

Disoriented. When I got off the plane in Indianapolis I had no idea where I was. After some time it struck me that I was in a new airport. Of course, 4 years had passed since I was last in Indiana. A lot has changed in 4 years.

Overly confident, I got my rental car and programmed my cell phone's navigation device to take me to my hotel in northwestern Indianapolis, but somehow the map would not "load." I did a lot of driving guesswork, and finally pulled off the 465 to re-group and brush off the cobwebs of my old paper map reading skills. It took me a while, but I arrived safe and sound, very tired from a long day of travel. After napping for a bit I got in my car to get some dinner in downtown Indy. After having a near death experience taking a left turn from W. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St onto Indiana Ave. because I was not paying attention and I was staring at the headlights of 3 cars coming straight for me I told myself, "Time out! Let's get this day done and over with!" Confirmed.

The next day was a fresh start for me, and had no troubles weaving my way to the band show main gate. This was my first time to Lucas Oil Stadium. The stadium was a thing of great beauty--large, inviting, detached. I felt like I was in BOA's bedroom as I walked the grand halls of exhibits, food vendors, and salespeople. When I reached my seat it took me a while to take in the view, and then had to put my sunglasses on to shield my eyes from the bright lights, though in time I took them off because truly you can't dim your eyes to greatness, no matter how blinding the ceilings, no matter how highlighted the entertainers.

Here is my review of the 2010 Bands of America Grand National Championships in Indianapolis, Indiana. My analysis is of all the bands that performed in preliminary, semi-finals, and finals competition--the analysis expanding as we make our way through the rounds. Please know that comments, my scores, and my placements have no association to the actual outcome; that I strive to assign a number and rank according to my belief (BOA General Effect focused) and my belief alone with what I hope will be with great accuracy but knowing that the BOA judges are the experts and will do a finer job than I. My take is but a another take for you to consider.

And now, for you...

\*\*\*DAY 1 PRELIMS\*\*\*

Dorman H.S., SC

Repertoire: "Between Yesterday and Tomorrow," themes by classical composer J.S. Bach highlighting Past, Present, and Future

Comments: The functionality of the props is clear in conjunction with the harpsichord notes--the band on the side of the field labeled "PAST." Form control and sound control is strong. I like the role of the solo snare drummer, and ah, nice interaction with a member of the auxiliary. Some late horn snaps, some fidgeting, and finally some notes off the mark. Strong cohesive presentation.

My Score: 76.80

My Placement: 24th

Edgewood H.S., OH

Repertoire: "Distorted," "Reve Rouge," "A La Lune" and "Urban"

Comments: Line it up, gang. Some timing issues thwarted a crisp start to their show. Okay, nice sharp open arm moves, trumpets. Auxiliary does a pretty decent job with their equipment swiping, yet angular deficiency robs them of a great performance. Form control overall is sketchy. Everyone has to be on the

same page as far as self-definition is concerned: is there a bend in the knee on the forward motion, or is the leg straight? Musically, harness it, harness it, harness it. Good power ending.

My Score: 58.00

My Placement: 42nd

Morristown Jr./Sr. H.S., IN

Repertoire: Rising Dragons by Robert W. Smith, Fantasy on a Japanese Folk Song by Samuel Hazo and Mau Tan by Mark Sternberg

Comments: I love the reflecting sword held by a guard member on the 50, and the huge sparkling dragon backdrop just beyond. Interesting break in momentum with the martial arts type visuals. I like how the music is linked with the motion. Beautiful, beautiful trombone solo. The auxiliary's responsibility is obvious--nice work! You've got to heed the intonation--trumpets especially. The band shines during their strongest moments, and that is always a good thing.

My Score: 63.90

My Placement: 32nd

Western H.S., IN

Repertoire: "Amelia Earhart," music of Philip Glass, Samuel Barber and Damien Rice

Comments: The cloud tarps both mesh well and are heightened by the cloud-and-sky backdrops. The fetal position poses that expand and rise are complimented by the guard. Excellent raising of volume, both balanced and timed right in how it rises. I am thrilled by the blind pass-throughs by the winds, and the snake-through set by the winds through the guard--very nice. The voiceover is properly done, though I could use some more volume there.

