

Senators

DCUK & DCE Champions Update October 2008

It is with great pride that I can inform you that the Senators Drum & Bugle Corps from Eastleigh in Hampshire are the **2008 Drum Corps United Kingdom & Drum Corps Europe Champions**.



"The 2008 DCUK Champions Flag"

"The 2008 Drum Corps Europe Flag"

2008 will go down as the most successful season in the Senators 24 year history, breaking records along the way and culminating in a magical night in Kerkrade, Holland on the 27th September 2008 with the Corps retaining the Drum Corps Europe Championships in front of over 3,500 fans and the top 16 units from all over Europe

The Corps has a dual circuit we compete on, our National circuit is Drum Corps United Kingdom which runs 4 show throughout the year and then a Championship on the 20th September, and then the week after we have the Drum Corps Europe Championships which is held in Holland.

We had a successful run of competitions running into the DCUK Championships, which had seen us undefeated in going into the Finals at the Marstons Arena in Northwich. DCUK run things slightly differently as in there is no prelims performance on the day just an evening Finals show, however during the day each Corps has an opportunity to do an exhibition show. This is great as it gives the Staff a chance to sample the acoustics of the stadium and make any minor adjustments we feel necessary.



"Front Ensemble Warm Up DCUK Finals Day"



"Tenor Line Rehearsal DCUK Finals Day"

The Corps theme for 2008 "The Seven Deadly Sins" which featured music by Andrew Markworth and we had worked hard through the winter and summer to bring the show to life. The music was varied and really pushed the members as we took the audience on a journey through each sin

Greed – "Lex from the Metropolis Suite by Michael Daugherty"

Sloth – "Original Composition" by Andrew Markworth

Gluttony – "New Era Dance" by Aaron J Kernis

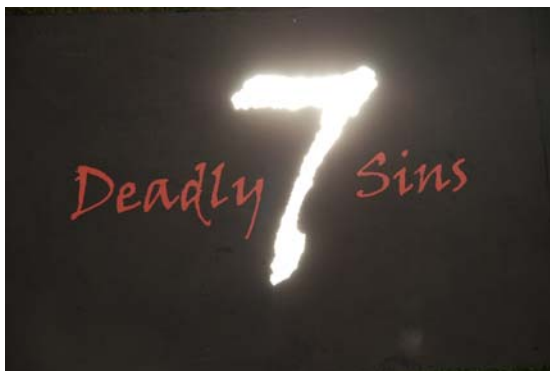
Lust – "Candlelight" by Imogen Heap

Envy – "Original Composition" by Andrew Markworth

Wrath – "Original Composition" by Andrew Markworth

Pride – "Firebird Suite" by Igor Stravinsky

We didn't want to make it a dark show and used the fact that each sin had a representative colour attached to it and so cleverly worked that as a hook throughout the show.



"Seven Deadly Sins"



"Boards for the front of the field"

DCUK Finals

Saturday 20th September 2008

DCUK Finals 2008 was always going to be very special for the Corps as we had the possibility of becoming 8 time DCUK Champions which would be a record which would outperform the very successful Blue Eagles total of 7 from the 1990's.

The build up was great and the Staff were pleased after a very impressive afternoon performance, we went to warm up across the road from the venue and everyone knew it was to be a special night. We have been fortunate to bring a lot of new members into the Corps for 2008 especially within the battery where we have 7 new members who made up the 13 strong unit and the majority of these new guys were young (16-17)

This was the one worry I had that as much as we prepare the members throughout the year, it is always special on a Finals evening and would the nerves and expectation get to them? We were not to be disappointed and they marched and played like Champions

We had a fantastic show, won great applause from the audience and when the results came out..... we had the perfect end – A clean sweep of ALL CAPTIONS to become officially the most successful British Drum Corps ever with 8 DCUK Titles. Another list worth mentioning is the Caption Awards within DCUK below is a list of the Captions the Corps has achieved

Senators DCUK Caption Awards

8 DCUK Championships (1993,97,00,01,03,04,05,08)

9 High Percussion (1993,94,95,99,02,03,04,07,08)

9 High Brass (1994,95,99,02,03,04,05,07,08)

8 High Visual (1993,97,00,01,03,04,05,08)

6 High Effect (1993,00,03,04,05,08)

2 High Colourguard (2000,08)



"Snare Line DCUK Finals Night"



"Battery DCUK Finals Night"



"Battery DCUK Finals Night"



"Senators DCUK Finals Night"



"A very proud Snare Line DCUK Finals 2008"

Normally following a Championships the usual thing would be to go back to our accommodation and have a good drink to celebrate, not this year!! We had achieved part 1 of the mission we now had to tackle the larger obstacle of DCE and the might of Beatrix and Jubal from Holland.

