

Report: Centro Guard '06 (15th January 2006)

Matt Johnson

The 2006 Winterguard season began with a bang with this year's first show at Fenton Manor, sponsored by Magic Performing Arts. This show was compulsory for Open Class units but also attracted many 'A' and Junior Class entries, providing an enjoyable day of competition for a pleasingly large and vocal audience.

Cadet Class

The draw gave **Atlantic Dawn** the unenviable task of opening the season in today's small Cadet Class contest. With white and red flats and costumed in bright red, the guard began well, with creditable movement and flag work, including a solid early sequence fitting aptly into some simple but well-matched vocabulary. This group's strongest element today was their movement book, in both ensemble and smaller groups; while these young performers were evidently nervous and occasionally unsure of their show, they did a fine job, and further practice and performance as the season progresses will undoubtedly help. This was a good first outing, and I hope the guard's second season builds on the firm foundation they laid last year. *(2nd, 39.00)*

The **Starlights** then took us for a train ride on the "Starlight Express" with their show. With starry flats, train wheels and even a miniature train set, the concept was set out right from the start. The opening with the coloured streamers was very effective, setting the scene for a series of well-constructed set pieces across the entire range of equipment. Staging was generally good although a couple of features were perhaps not sufficiently emphasized – the train-set feature and a late "pop-up" solo sabre toss were examples of this. Equipment work and transitions were both generally good, but occasionally suffered from timing problems and differences in interpretation; neither of which are unexpected for this point in the season. That said, vocabulary was very strong for a Cadet unit, and I was surprised to see a sabre transfer in the equipment book! With such a high score and a solid opening performance, I hope to see Junior Class in this guard's future this season. *(1st, 84.00)*

Junior Class

Atlantic Dawn opened the Junior Class with their show based around the film and musical "Grease". The show began with a good solo flag and movement feature, and proceeded into the full ensemble reasonably well. However, the ensemble silks were marred by noticeable timing problems, and while sequences were legible they were not entirely clear. On the whole, equipment writing and execution were somewhat questionable, but not without good moments – the introduction of double flags worked very well indeed. The ending was convincing with good coordination with the music, but at other times throughout the show association between the writing and soundtrack was tenuous. Movement was generally reasonable if a little unpersuasive – there were some good moments but it otherwise lacked rigour. There were certainly some hiccups today, but this was a very passable first performance, and I look forward to seeing them in the future. *(7th, 26.4)*

The **Guardsmen Cadets** took us back to school with their show, using Madonna's "This Used To Be My Playground" and "Baggy Trousers" by The Madness. With a black "playground" floor and the guard dressed in school uniforms, this bade well for communicating the concept. The opening was very strong with good ensemble skills in evidence, improving as the show progressed with adeptly manipulated accents and resolutions coming to the fore. Staging was also strong, with good use of multiple stages for different pieces of equipment and highly legible forms. The mood change into the second motive was communicated very strongly indeed; a big contrast in music reflected amply on the floor. Vocabulary across the books was challenging – perhaps more so in equipment than in movement – and I'm confident the guard will be able to make the most of what's written. The ending was rather unsatisfying, but I'm willing to ascribe that to being a "work in progress" at this stage. This was a very solid performance indeed, with lots of good aspects and writing well-matched to the performers' abilities. This show will continue to grow as the season progresses – second place in the first contest is a very good start. (2nd, 58.2)

Northern Academy showed us "The Sound of Silence", featuring Emiliana Torrini's version of the Simon and Garfunkel classic. We opened with movement and a solo silk, using some excellent staging early on to track left to right across the ensemble. Movement as we went into the main motive was very strong indeed, with the individual "tableaux" being portrayed very well. The sabre and flag partner work was clean and convincing, with good use of differing heights to emphasize the sabres. As we moved on, resolutions and accents were manipulated solidly – a purple flag hit near the middle of the show was particularly noteworthy – with the execution allowing the writing to show flashes of brilliance even at this early point in the season. Execution occasionally left a little to be desired, particularly in ensemble interpretation and transitions – some of the latter seemed rather insecure at times. The books are still a challenge to the guard, but I am confident this will change. For this point in the season, Northern Academy can be very pleased with this performance; I am not convinced that a ten point gap between 1st and 2nd place was warranted, but regardless of score, the show was a clear winner on the day. NAPA must not be complacent, however, since the other guards will certainly close down the gap as the season progresses. (1st with a clean sweep of the captions, 68.1)

