

How Rick Roussel became an Optimist



Don Daber's photo of The Roussel Brothers
(September, 1968) L-R: Den, Rick, Tim and Ray

The story behind this shot (stop me if you've heard this one) is that Tim, Den and I (Ray) all marched with the Optimists that year (1968) and although we had a very difficult season we managed to win the national championship on sheer grit and determination.

Rick played snare drum with De La Salle at the time and, although De La Salle and the Optimists had been trading victories most of the year, somehow Rick agreed to a bet that if the Optimists won the championship he would quit Del and come and join us. We won. And so, being the honorable fellow that he is, Rick resigned from Del and came over the the green side.

This completely staged shot was taken by Don Daber at a stadium in west Toronto where we had performed that day. Because we all look so young (unlike the grizzled old buggers we are these days) I'll identify the culprits. That is Den placing the shako on Rick's head, Tim holds the jacket, and Ray helps support the snare drum that Rick will proudly carry for the next three years.

It may not have made much of a difference in the world of drum corps but it sure made a difference in the household peace around the Roussel house for the next year.

(Remembrance by Ray Roussel)