

March 17th, 2001

National Capital Drill Classic

U.S. Army 4th Brigade,
1st Region Championships
DC National Guard Armory
Washington, D.C.

Washington, DC conjures images of great concrete structures majestically towering above the skyline. This backdrop may have also described the strong, indomitable front put forth by several of the schools looking to bring home the gorgeous championship trophies at the 10th annual **National Capital Drill Classic**.

The NCDC competition field of 40 Army JROTC drill teams made for a powerful one-day competition. The "Parade of Colors" Opening Ceremony started the day off with an exciting flair. A brief inspirational speech by **CSM Stevenson Cuffee**, CSM of Military District of Washington, added class and dignity to the event kickoff.

Four team events in both the Armed & Unarmed Divisions are scored. These events (Inspection, Platoon Regulation, Color Guard & Platoon Exhibition) are held throughout the day making preparation & motivation vital ingredients for ultimate success.

Armed Division

In the tightest overall competition scoring in the history of the NCDC event, when the dust settled at the end of the day, two tough programs were tied at the top of the Armed Division competition scoring. With their raw score breaking the tie (by just 15 points out of 4,800 total points available!), the drill team from **Thomas Stone HS** in Waldorf, Maryland pushed hard to capture the razor-thin victory. Prepared for competition by **CSM Charles Henson**, the **Cougar Blue** drill team powered their way to a win with a strong overall attack that garnered a top four finish in every team event. This excellence was highlighted with a win in the tough Regulation Drill event.

Just missing a division championship title, **Liberty HS** from Bealeton, Virginia was painfully close to grabbing their first-ever NCDC crown. Despite winning both the Armed Inspection and Color Guard competitions, the **Eagles** drill team hurt their chances with a 6th place finish in Exhibition competition.

Forestville HS from Forestville, Maryland grabbed 3rd place overall in the Armed Division on the back of two impressive 2nd place finishes in both Color Guard and Exhibition drill events. Only a disappointing and uncharacteristic 10th place finish in the Regulation Drill competition kept this fine program from challenging for the overall title in the Armed Division.

Other top performances included: **Forest Park HS** (1st-Exhibition); **Benedictine HS** (3rd-Inspection); **McDonough HS** (3rd-Regulation); and **Woodbridge HS** (4th-Regulation & Exhibition, 5th-Inspection).

Unarmed Division

Just when we thought it couldn't get any tighter, along comes the always tight Unarmed Division that featured a three-way tie at the top! Again, using raw score as the tie-breaker, the drill team from **Thomas Stone HS** in Waldorf, Maryland grabbed another overall title. The hard-nosed Cougar Gold drill team showed overall strength without a single dominating finish as they captured the championship in a division showing great parity with only two trophyed finishes (2nd-Color Guard / 3rd-Inspection). Winning both the Armed and the Unarmed Division titles at the NCDC had only been done previously by T.C. Williams HS, and deserves great recognition.

Just missing in their title chase was Overall Runner-up **Howard HS** from Ellicott City, Maryland. The **Lion's Battalion** drill team grabbed three trophies including a very strong 3rd place Exhibition finish.

Gaining 3rd place overall within the Unarmed Division was **Laurel Park HS** from Martinsville, Virginia. Sneaking up on the competition field, the solid Lancers drill team finished well across the board, gaining two trophies, the strongest, a 3rd place Regulation finish.

Other top finishes in the Unarmed Division included: **Thomas Walker HS** (1st-Color Guard, 2nd-Inspection); **Denbigh HS** (1st-Inspection, 2nd-Regulation); **Forestville HS** (1st-Exhibition); **Forest Park HS** (2nd-Exhibition); and **Hayfield Secondary** (3rd-Color Guard, 4th-Regulation).

Spirited Knockout Drills preceded a tense NCDC Awards Ceremony. Powerful closing words were delivered by **Mr. John McLaurin**, Asst. Sec. of the Army Manpower & Reserve Affairs. The **Mayor's Trophy** was presented to the highest finishing Washington, DC JROTC unit (**Eastern Sr. HS**).

Sports Network would like to thank everyone who helps to make the National Capital Drill Classic the special event that it has become. With the addition of West Virginia to the Brigade the 2002 NCDC should be even more competitive.



The old axiom "Teamwork Wins" was on display throughout the NCDC, as seen here while this color guard unit gets motivated before entering event competition.