My Score: 80.20

My Placement: 13th

Indian Hill H.S., OH

Repertoire: "The Machines," by Gary Gilroy, including: 1. Construction, 2. Artificial Intelligence and 3. The Machine Age

Comments: Now winds, how far are the feet supposed to be apart at parade rest? Details! Ooh, right off the bat I am engaged by the forms. Wow, the trumpets sound great, as do the rest of the wind players, and you can tell they are using a lot of air. Much of the guard work looks confused as if the girls don't know the counts or the directionals. Nice dynamics, battery line.

My Score: 65.70

My Placement: 29th

Carlisle H.S., OH

Repertoire: Selections include: "Asphalt Cocktail" by John Mackey, "Can't Help Falling In Love" by Elvis and original music by Joe Wesche

Comments: Make sure your presentation is strong when you emerge from behind those beautiful autumn tree props, winds. Right now I am more focused on the drum kit cymbal drone than I am the low impact backfield music. The sabre feature in front of the brave sax solo was "meh." Hey, way to reach that high note, trumpet soloist. The most memorable moment in their show was the record player "ripping" sound that kicked these kids into high gear.

My Score: 60.90

My Placement: 36th

Louisville Male H.S., KY

Repertoire: "One," Featuring four selections: "On My Own," "Overture to Russian" and "Ludmilla," "One Hand One Heart" and music from Prokofiev Symphony #1

Comments: My, my...what sweet symphonic sounds when the trumpet player does his thing pre-show. Be more confident on that opening, high brass...full air, full air. (Build up that endurance!) Wonderful marching technique from almost everyone, now shape up the whole package. Gorgeous ballad! I am sitting high enough, I believe, and cannot read the words on the field tarps. Great domino execution, guard, not to mention front and back facing work.

My Score: 77.70

My Placement: 22nd

Talawanda H.S., OH

Repertoire: "Heroes"

Comments: Appropriate delicacy in sound and what is seen. Okay, now...don't deteriorate in tuning and tempo and...good--you locked it back in. I like the communication happening from the wind players in front of the backdrops. It sounds like the notes don't matter much at times; that there's just a mad rush to get to the end of the phrases. Take your time!

My Score: 60.00

My Placement: 37th

Logan Elm H.S., OH

Repertoire: "Cirque du Soleil: Journey of Man," including 1. "Journey of Man," 2. "Flying," and 3. "Youth"

Comments: Hmm, there's got to be a way to make those visual cues happen in a more...subtle way? (Perhaps the snare player could conduct? Teach him!) Okay, if the duhting was acceptable before, it is not right now, and becoming distracting, cramping this band's style. I think it's great the band is performing in and around the PVC prop cubes, near effortlessly. Great use of color and square outlines by the guard. I wish the show would end as strong as it started.

My Score: 58.70

My Placement: 40th

Utica H.S., OH

Repertoire: "Revenge of the Mouse," including "Fire of Eternal Glory," "Festive Overture," "Waltz, #2: Finale from Symphony #5"

Comments: NO SHOW

My Score: N/A

My Placement: N/A

Springfield Shawnee H.S., OH

Repertoire: "Riverdance Opener," "Riverdance Production," "Galway Piper" and "Galway Piper" and "Riverdance Closer"

Comments: Lovely trumpet solo and backfield music to start things off. Interesting that a wireless electric guitar is marched on the field. The forms are pretty clear. I would like to hear shades of other sections besides trumpets and snare drums. (Really reach for the upper decks, too, when you play!) No auxiliary, but they manage with what they have. The "Riverdance" tap dancing feature by couples (in uniform, as there is no guard like I mentioned before) was particularly eventful.

My Score: 61.70

My Placement: 35th

Daviess County H.S., KY

Repertoire: "Lines in the Sand"

Comments: Stunning "separation" drill form before the show begins with the guard in gold linking it. Beefy first notes succeed in catching my ears. Yes, the kaleidoscopic drill variety works! There is some unfortunate feedback issues with the soprano sax soloist. Way to shape the music, ha ha ha! Way to keep me on the edge of my seat, too! Fine show!

