



**Mechanicsburg Regains Blue Guard KIDA Crown, and Takes Unprecedented White Guard Crown as Well**  
**By Andrew Barbin**

What a difference a year makes. Last year, Mechanicsburg lost the Blue Guard crown by 2 tenths of a point, after taking the crown five of the prior six years. While they managed to shake off the disappointment last year, regroup and go on to take Eighth in the World in Scholastic A Division at the World Guard International (WGI) Championships in a Dayton; still, they had something to prove Saturday night at Southwestern High School, in the 2007 KIDA Championships. That is just what Mechanicsburg did, posting a 97.8 with their edgy, elaborate and ever evolving “Shavings” show, to out distance a classic, elegant and flawless Red Land performance of “Stained Glass” which earned a 96.9. Governor Thomas Johnson (MD) placed third with a 95.1 for its Cirque du Soleil style show. Cumberland Valley was fifth with a whimsical and crowd pleasing performance of “Sweater” that earned a 92.4.

While the victory for Mechanicsburg was a sweet one, it is not one they will savor long. Although the season ends with KIDA Championships for most area units, Mechanicsburg will be headed to Dayton in two weeks for Preliminaries at WGI World Championships. Mechanicsburg is one of forty-one Scholastic Open units from around the World who qualified to participate in the World Championships, after being promoted from the Scholastic A division after last year’s Championships. MASH Blue Guard members Sarah Draude, Erin Hensel, Cassie Hoover, Steph Przewoznik, Courtney Quigley, Janell Hixon, Shalee Drake, Jewel Latsha, Jen Hilbish, Sarah Barbin, Kristine Alford, Kirstin Shatzer, Ashley Schmidt, Nikki Martin, Alysha Naugle, Jess Mack, Kaitlyn Baer, Sarah Brickner, Gia Lovari, Kylee Johnson will have a few more intense practices before heading to Dayton next Thursday after next.

Mechanicsburg White Guard scored an 88.4 to take the White Guard division. Five members of the MASH White Guard, Jess Mack, Kaitlyn Baer, Sarah Brickner, Gia Lovari, Kylee Johnson were recently given supporting parts in the Blue guard show and wound up with two Gold medals each at the end of the night. This is the first time in KIDA history that the same school has won the top two divisions. Bermudian Springs, which continued to improve all season, posted an 86.8 for the Silver to edge out Westminster (86.2) who earned the Bronze. Bermudian Springs had scored an 82.4 last week while Westminster had scored an 86.8. Bermudian Springs show is anchored by Senior Brett Spahr who won the Guard Solo competition at Mechanicsburg and gave an exhibition performance at Championships.

Biglerville (86.0) took the Gold in the Gold Guard division. Musselman (85.1) took Silver and Littlestown (82.1) took the Bronze. Big Spring took 7<sup>th</sup> in the crowded field, while West Perry took 10<sup>th</sup> and East Pennsboro took 11<sup>th</sup>. Boonsboro (88.1) took the Gold in Bronze Guard Division, with Mechanicsburg (87.2) taking Silver and Spring Grove (84.7) taking the Bronze. Mechanicsburg’s accomplishment in taking medals in three Guard divisions in the same year is also a KIDA first. Northern Middle won the competitive Junior Guard division with a score of 88.1. Chambersburg (85.5) took Silver, edging out Carlisle (85.0) which took the Bronze. Red Land took 5<sup>th</sup> and Mechanicsburg took 8<sup>th</sup>.

It was also a big night for Mechanicsburg’s Designer and Choreographer Todd Marcocci who has assisted several KIDA programs including Mechanicsburg, Red Land and Chambersburg, and is a nationally recognized event organizer/designer. He was inducted into the KIDA Hall of Fame. He has choreographed and designed over 570 parade, marching band, drum corps, color guard, and dance productions over the last 20 years. His design and choreography work has been seen in The Philadelphia Thanksgiving Day Parade; NBA All-Star events; NASCAR events; The Philadelphia July 4th Parade; The Citrus Bowl Halftime; Millennium Philadelphia Convention Hall Spectacular; The Tournament of Roses Parade; and The National Cherry Blossom Parade. Coach Kristy Templin praised Todd for his contributions to the development of the Mechanicsburg program and its unparalleled growth and success in the past decade.

No one at Southwestern High School Saturday could doubt the fierce competitive spirit of each of the indoor guard units performing Saturday. Each of the shows demonstrated the skill and dedication of the student performers. And yet, it is heartening to see the unique mutual appreciation and camaraderie members of the various units show toward each other at Championships and throughout the season. All cheer with genuine appreciation the efforts of the others, and is not uncommon to see the unit members or prop crew parents of one squad assisting another, even when time penalties could make a deciding difference. Their unique sportsmanship is typified throughout the season in the time between competition and awards when all units join first in appreciation for the exhibition performances of the host school, next for a dance with their competitors in the center of the floor while the judges finish their tabulations, and then finally (win, lose or draw) for the continuation of the joint celebration after awards ceremony.

