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The Early Age of National Marching Band Contest

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Abstract--This academic article aims to 1) study the history of the national marching band contest; 2) the development of the national marching band contest. The results showed that National Marching Band Contest has been held from 1982 until the present. The contest in the early age from 1982 to 1993 is divided into three categories: Category A, Men, Category B, Men and Women, Category C, Women. The winning marching band will receive a royal trophy. In addition, the marching band has to play three songs at the Supachalasai Stadium: royal song (Rama IX), Thai Thao song or Prelude song, and a selected song according to preference, continuing with the March music: sports ground music, and Thai Military Band (TMB) song which is a compulsory one. The marching band contest has been developed because the contest management activity is an important factor in the development of standards for marching bands to grow rapidly at the national level from an early age to the present.

Keywords--early age, history, marching band, music, national competition.

Introduction

The marching band is a band that has been distributed from the west since the reign of King Rama IV, used in military activities. Later, in 1957, the government at that time provided a budget for the Ministry of Education to purchase musical instruments by assigning Phra Janeduriyang to provide musical instruments used in the marching band. Then he donated to schools in the capital and provinces to prepare for the celebration of the 25th Buddhist century for ten schools, thus causing the marching band to be distributed in educational institutions (Charoensuk, 1995).

Before 1981, there were not many schools that taught the music of the marching band. Most were located in the capital or the big cities. But after the marching band contest in 1981, various educational institutions began to set up a marching band to develop youth's music. Moreover, the importance of the

marching band can be seen that the number of marching bands that enter the contest increase every year (Black et al., 2017; Bernard et al., 2003). Therefore, the contest is an important foundation for the development of youth music. After that, the Ministry of Education has prepared a curriculum focused on students to develop according to individual aptitude. Music is a subject that deals with individual aptitude, especially the marching band that is a subject providing discipline and playing together as a group. The marching band contest in Thailand started with the Boy Scout Orchestra Contest in 1981. Later, it changed the name to the student Royal Trophy Marching Band contest. The contest has been held regularly until the present for more than forty years with educational institutions all over the country submitting the band to the contest (Suanmontha, 2004).

The student Royal Trophy Marching Band contest was organized by the Department of Physical Education, Ministry of Education. (Currently named Ministry of Tourism and Sports), which organizes the marching band contest at the national level with a long history and the contest has been developed all the time. Consequently, it affects the music personnel in Thailand, whether the music teachers in elementary school, secondary school, and university, most of them have passed all such contests (Thawanchai Suan Montha & Narong Rat Woramitmaitri, 2021). From such background and importance, the author foresees that the history and development of the marching band contest in Thailand deserve to be studied as an important foundation in the country's music education and contributes to Thai youths for developing music skills to be on par with international ones (Thaut, 2015; Ogden et al., 2011).

History of the marching band contest

The student Royal Trophy Marching Band Contest is the oldest national marching band contest in Thailand. The contest began in the celebration of National Children's Day in 1981 by Professor Dr. Boonsom Martin, Director-General of the Department of Physical Education at that time reviving the contest. This is because in the past the country had held a Boy Scout Orchestra Contest in student art at the Royal Equestrian Plaza. For the contest in 1981, it was called the "Boy Scout Orchestra Contest" (Orchestra of various schools, most of them are dressed in Boy Scout uniforms). There were five orchestras from Central schools applied to participate in the contest, the winning band was Suankularb Wittayalai School. The competition was a trial project with support from TMB Bank (Collins & Kane, 1975; Jahoda et al., 1999).

Later, in the year 1982, when Bangkok was 200 years old, the Department of Physical Education, Ministry of Education led the project to contest the marching band that was organized to celebrate Bangkok. The Department of Physical Education invited the music-qualified persons, who prepared the contest rules and determined the format of the contest. The qualified persons later became a committee of the contest were as follows: Wing Commander Aree Sukaket, Mr. Paiboon Supavaree, Pol. Lt. Col. Teeka Phothiwes, Mr. Thanit Pholprasert, Lieutenant Commander Samphao Sonthipanya, Mr. Prasarn Suthat Na Ayutthaya, Lieutenant Colonel Wichit Ho-Thai, Flying Officer Boonserm Changyai, Capt. Arun Pattayakul, Sergeant Major First Class Pramuan Attacheep, and Mr.