We followed the Yellow Brick Road with **Pride of Bristol's** show featuring music from "The Wizard of Oz". With said road being clearly depicted on the floor, we got off to a good start with "Over the Rainbow" – rainbow coloured hand flags being used in a lovely early sequence. There were a few staging problems – an early ensemble entry from the left was poorly staged with the audience having been kept looking right due to an exit a couple of beats before. The mood change into "Follow The Yellow Brick Road" was adeptly handled, with the flag and rifle work showing generally good vocabulary and execution, if rather ragged and loosely coordinated at times. Staging and legibility of forms were good but not great, but the concept and delivery of the show was convincing and enjoyable. Once the guard understand better what has been asked of them in the various books and the changes involved in the different motives, the show will continue to improve. The concept was very well communicated, and, like Pride's other shows this year, this will be great fun for both the guard and the audience in shows to come. (4th, 49.6)

Next were the **Buttercups** with their show entitled "Spring Is Here". The movement opener was very tight, with good timing and presentation of forms, and the introduction of the solo silk through to the ensemble silks exhibited good use of the accents provided in the soundtrack. Sequences were good if occasionally slightly illegible, and execution of the books was handled generally very well – unusually for this guard, the equipment seemed to work better than the movement. The vocabulary in use did appear to be somewhat conservative, with only a few dalliances with higher risk and more complex manoeuvres. The writing with regard to staging was functional – it served its purpose but didn't really excite; there was a use of two stages near the end, but the show felt like it lacked sophistication. The show continued to improve as it progressed, with the finale featuring double flags being very convincing indeed, and overall the delivery was certainly effective. I will be interested to see how Buttercups build up this show from what they have proven to be a solid foundation. (5th, 49.2)

The **Anchormen** were next to perform, their show featuring John Lennon's "Beautiful Boy" and Charlotte Church's "Crazy Chick" – quite a contrast! The opening movement feature and early accents were handled well, with only slight differences in ensemble interpretation. The silks were introduced into a second stage which worked nicely, but the following ensemble silk sequence was rather ragged and barely legible. The mood change into the second motive was dealt with very convincingly, with an improvement in timing across the silks and good use of accent points on the soundtrack; indeed, it seemed clear that the guard was much happier about the second half of the show than the first. This was a reasonable first performance; however, unless I'm mistaken, I did not see any weapons in use, which is surprising for a Junior Class guard. This show works well from the audience's standpoint, but the guard needs to work on their books to ensure that the show will be competitive this season. A lot of hard work lies ahead, but this was an enjoyable show which I hope will go places as the season progresses. (6th, 37.1)

The Academy were ready to rumble with their show entitled "Round 1". The best parts of the show were undoubtedly the opening and the finale: the former with some good movement and solo silk work and a very good sequence, the latter with a reasonably strong ensemble silk feature but marred by significant differences in ensemble interpretation and timing. The majority of the show had reasonable staging, but the content being staged was rather unconvincing; the vocabulary in use was generally extremely conservative with only hints of intermediate challenges. The execution was reasonable, with equipment certainly stronger than movement, and some insecurity was also evident, which I am sure is related to "first show nerves" for this young Junior Class guard – having a few performances under their belts will undoubtedly help with this. Overall, the concept itself shows promise, but the show had the feel of an unfinished product – I hope that this is the case. This was a very good shot by the guard members in performing a show which is not yet viable – significant changes must be made to make this competitive this year; a task of which I am sure that TA's staff are capable. (8th, 19.2)

Today's Junior Class competition was concluded by **Mayflower**, performing their show entitled "Funkadelic". With a very "loud" yellow and pink floor, the movement opening was very convincing and produced a very clean discovered four-part stage – vocabulary in both books was wide-ranging and convincing throughout. As was the case last year, staging and form were strong elements, both already showing signs of brilliance – an example of this would be the staging of four sabres performing a toss in the centre of the floor, with extremely clear staging by the remainder of the ensemble on silks. Movement was generally carried off with some verve, but there were a few differences in interpretation and timing throughout the show which need attention. The flag feature in "Dance" was a high point, with very good timing and powerful performance for this point in the season – this strength continued to the finale with a notable movement feature at the very end. The concept certainly works very well, and the writing is essentially there – however, execution leaves something to be desired at times. The third place result is well-deserved, and I would not be at all surprised to see Mayflower pushing for the top again this year. (3rd, 56.0)

