it will need to be discussed and voted
  on by the Board of Directors (which is why everyone abstained from the vote)

## **Prop Safety**

Dale raised the issue of prop safety and as more units experiment with props, there have been more incidents involving concerns about safety of performers. Common surface standards in performance areas were discussed since someone raised the issue of safety related to rolling props across show hosts' tarps that are not flat. The CAB agreed to rely on the Board of Directors to make exceptions about oversize props, before creating stricter prop rules.

### **Two Corners**

After proposal voting, the CAB split in half and went to two corners of the room to discuss judging concerns in the upstairs and downstairs captions. The information from these discussions will be presented at the Judges Meeting in July. Below are important points from these discussions:

### **Upstairs (moderated by Rick Subel—Paramount)**

 Issues with education about promotion to the next class. We have done much with A to Open, but not as much from Open to World.

- Open class is the "Jan Brady" of WGI since there is little consensus about competitive criteria.
   Suggestions to improve instructor and judge's education to improve this such as creating a clearer terminology.
- Concerns about judge's being unable to articulate issues with design, especially in the DA caption, when noted.
- o Instructing judges to "call the effect what it is" in their commentary to enhance clarity.

### Downstairs (moderated by Andy Toth—Pride of Cincinnati/Carmel)

- Questions about the concept "well-crafted phrase"; didn't have an answer, but stay tuned for information after the judges meeting.
- Concerns across classes about judges still "reading" programs instead of analyzing or crediting their value.
- Concerns about exploring new or modern movement styles for fear of not being perceived by judges as "correct"
- Expanding equipment judges ability to credit for things beyond spinning difficulty, such as staging demands or use of props
- Discussion about making downstairs judges responsible for either WHAT or HOW in both movement and equipment, to better capture all that is being demonstrated and since both captions are so intertwined.
- Denise Bonfiglio stated equipment judges were considering more how phrases "function" together and always through time.

## **Looking to the Future**

In the Full CAB meeting, Executive Director Ron Nankervis presented information on the state of WGI and the future projects.

- Growth of WGI and Color Guard specifically: We are nearing capacity for attendance at WGI
  World Championships and the administration is investigating alternative sites for the event.
  However, many major cities are unwilling to schedule color guard events in lieu of basketball
  tournaments or concerts.
  - o Missouri was in the top 5 of states with units represented at WGI Regionals!!
  - o Regional Attendance 2012-2016: increase of 18% (632 to 780)

	IW	10	IA	SW	SO	SA
2012	31	40	106	22	73	360
2016	30	56	106	29	83	476

 Planning for 6 Elite events in 2017. The CAB mentioned wanting a TENTATIVE schedule posted even though the possibility some places/dates may change.

- International Presence: WGI is expanding the membership to include education and events in numerous other countries. The greatest presence is in Holland and England, with many Asian countries (including Japan and Thailand) expressing desire to participate.
- Education Opportunities: WGI is expanding educational opportunities via the Education
  Director, Karl Lowe, and Director of Color Guard Development, Shirlee Whitcomb. These
  individuals are direct points of contact for information and development of technique, design,
  and judging criteria. Members are encouraged to send questions and concerns, along with
  videos of their units, for commentary and assistance.
- Development of the Scholastic Regional A class: Shirlee Whitcomb is spearheading the growth and development of a SRA class at WGI Regionals and World Championships. There is discussion that some units in the SA class might compete at this level if offered at World Championships.

### **Contact**

Please direct any additional questions or comments about the meeting or this report to:

Sara Barnett
Julie Bunkley <u>Julie.Bunkley@washington.k12.mo.us</u>
Kim Kras <u>kim.r.kras@gmail.com</u>