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## ***Doug Ferraro – The Caballeros***

Doug is currently in his fourth year with the Hawthorne Caballeros Snare section. Doug started percussion in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, played clarinet in the 6<sup>th</sup> but came back to percussion in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. He attended Bensalem High School (Bensalem, PA) and was part of the indoor ensemble that won gold in the Scholastic World division for Tournament Indoor Association. Doug also marched with the Temple Diamond Marching Band and Aftermath Indoor Percussion Ensemble.

Doug has taught and arranged for several percussion programs and is currently a percussion adjudicator for the National Judges Association that judges the TOB and TIA circuits. Doug is also a math teacher and a HUGE fan of the Carolina Panthers!!

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**LP:** Because of your experience with judging, in your role in the snareline do you ever feel yourself crossing over into the realm of staff person more than you should?

**Doug:** Absolutely. This happens to me in real life as well. During the week, I am a math teacher, and when I am at family gatherings I find myself CONSTANTLY asking my two little cousins questions about math. As for judging/competing at the same time, I am looked upon as almost a member of the staff.

**LP:** Senior corps you can march at nearly any age, junior corps you have age restrictions, is there a reason why you never marched a junior corps? Do you feel that you missed anything?

**Doug:** Not at all. I never had a real big interest in DCI. As many good things I have heard about the activity, the same number of negative things I have heard. Getting in shape for the summer is one thing, but I have seen people being worked like dogs during a camp. Also, Never during my high school tenure was I able to afford the dues.

**LP:** Do you believe Junior Corps should relax their age rules?

**Doug:** No...I'm 22, a college graduate, and have the same job now that I will have for the rest of my life...time to relax during the summers.

**LP:** If they did how would that change things with DCA? Would the circuits merge?

**Doug:** Boy I hope not...while both DCI and DCA are great organizations, they complement themselves so well as they are right now.

**LP:** If you were to recommend a young student to a corps or a type of corps what direction would you push them to, DCI or DCA?

**Doug:** That really depends on the type of person they are. If they can afford DCI, and don't mind putting everything else aside for 3 months, and have an absolute LOVE for the activity, then I would absolutely push them to do DCI. However, I would also persuade them to try DCA first, just because there is such a big difference between high school marching bands and drum corps.

**LP:** Most corps' goals or philosophies include educating members and helping them grow as musicians. Judging is sometimes looked on as the highest, or at least higher level, a person can participate in percussion. Do you feel you gain a great deal of an education and become a better player season after season, or is this more of a situation: you bringing your talent to the line and helping others?

**Doug:** I strongly believe that no matter who the instructors are, the more that I march in drum corps the more I will learn. Even in seasons where I don't learn as much about technique, I can still learn about other things just as much (being a team player, leadership skills, showmanship, etc.).

**LP:** From a member point of view, what makes a great drumline?

**Doug:** Not killing each other before the season's over. Ha! Ha! ...and putting out a great product that gets the crowd on their feet.

**LP:** From a judge's point of view, what makes a great drumline?

**Doug:** The more cohesiveness and simultaneous responsibility that is placed on EVERY member of the percussion section, the better. I see many lines that have a great snareline, but have only a mediocre everything else. A great drumline has the total package.

**LP:** Watching a drumline (as a judge or not) are you affected by an ensemble that is playing well, sounds great, but stares at the ground or isn't giving that "This is easy, I rock, I'm confident" vibe? (Would you say how a drumline is viewed/looks is just as important as how they sound?)

**Doug:** Easy question...if two drumlines are playing just as good, but one has the "look" where the other doesn't, it's a no-brainer who will come out on top.

**LP:** In the workplace there can be tension between some of the "vets" who have been in the business for a few years and the newer younger guy. Does this ever come into play or exist in senior corps where the age in the drumline can span decades?

**Doug:** Not at all...not to say we don't mess around with the new guys from time to time, but there is very rarely an instance where vets are taken back by the "cockiness" of a rookie.

**LP:** Does age play a part in placement in the line? (Treating age and experience individually)

**Doug:** Nope. I'll put an infant on snare if he can play a flam drag at 180 BPM.

**LP:** If you could improve on one aspect of your own drumming what would it be?

**Doug:** I have a lot of trouble with "Erts" (alternating triple beats), and from time to time I my feet get out of time while I am marking time...but only when I'm marking time.