'A' Class

Mayflower opened the 'A' Class competition with their show entitled "Eden". With ochre and brown costuming, a brown floor, and a garden bench for scenery, the abstract concept is communicated reasonably well. The opening movement was very clean indeed, with good forms throughout, swiftly followed by a very effective floor colour change to a greyish green. Sticks and rifles featured in a convincing exchange early on, showing off a good equipment book stronger in rifles and silks than on sabres. Co-ordination with the music throughout is very good, but there is a section in the middle where the music dies away to almost nothing for several beats, which proves rather off-putting. The movement book and execution were notably strong throughout, gaining second place in that caption. Transitions were generally good, but deteriorated a little as the show progressed – becoming a little long and unconvincing towards the finale, which was satisfying but not particularly inspiring. Overall, this was a very good performance for a first contest – the nits needs to be shaken out, and a little development needs to take place for the show to fully flourish this season. Nonetheless, third place is certainly a very good starting point. (3rd, 60.4)

Next to perform were **The Avengers**. The show started with a very strong movement sequence, segueing into an ensemble flag feature with good timing and accent work. The black and green colour scheme caused me a few problems – there is a section where some green equipment (possibly silks) gets lost in the clutter caused by the green floor. However, this was a minor nit in a very strong performance: staging throughout was very clear and showed significant ingenuity, whether for the entire ensemble or smaller groups. Vocabulary in both movement and equipment was evidently challenging, and the members are making an excellent effort to fulfil what has been asked of them. There were several excellent sequences in both movement and equipment – to have such good ensemble timing this early in the season is highly laudable. The writing throughout is elegant and enjoyable from an aesthetic point of view – a highlight is the introduction of four different coloured silks from the four corners of the floor to stage a solo rifle, which worked terrifically well. The only question I would have is over the sense of concept – I'm not entirely sure where the show takes me at that level, but I do know that what I saw, I enjoyed, and that The Avengers have made an excellent start to their 2006 season with what will undoubtedly be a competitive show. (*1st with High Equipment, High Movement, Joint High Ensemble, 70.2*)

The **Southern Knights** then told us the story of “The Giving Tree”, using music by George Winston and Ludovico Einaudi to accompany the spoken text written by Shel Silverstein. The strong opening and mirrored forms in the movement are very effective, leading to a very strong ensemble silk feature, with great interpretation from the entire guard. Weapons were also noteworthy, with each toss introducing a new sabre to the floor during their introduction, and continuing with convincing work throughout on rifle too, all contributing to a second place in the Equipment caption. Staging was very legible and effective throughout, and the writing in general – as we have come to expect from SK – was forceful – a double flag and rifle feature rises above the rest. There were a handful of overlong and perhaps “overstressed” transitions, but this improved as we moved into the finale – an excellent resolution in keeping with the soundtrack. The guard will have to work hard to make their visual presentation soar over what seems to be a slightly featureless soundtrack, but the guard certainly have this task already in hand. This was a commendable first performance and a fine starting point for their season. (*4th, 60.0*)

As soon as I heard that the **Pride of Bristol** were performing to Queen's “Bohemian Rhapsody”, I knew that the Winterguard audience would be in for a treat – they did not prove me wrong! The opening was handled very nicely, with good use of the soundtrack with the early movement and sequence into the silks. The first mood change introduced the weapons and a very convincing centreline poke, with great use of the accents provides in the music. Vocabulary was rich in both books – sailing flags onto the floor just one example – and execution was solid throughout. Ensemble skills throughout were noteworthy for a first contest, with highly legible forms and good staging with only one or two slight hiccups, if slightly unoriginal at times – the front “wedge” form perhaps being overused. In this generally strong and impressive first performance, the weakest element was the finale, with a slightly questionable transition into the final set piece and a moderately vague ending. Overall, the guard were clearly having a blast performing this, and the audience feedback will undoubtedly buoy them on their way this season. A powerful, confident performance and a richly deserved second place – this show will be “in the hunt” this year. (*2nd, Joint High Ensemble, High General Effect, 67.2*)

