Tiger Band Celebrates the 75th Anniversary of Tiger Rag at Clemson

Ask any Clemson fan what tune first comes to mind when they think of Clemson, and chances are they will say "Tiger Rag." Its high energy beat and distinctive trombone glissando, along with the CLEMSON spellout, has endeared the "Song That Shakes the Southland" into the hearts of Tigers everywhere.

Saturday at Homecoming we mark the 75th season anniversary of when "Tiger Rag" was first played at a Clemson football game. In 1941 student band leader Robert Dean Ross hitchhiked to Atlanta looking for sheet music that the band could play. He found a copy of the Paul Yoder arrangement "by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band." The band tried it out in the 1942 football season, and it soon became a band staple. By 1948 "Tiger Rag" became the official fight song of Clemson College, replacing "Tiger Rah!" by Ed Freeman. In 2002 we honored Robert Dean Ross during half-time of the Maryland game on November 16. Mr. Ross passed away on October 20, 2014 at the age of 92. Clemson fans are eternally grateful to Mr. Ross.

The origins of the tune "Tiger Rag" have their roots of course in New Orleans jazz, but they are shrouded in mystery. Many claims have been made as to who composed the music. Jelly Roll Morton may have the best claim, but in truth, the tune is a conglomeration of snippets and riffs that were common in early jazz. The version that we play at Clemson is based on the 1918 recording issued by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. In 1917 are credited as issuing the first ever jazz recordings, but that version of "Tiger Rag" did not sell. Their 1918 version was a million-selling record, and forever ingrained "Tiger Rag" into popular culture. The tune has been covered by hundreds of artists over the years, including my favorite version by Glenn Miller's big band recorded in 1939. Tiger Band will play my interpretation of that one Saturday at half-time.

Saturday also marks the 35th annual return of the Tiger Alumni Band. In a new twist, they will join Tiger Band

on the field during pre-game and re-live the "25 most exciting seconds in college football."

Halftime will begin with a "blast to the past and future" with the theme from the movie "Back to the Future," then continue with the Glenn Miller version of "Tiger Rag," and finally bring out the Homecoming Queen and Court to an original composition by band student Stephen Hill called "Memories of Clemson."

Dr. Mark Spede
Directors of Bands

Link for an advance look at Tiger Band's program article for Homecoming:
http://tband.people.clemson.edu/TigerRagArticle.pdf

ALUMNI BAND 2017 STATISTICS
Instrumentation and auxiliary breakdown

Clarinet	20	Percussion	11
Piccolo	20		
Alto Sax	8	Guard	11
Tenor Sax	3	Dancers	10
Trumpet	14	Twirlers	16
Trombone	11		
Horn	3	Drum Major	1
Baritone	2		
Sousaphone	5	No Instrument	9

Participants by decade:

1960's	4	1990's	38
1970's	24	2000's	18
1980's	35	2010's	24

Graduation dates range from 1963 to 2017
1963 Graduate – Alex MacCormack
2017 Graduate – Maegan Thompson

Here is a link to Alumni Band Schedule for Friday and Saturday:
http://tband.people.clemson.edu/AlumniBandSchedule.pdf

Know the significance of this photo from the early 1960's?

If you know or want to venture a guess, send answer/guess to tony.stapleton76@gmail.com.
Put THE TEN in the subject line of the email. A Tiger Band logo gift will be awarded to anyone with the correct answer.   Awards limited to the first TEN correct answers.

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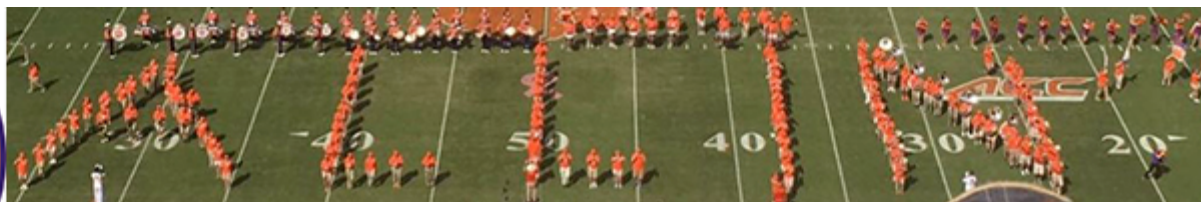https://www.instagram.com/cutba/

And a little band humor

Yours for Tiger Band, CUTBA and Clemson University,

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