**LP:** What was the worst/most boring (non-percussion) job you've ever had? How did you deal with it?

**Doug:** Math tutor at Sylvan Learning Center...I quit once I got a full-time job.

**LP:** Were there/are there times when you were working and you'd rather be drumming?

**Doug:** Probably always.

**LP:** In teaching percussion, especially at a high school level where talent may or may not be high and you might not have the option of cutting/auditioning a person, how do you handle a tough student? One who might take a little longer than the rest to grasp the concept, or who might not take it serious?

**Doug:** I hate to admit this, but I put them in the pit as a rack player. Most of the time kids can sorta-kinda read and play, but once they try to march at the same time...look out!!

**LP:** Do you work with them or handle them as you would in the classroom?

**Doug:** Since it's an extra-curricular activity, there is always plenty of time to work them on a one-to-one basis, unlike my math classroom.

**LP:** How do you feel about corps having starter or feeder corps (Phantom's old Phantom Legion, Blue Devil's BDB, BDA)? Should more corps adopt a similar education program?

**Doug:** Absolutely, no question. The district I teach math in has the luxury of having the same percussion teacher from 7<sup>th</sup> grade through the high school, and it does wonders for the program.

**LP:** No matter where, when, what or any other variable at some point a response to the score received is. "The judges don't like us" or "It's too political" or "They play favorites because 'person x' marched with 'person z' at blank."

As a judge do you feel any of that actually takes place? Are all judges truly unbiased?

**Doug:** Personally, I have never seen or heard of an instance of that happening. I cannot speak for anyone else. Everyone likes to think that judges are out to get them or make them feel bad, but we're only trying to help!!

**LP:** From Cabs, to Aftermath, and Temple, were there any major adjustments you had to make as far as vast differences in program, technique or rehearsal style?

**Doug:** At Temple, sight-reading was key because we learned a new show every week. At Aftermath, there was no written music to be found, everything was taught by wrote. Only at Cabs did we have written music and a significant amount of time to learn it.

**LP:** For a person nervous about going to Cabs and worried that they'll be good enough, what advice would you give? What should they do to prepare?

**Doug:** Rudiments, Rudiments, Rudiments...just like I tell my 7<sup>th</sup> grade drummers, Rudiments are to drumming like vocabulary is to English...if you don't know them, you will fail!!

**LP:** What is a typical season like for Cabs?

**Doug:** Starts around Thanksgiving, one camp every 3 weeks. Around April we go every weekend. Parades and shows start in June and goes up until Labor Day.

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**LP:** For each person, thing or phrase that follows give the first image, phrase, words, etc. that come to mind when you read them.

Troopers - Tradition

Kilties – DCA 2005

Stick Tape – Home Depot

Liverpool – Aren't they a rock band?

Dirty Rolls – 7<sup>th</sup> graders playing Triplet diddle for the first time.

Phantom Regiment - my friend Ryan tried out for them and did not have the best experience.

Paradiddle - My all-time FAVORITE rudiment!!!

Ratamacue - Mr. Rogers old TV show learning how to play this one-  
"It's a ra-ta-ma-cue!"

Brittany Spears - \*\*\*\*\*!!!!!! (Lot Patrol decided to err on the side of safety. If you're extremely desperate to know what Doug said... What do you row a boat with? What he said rhymes with it.)

Ringo Star - I can outplay him with one hand.

Paul Simon - My **dad** can outplay him with one hand.

Elvis - did he REALLY steal his dance from Forrest Gump??

Antelope - Sounds like cantelope

Flam-Tradia River Scouts - Exactly how many flams do they play??

**LP:** From your experience, why is drumming so great? What makes it interesting and something you pursue? Why not keep playing the clarinet at the time?

**Doug:** Actually, I keep trying to switch to mellophone at Cabs, but they wont let me! (our response - BOO THIS MAN!! BOO!! That would have been a lot funnier if you had seen the movie Half Baked.)

**LP:** Ever have anything horrible happen during a performance?

**Doug:** My shoes have come off a couple times, and during DCA Finals 2003, during the victory concert I had to go to the bathroom so bad, you can almost hear me screaming for mercy during the ballad on the DVD!!!

**LRL  
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December 2005

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