My Score: 78.00

My Placement: 20th

Northmont H.S., OH

Repertoire: "The Changing Leaves" featuring: "Autumn Leaves" by Joseph Kosma, "Winter" from Four Seasons by Antonio Vivaldi, "Rite of Spring" by Igor Stravinsky, original music by Andrew Markworth

Comments: The thunder shower sound effect before the show is a great way to set the mood. Excellent control, musicians, especially on the move! Now that the guard is center stage, wow, they rocked it. Nice earthy looking rifles, and in fact the guard costumes as contrast to flag colors of autumn and spring (I assume) are beautiful. Whoa! Great flip of guard girl into the "net" of wind players! Solid all around show. Solid.

My Score: 81.00

My Placement: 12th

Lafayette H.S., KY

Repertoire: "CHIME," music from "Bells for Stokowski" by Michael Daugherty, "Tubular Bells" by Mike Oldfield and "Carol of the Bells"

Comments: The energetic dancing by the guard to silence is intriguing, and then bells activate the uniformed musicians in the backfield as they come join them in varying poses before powerful musical notes. There is no denying it--these kids can play. Attention to detail is remarkable with this group. Every leg shape, every horn angle, every equipment catch is spot ON. My eyes were glued to this fantastic performance.

My Score: 86.90

My Placement: 6th

Walled Lake Centra H.S., MI

Repertoire: "Phoenix Rising," featuring the music of Philip Glass, Mark Isham, John Mackey and Igor Stravinsky with original music by Nick Pourcho

Comments: The dark, humming pit, fluctuating in frequency amongst the bells sets the mood. Ooh! The sprite-like guard soloist dances around the musician soloists, emitting joy, before dark "demons" interrupt this. The sprite/demon battle in the drum feature is breathtaking, as are the neat sound effects. Marvelous color, now, by the unhooded guard shaking ribbons of red shades. The variety that keeps me interested, and is great!

My Score: 86.50

My Placement: 7th

Centerville H.S., OH

Repertoire: "Every Which Way," including: "Jubal Step" by Wynton Marsalis, "Adjustable Wrench" by Michael Torke, "Shadowplay" from Cirque du Soleil's "Ka" by Rene Dupere and "The Way Up" by Pat Metheny

Comments: As this band takes the field their presence is stellar. I'm diggin' the funky sax quartet. This group throws you some odd, hypnotic stuff...and I am liking it! (Some of it is hard to follow, though.)

There is a bit too much flow in this presentation, and little edge. Mr. Clean can't seem to help you in these aspects. You'll have to dig much deeper.

My Score: 85.00

My Placement: 8th

O'Fallon Township H.S., IL

Repertoire: "Maria"

Comments: The prelude to their show is slick. There are streaks of smudge at different times, musically and visually. Jazz runners, you have got to got to got to be in time for the jazz running to be effective. Lovely voice solo by the young lady wearing white. Excellent highlighting of the flag soloist by another flag operator.

My Score: 74.90

My Placement: 27th

Columbus North H.S., IN

Repertoire: "Liquid Sky," I. "Cloudburst and The Storm," II. "The Calm," and III. "Celebration"

Comments: A mellophone player fell hard while running behind one of the blue flags held by one of the auxiliary. Nice recovery, though! Excellent piano roll while a set of rifles are tossed (and almost all of them are caught!). I can count on this group for a mature, clean production. Yeah, there were flaws, but this group showed their true colors by how well they handled those flaws.

My Score: 79.50

My Placement: 14th

Adair County H.S., KY

Repertoire: "The StoryPeople," inspired by works of Brian Andreas

Comments: One of the better pre-shows I have seen, Adair County gets straight to the point with what they are going to present. Inventive interplay with the lead guard girl and the snare drummer. Inventive GUARD COSTUMES! Well, well, well--this group can play well and catch equipment with ease and, man...it's like there's nothing this band can't do. Sweet! I loved the theatrics.

My Score: 82.90

My Placement: 10th

Bellbrook H.S., OH

Repertoire: "Walk this Proud Land," original composition by Michael Siler

Comments: The poses evolve--great. Dooooon't lean into those step-offs, winds. Very sturdy work. Ooh, those feather-like flags are neat but hard to get in synch. Great range, percussionists, great range. This show moved and moved, but moved me little. It was a little too "by the books" for me. Not a bad show by any means, though.

