

By ANNEMARIE McDONALD
Collegian Staff Writer

Faithful graduates return to play: the Alumni Band

One of the biggest events at the University in the Fall has traditionally been Homecoming Weekend. And, traditionally, one of the most-entertaining parts of Homecoming has been the Alumni Band.

The Alumni Band was formed in 1963, and a number of faithful band members have returned every year since. Joseph Machlan, the oldest Alumni Band member, has been back annually since 1968.

"I just enjoy it," said Machlan, a 1926 graduate in electrical engineering. "I've always enjoyed playing in the band."

Another Alumni Band member uses Homecoming as an excuse for an annual family reunion.

"My two sons are Penn State graduates as well," Harold J. Koch, class of 1932, said, "and they're in the Alumni Band. We see it (Homecoming) as a chance to get together every year."

Each year, about 250 alumni return to the band. They are contacted by mail every August by Blue Band Director Ned C. Deini, who sets up the halftime show and selects the music that the Alumni Band will play.

The alumni are not told which music selections they will be playing until 9 a.m. the day of the Homecoming game. They practice the music and marching formations from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. "So we don't look like a bunch of ducks on the field," said Robert Johnston, a clarinet player and University graduate in 1929.

This year's theme for the halftime show is the 300th anniversary of the formation of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. After the Alumni Band does the downfield charge, they will spell out "alums" and play a few songs.

"We'll probably do the old college songs from way back," Johnston said. "Then we'll do a razzle-dazzle number for the younger folks, and a jolly old number for Boston College as a little tip to the hat."

When the Blue Band joins them on the field, the alumni will form the outline of Pennsylvania and the Blue Band will form the number 300 in the center.

In past years, the Alumni Band members have just worn white shirts and dark pants for their uniforms. This year, though, they will add a touch of class with white jackets and blue caps.

Most of the alumni will be using their own instruments, but the Blue Band will provide some of the drums and the larger horns.

Lion job more than fun and games

By CHRISTINE ERB
Collegian Staff Writer

Most Penn State sports fans are familiar with the Nittany Lion mascot who romps in the end zone at football games, does push-ups and passes through the crowd of fans each fall. But very few people know much about the man inside the furry brown suit, or realize how much work is involved in being the University mascot.

Roy Scott (10th-speech communication) has been the Lion since Fall Term of last year. The Lion has responsibilities to Penn State athletic events and to the community, he said. Scott attends all football games, all home and some away basketball games, and as many other sporting events as he can.

The Lion also appears at sorority and fraternity fundraisers, pep rallies, alumni banquets and community events. He

estimates that he has made over 200 appearances as the Lion, averaging four or five a week.

Scott said the Lion's image has three aspects. He must be skilled in all sports, so that he can participate in all events. He must be a comedian to keep the crowds entertained when the game gets slow and he must be good with children.

"Little kids get really scared of the Lion," Scott said. "The Lion has to act very tame around them."

Being the Lion has had quite an effect on Scott. He has learned to speak in public and to communicate with all types of people on a one-to-one basis as a representative of Penn State.

The time required obviously affects his lifestyle. Often, Lion duties conflict with Scott's studies, especially during basketball season when there are games in the middle of

the week. The important thing, he said, is learning to budget his time.

The Lion must also be in good physical shape. Scott runs and does from 300 to 500 push-ups a day to keep in shape. This training came in handy, for example, at the Colgate game last year, when he did over 300 push-ups, and at this year's Cincinnati game, when he did 244.

"The push-ups are tiring, but the hardest thing is just being in the suit for that long and always moving around. You sweat an awful lot in the suit. The hardest thing is just keeping up your endurance."

Scott said that rising over the heads of the crowds at football games is not "just a fun ride to the top." He goes home with bruises on his arms, back and legs as a result of rough handling by fans.

The Lion's 19-pound suit also takes quite a beating. Scott said the one he has now is patched up, but a new one should be here for the Homecoming game. It will be a little lighter in color than the present suit, because many people thought the old one looked more like a bear than a lion.

What makes Scott want this position which, obviously is not all fun and games? All through high school, he said he was involved in athletics and then played on the water polo team at the University his freshman year. Because he wanted to be active year-round, he became a cheerleader the next year and became friends with Norm Constantine, a former Nittany Lion. He decided he wanted to follow in Constantine's footsteps.

He and 65 others applied for the spot at the end of Winter Term. Forty of them were interviewed, and only 10 actually tried out in the Lion's suit. They performed stunts to music, displaying dancing and athletic skills. Scott was chosen the fourth week of Spring Term.

By the end of football season last year, he said he was a little discouraged because being the Lion took up so much time. He said he had second thoughts about coming back as the Lion this year, but that, "When you look back on it you realize all the fun you get out of it."

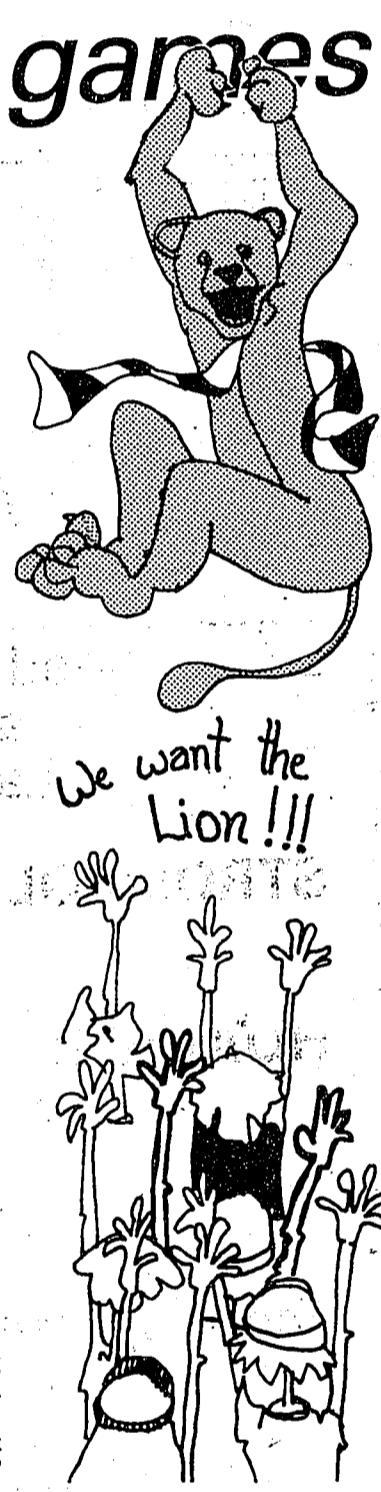


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