We had arranged a stadium the day after DCUK Finals so we could put the finishing touches to the show that would hopefully catapult us to the next level, it also gave us chance to sit down with the members and discuss how we were to rehearse in Holland and what they would expect out there.

DCE Rehearsals

Thursday 25th & Friday 26th September 2008

DCE Finals had moved from the city of Rotterdam to the district of Maastricht and the town of Kerkrade in Holland, this is home to the World Music Championships that are held every 4 years and the current Champion is the Blue Devils.

The stadium for the Championships is the JC Roda Football Stadium, a beautiful stadium that holds over 20,000 spectators and that has a perfect playing surface and a fantastic view from the front sidelines.

Joe Fitzpatrick (Senators Director) and I had visited the stadium in July to organise accommodation for the Corps, rehearsal venues and the chance to see the stadium and the logistics around it.



"JC Roda Stadium view from the stands"



"Joe Fitzpatrick with staff from the Stadium"

The Corps members arrived Wednesday evening to our accommodation just outside Kerkrade and we prepared for an intensive 2 days of rehearsals. We also had the privilege of 2 of our American Staff members coming for the Championships.

Andrew Markworth had arranged all the music for the Corps and this was to be his first chance to actually see the full Corps in action (Andrew has been over before to work with the Indoor Line and also in the winter when not all sections are there).

Tim Fairbanks is a good friend of the Corps and is an invaluable aid to Craig Sherratt our Visual Designer as we put the finishing touches to the production; Tim is a great guy and can add all the little nuances which really make the show stand out. He is also a fantastic support to the Percussion Section and me in particular and he has definitely helped push us the right direction over the last few years.

The Corps worked extremely hard over the 2 days we were in Kerkrade and we went down really well with the locals which culminated in a local TV Film crew coming to visit our rehearsal and show clips of the Corps on a local Dutch TV Station

http://www.l1.nl:80/mediaplayer_landingpagina/_rp_links1_landing/1_true/_rp_links1_lsideold/1_2904676/_pid/links1



"Bass Line Rehearse in Kerkrade"



"Percussion Rehearsal in Kerkrade"

DCE Prelims

Saturday 27th September 2008

This year DCE had decided to seed the draw for Prelims based on the highest score achieved through the DCE Certified Shows held throughout the year. Although we compete on the DCUK circuit all the shows have DCE Certified judges who are brought in to give us greater transparency throughout the season.

The Final show to gain a score was DCUK Finals and we had to better Beatrix's score of 83.85 to guarantee going on last at DCE Prelims, it was with much surprise that we got the exact same score as Beatrix at DCUK Finals however we achieved a slightly higher GE score which meant we would have the privilege of going on last in Prelims.

We had secured a college just 1 mile from the Stadium to warm up and we also decided to do some light marching to get the blood running their veins, it was a beautiful day and you could feel tension in the air but everyone was ready, excited and wanted to do the best they could.

The Corps marched onto the field like they owned it and a very large crowd gave them a fantastic ovation, in a flash the show was over and we gathered everyone outside to analyse what the members thought of it and what the initial reactions from the Staff. The members were all very pleased everything had worked well and as a Staff we were very happy in a clinic but strong performance.

We despatched the members back to our accommodation whilst myself and Craig Sherratt stayed behind to go to the Market Place where the Souvenir Booths were and the DCE Help Desk which held our scores. We knew that Jubal had scored 85.80 and were currently in the lead; Beatrix had gone on before us so it just left our 2 scores to come out, as per usual this seemed to take forever and then finally we got the news.....WE HAD WON PRELIMS!!!!