My Score: 79.20

My Placement: 15th

Edgewood H.S., IN

Repertoire: "To Tame the Perilous Skies"

Comments: Lots of "air" motion with the auxiliary equipment, which is fitting I suppose, with the winds at a halt. Line up the music more, winds. The sharp, angular moves to finish the first setting--perfect! Glorious lunge moves here, and a shift in overall mood there. The tempo of this arrangement seems a bit slow, and yet it still seems challenging to these kids. Great "lift off" at the end of the show as a kid goes up a ramp and Supermans off of it (onto a mattress, I'm sure). Nice accomplishment.

My Score: 75.50  
My Placement: 25th

Lincoln-Way East H.S., IL  
Repertoire: "blue cathedral"

Comments: I could use more volume from the pit in the beginning...as it's a little TOO soft, there. I must say those leg capes on the winds and guard are unique! I like this band's full body sound, and up to this point this show is filled to the brim with mystery. Elegant strength! I am blown away by their creative use of color, and they are doing the very difficult very well.

My Score: 83.70  
My Placement: 9<sup>th</sup>

Herscher H.S., IL  
Repertoire: "The Pursuit," featuring "The Pursuit" by Matt Conaway and "Splashes of Gold" by James L. Hosay

Comments: Excellent ripple move in that mushroom form to get things in motion. The na-nah na-nah nah-naaah antics were cute and I could see the discipline in this group shine through. The battery drums seemed to overpower all the winds to the unfortunate point of noise, senseless noise. Overall, decent musical and visual execution. Various timing and clarity issues plagued their production.

My Score: 59.00  
My Placement: 39th

Lake Park H.S., IL  
Repertoire: "Birds of a Feather"

Comments: The eccentric bird costumes and flutter moves by the winds were different. I like different. Ooh, this band is on top of their game! Fabulous sabre toss once, and then again (later), for well deserved claps. I question the marching technique of many of those marching forward and backward. (That bicycle stride is a challenging one to make look great.) The guard is certainly pulling their weight.

My Score: 79.00  
My Placement: 16th

Rampart H.S., CO  
Repertoire: "Revolution," 1. "Sevens" by Samuel Hazo, 2. "The Seal Lullaby" by Eric Whitacre and 3. "First Circle" by Pat Metheny

Comments: I felt the pre-show portion was ill-timed, and unnecessary, even. Fantastic athletic moves with the quick pivot turns and somersaulting guard soloist. What a difference a percussion-less band makes when they don't play. (I'm sorry, it had to be said.) Touching moments occur when this show slows down. There are lots of space issues across the green grid. Way to play out, flute section! Aaah, another "rush the guard soloist in the center" moment.

My Score: 75.00  
My Placement: 26th

Moore H.S., OK  
Repertoire: "The Intertwine"

Comments: Strong opening statement, Moore. Some of the woodwind parts seemed to fall through the cracks. Sheesh, what a dark rendition of Holsinger's "American Faces." The voiceover added to the ominous feel of the production. Bring those horns up at the same time, brass. I can barely hear the bass clarinet feature! (Amp it...or SOMETHING!) This show is deep. Ha! Love that rim shot that gets the last

word.

My Score: 77.90

My Placement: 21st

Marietta H.S., OH

Repertoire: "The Canyon" by Philip Glass, "First Drop Off/First Kiss" by James Horner and "Symphony for Brass and Percussion, Movement 3" by Alfred Reed

Comments: A spectrum of hot colors flooded the field with paint-brush-like props. The contrast between the backfield volume and frontfield volume was way extreme, and now roll in the pounding drummers and you have quite the culture clash. The drum major had the most unique conducting style, yeah? (I've seldom seen such a range of pattern, so...did it work?) The musicians virtually wore all black uniforms and no, the props did not help them come alive (sad to say). This show was okay. Dynamite repertoire!

My Score: 64.40

My Placement: 30th

Union H.S., OK

Repertoire: "ReInvention"

Comments: "More Union, less Jenks!" or was it, "Moore/Union, less Jenks!" I could not believe someone would yell that when this band took the field. Jenks wasn't even at Grand Nationals this year! Real classy, band parents...NOT! Apparently, the parent who made the snyde remark was from Moore (or so I was told). Regardless of the association, let it be known that more judge the strength and character of a group off the field than they do on the field, and YOU NEVER KNOW who is watching (or listening) to you. In summary: have some class! It's sad that I have to write this kind of stuff at BOA Grand Nationals. NOW, where was I? Ah yes. UNION. With MORE class was the entrance of this group slowly filling the field from the tunnel. Fierce, fierce notes by the brass, and I was extremely impressed by the integrated musical nature of the auxiliary in form, function, and anything else you can think of. Splendid show! I liked the decidedly electronic part of the score.