Next to take the floor were a new guard joining the circuit this year – **Electrix** from Malvern, Worcestershire – who received a very warm welcome from the audience for their performance to music from “Billy Elliot”. The opening, on a rather wide stage, was effective and showed off good characterization by the guard members, and cued up an excellent mood change into the upbeat movement feature, featuring some very convincing execution and good forms. The books throughout were executed well, but apparently offered few challenges – I suspect the members might be able to be tested a little more? Ensemble factors were very good, but not great – there was generally uniform interpretation, occasionally gifted sequence work and generally solid staging. However, transitions between set pieces suffered and at times the correspondence between the soundtrack and the show was rather questionable: several accents took a while to resolve instead of hitting their accent points. The big problem for me was that the show went from several really well-constructed and effective sections into some slightly expressionless and lifeless portions – this may have influenced the judges’ rather harsh EA and GE scoring. However, from my point of view, when Electrix got the audience going, they did it with style: the solo rifle “playing his axe” in the middle of the floor with some outrageous staging was a truly fun and memorable moment, to mention but one! The guard succeeded in performing an enjoyable and entertaining show, and I look forward to seeing how Electrix develops next contest. (6th, 22.8)

The Academy were next, performing their show “A Starry Night”, featuring “Vincent” by Josh Groban. With easels as scenery and the guard wearing stylised painters’ overalls, the concept was clear from the very beginning as we opened with a convincing movement feature with clear forms. The introduction of the flags with the new motive worked very well, with a good sequence and toss setting up effective staging for the sabres. Accents throughout were well-timed and adeptly handled, and transitions were carefully constructed and elegantly executed. Staging throughout was reasonable, but in the second half felt a little cluttered with the easels all over the floor. Vocabulary and execution was marginally better on equipment than movement – sabres and silks doing yeoman’s work. Timing was generally good, but a major effect accent with the grey silks appearing from behind the easels had a noticeable tear and missed the mark. This show requires tons of expression to be convincing, and that was somewhat absent for this performance – technically the presentation was reasonable but a mite uninspiring. That said, this was a very good start to the season, and with only just over two points covering third to fifth, the ranking is not much to worry about at this stage – the show is certainly competitive. (5th, 58.0)

Closing the ‘A’ Class contest were **Moonlight** with their show “First Time Love” to “Try” by Nelly Furtado. The scenery communicates the concept well – a white and pink petal floor, with flowery flats proclaiming “Love me, love me not”. The sabre opening was generally solid, but wavered a little as it progressed. As the pink flags were introduced, the ensemble took some time to become cohesive, but this improved quickly and was fully up to speed by the time the sabres and rifles took the floor. Vocabulary in both books was a little on the pedestrian side – movement execution was notably more solid than the equipment, with rather a lot of errors in the latter. Timing throughout was rather ragged but not without good moments, and power and communication of the written show was rather questionable but showed moments of lucidity. The coda didn’t work out very well – the audience believed that the end of the main motive was the end of the show and so the guard lost the reaction at the finale, which was a little unfortunate. The members were noticeably concentrating on the rudiments of the show for this performance – once they are happier with this level of the show they will be able to add expression and make the writing come alive. This was a very good effort by the guard members though, and I am sure that as the season moves on we will see this show reach its full potential. (7th, 20.6)

Open Class

Moonlight started the day's Open Class competition, performing to "Feelings" by Il Divo and the rock classic "Dancing in the Street". With a table and chairs at the front of the floor, looking something like a street cafe, this was going to be an interesting show! The opening solo silk and movement were very elegant, and progressed nicely to the first set of accent points. A timbre change in the sound track introduced the weapons, in which some intermediate vocabulary challenges were handled reasonably well throughout. The mood change into "Dancing in the Street" was not entirely convincing – for this to work there needs to be a big and "snappy" change here. Forms were rather messy at times but usually legible, and staging was functional, but not really inspiring or noteworthy. The performance was rather workmanlike, suffering from a lack of significant expression similar to the guard's 'A' Class unit – this must be rectified before this show will be competitive. That said, I think the EA and GE scores in particular were extremely harsh and did not reflect the good work that took place in many sections of this show – convincing flag features, several solid sequences, and quite a bit more. The product definitely needs to develop in order to go places this season, but it is certainly not without promise. (8th, 15.9)