DCE Prelims 2008

1. Senators (UK)	88.25
2. Beatrix(Hol)	85.90
3. Jubal (Hol)	85.80
4. Kidsgrove Scouts (UK)	83.05
5. Juliana (Hol)	81.65
6. Millennium (Ita)	74.50
7. Starriders (Ger)	71.85
8. Wolper Lowen (Ger)	70.55
9. Black Knights (UK)	68.50
10. Poynton (UK)	66.75
11. Federatieband (Hol)	64.85
12. 6 th Hove (UK)	61.30
13. Calypso (Bel)	58.30
14. Distant Thunder (UK)	55.30
15. Blue Bandits (Ger)	50.90
16. Besana (Ita)	48.25

Senators (High Brass, High Visual, High Music, High GE, we lost out on Percussion by 0.05)

With 10 Corps making it through to the Finals we had achieved the initial goal and we were to go on last at Finals. We went back to the accommodation to break the news

The Corps members were ecstatic and it is always nice when they show genuine emotion at receiving good news, we have had such a good membership this year and such a strong bond everything just felt right about this group. It was time for some rest, some food and get ready to retain our title (hopefully).

DCE Finals

Saturday 27th September 2008

After talking with everyone we decided to arrive early to warm up to give us plenty of time to prepare and let the members have a really long and productive warm up. Everyone could sense this was going to be a great night no one dared mention it though ☺



"Tenor Line DCE Finals Night"



"Senators Colour Guard 2008"



"Senators Colour Guard 2008"



"Helen Bassett Mellophone 2008"



"Simon Fry Trumpet 2008"

After a great warm up the Corps moved back to the Stadium to soak up the atmosphere and get ready for the show of their lives, our report time was 9.00pm and we knew there was a huge crowd inside the stadium, as Beatrix were finishing off their show Kerrie Brett our DM moved the Corps into stadium ready for our entrance.

Beatrix finished their show and the stadium erupted in cheers, we knew we had a lot to do and the guys would have to pull every ounce out of the show. We set off and the announcer introduced the current British and European Champions onto the field, the crowd cheered and we brought everyone in for a last minute "heads up" they knew what they had to do, it was down to them.

The show starts in a large expanse across the field, we do a 360 degree move and the Pit start the show with some 16th note runs and we are off, the opener is GREED and is based on Lex from the Metropolis Suite, it is a very fast moving piece that allows the battery to really show what they are made of.

The end of GREED sees the Brass in a company front with the battery in a 7 formation behind, we then move onto SLOTH which is a Front Ensemble piece that has role play from the performers on the field

We then move into GLUTTONY which is based on New Era Dance and is a really good piece for the Brass and Colour Guard to show their skills, again fast movement and tempo is tempered by sympathetic Guard work and features from the Brass section



"Kerrie Brett DM starts the DCE Finals Performance"



“Senators at the end of GLUTTONY on DCE Finals Night”

We then move into the ballad which is LUST and the piece is Candlelight by Imogen Heap, we really give the Colourguard and Front Ensemble chance to shine and back the Brass Line up as we slow the show down and give us more variety to the production.

From LUST the show turns to ENVY which starts with 2 individual snare drummers performing to each other before the rest of the Battery and Front Ensemble enter to complete a really strong piece for the Percussion Section who are ably supported by 2 Colourguard performers.

The next sin is WRATH and this is possibly the hardest part of the show for the members who have to portray aggressiveness whilst staying in control. It is a highlight of the show for many people with again fast movement, strong work from all sections which culminates in a huge “Rock Out” section near the end of the piece where the members just get chance to perform the heck out of the show and you can see it in their eyes.



“Senators Snare Line during WRATH on DCE Finals Night”

The final part of the show is PRIDE which is based on the Firebird Suite by Stravinsky, it starts with a sympathetic Pit intro which builds into a large push from the Brass line and we then enter to the familiar strains of the Firebird. This is all about the Guard members portraying the feeling of pride as the Brass line and Front Ensemble back them up, we move towards a Company Front and the introduction of the Battery as we pull the show towards a triumphant close.

Right at the end of the Company Front the whole Corps vocalise "Seven Deadly Sins" and then we are off to bring the show to a fast and furious conclusion, as the final set hits which is a huge "7" made up of the Brass Line and Battery the crowd are on their feet and the show is done

Staff hug each other and the members know they have had a fantastic performance, what was nice was as the Corps marched out of the stadium all the Corps milling outside clapped and cheered the Corps coming off which was very emotional to many of us.

So to the results.....

