



*Developing a Successful High
School Percussion Section*

Clinicians:

Scott Brown, Mike Lynch

Sponsor: Row-Loff Productions

Texas Bandmasters Association

61st Annual Convention/Clinic

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*Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center
San Antonio, Texas*

2008 Texas Bandmasters
Association Convention Clinic

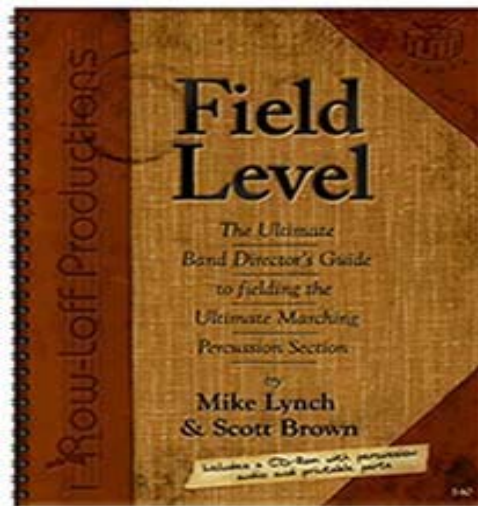
Row-Loff Publications
Nashville, TN
Presents:

The Educated Drumline!

Tips for an Educational Approach to Marching
Percussion that will Benefit Your Concert Program
and Develop Well-rounded Percussionists.

Scott Brown & Mike Lynch

Percussion Instructors of the 2x National Champion,
Lassiter H. S. Band, Marietta, Georgia



Monday, July 28th 5:15 pm – 6:15 pm
Convention Center Room 008

The Educated Drumline!

Tips for an Educational Approach to Marching Percussion that will Benefit Your Concert Program and Develop Well-rounded Percussionists.

Scott Brown and Mike Lynch, Clinicians

- A. **Philosophy** - How to structure a comprehensive percussion program. What would you like to accomplish with your percussion students short and long term?
- B. **Rehearsal Techniques** - Discussion of ideas and techniques that can be used to make rehearsals run smoothly and efficiently. Establishing a set of standards and routines from the beginning of your marching percussion preparation helps the students understand the expectations and saves a tremendous amount of time as the season progresses.
- C. **Grip** - Without an understanding of proper grip, a percussionist will never have a good fundamental stroke or a good sound quality. This is the most important detail in training young students. A percussionist's grip is the equivalent to a wind player's embouchure and should receive the same amount of attention.
- D. **Basic Stroke Types** - In order to keep our examination of the stroke from becoming a science project, we will focus on two fundamental strokes: Legato and Staccato.
- E. **Stick Height Program** - We use a system of sticks heights to help the marching percussion ensemble to look and sound uniform. It's often easier for young performers to match dynamic levels and volumes when they have a visual aide. Forte may be interpreted different from one person to the next, but six inches is always six inches.

- F. **Exercise Program** - When planning out your exercise program, keep in mind the students ability levels and the relevance of the exercise to the style of music you're playing. Do not over program the exercises, especially in a high school setting. Make sure the exercises teach the basics, which are; maintaining a proper grip, basic stroke types, and rhythmic or rudimental patterns. All of the rehearsal time should not be spent teaching the exercises. The purpose of the exercise program is to develop specific techniques and fundamentals which should make it easier to teach and clean the show music.

The Battery Section

- A. **Snares** - When developing a quality snare drum section, the focus should be on developing solid fundamentals and save the "hero" stuff for later. Working on a proper grip, stroke and uniform approach using simple exercises at the beginning of the season will help the students play more challenging material with less difficulty and a good sound quality later on.
- B. **Tenors** - When working with tenors, the development of the student's hands should be the first priority and drum motion should be second. All techniques and music should be developed on one drum first. It's much easier for students to think about heights, interpretation, and dynamics without having to worry about the drum changes. It is also easier for the instructor or director to address uniformity of technique and heights on one drum.
- C. **Bass Drums** - Marching bass drumming has evolved into a very demanding art form. It is expected that the bass drummers not only be capable of playing the same rhythms and patterns as the snares and tenors, but also be able to split the parts between several drums. The students must have a strong grasp of rhythmic timing, tempo control, and be able to balance with the other drums in the section.
- D. **Cymbals** - A well trained and motivated cymbal section can be one of the most captivating elements of a marching percussion ensemble. The variety of sounds possible, along with the numerous visual demands, can make playing cymbals very exciting and challenging for students. The goal is to teach the students to create good sounds, using proper technique, and to develop a sense of uniformity.

E. **The Front Ensemble/Pit** - The front ensemble or pit has evolved into a world of its own, encompassing virtually every aspect of percussion. From traditional concert keyboards, tympani, and accessories to world percussion and electronics, the possibilities are endless. The front ensemble is an integral part of the musical presentation, providing impact with the large drums, cymbals, and gongs; colour through the accessory instruments, and melodic and counter melodic lines with the keyboards. The front ensemble also provides an opportunity to develop well-rounded percussionists.