Weerachat Premanon. The contest was named “The student Royal Trophy Marching Band Contest”, with marching bands entering the contest all over the country. The winner of the contest was Khon Kaen Wittayon School, Khon Kaen Province. This contest is considered the first official contest (Smolen et al., 2002; Standley, 2002).

In 1984, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX) was graciously pleased to award the Royal trophy to the winner of the marching band. The contest has a new name as “The Student Thailand Royal Trophy Marching Band Contest”. In 1988, the Department of Physical Education and the Thai Military Bank (TMB) organized an additional Royal trophy women's marching band contest. HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's trophy, Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn (Her rank in those days) and add four special prizes, namely the award for the best performance, Best Field Music Award, the award for Best Thai Music Performance, and Outstanding drum major (conductor) Award (Dain et al., 2015; Pucciarelli & Kaplan, 2016).

In 1991, the Department of Physical Education together with the Thai Military Bank (TMB) organized a marching band contest, one more category, by receiving a royal award, the crown prince's trophy, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn (His rank in those days) (Department of Physical Education, 1995). Summary of the Royal Trophy marching band contest for pupils, secondary school students, and university students is organized as follows:

- The Royal Trophy, Category A, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX).
- The Royal Trophy, Category B, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn.
- The Royal Trophy, Category C, Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn.

The development of the national marching band contest

The development of the national marching band contest, which the researcher has studied from documents, textbooks, and birth certificates of the marching band contest, can be presented with three features 1) the qualifying marching band contest 2) the country marching band contest 3) the rules of the marching band contest with details as follows:

- Qualifying marching band contest
The Thailand Royal Trophy marching band contest for pupils, secondary school students, and university students officially started in 1982, organized by the Department of Physical Education, Ministry of Education. Objectives were 1) to increase knowledge, ability in music, and know the aesthetic value of the art of music; 2) to invite educational institutions across the country to actively promote and create music activities and develop a marching band for an educational institution for playing in important ceremonies; and 3) to extensively promote and support of marching band activities in educational institutions at all levels and have

better standards. From the objectives of organizing the said contest, the marching band contest has the following guidelines: The marching band that participated in the contest must be submitted on behalf of the school. The performers are not over 25 years old, studying in the same school. The number of performers is not less than 35 people, but not more than 45 people. The contest is organized by the Office of Education Districts, totaling 12 educational districts (Sreesamuth & Jaranyanotr, 2014). The Department of Physical Education must provide the officials in each school district. In the central qualifier, the contest will send a committee of music experts to become the judges. For the Bangkok Educational District, the Department of Physical Education organizes the contest itself to find the winning marching band to represent the contest around the country at the Supachalasai Stadium, the National Stadium on Children's Day as the part of the National Children's Day celebration. The certificate of the marching band contest, therefore, told the origin of the marching band, for example, the Montfort College marching band, the eighth Educational District, Chiang Mai Province; the Wisutthirangsi School marching band, the fifth Educational District, Kanchanaburi Province; the Ratchawinit Bangkaew School Marching Band, the first Educational District, Samut Prakan Province; and the Wat Suthiwararam School marching band, Bangkok, etc.