This is the best part and the worst part of a night in Drum Corps for me, the anticipation is a nightmare but if the result is right then euphoria ensues. I understand and we teach the Corps it is not about winning, we can't have 7 people determine whether we have had a good year or performance, however we are in a competitive environment and we all want to be the best that we can.

As the results filtered out or worst fears started to come to the fore, Poynton Commodores jumped from 10th place in Prelims to 7th place in Finals this was difficult as it shows that although exactly the same panel on the night they were prepared to move things about.....not good.

We get to 3rd place.....with a score of 86.95.....Jubal, so we are thinking that's less than we scored in Prelims is everything ok? And then in 2nd place with a score of 88.30.....wait for ever.....and becoming the Runners Up at the 2008 DCE Championships.....wait for ever AGAIN.....Beatrix!!!! Cue euphoria, hugs, screams, tears of joy!! We had done it and wait for it with a record high score of 90.20!!!

DCE Finals 2008

1. Senators (UK)	90.20
2. Beatrix(Hol)	88.30
3. Jubal (Hol)	86.95
4. Juliana (Hol)	86.10
5. Kidsgrove Scouts (UK)	84.05
6. Millennium (Ita)	75.50
7. Poynton (UK)	72.25
8. Starriders (Ger)	71.90
9. Wolper Lowen (Ger)	69.25
10. Black Knights (UK)	68.70

Senators (High Visual, High Music, High GE, and we were second in Brass, Drums, Colour Guard)

With regards to the Caption Awards we also won High Front Ensemble, which is a separate award to the best Front Line of the night. The scores do not go towards the total but it is an annual award now. The Senators have now won this award 3 years running since the inception of it.

We also captured the High Visual Award for the 3rd consecutive year which is a record for DCE; we scored the highest score ever at DCE Championships 90.20 bettering our own score of 90.05 last year.

We were also second in Colour Guard by 0.05, second In Percussion by 0.10 and second in Brass by 0.10 and one huge point to note is that Beatrix travelled to DCI this year to compete in the DCI Open Class Division and finished 11th in the World in that class. So for us to comfortably beat them was another feather in our cap and one we are extremely proud of



"Senators Snare Line Warm Up DCE Repeat"



"Senators Tenor Line Warm Up DCE Repeat"



"High Front Ensemble 2006,07,08"



"Joe Fitzpatrick and Staff very proud during repeat"



"Thanks to the audience at the end of the repeat"

Once the Staff managed to get onto the field we had a mad 15 minutes of everyone celebrating together and then we got down to the serious business of letting them enjoy their final performance as the 2008 Senators with the DCE Championship Repeat.

Normally repeat performances are a chance to let off steam and for the members to have some fun, but this was different and for me a definite sign of the maturing of the Corps, yes it was fun, yes they were smiling all the way through but it was tight and they sounded fantastic, ever member of the organisation just enjoyed it and the audience who stayed were treated to a gem of a show and one that will remain in the memory for years to come.

After the repeat we got chance to have photographs taken and to hang out which was a great tension release and I would like to share some of these with you



"Senators 2008 DCE Champions"



*"The Dream Team with the 2008 DCE Flag"
"John McNamara, Joe Fitzpatrick, Craig Sherratt"*



*"Evan Cox Senators 2008 Tenor Line"
"Evan is from the USA and his dad marched Spirit Of Atlanta 1977 Snare Line"*

L'Oreal Redken Tribe Awards

Monday 15th September 2008

In addition to being extremely successful on the field of Competition, the Senators pride ourselves on being able to deliver high quality performances to corporate functions as well as TV and Film appearances.

We were asked to provide 11 drummers to open the Redken Tribe Awards at Battersea Evolution on the 15th September and cue to form we had a fantastic evening.

Redken are a part of L'Oreal the hair care specialists and they have an annual "Tribe Awards" to recognise the best talent in UK Hairdressing. The event was hosted by the TV presenter Alex Zane and was filmed for MTV UK.

The brief was to perform to Gwen Stefani's song "Hollaback Girl", although they used a live backing band for the event not Gwen. We were dressed in all black and they wanted us to drum and dance along the catwalk as the band played Hollaback Girl. As always we did a fantastic slot and the customer was really pleased with the Senators as we further cemented our reputation in the industry.



"Senators at Redken Tribe 2008"



"Chris Daly on stage rehearsing for Tribe 08"



"Senators with Alex Zane from MTV UK"