My Score: 89.70

My Placement: 2nd

Brunswick H.S., OH

Repertoire: "Metamorphosis," 1. "Awakening," 2. "Caterpillar," 3. "Cocoon" and 4. "Butterfly

Comments: The "birthing" of the wind players from those black stretchy things was connected to their metamorphosis theme all right. Fine approach to this technique, individuals. Ha! That giant caterpillar train of guard was memorable, certainly, further expressing the transformation theme. Some nice moments musically, indeed, and...some not. This show was very controlled. Solid job by all!

My Score: 77.00

My Placement: 23rd

Bishop Fenwick H.S., OH

Repertoire: "Tragic Kingdom," I. "QUEEN featuring Queen's Seven Seas of Rhye," II. KING featuring Elvis' "Can't Help Falling in Love" and III. TRAGEDY featuring No Doubt's "Tragic Kingdom"

Comments: Great poise, as one of the drum majors called the band to attention. I waited and waited for that first big impact, but no dice. The pit in the center of the field does a fine job of enabling the wind players to stay in time without a conductor. The rockin' synth part had me nodding along. Okay, on-target rifle toss by the guard soloist. You had to cheer for these guys, as little as they were.

My Score: 54.20

My Placement: 43rd

Ben Davis H.S., IN

Repertoire: "The Maze"

Comments: The bizarre, creepy voiceovers before the show starts seems to indicate that we're about to go on an adventure (through a maze apparently). Not a bad mellophone spot. Top, top, top heavy for B.D. When the trumpets go away, you notice. I appreciate the complexities offered to my ears including a sequence involving the low reeds. Ha ha! Verry nice rifle toss CAUGHT! Microphone feedback es no bueno.

My Score: 82.30

My Placement: 11th

William Mason H.S., OH

Repertoire: "Underworld!" including: 1. "Love Dance of Orpheus and Eurydice," 2. "Pursuit and Capture of Eurydice," 3. "Orpheus's Lament," 4. "Descent Into the Underworld," 5. "Orpheus Negotiates with Hades" and 6. "Lost Forever"

Comments: These guys are pretty gripping! They sketch out the way their show is going to start with finesse! Tension here, tension there, tension everywhere. (GOOD tension, I should note.) That is a stunning amped concert horn solo, and put right in the spotlight. Aaaaah, and the guard takes center stage. Ooh, some of the auxiliary are victims of their costume. Really, really well done show. They draw...you...in.

My Score: 87.80

My Placement: 3rd

Center Grove H.S., IN

Repertoire: "Something Wicked This Way Comes"

Comments: Sweet, flowing movement is enhanced by the synth's piano notes. Supreme control was the name of the game! I am sucked into this now bleak presentation as once of the guard is tied to a tree prop in a cultish way. Wow, love the fierce aggression. An CG can do body movement with the best of them! Color guard, color guard, color guard...you rule.

My Score: 87.50

My Placement: 4<sup>th</sup>

Lake Central H.S., IN

Repertoire: "Seven"

Comments: These kids grasped all the fundamentals, and now I was on the hunt for detail. Were the toes as high as they could be on the forward motion? What about intervals? Shifting focus to the guard, showcase the guard more! I hate that I had to glance left rear to see sabres being caught. (Bring that stuff up front.) There were clever portrayals of the theme almost everywhere--superb!

My Score: 87.10

My Placement: 5th

Lawrence Central H.S., IN

Repertoire: "Evolucion," featuring the music of Darmon Meader and Astor Piazzolla, including: "Baroque Samba," "Oblivion," "Aconcagua" and "Libertango"

Comments: Look towards the field: it's a bird, it's a plane, it's...a moving work of art! And I love every detail. Ooh, key toss dropped. Wow, when these kids play out they leave nothing behind. I am just in awe of the guard that has one of their members slowly, gently walking atop the backs of other guard members squished together in a line on their hands and knees. Superior coverage of the field, band,

really utilizing your floorplan. Suave!