- National marching band contest

Twelve bands were participating in the contest from school district representatives (some did not complete twelve bands because no marching bands were participating in the contest at some district level) and one marching band from Bangkok district representatives (some years there may be more than one band). The total number of marching bands participating in the national contest is thirteen bands. The contest around the country will be held for three days. In the first-second days, it is a contest to select the marching band with scores in the first to sixth places that can enter the final contest. The final contest is on the third day at Supachalasai Stadium, the National Stadium, Bangkok. The national marching band contest award consists of the first prize, first runner-up, second runner-up, third runner-up, fourth runner-up, fifth runner-up, consolation prize, the award for Best Thai Music Performance, and Outstanding drum major (conductor) Award. Subsequently, the award for the best performance and Outstanding Field Music Award were added. The current final contest is not only held at Supachalasai Stadium, the National Stadium alone, but also the contest venue has been arranged according to the following types: The marching band performance contest is held at the Suriyathep Auditorium, Rangsit University; The parade contest was organized on the road around the MBK shopping center, but the marching contest and the parade procession transformation contest are still held at the same place.

- Rules for the marching band contest: in the year 1982, the contest has only one category, in the year 1984, His Majesty the King (Rama IX) was graciously pleased to award the winning Royal Trophy. The contest was renamed "The Thailand Royal Trophy Marching Band Contest" for students. In 1989, there was an additional contest for all women's marching bands and received the winning Royal Trophy from Her Royal Highness Princess Maha

Chakri Sirindhorn, (Her rank at that time), in 1990, it added a contest for the newly formed marching band and received a winning Royal Trophy from the His Royal Highness Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn (His rank in those days). Therefore, the contest will be divided into three categories, namely, category A, male or female mixed music contest, with 45-50 performers, no more than 25 colour guards, 5 Thai song performers, and 1 drum major. A marching band contest, category B, Male or female mixed gender: 35-40 performers, no more than 15 colour guards, 5 Thai songs performers, and 1 drum major. Category C, all-female marching band contest, 35-40 performers, and colour guards not more than 15 people, 5 Thai music performers, and 1 drum major. The contest lasted 32 minutes in the Supachalasai Stadium. The formats are divided into two consecutive styles: 1) A twenty-minute concert consists of the following songs: Royal Song (Rama IX), Thai songs use Thao song in the categories A, B, and C. Later, it has been changed to Thai song, prelude song, only category A, songs selected according to their aptitude. 2) Marching and displaying music for 12 minutes, a marching band stands at the gate of the starting point about 100 meters and starts playing with a sports ground song. After passing the chairman, the drum major pays her respects and turns it into a Thai military bank march song, cuts into the field for transforming the parade procession by using a variety of songs and accompanied by an accompaniment such as flag equipment, gun equipment, various devices that match the song of the parade (before 1990, no performers).



Figure 1. Marching Band Contest (Suanmontha)



Figure 2. The parade procession transformation contest (Suanmontha)

- Scoring Criteria of the Committee: The committee has set the scores divided into concert and display contests. The concert contest is detailed as follows: balance and ensemble, tone quality, and volume 20 points; intonation and harmonization 25 points; technique (winds, articulation, dynamics) 25 points; beauty and order, readiness, the correctness of sitting style, 10 points, conductor's signal, and feedback 10 points; and overall visual 10 points; the total is 100 points. The details of the concert contests are as follows: form and style, line arrangement, readiness 10 points, marching, turning, keeping distance 10 points; conductor's signal and feedback 10 points; tone quality, balance, intonation, rhythm, and tempo 20 points; parade procession transformation, visual proficiency, and staging 20 points; the visual technique, creativity, and beautiful style, 20 points; overall visual 10 points, the total is 100 points.

