

Halftime shows at football games require hours of practice

By Tony Gamble

Part of the enjoyment of Carolina football games is halftime, when horn players take the spotlight from ballplayers. Spectators can rely on the Carolina Band's vibrant, familiar tunes and intricate movement, no matter what the football score is.

But many spectators are not aware that each band show is the result of hours of planning, conferences, and practice, practice, practice.

The making of a quality performance is a multi-faceted operation, according to James Copenhagen, associate professor of music and director of bands.

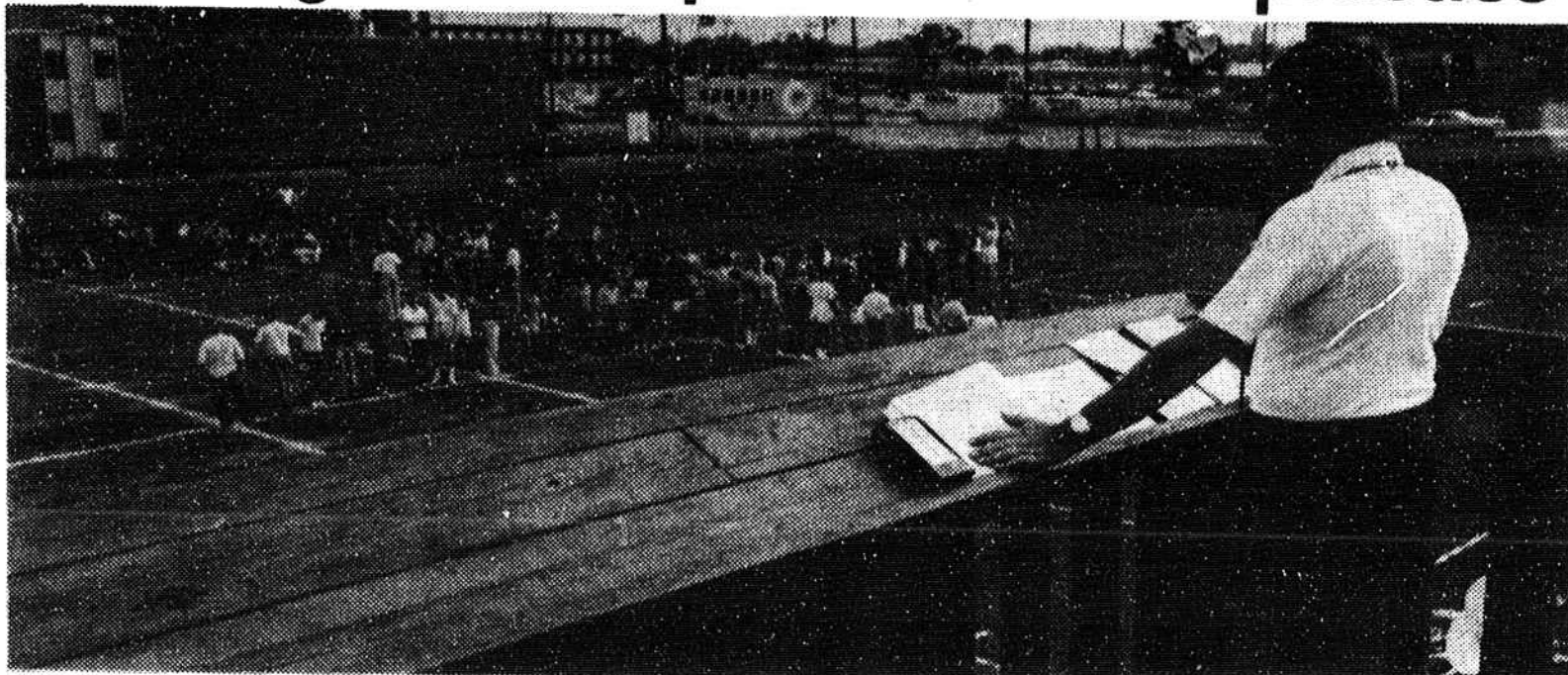
"Our goal is the entertainment of the audience," Copenhagen said. "We select a potpourri (of music) for the different music tastes in the audience." Copenhagen said musical selections include disco, rock, jazz, big band and Sousa marches.

The tunes are arranged by music professor Gordon Goodwin, who is in charge of the music composition department, Copenhagen said.

Graduate assistant Barry Bridwell said the selection of music usually has a central theme. One show with a jazz theme is in the planning stages, Bridwell said.

After the music selection is completed, music is "choreographed" with drill movement. Creating the drill is "no small time task," according to Copenhagen.

Each show involves about 200 hours of labor, which includes charting all the steps on paper scaled to represent the



Director of Bands James Copenhagen oversees the Carolina Band at a recent rehearsal.

Photo by Sally McGill

football field. Copenhagen said 290 bandmen are represented by dots, x's and arrows on the drill map. Each show requires at least 30 pages of drill maps, he said.

From the planning stages on, the show is discussed between the directors, graduate and senior staff assistants, drum majors, student leaders, and captains and choreographers of the flag corps and Coquettes. Once the

staff agrees on the show's details, the show is taken to the practice field for rehearsal, Copenhagen said.

Carolina bandmen practice from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and the auxiliary units (Coquettes and flag corps) also practice Monday. The band also practices Saturday morning at Williams-Brice Stadium.

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