

Marching Band Is A Sport!!

I know you have all heard this, “Marching band isn’t athletic.”, “How do you get hurt in marching band?”, “Marching band isn’t hard, all you do is walk around a field playing music.”, and “Marching band isn’t a sport.” Well, I am here to tell you different. Think about it for a minute. How many of you know an athlete who goes non-stop for 10-15 minutes at a fast pace (anywhere from 100-200 bpm) and carries an extra 10-50 pounds with them? What you do out there is both mentally and physically draining on your body. You are all required to carry your instrument, march in step and in perfect alignment all over the field, at fast speeds while blowing air through the instrument for an average of 10 mins. Imagine running a mile in all different directions while carrying a dumbbell at shoulder level, oh and you better not don’t let your arms drop. With this being said, you need to prepare your body not only mentally, but physically with proper hydration and nutrition. I know I have talked to you all many times and you are probably getting tired of hearing me talk, but until I know you guys get it I am going to continue to harp on all of you. It’s my job to keep you all as healthy and as safe as I can when you are with the Marching Mustangs.

Now here is an interesting fact I found:

Bobby Knight, a former Indiana University Coach took his basketball team to go watch a DCI competition. Bobby Knight stated, “If a basketball team trained as hard as these kids do, the team would be unbelievable. I like to take my players to watch them (competitive marching bands) to show them what they can accomplish with hard work and teamwork. Besides, once they hear they practice for 12 hours a day, my players think I’m a helluva lot easier.” I am putting this here because I think he hits it right on the nose per say. You all have to work as a team or the show won’t work. That doesn't just go for being at rehearsal, knowing your music and your drill but also taking care of yourself and your health. If one person isn’t feeling well and is sitting out it throws everyone off. You all have to take your hydration and nutrition serious and look out for your Marching Mustang family members.

Since last Saturday I have been doing research on how much you should be eating and drinking. You should start to prepare for any of this 24-48 hours ahead of time not a

few hours before. What I have found out will baffle you, so please read this closely and if you need to print it out as a reference please do.

So on average, we are told we should consume 1,500-2,000 calories per day and drink 64 ounces of water per day. However, a person in Drum Corp should consume 3,000-4,000 calories per day when they are practicing 12 hours per day and this is within the realm of an endurance athlete like a football player or runner. It is said that for both college marching bands and high school competitive bands they should be eating between 2,000-3,000 calories per day. Now yes this is based on a 12 hour day which is your band camp and very close to how long your competition days are, but if you are at a mini camp for 5 hours you would still need to take in then very close to the 2,000-2,500 calories. I don't expect you to all start counting calories but if you eat right you won't have to even think about the calories. Of those calories 50% of them should come from Carbs (which is where carb loading comes from) as the carbs are going to give you the energy you are going to need to get through camp, mini-camp, or a competition day (remember a competition day can be 12 hours). You want to avoid sweets as you know those are the bad carbs. Then 25% needs to come from protein and the last 25% needs to come from fats. This is going to help rebuild your muscles that you are beating up while you are out there. If you go too long without eating then it affects the way your body metabolizes food and can hurt your ability to perform well. Think about last Saturday, the problems weren't all related to the heat, but because of people not eating and hydrating properly before practice. You also need snacks on these long days and this is why we suggest you all have snacks with you. Your snacks should be full of carbs or high in salt if you can tolerate an increase in salt intake. The salt intake will help you retain fluid, for you to use it when needed, but it also makes you want to drink more! A lot of runners will eat beef jerky for this reason plus it also has protein to help with rebuilding muscles.

Now for hydration, just to reference again so you have an idea, Drum Corp depending on which group they are with will drink an average of 2 gallons of water every day. That's a far cry from 64 ounces and you should be drinking pretty close to that, especially on those hot/humid long days and this needs to take place 24-48 hours beforehand. Of those 2 gallons, it can consist of sports drinks, but that needs to be

done before or after, not during. If you drink it during (unless you are being told to drink it) the body stops absorbing the salts, sugars and electrolytes and it will begin to work against you than help you. Water is the best option during a camp day or competition.

So, as I have told all of you before, you have to prepare for these days in advance by eating well, hydrating well, and getting rest. Remember, if you don't do this you don't just affect yourself, you affect the whole band. ***You are all in this together, you are a TEAM!*** If you continue to do what you're doing and don't take care of yourself it's going to hurt all of you. For years I have heard all of you say you want to beat Prospect, Lockport, Lake Park, you have been given that opportunity, now run with it! Yes, this show is hard. Yes, all the staff is making you all work harder than you ever thought you would have to. Yes, Mr. Brooks has told you all that this show is just below DCI level, but if you really want to beat those groups then you need to up your game. I have been watching all of you for weeks, and I see the difference from last year to this year and it's amazing, it gives me the chills just thinking about it, but you can only continue to be amazing if you do what is being asked of you. ***YOU MUST EAT WELL, HYDRATE WELL, AND GET YOUR REST!***

Now as we go into competition season, I am going to ask the parents who host section breakfast to please make sure they have a good breakfast full of proteins and carbs. As long as they are doing what I have been asking them ahead of time, this will make a world of difference in the way they feel and perform that day as well.

Remember, I am here to keep you all as healthy and safe as I can while you are with the Marching Mustangs, and I love being here to doing it. So, it's in your hands to make the 2019 Marching Mustang a season to remember!

As always, if you have any questions or concerns please let me know.

Love Your Band Nurse,
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