My Score: 92.30

My Placement: 1st

Morton H.S., IL

Repertoire: "The Boy in the Striped Pajamas," based on the World War II story of two boys on opposite sides of the fence music by Craig Fitzpatrick

Comments: What a daring show theme. I like what I hear thus far! Wow, the symbolism and accuracy is concentrated. This is quickly turning into one of my favorite shows of the day and it's because the band struck the right emotional nerve. Wow, the part where the kids get trapped between the wall of winds closing in gave me goosebumps.

My Score: 78.30

My Placement: 18th

North Laurel H.S., KY

Repertoire: "Lux," including: "Sunlight," "Starlight" and "Illumination"

Comments: The band starts things off with a bang, as they waste no time hitting you with their music. Some unsteady notes flew here and there, but not bad! This band is severely lacking a bottom voice, so tubas, tuba up or get thee a synth! Beautiful flag work guard, as you unwind out of that spiral form. Nice change of color from the plumes, too, even though one plume got completely pulled out by mistake. (Oops!)

My Score: 59.20

My Placement: 38th

Carroll H.S., OH

Repertoire: "Pipe Dream," an original composition by Andrew Markworth

Comments: Calm down the intonation, y'all. I appreciate how they use their pit to carry the beat without a battery line, a la Tarpon. Okay, the props are made to lean a bit by some of the wind players, and then they are moved to condense the stage, giving you that claustrophobic feel. There is a lot of good stuff happening in this show.

My Score: 62.50

My Placement: 34th

Brentwood H.S., TN

Repertoire: "In the Woods...LOST!" including: I. "In the Woods," II. "Lost" and III. "No Escape," featuring music by Javier Navarrete, Anouk and Hans Zimmer

Comments: Okay, super--another "out of the gate" pre-show similar to Union. Big, big opening notes, but a little on the "chalkboard screech" side, trumpets. Despite some sloppy moment, this group delivers when it matters most. The flute player in a red robe plays a pivotal activation role and then, hey...more robed flautests come out of the woodwork to play. (Spectacular sabre-catching soloist, too!).

My Score: 78.80

My Placement: 17th

Monrovia H.S., IN

Repertoire: "The Road of Life," including: "Whirlwinds" by Saucedo, "He's Gone Away" by Kirby and "Windsprints" by Saucedo

Comments: I like the uniforms, which are kind of a Cavaliers look with the green and white tops and sleep hats with long white plume. Trumpets listen, lis-ten. Get in time, everyone. There we go--a "gold"

moment with the rifle toss. The velocity at the end of their first movement was a great moment, too. They do a reasonable job of maintaining momentum.

My Score: 58.50

My Placement: 41st

Victor J. Andrew H.S., IL

Repertoire: "In the Shadows of Leaves," music by Hans Zimmer and Tetsunosuke Kushide

Comments: With solemn, strict narration the wind players execute typical martial arts types moves for this kind of show. Excellent symmetry when called for. I can see how the easy-on-the-eyes drill could represent "harmony." There is not enough velocity, though. Dynamite, drums, as they make a solid contribution when they take center stage.

My Score: 64.00

My Placement: 31st

West Bloomfield H.S., MI

Repertoire: "On the Edge," including "Raise the Roof" by Michael Daugherty, "Impetuosamente" from "Pampeana No. 3" by Alberto Ginastera and "Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor" by Sergei Rachmaninoff

Comments: (Uh oh. Looks like the directors were trying to take care of a major cable management issue in the pit before the show started.) They had an okay start--a somewhat lackluster impact. I like the guard imbalance theme, and how the winds stage the "eye candy" (i.e. drums). As much as I give the guard credit for achieving, I wish I could give them more credit for achieving in perfect synch. This show got better and better as it progressed.

My Score: 78.10

My Placement: 19th

Ravenwood H.S., TN

Repertoire: "The Jester's Deception," an original composition by Richard Saucedo

Comments: Wacky conditions set, with wind players looking like they're trying to break out of neon PVC boxes...and then they do to take shape in a sort of "sleep" mode. Excellent pace, everyone. Ugh, a high rifle toss is bounced. I can't make out the narration. Was that, "The tricks start now"? Chaos becomes organized--nice.

