

(left) Freshman Hector Rama performs during halftime at a football game. "I get to spend time with my friends and have a wonderful time doing what I love," Rama said. *Photo by Akilah Smith*

(right) Senior Anna Donnelly marches during halftime at a football game. "I love walking off the field with a sense of accomplishment," Donnelly said. *Photo by Holly Hearn*



During summer band practice senior Aron Trevizo practices with drumline. "I think that the biggest thing is making me feel like part of a group," Trevizo said. "I had friends before school even started." *Photo by Holly Hearn*



Laughing together, junior Jennifer Tran and junior Kelsey Sellers watch a football game as they cheer on their team from the stands. "My favorite thing is spending time with my friends and having fun at the football games," Sellers said. *Photo By Akilah Smith*

"The bus rides and making up new stand dances at the games."
-sophomore Cierra Gordon
Photo by Holly Hearn



Junior Maria Mcevoy marches off the field during halftime at a football game. "It's so much fun to hear and see people enjoying the music," Mcevoy said. "It makes me proud to know I'm a part of something so great." *Photo by Holly Hearn*

Best moments with color guard

"Making it to area finals for the first time in such a long time. Nothing beat that feeling."
-junior Kenna Skyvara
Photo by Skylar Campbell



"I like the bus rides."
-junior Elizabeth Willey
Photo by Skylar Campbell



After breaking a sweat, senior Jessica Plane and sophomore Tomas Bryan enjoy the refreshingly cool water provided by a local fire station. "It was heart warming for the fire station to do that for us," Plane said. "It made all of us feel appreciated in a way I can't describe." *Photo by Skylar Campbell*

Beat the heat

Summer practice test band member's stamina

By Connor Seymour

While other students spend their summer drinking lemonade and enjoying cold pools, the members of the Cougar Marching Band arm themselves with gallon water jugs and push themselves to the limit day after day to make football season unforgettable. Sweating for hours on end, these students face the dangerous threats of heat stroke, heat exhaustion, and heat rash on a routine basis.

Under new direction, the band has strived to make heat safety the ultimate priority. Band director Brian Drake said he dedicates himself to preventing heat-related illnesses that could cause fainting.

"Actually this year and last year, the band [has] not had any students actually faint," Drake said.

To prevent danger, Drake said identifying the signs of heat exhaustion early is important.

"They have a dazed look on their face," he said. "they may not be sweating as much as they should be because they're not hydrated, they aren't looking very coordinated, or not as coordinated as they usually are."

The band directors emphasize the importance of slowly increasing expectations for the students, especially new students coming from eighth grade.

"We totally understand if it's like the first day of summer band and [the students] are not used to the strain that that much heat causes the body," Drake said.

"But we try and figure out as well what they need to do so that as the weeks go on, they're not feeling ill as often".

Some students believe that shaming exists toward asking for breaks and water in the face of the scorching heat; however, Drake believes students need to embrace full transparency with their needs during practice.

"I think that certain students may place that [stigma] upon themselves," Drake said. "That they may feel like they don't want to let us down, that they don't want to let the band down, that they don't want us to think that they aren't trying."

Many band students, including band senior Naren Makkapati, agree the heat controls the amount of work band can get done.

"The heat is probably the biggest influence on how well the band rehearses," Makkapati said. "There are a lot of days where it's really humid and above 100 degrees, and the band doesn't get as much done as we would like. On other days when it's close to 70 or 80 something, we speed through rehearsal".

He believes conditioning for summer band helps to build stronger students who can endure more.

"There'll be times after school that I walk outside and a normal student says 'Wow, it's hot out here' at the same time I say 'This is refreshingly cool.'" Makkapati said.

Survival 101: Getting through marching band



Freshman Sergio Cabrera has mastered the art of marching band. "You need lots of water for sure," Cabrera said. "It's also a matter of how determined you are."



Freshman Payton Hughston pushed through the heat of the day every day on the marching field. "Sunglasses are so important, it's hard to get through a day without them," Hughston said.



Senior Zach Zinsky is not a stranger when it comes to marching in the heat. "You have to be physically fit," Zinsky said. "Conditioning before the first day is also key."

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