

COLORGUARD CLASSIFICATION

I. Colorguard units will be organizations ranging in size from five (5) through thirty (30) performing members. A unit will declare their class on the membership application. A unit may move up a class no later than 14 calendar days before the Circuit Championships. The unit director must put this in writing to the Texas Educational Colorguard Association President. A unit may not move down a class once they have performed within a specific classification.

A. The following unit classification descriptions are merely that; descriptions of what units in that class will typically be attempting and achieving. These descriptions are in no way meant to limit or restrict creativity of the designer or achievement of the performer. Instead they are meant to serve as general guidelines for the instructor when making the decision as to what classification to place his/her unit during the contest season. It is expected that there will be some overlap of classes in terms of what is being attempted and what is being achieved. Often units at the top of one class will demonstrate some qualities on the next class. However if a unit is demonstrating a majority of the criteria for a particular class, then they should be competing in that class. Directors and designers should pay close attention to the criteria when creating the program and classifying the unit.

1. **CADET CLASS** – Any unit in which every member is an 8th grader or younger. Units competing in this classification will be judged using the WGI “Regional A Class” criteria.

2. **NOVICE CLASS** - All members attend the same school or feeder school. This class serves as an entry level class for new, beginning first year programs which have never competed in the winter activity. Equipment and movement will focus on the training and achievement of the most SIMPLE BEGINNING SKILLS. Directors and members will recognize which principles are essential at a beginning level and train for the excellent demonstration of these skills. The purpose of this class is to help the performers grow in the very elementary principles and efforts in handling equipment and movement. Many may use props, small swing flags or other pieces of equipment, which can be handled through full arm rotation. Always support proper training and development on whatever piece of equipment or movement choice the unit displays. In the Ensemble Analysis caption compositional qualities should include logic and presentation with good connections and flow from one single idea to the next. Obvious melodic line reflections will be the choice for most groups in reflecting musical structure. Focus on the correctness of the basics of composition. At pulse, in-step and consistent step offs and builds to new sets will be the priorities. In General Effect, design and performance skills will be at a beginning level. As beginners, single efforts and simple responsibilities will occur. The concept of layered skills will probably not exist. Shows will likely “set, move and spin”, presenting one skill at a time. Effect will be generated largely through precision and timing. Achievement of simple beginning skills is the main focus of this class. Units competing in the classification will be judged using the WGI “Regional A Class” criteria.

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3. SCHOLASTIC REGIONAL AAA CLASS - All members attend the same school or feeder school. This class is designed for the most novice performers of color guard. Units in this class are characterized by membership of no more than 25% of the total number of performers ever having any dance or guard experience. Show design and the generation of effect are very much less important than the development of primary technical skills and the introduction of expression. This class is reserved to allow these performers a positive emerging competitive experience in color guard, and to allow them to develop entry-level skills in a supportive environment. Only groups who are at the very nascent stages of training should declare this class.

4. SCHOLASTIC REGIONAL AA CLASS - All members attend the same school or feeder school. This class is designed for units that may have new performers, but also includes more than 25% of the unit with limited dance or previous color guard training. This class is designed for individuals to be somewhat more competitive than the regional 'A' class, but still working on the refinement of entry-level skills. Design and thematic efforts play a more prominent role than in the regional 'A' class, but still are at elementary levels. Groups who have had some exposure but limited training should declare this class.

5. SCHOLASTIC REGIONAL A CLASS - All members attend the same school or feeder school. This class is designed for units that may have new performers, but may also include a majority of returning performers who have had some previous exposure to dance and/or color guard. For a competitive unit which is not ready for the demands of the A Class sheet. Equipment and movement will focus on the training and achievement of the basic skills. Tosses use a limited variety of release and catch points and typically take place from a stationary position. Weapons will usually toss no higher than a triple. Dimensionality is limited and phrases are often very short (16 to 24 counts) with much built in recovery time. Movement is mostly demonstrated by moving from place to place with a good range of gestural qualities being demonstrated. There is usage of simple turns and leaps and performers occasionally explore level changes around the body. Performers should demonstrate good examples of body awareness (posture, line, shape, weight) with very little change in dynamic qualities. Ensemble Analysis will display a beginning level of artistic effort that focuses on clear staging of the elements, logical progression of ideas (horizontal orchestration) and the basic use of the design elements. The triad is never completely used with elements most often being presented singularly and occasionally presented two at a time. In General Effect, the concept and intent should be clear, consistent and moderately developed. Ideas should move successfully from one to another and the intent of the concept is not totally dependent on the role of the performers. Performer role, character and emotional development is evident but at a basic level with minimal changes. Units competing in this classification will be judged using the WGI "Regional A Class" criteria.

