



**Mechanicsburg and Carlisle Win Again in KIDA Competition, Stage, Set for Exciting Championships Next Week at Southwestern**  
 By: Andrew W. Barbin

Five weeks ago at New Oxford, Mechanicsburg swept to first place in the Bronze, White and Blue Guard Divisions, and Carlisle took first in Blue Moving Percussion and Junior Guard. With one week to go before the annual Keystone Indoor Drill Association (KIDA) Championships, they did it again this past weekend at Red Land.

Carlisle Blue Moving Percussion (91.9) came out ahead of Cumberland Valley (90.2) in their first meeting since Carlisle's victory five weeks ago at New Oxford. Next week, in addition to a final rematch with Cumberland Valley, Carlisle will have its first meeting with Central Bucks West, which posted a 93.2 to win first in Blue Moving Percussion at the North Hagerstown Competition. In other percussion competition, York Suburban outpaced a crowded field in Gold Percussion Ensemble; West Perry took the White Percussion Ensemble, Dallastown took the Blue Percussion Ensemble, and Biglerville defeated Central Dauphin in the Gold Moving Percussion Division at Red Land. At North Hagerstown, Greencastle took first in Gold moving Percussion and Waynesboro took Blue Percussion Ensemble. Carlisle's Junior Guard (81.3) outdistanced Mechanicsburg's Junior Guard (70.6), to continue its win streak this season. Carlisle has won competitions at Littlestown, New Oxford, Cumberland Valley and Red Land. They will face stiff competition next week from Musselman (74.6), Saverna Park (74.8) Chambersburg (78.4) and Northern Middle (79.4) who competed in North Hagerstown this weekend. Northern Middle won competitions at Hancock, Greencastle, Chambersburg, Mechanicsburg, and North Hagerstown. Each of the other schools has also won at least once this season.

Mechanicsburg took first in the Bronze guard division with a score of 88.1. Northeastern was second with an 83.2, and Spring Grove was third with an 82.4. Boonsboro scored an 81.8 to take first in the Bronze division at North Hagerstown. Mechanicsburg took first in the White Guard division with a score of 87.0. Cedar Cliff was second (83.8), Bermudian Springs third (82.4), and Bishop McDevitt fourth (80.2). Westminster took the White Guard division at North Hagerstown (86.8), followed by Greencastle (84.1), Lower Dauphin (83.9), and Linganore (83.3). Matters were touch and go for Mechanicsburg in the Blue Guard division. Red Land has a tighter gymnasium than most KIDA venues, and Mechanicsburg designs its shows for the much larger venues used for WGI competitions. Even leaving a significant number of props at home and folding its tarp back a couple of feet, they still managed three full points of "over the line" violation deductions at Red Land. Last year, such deductions cost Mechanicsburg the first place trophy; this year, they managed to hold off Governor Thomas Johnson 94.6 to 93.6, despite the deductions.

Ample space at Southwestern's gym should remove penalty considerations from KIDA Championships, but there should still be plenty of excitement as Mechanicsburg seeks to regain the crown it lost by two tenths of a point last year, before regrouping and going on to take Eighth in the Scholastic A division at the WGI World Championships. Mechanicsburg has won the KIDA Blue Guard crown six of the last eight years. To regain the crown, Mechanicsburg (94.6) will have to hold off Governor Thomas Johnson (93.6), Red Land (93.1), North Hagerstown (91.8), Cumberland Valley (91.4), Carlisle (89.9), and Pocono Mountain West (88.7), in a virtual rematch of the Red Land and Mechanicsburg Competitions, with North Hagerstown added into the mix near the top.

Biglerville took first in the crowded Gold Guard division with a score of 82.5. Big Spring was second (75.0) while West Perry and East Pennsboro tied for third (73.7). The tie for third added some comic relief with the representatives dividing up the candy that came with the fourth place consolation prize and playfully debating who would get custody of the one third place trophy on hand (Red Land promised to wrangle up a second trophy in short order). Musselman took the Gold division at North Hagerstown with a score of (74.2). The Gold Division is the most populous division in KIDA this year, and it should be one of the most competitive divisions at KIDA Championships next week.

While no one could doubt the fierce competitive spirit of the indoor percussion and guard units a week before championships, it is heartening to see the unique mutual appreciation and camaraderie at their events. All cheer with genuine appreciation the efforts of the others, and is not uncommon to see the unit members or prop crew members of one squad assisting another. Nowhere is this better typified than in the time between competition and awards when all join first in appreciation for the exhibition performances of the host school, next for an impromptu dance 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. For these student performers, competition is a means to bring out the best in each, rather than to divide one from the other.

Host Red Land ran an efficient show, provided excellent concessions and presented entertaining exhibition performances by its Junior Guard and Blue Guard, and special exhibitions by First Class Percussion, a local youth percussion ensemble, and "the Guard," a *young at heart* independent guard ensemble. Red Land also recognized its Senior guard performers Miranda Gainey, Amanda Lucas, Christine Knonse, Patrick Toomey and Hannah Rothermel. Patrick came in for a special ribbing, with Coach Carol Bieler noting that Patrick was renowned for his voracious appetite. Patrick was "born into guard" with family members who were instructors, and an entire family fan club in attendance at all competitions. Local competition concludes for the year at the KIDA Championships at Southwestern High School this Saturday, March 31, 2007, with Percussion competition beginning at 9:00 a.m. and Guard competition beginning at 2:15 p.m.

