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2007 US Open Brass Band Championships

Introduction and predictions

4BR will once again be in Arlington Heights, Illinois for the US Open Brass Band Championships. Now in its 5th year, the US Open has established itself as a North American contest with international flair.

**November 10th
St. Viator High School
Arlington Heights, Illinois**

With three of the favourites either from the UK or having competed in the UK in the past year, this year's US Open is sure to have a more international feel than ever before.

It's hard to believe we are already on the eve of the 5th US Open. When it began the goal was to the development of banding in the United States. Five years ago, who would have thought that bands like Central Florida and Fountain City would make their mark on the UK like they have.



Like many of the European ensembles, the bands in the States are attempting to be innovating whilst still respecting the brass band tradition. They seek the knowledge and experience of the brass band tradition from their overseas counterparts, yet they do not see some of the limits of the tradition of brass banding.

The format of the US Open is that of an entertainment concert programme, a format that suits the bands here, and their undoubted ability to bring their special brand of audience friendly music and choreography should result in quite an entertaining event.

For the fourth time in five years a band from the United Kingdom will be competing at the US Open and it is always a delight for those in the States who don't frequently travel to hear another band from the UK in person. This year's representative will be Wingates Band, hot off of their victory at the Senior Cup Contest in Blackpool and featuring Peter Moore, their 11-year old trombone virtuoso.

In spite, of what may appear to be a three-horsed race, Illinois and Prairie Bands made impressive shows at the North American Championship last spring and are surely poised to take some prizes on the day. This should truly be the most competitive US Open yet, and one can't help but think this is what the organisers had in mind when they began the event 5 years ago.

We'll start our coverage Friday evening with the Busker's Preview at Peggy Kinnane's and do our best to bring you live coverage on Saturday from 9:30 am CST (3:30 pm GMT).

Both the Buskers Preview and Awards Banquet have turned out to be fantastic social events and have created another grand opportunity for comradary between bands in a country that is so spread out. One also can't help but have a good time and be entertained when Frank Renton is the compere.

As to a possible winner then?

To win an entertainment contest always takes something special to make you stand out from the other bands. Wingates is a fine band and should bring something quite special to the table (much like Jaguar did last year). That being said, Fountain City is on quite a hot streak after their North American title and 9th place at the All England International Masters in the UK earlier this year.

We will put our necks out on the line once again in what is sure to be a very competitive contest.

4BR Prediction:

1. Fountain City BB
2. Wingates
3. BB Central Florida

Dark Horses: Illinois BB & Prairie BB

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