Education Support

American Dance

Tips for a Successful Halftime Show with Your Band

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Performing with your band can be a very exciting opportunity for your dance team. Your team will enjoy increased performance time, new contest opportunities, and unity with the band and flag corps. This article will focus on aspects to help develop a strong foundation for a successful performance season with the band.

The first step to a successful season is to develop a positive attitude for both yourself and your team. As the director, you are the example of eagerness, even if the decision to move to this style of performance was not yours. Of course, this performance style has both advantages and disadvantages. To be successful, concentrate on emphasizing the advantages such as increased performance time for your dancers, and minimize the disadvantages. After your team spends a few weeks performing for 9 ½ minutes rather than 90 seconds, they may never desire to return to their traditional performance style.

Maintaining a positive attitude means you must develop a good relationship with your band director and his staff. There is no room for pettiness. You must promote the halftime show as a unified team effort, not band, flag corps, and dance team as separate units. Emphasize the fact that by working together, each group can complement the other for the most effective and entertaining halftime show. Listen to your band director. He has a great deal of experience in this field. Work together to achieve a common goal. Give him/her full support and they will return the favor. When they ask for your input, don't be timid-- contribute! And remember, pettiness and complaints will destroy what you are trying to achieve.

The second step to a successful season is an open mind. Be willing to try anything, or nothing, as a prop. You'll be amazed how well your dancers will maneuver short flags or possibly other visual props Perhaps the show will call for an unusual prop to carry out an intricate theme. Your band director may want to feature the dance talents of your team, so prepare them to dance rather than pose next to a big prop. You may have the opportunity to compete with your band, so be ready to commit your girls

to contest performance level. Adopt the same style of marching the band uses. Unity is the best policy for success.

Finally, creative choreography is critical. Choreography for this type of show is vastly different than for traditional performance and sometimes the band has hired a professional to map out their contest performance. Choreography must be on a wide scale and be open to the choreographer's ideas. Watch the formations the band displays and note the movements of the flag corps. Try to make your movements complement the whole picture. Formations are critical. Be certain the patterns you are using fit into the puzzle created by the band. If your formations are charted for you, be excited that someone with years of experience has planned for you. If a formation doesn't work, be certain that you have tried to make it successful, then bring it to your band director's attention, along with an alternate formation, off the field. Also, remember that large dance movements are very effective on the field.

A positive attitude, an open mind, and creative choreography serve as the foundation for a successful performance season with the band. Every school faces a unique performance situation. However, these factors can be utilized in all situations. Enjoy an exciting season of opportunity performing with the band!