



KRIS J. MURANTE staff photographer

The East Rochester drumline performs during the percussion competition at Hilton High School on Saturday.

The bands played on

Hilton holds annual percussion competition



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East Rochester eighth-grader Alex Case plays the chimes at a percussion competition at Hilton High School on Saturday afternoon.

BENNETT J. LOUDON

STAFF WRITER

HILTON — About 700 people crammed into the Hilton High School gymnasium Saturday afternoon for the 13th annual Hilton percussion competition.

One independent group from Syracuse, plus bands from 12 schools in the Rochester, Syracuse and Finger Lakes areas competed.

The show also included an exhibition by the Hilton High School Marching Band.

By the end of the day, three groups took home top honors in their division: Hilton High School, Victor High School and Cicero-North Syracuse High School.

The competing ensembles comprised 15 to 30 members with all sorts of percussion instruments and in some cases included other instruments not normally part of the percussion category, such as bass and electric guitars.



A packed house at Hilton High School watches Midlakes High School perform during Hilton's 13th annual percussion competition on Saturday afternoon. About 700 spectators came out for the event.

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Hilton

FROM PAGE 1B

Some groups also brought color guards, baton twirlers and rifle twirlers.

"They're timed and they're judged both musically and visually on their performance," said Rick Wilson, an organizer of the event.

"There's a real big range of performances. It's very rare to see two that are even close to the same."

Bob Wahl of Hilton, whose daughter, 16-year-old Stephanie, is a baton and rifle twirler in the Hilton High School Marching Band, said the drumline shows are very different from a typical marching band show.

"It's a whole different style," Wahl said.

The indoor circuit for the percussion groups runs from Feb. 10 through April 1, when the New York State championship competition is scheduled for Central Square High School in Oswego County.

Each group gets a total of nine minutes from the time they set up their equipment, until they leave the floor.

They must play music for at least four minutes.

The music can be just about any genre, arranged for an emphasis on rhythm and percussion instruments.

"Groups have done classical pieces that have electric guitars, they've done pop pieces," Wilson said.

The East Rochester High School drumline performed

"Toxicity" and "Question" by the rock band System of the Down.

"I picked those songs because it's music that I know these guys can relate to," said band director Mark Gowman.

"It's heavy metal and it's very rhythmic music and it's something that I know they listen to and that they'd be familiar with," he said.

"A lot of these guys play in rock bands and I knew it was something they'd be able to relate to and get into and would inspire them to do their best," Gowman said.

The East Rochester group has 25 members and half have never played any instrument before being in the drumline.

They competed at Victor High School a few weeks ago where they placed third.

"We play more songs that we know," 14-year-old Sam Brown-Steiner, comparing the percussion group to other musical groups at school.

Brown-Steiner, an eighth grader at East Rochester Middle School, is a vibraphone player in the percussion band and a trombone player in the school's concert band. □



Gowman