Next to perform were last year's champions, the **Southern Knights**, with their show entitled "Hymn to Love" uses the song by Cyndi Lauper, and various features from the film "Love, Actually". With a very eye-catching sunset coloured "sky" floor, the opening featured some very clear forms and a beautifully expressive movement sequence with exquisite timing – a great start. The introduction of the equipment featured some good staging, but the sabres were rather obstructed by the silks at times. No sooner had we got into the show are we baited by several big rifle trick catches and a big rifle sequence, showing off a tough equipment book which still requires quite a bit of cleaning. The soundtrack is reflected very well indeed in the writing throughout, particularly in a series of chained flag and rifle tosses which were delivered with great aplomb, moving into a mood change which was handled powerfully and very well indeed. Ensemble work was generally good, but several transitions didn't quite work out, including a key one to form a company front where the form never quite materialized. The finale was full of gravitas, and very well-delivered to complete a very promising first performance. Certainly more expression is needed, but given the point in the season this is not a surprise, and time and further performances will assist in both this and the full confidence in the written work. The show is undoubtedly competitive – the Knights have made a strong start to the new season. (3rd, 61.9)

The Academy returned to its roots, "reprising" music played by Thurrock Marching Brass back in the day with their show "Carmen: A Lover's Story", featuring music from the opera by Bizet. Elegantly uniformed – including a further homage to TA's past with the blue Thurrock jackets, the opening "rifle practice" provided good characterization. We were thrown rapidly into a tough equipment book with a solid rifle exchange, soon followed by a very strong rifle and sabre toss – there are significant challenges in both books' vocabulary which will take time to come into their own. Sabre work on the whole was particularly noteworthy, along with several key features on the ensemble silks. The show pivoted around a very elegant duet dance, carried off with great conviction and providing an excellent counterpoint to the "classical Winterguard" surrounding it. Ensemble and sequence work was good – a cracking "left to right to centre" toss sequence sought attention and got it from the entire audience, but deteriorated towards the end of the performance. Progression and development throughout was excellent, all the way to an impressive and powerful ensemble silk feature and a chaotic finale amid which a massive sabre toss pops out to excellent effect – I'm yet to be entirely convinced by this though. This was a very solid first show – TA are undoubtedly out of last year's doldrums with a real crowd-pleaser, and I would not be at all surprised to see this challenge for medals as the season progresses. (4th, 60.7)

Next were **Northern Academy**, with their cerebral show entitled “JFK – One Moment In Time”. The opening movement section was very strong with good ensemble interpretation, showing a good reflection of the soundtrack. This swiftly led into a very well-staged solo sabre, and a two part stage for movement and sabre, all very strongly constructed and well-formed albeit with a few small timing problems. An early flag transfer was impressive, but I couldn’t quite see the underlying form which diminished its effect a little. Sequence work throughout was excellent – one example was the “police siren” sequence from left to right on rifle – great timing, great execution and a solid visual. The show on the whole was impressively clean for the first performance of the season, with few drops despite the evident advanced equipment challenges. Some transitions were rather tight – one in particular involving the introduction of large white silks didn’t quite come together. The finale was expressive and moving, and provided an excellent discovered stage of the member behind the podium: very strong orchestration and development. The show on the whole was technically very good indeed, but for me it has much more potential in how it engages with the audience – it didn’t grab me as it should perhaps have done. I am looking forward to seeing how this show develops – NAPA are undoubtedly going to push for the very top this year. (*2nd, High GE, 68.2*)

Mayflower then took the floor for their performance. Their expressive and powerful opening movement statement was very significant, matching the soundtrack very well indeed – and this was an indication that movement throughout would be a particularly strong suit in this product. As we moved into the show, transitions were somewhat variable in nature, as was ensemble interpretation, but some great timing was exhibited – several key sabre tosses reflecting “pings” on the soundtrack were tremendously effective, followed up by a big ensemble sabre toss right on an accent point. The use and implementation of staging showed signs of brilliance: it was usually busy but not cluttered, and directed the audience to the action on the floor with apparent effortlessness. There was advanced vocabulary in evidence for both books too – one example which wowed the audience was the ensemble silk “leg spin”, not to mention the numerous trick catches and equipment work in combination with complex movement. The late mood change and partner movement section was handled very well indeed, with great legibility and elegance. Movement throughout was a major driving force – it was undoubtedly a caption winner, but I’m unconvinced that the margin reflected on the recap is entirely realistic. While definitely effective and attention-grabbing, the second half of the show wasn’t entirely satisfying to me – it seemed to be almost a continuous transition, never really landing at a form to latch onto – this may just be subtle timing issues though. The show is pacey and tough – Mayflower have the bit between their teeth and certainly gave their all: this was an impressive first performance, and a richly deserved win today. (*1st, High Equipment, High Movement, High Ensemble, 70.7*)

