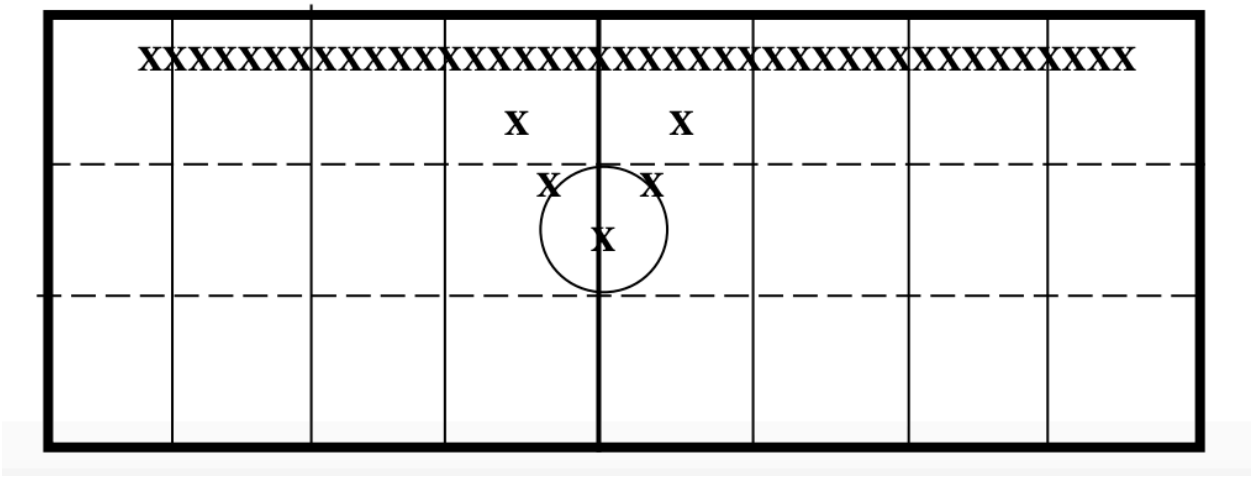
Field Entrances for Teams & Officers

By Joyce Pennington

In past experience with my team, I found (like you have) that there are not enough hours in the week to be totally prepared for each Friday's halftime performance. In analyzing how I could make better use of our weekly time, I concluded that if the team had a 'traditional' entrance and exit that would be the same each week and never change that, A. We would save a drastic amount of preparation time and, B. It would start a great tradition where the music and look would be recognizable to the crowd that the drill team was taking the field.

I worked with my band director to select the appropriate pieces of music that he felt would be most effective. (The entrance music would last about 30 seconds while the exit music not only took the drill team off the field but was the exit for the band as well and took about 20 seconds.) We selected a piece for the entrance that was peppy and that depicted the drill team name ("Yankee Doodle" for the Yankee Doodle Sweethearts team). He also wrote a special version himself just for us. We selected an exit piece that was dynamic but not overpowering, that he felt would be appropriate for both groups. We also occasionally interchanged our exit music with the fight song, which would certainly generate a positive response from the audience.

In true Texas tradition, my officers danced in front of the line and wore a different color uniform than the line. They entered the field first using the drum major batons/mace (that we cut down in length) or maizes. The team was lined up on the far sidelines and used the 'Betsey Ross' flag that was a symbol of our school. While the officers would 'strut' onto the field, the line would do contagions with the flags that would add visual color and pageantry to our entrance. The team would then place the flags down behind them in a contagion while the managers would hurriedly pick them up while they started on to the field. The team would perform a 'step four in fours' stepping off every four counts in groups of four girls from the center four out towards both outside ends. This would present a "V" formation that was simple yet effective. I learned long ago that it is virtually impossible to keep a team in one straight line when entering or exiting the field. Plus, it is less interesting than presenting the team in a

pattern. We would exit the field in basically the same manner with the officers leading off first then the team would file down the 50 yard line two by two.

Although there are many different ways to enter and exit the field, it can simplify your preparation time to have a traditional entrance and exit. It will make the team feel more confident in their routines if they do not have to think about a different entrance to the field.