My Score: 72.80

My Placement: 28th

Stebbins H.S., OH

Repertoire: "For Whom the Bell Tolls," featuring music by DJ Food, Shane Kelbley and Giacomo Puccini

Comments: The tall belltower prop on the 50 is impressive. Excellent use of the field with that huge "X" form that condenses. It does not sound like all the musicians are contributing--come on; full out.

Excellent tuba/trombone feature! Woodwinds, make yourselves known! I want more pronunciation, er, EXCLAMATION!

My Score: 62.90

My Placement: 33rd

\*\*\*END OF DAY 1 PRELIMS\*\*\*

At the end of preliminary competition on Day 1, here are my results. Please note the "\*" (asterisk) indicates the bands that are my picks to be amongst the top 11 to advance to semi-finals regardless of class. Please note the "!" (exclamation point) indicates the bands are my picks to be amongst "the next 8

highest scores of day 1 and day 2 of preliminary competition" to advance to semi-finals regardless of class. Enjoy!:

- \*1. 92.30 Lawrence Central H.S., IN
- \*2. 89.70 Union H.S., OK
- \*3. 87.80 William Mason H.S., OH
- \*4. 87.50 Center Grove H.S., IN
- \*5. 87.10 Lake Central H.S., IN
- \*6. 86.90 Lafayette H.S., KY
- \*7. 86.50 Walled Lake Central H.S., MI
- \*8. 85.00 Centerville H.S., OH
- \*9. 83.70 Lincoln-Way East H.S., IL
- \*10. 82.90 Adair County H.S., KY
- \*11. 82.30 Ben Davis H.S., IN
- !12. 81.00 Northmont H.S., OH
- !13. 80.20 Western H.S., IN
14. 79.50 Columbus H.S., IN
15. 79.20 Bellbrook H.S., OH
16. 79.00 Lake Park H.S., IL
17. 78.80 Brentwood H.S., TN
18. 78.30 Morton H.S., IL
19. 78.10 West Bloomfield H.S., MI
20. 78.00 Daviess County H.S., KY
21. 77.90 Moore H.S., OK
22. 77.70 Louisville Male H.S., KY
23. 77.00 Brunswick H.S., OH
24. 76.80 Dorman H.S., SC
25. 75.50 Edgewood H.S., IN
26. 75.00 Rampart H.S., CO
27. 74.90 O'Fallon H.S., IL
28. 72.80 Ravenwood H.S., TN
29. 65.70 Indian Hill H.S., OH
30. 64.40 Marietta H.S., OH
31. 64.00 Victor J. Andrew H.S., IL
32. 63.90 Morristown H.S., IN
33. 62.90 Stebbins H.S., OH
34. 62.50 Carroll H.S., OH
35. 61.70 Springfield Shawnee H.S., OH
36. 60.90 Carlisle H.S., OH
37. 60.00 Talawanda H.S., OH
38. 59.20 North Laurel H.S., KY
39. 59.00 Herscher H.S., IL
40. 58.70 Logan Elm H.S., OH
41. 58.50 Monrovia H.S., IN
42. 58.00 Edgewood H.S., OH
43. 54.20 Bishop Fenwick H.S., OH

POST DAY 1 PRELIMS THOUGHTS: The surprise band of the day for me was Morton H.S., IL--I found their

moving ode to the novel/movie THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PAJAMAS to be BOLD, and they did it with utmost taste. The "You're Still Great No Matter What People Say About You" award goes to Centerville H.S., OH (or "THE CENTERVILLE JAZZ BAND" \*as Chuck H would say in his peppy voice). Go Centerville, go! (I love the "underdogs"!)

Now, as for Ben Davis and Lake Park, hmmm...time to shape up or ship out, yeah? (I would not be the least surprised if one of these two bands DID NOT make semis. We shall see.)

Finally, the best band of the day was Lawrence Central, though the fact they were the best today at what will arguably go down in history as one of the fiercest BOA GNs ever is...odd. (You would think more great bands from Day 2 would instead join the mix on Day 1, but what do I know?)

TRENDS?: Tree props, circle "worship" pods (think Reagan plume-change circa 2002), plume change/wacky-colored plumes like neon green and orange-and-yellow (again, Reagan!), the show before the show or "pre-show" performance (AHEM!--you know who to thank), and tarps gone WILD (and I am not just talking about Tarp-ON Springs, haha!)