Next to perform were the **Pride of Bristol**. A strong opening movement feature introduced the sabre line with a very convincing first ensemble toss – a very good hook for the audience into the show. The big mood change which followed was more-or-less convincing, but wasn’t entirely there yet; however, this introduced the silks which executed some tough work very well indeed. Staging throughout was reasonable if occasionally unclear at times – rifles were occasionally lost between flags on a couple of occasions. Development as the show progressed was solid, including a good rifle sequence leading into a very powerful ensemble silk feature. This was followed soon after by a reverse rifle sequence with an impressive final trick catch at the end of the line. Movement was good – ensemble features were much stronger than individual work – an example being the late feature leading into the finale, adding massive effect and garnering a huge audience reaction. This was a very strong first performance by Pride, already showing off a lot of grit, power and enjoyment from the guard. This crowd-pleasing show is being rewarded with great responses from the audience – it’s definitely competitive, particularly given that third to sixth place were separated by just over three points. (*6th, 58.6*)

Alliance took the floor for their first performance in Open Class with their show featuring various versions of “Confide In Me” by Kylie Minogue. Their black floor with grey crosses proved to be a key to their use of many geometric forms, but the colour scheme and show seemed to be a little disjoint with their concept of “Trust”. The opening movement featured an expressive solo followed by a “travelling duet”, showing some complex vocabulary early on with good ensemble interpretation. The silks were also used generally well, and accents were mostly convincing throughout – both books exhibited solid execution and vocabulary. The show unwound a little bit from the ensemble perspective – forms became rather ragged and the group didn’t mesh particularly well; staging was reasonable but occasionally cluttered with flags obstructing rifles at times. There were several highlights: the use of exercise balls and their combination with movement proved very effective and eye-catching, as did a section where the silks were ‘sailed in’ to the middle of the floor. The late tempo change was rather unconvincing, likewise the finale – but once the ensemble is tighter this should help. This was a perfectly good first performance in Open Class, and I’m rather surprised at the harsh Ensemble and General Effect scores. There are certainly a few corners to look at, but the show is definitely viable – Alliance’s entry to Open Class will prove to be a good decision, I am sure. (7th, 37.4)

Guardsmen closed the day’s performances with their show entitled “Today”. From the beginning this was evidently going to be a show to make the audience think: an abstract white floor with brown “orbits”, and right in the middle of those orbits sat a chair. The opening movement was very tight with some very clear forms, and introduced the sabres solidly. This was followed by a pleasing sabre toss to introduce the silks, and the early staging for sabres and silks was entirely convincing. Staging throughout was solid – occasionally some more effective and ingenious than others, for example, a good three line stage of flags, rifles and sabres making good use of sight lines, and uniformly functional even at its weakest. Both books were strong in both writing and execution – the weapons were particularly well-served by a series of repeated chained rifle and sabre tosses, and a late ensemble silk toss garnered excellent effect. Forms were rather ragged and occasionally illegible, but for a first show this is not unexpected. The concept is bizarre – and self-referential, with references in the sound track to the date of the show and the performance of the show itself! There was lots of “make you think” material in here – but I’m not sure whether the visual presentation really grabbed me; I’m looking forward to seeing this one again in the future to try and get another “read” on it. A very well-executed performance with a quirky concept that has got the audience talking – well done. (5th, 60.5)

The day also saw exhibition performances from the Kidsgrove Scouts Winter Corps, who fairly raised the roof with their toe-tapping melodies and great tone quality; and also the Forgemen Percussion Theatre, with a great, sharp and showy performance. It is great to see these organizations giving themselves exposure on the Winterguard circuit, and both performances were given a very warm and vocal reception by the audience.

The first show of the season ran very smoothly and successfully indeed: many thanks to Mark Nicholson and Magic Performing Arts for their sponsorship and running the show, all the volunteers from various local guard and drum corps organizations who assisted, our hosts at Fenton Manor, all the WGUK staff, judges and tabulators, all the members and staff of today’s competing guards, and to everyone who came along to support and enjoy the show.

After a cracking start to the season, the first show in the South takes place at the end of the month – the first of the year’s two Southern Classic events sponsored by the Southern Knights at the Triangle, Burgess Hill, where we’ll get to see the rest of this year’s guards in competition. 2006 looks like being another great Winterguard season – see you in the stands!