

# Marching Percussion Sessions at PASIC17

By Gene Fambrough

Once again, the diversity of presentations at PASIC 2017 will reaffirm the far-reaching impact that the field of marching percussion has in our society. Every year, I am amazed at the variety we are able to showcase in these sessions, and this year is certainly no different. We will have sessions ranging from French-American rudimental drumming to a panel on professional sports drumlines, from the deep history of the Basel *Fasnacht* to contemporary marching cymbal techniques, and an appearance by the 18-time DCI champion Concord Blue Devils Drum and Bugle Corps percussion section, led by percussion caption head and arranger Scott Johnson.

## A BRIDGE TO BASEL

Rob Sanderl will share his research and experience in Basel drumming from his perspective as an American percussionist on Thursday, Nov. 9 at noon. Including a discussion of the historical aspect and important names in the performance and education of Basel drumming, a study of the grip and notational aspects, and (most importantly) its unique phrasing, this session will focus on the experience of learning and adapting to the style from a typical American marching band and drum corps background. Please refer to his preview article elsewhere in this issue for additional information and web resources to help familiarize yourself with this fascinating style of drumming.

## FRENCH-AMERICAN RUDIMENTAL DRUMMING: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Joseph Tompkins will present a session on his innovative blending of these two rudimental styles on Friday, Nov. 10 at 10:00 A.M. If you have used his wonderful etude books or solos, you know this unique and fresh style and may be interested in its development and other potential applications. His session will focus on why these styles work together and will include performances of new material. See his detailed article elsewhere in this issue for more information regarding his PASIC session.

## THE HOW-TO OF MODERN MARCHING CYMBAL PLAYING

If you have seen DCI (Drum Corps International) and especially WGI (Winter Guard International)



Chelsea Levine (far right) will present a marching cymbal clinic

percussion ensembles lately, you have certainly noticed the level of achievement that some of these groups' cymbal lines have achieved. Incorporating amazing visual techniques with increasingly more complex rhythmic contributions and effects, the modern cymbal section requires a refined technical approach and demanding rehearsals and instructional time in order to be successful. Chelsea Levine (Rhythm X, Western Carolina University) will present a session on her teaching style on Friday, Nov. 10 at 4:00 P.M.

## PANEL DISCUSSION: THE RISE AND INFLUENCE OF PROFESSIONAL SPORTS DRUMLINES

Vince Wallace, the founder and director of the Pittsburgh Steeline (the official drumline of the Pittsburgh Steelers), will moderate a panel discussion focusing on the value that these high-profile groups can generate. A vast majority of teams in the NFL and NBA have officially sanctioned drumlines that perform pregame, in-game, and postgame at their events, and this panel will feature four directors of such organizations. The article elsewhere in this

issue discusses some of the different topics to be addressed, and there will be an opportunity for a Q&A session from attendees during this session on Friday, Nov. 10 at 3:00 P.M.

## SCOTT JOHNSON AND THE CONCORD BLUE DEVILS

The culminating session for marching percussion at PASIC17 will be Saturday, Nov. 11 at 3:00 P.M. with the Blue Devils percussion section. This clinic/performance will focus on their "System Blue" educational approach to technique and musicianship while using music from their 2017 DCI Championship production as a vehicle. Refer to the accompanying article for an in-depth preview of what will be a fantastic (and jam-packed) session.

## WRAP-UP

Once again, we are thrilled to have such a diverse and well-respected group of presenters for the marching percussion sessions at PASIC17 in Indianapolis. I hope to see you there! **PN**