6. SCHOLASTIC AAA CLASS - All members attend the same school or feeder school. For a competitive unit which has exceeded the criteria of Regional A, but are not yet ready either through individual performance or design for the demands of AA, A, Open or World Class. Equipment and movement still will focus on the training and

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achievement of the basic skills but with more variety than the Regional A units. Tosses will begin to display more variety of release and catch points with weapons usually tossing no higher than a quad. There is more exploration of basic dimensionality of equipment and some layering of efforts is beginning to occur. Phrase length is still primarily short (16 to 24 counts) and recovery time is still apparent. In movement, the range of dynamic qualities is expanding. There is also expanded use of torso and level changes. There is more exploration of changes in weight, time and space and usage of expressive qualities is broadening. Ensemble Analysis shows a program with skills being demonstrated during the program. There is usage of two elements of the triad simultaneously with occasional use of all three. In General Effect, the concept shows a use of artistic effort and a variety of methods of creating effect are used. Characterization is more developed. Units in this classification will be judged using the WGI "A Class" criteria.

7. SCHOLASTIC AA CLASS - All members attend the same school or feeder school. For a competitive scholastic unit which is not ready for the demands of A, Open or World Class. Equipment and movement still will focus on the training and achievement of the basic skills but with more variety than the Regional A units. Tosses will begin to display more variety of release and catch points with weapons usually tossing no higher than a quad. There is more exploration of basic dimensionality of equipment and some layering of efforts is beginning to occur. Phrase length is still primarily short (16 to 24 counts) with occasional longer phrases (24 to 36 counts) and recovery time is still apparent. In movement, the range of dynamic qualities is expanding. There is also expanded use of torso and level changes. There is more exploration of changes in weight, time and space and usage of expressive qualities is broadening. Ensemble Analysis shows a more developed program with skills being demonstrated more frequently during the program. There is increasing usage of two elements of the triad simultaneously with occasional use of all three. In General Effect, the concept shows a greater use of artistic effort and a variety of methods of creating effect are used. Characterization is more developed and changes in the emotional character are beginning to be explored. The concept does place some demand on the performers to be fully realized. Units in this classification will be judged using the WGI "A Class" criteria.

8. SCHOLASTIC A CLASS - All Members attend the same school or feeder school. For a Moderately competitive scholastic unit which is not ready for the demands of Open or World Class. Guards in this area are at a level where members and staff have a complete understanding of the basic principles of performance and design. Units here may also occasionally explore more intermediate concepts that encourage performers and designers to broaden their skills. There is moderate rehearsal opportunity and funding to develop this level of competitive program. Units competing in this classification will be judged using the WGI "A Class" criteria and will be encouraged to maximize the achievement of these criteria.

9. SCHOLASTIC OPEN CLASS - All members attend the same school or feeder school. For a highly competitive unit which is too advanced to find any competition in

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the Scholastic A classes, but is not ready for the demands of Scholastic World Class. Guards in this area have a greater experience level. Both staff and performers have the talent to grow beyond the basics, exploring a higher level of design and performance techniques. There is sufficient rehearsal opportunity and funding to develop this level of competitive program to benefit the students and broaden their performance skills. Units competing in this classification will be judged using the WGI "Open Class" criteria

10. SCHOLASTIC WORLD CLASS - All members attend the same school or feeder school. For the most highly developed high school programs. The designation World Class indicates the unit is competitive on the national level. This is the most advanced level of scholastic competition for guards with the student talent, design, staff, rehearsal time and budget capabilities to produce challenging and creative programs. Students here will be challenged to expand their technical and performance base to achieve their fullest potential within programs that utilize advanced concepts of design. Units competing in this classification will be judged using the WGI "World Class" criteria.

11. INDEPENDENT REGIONAL A CLASS – All members do not attend the same school or feeder school. Performance criteria for this class are identical to the Scholastic Regional A classification

12. INDEPENDENT A CLASS - Every member does not attend the same school. For a competitive independent unit which is not ready for the demands of Open or World Class. Guards in this class are at a level where their members may be young or less experienced in their equipment and movement skills. In this category, guards will be encouraged to demonstrate skills in movement and equipment handling. Designers should present imaginative shows with sound and logical designs setting achievable standards for their performers. Members may not be over 22 years of age as of the date of the WGI national competition. Units competing in this classification will be judged using the WGI "A Class" criteria.

13. INDEPENDENT OPEN CLASS - Every member does not attend the same school. This class is for a highly competitive unit which is too advanced to find competition in A Class, but is not ready for the demands of World Class. Guards in this area have a greater experience level. Guards will be challenged to broaden their design and performance skills. Designers and instructors will be challenged to expand their programming, creative and instructional techniques. Members may not be over 22 years of age as of the date of the WGI national competition. Units competing in this classification will be judged using the WGI "Open Class" criteria.

14. INDEPENDENT WORLD CLASS - Every member does not attend the same school. There is no age limit to this classification. For the most highly developed independent programs. The designation World Class indicates the unit is competitive on the national level. This is an area where innovation and setting standards is the goal. This category is open to a guard with the membership talent, design and instructional staff and budget to place their performers at this challenging level to stimulate their growth and

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development through World class competition. Units competing in this classification will be judged using the WGI "World Class" criteria.