

**DYNAMIC  
CY-FAIR**

**DANCE  
AND  
DRILL  
TEAMS**

Photo by Carson Action Photography

Whether they're dancing, high-kicking, or cheering in the stands, these hardworking athletes are committed to school spirit.

*Written by Marlena Solomon  
Select photos courtesy of  
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Cy-Woods Cadettes



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The buzzer sounds for half-time to begin at the football game, and the members of the drill team proudly march to their places on the field as they are introduced by the PA announcer. Try-outs, training class, summer camp, hours of practicing, learning precision choreography, halftime, spring competitions, officer elections and showcases are all part of what it takes to be a member of a drill team in the Cy-Fair Independent School District.

According to Joyce E. Pennington, President and CEO of American Dance/Drill Team, "There are approximately 1,200 high schools in the state of Texas. About 900 have dance/drill teams with about 25,000 participants." While other states may have drill teams, their membership is typically 30 or less. Dance teams are typically larger in Texas. The average size dance team in Texas has 30 plus.

All ten of the Cy-Fair ISD high schools boast drill teams including: The Cy-Fair Brigade, Cypress Creek Silverados, Cypress Falls Sky Dancers, Cy-Lakes Sterling Stars, Cy-Ranch Classics, Cy-Ridge Dazzlers, Cy-Springs Panteras, Cy-Woods Cadettes, Jersey Village Gold Dusters and Langham Creek Bailadoras.

### *The Process Begins*

The process to become a member of the drill team begins with freshmen tryouts. Cy-Woods Cadettes Director Jennifer Metsayer explains it this way, "A freshman girl would try out in December to be placed on the team the following year. During the spring semester of her freshman year she is in a training class." Senior Cadette Kahley Koch says, "Tryouts are always the most nerve racking situation for almost everyone. There's a chance that you may not be able to experience drill team and all it has to offer."

### *Making the Team*

The average number of girls who try out for drill teams in Cy-Fair averages 100 per season and can be as many as 200 or as few as 35 depending on the history of the program. Established teams such as the Cy-Fair Brigade, was founded in 1951 and has 86 members this year. The Jersey Village Gold Dusters team was created in 1972 and has 55 dancers and two managers. Newer teams such as the Cy-Lakes Sterling Stars and Cy-Ranch Classics have only been in existence for two years, and are in the early stages of building their history, but it doesn't make the teams any less excited about their role at their schools. Each team has 58 and 36 members respectively and no seniors.

When asked about the positive aspects of being on a drill team, Brigade Director Jan Sanders says, "The most positive aspect about being a member of drill team is promoting full participation in a unified, precision dance group, while developing leadership, self-discipline, responsibility, school spirit, team work and a standard of excellence." Annette Stark, Cy-Lakes Sterling Stars Director adds, "I truly believe that drill team is a tool that equips young girls to become disciplined, dedicated, and successful young women, regardless of their past."

### *A Year Long Commitment*

The drill team season extends long after the last football has been snapped on the field. In addition to halftime shows, the drill teams also perform at pep rallies and community events. Pending the success of the football team, drill teams then move into the competition season that is during the months of February and



Cy-Woods Cadettes



Cy-Fair Brigade Dance Officers



High kicks are part of the Cy-Falls Skydancers routine



Drill team members build lifelong friendships

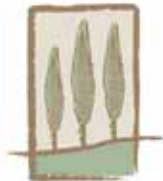


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Before

6 Months Later!

March. Teams prepare three to four team numbers and then the girls work on choreography for officer routines, solos and ensembles. The Teams compete primarily in competitions held in Texas but are permitted by the district to travel out of state every other year. Some teams take the opportunity to rest and regroup after competitions during Spring Break, and then begin preparations for the spring show that caps the season along with social and dance officer elections for the next season.

### Learning Life's Lessons

Being a member of a drill team in high school is also a platform for establishing important life lessons that the girls will hopefully apply to their lives after graduation. "Confidence, respect, commitment, and discipline are just a few of the traits Dazzler alumni carry with them beyond drill team," says Cy-Ridge Dazzlers Director Stephanie Lyle. Cy-Creek Silverados Director Stacy Donalson adds, "The life lessons that I try to instill in my team members are time management, organization, manners, and how to have passion for all that they do."

### Words of Advice

Are you still wondering if you have what it takes to be on a Cy-Fair drill team? When the directors were asked for advice for potential aspiring members was overwhelmingly, "Don't give up!" Cy-Ranch Classics Director Elizabeth Buchner offers this advice, "To just keep trying. If you want to be a drill team member you can. You don't have to be a trained dancer (although it helps) but anyone with the will and determination can be a drill team person. Ask for help, get advice, take classes if you can along the way, work hard and believe in yourself." CFM

*MARLENA SOLOMON was part of her pom pon team her sophomore year in high school and fondly remembers wearing those saddle shoes and her first routine to A-Ha's "Take on Me."*

## DRILL TEAM FUN FACTS

- In addition to the dancers, most teams have at least two managers.
- Walt Disney World is a favorite destination for out-of-state competitions.
- Line Officers often include: Captain, Co-Captain, Senior Lieutenants and Junior Lieutenants.
- Social Officers include: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Historian, Chaplain and Spirit Leader.
- Weekly recognitions include: Spirit Girl of the Week, Dancer of the Week and Director's Choice of the Week often announced during halftime.
- CFISD drill teams often participate in community activities.

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