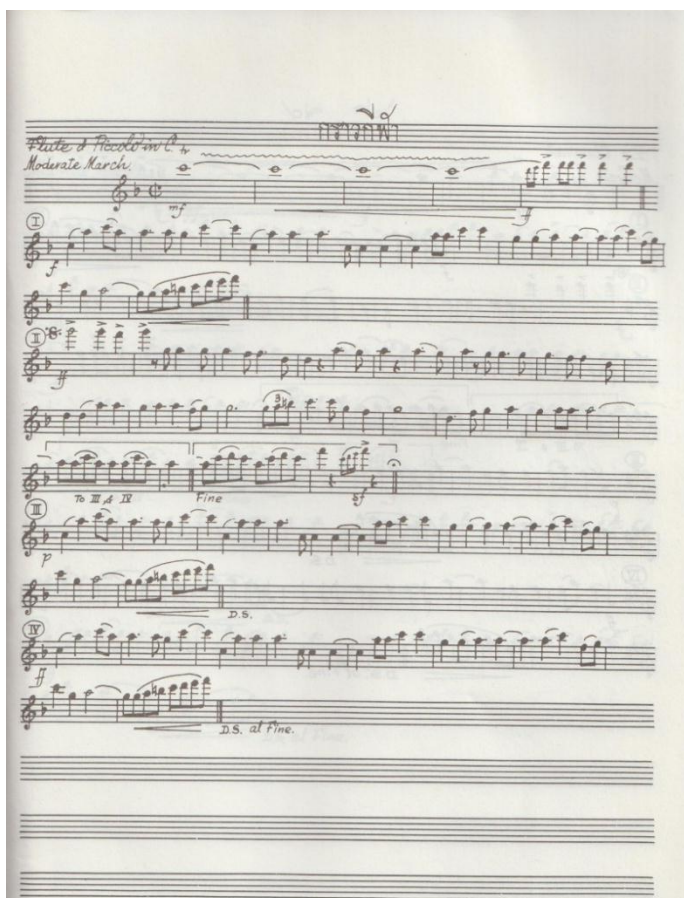


Figure 3. Notes of sports ground music (Suanmontha)

Conclusion

The national marching band contest is called the Thailand Royal Trophy Marching Band Contest. The contest project started in 1981, using the name of the Boy Scout Orchestra Contest. In 1982, the name was changed to the Student

Marching Band Contest of Thailand. In 1984, the name was changed again to Thailand Royal Trophy Marching Band Contest for students. The contest format is an outdoor contest at the Supachalasai Stadium, the National Stadium. It is an ongoing contest in both concert and display contests with the compulsory songs for the contest. It is divided into three categories by using the number of people to determine the category of the contest. The contest is held in two rounds, qualifying for the winning marching band at the educational district and Bangkok district. The final contest is held at the Supachalasai Stadium, Bangkok to find the winning marching band (Zong & Zhen, 2021; Suwija et al., 2019).

From the regulations of the national marching band contest, there will be a continuation of the contest starting with the sitting marching band performance at the Supachalasai Stadium. When the performers have finished, they line up to walk and transform the parade procession causing problems for concert contests and playing in the middle of the stadium. The music, if played softly, will not be heard. If playing very loudly, there will be resonance because there are amphitheatres around the stadium (Mantra et al., 2016; Mawan, 2021). There should be contests in the concert hall. From the aforementioned problems, the format of the contest management was adjusted according to the nature of the competition. Currently, the contest has developed music in various forms. The contest has been categorized into 5 categories as follows:

- Concert contest, divided into 1) concert contest: class A; 2) concert contests: class B; and 3) concert contests: open division.
- Marching contest
- Parade contest
- Display contest
- Drum Line Contest
- Color guards Team Contest

In 2018, the marching band contest has changed its name to Music Festival on the occasions of His Majesty the King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajiraklaochaoyuhua Bodindradebayavarangkun's birthday and Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's birthday, The Queen in the reign of King Rama IX, organized by the Department of Physical Education in collaboration with Rangsit University (Department of Physical Education, 2019). The national marching band contest allows marching bands across the country to develop rehearsals to participate in the contest. A large number of schools are present in primary, secondary, and university to meet the needs of educational institutions in utilizing the marching band in terms of learning, activities, and social service. Moreover, it develops the quality of the performance of the current marching band to have high potential until it is known in the world as can be seen from the country's marching band from Thailand won the gold medal in both the concert contests, marching contest and the parade contest in the world-class contest. Although at present the contest has been changed to raise the level of international equivalent, early contests are still important to the national marching band contest (Solomonova et al., 2021; Marchenko et al., 2021).

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