

Choose Your Battles

As you approach the critical regionals and the final weeks of the marching band season, it is imperative that you take a moment to step back and choose what you need to work on in your limited remaining rehearsal time. Look where the majority of your points come from within the system: Music and General Effect. Sure, you need to march well, but you might gain the most benefit from potentially cutting out a few complicated drill moves if that helps you play better. Make the kids look and sound strong!

Take a moment and ensure that you identify at least one major effect in each production that you will ensure is clear. Focus on the beginning and ending of each production, plus one other key moment in each tune. Let the developmental ideas be what they are. If you make the impacts “impactful” that will generate effect. Starting at the beginning, ensure that each moment is clear in and of itself. And then, make each moment fit within your whole. What makes you unique? How will you stand out? If you can let the woodwinds, or color guard, stand for a feature, take out their drill and let the others carry the moment during the feature.

The keys are to play well first, move well second, and generate effect all the time. Have you spent time explaining the mood and character of the show for the performers? A believable portrayal, even performed less clearly, can still be effective. Excellence is in the performance captions and will “add to effect,” but you can generate effect in multiple ways. One effect that most teams overlook is emotion, believability, commitment. There is an entire 30 points possible for your performers to achieve through performance effect and communication. This comes from playing convincingly, emotionally, and successfully. If you do your job, you can maximize your product by the end of the season.

Good luck with your season!

William Chumley