

PLATEAU WARS

Get ready to rumble! Are you ready for the collision course your chapter is headed for this spring in Peoria?

If you've taken a glance at the interesting possibilities the match ups in our four district chorus plateaus offer, you can imagine the fireworks that will take place on the stage of the Five Points venue on April 1.

With Chicagoland West Suburban and Northbrook's automatic bye in place, this leaves Bloomington all by themselves in plateau 5-A. They might reprise their stunning Fall effort which earned them a trip to Portland. Or they may surprise everyone and premier their contest set for Portland in advance. Regardless of what Terry Ludwig and his team chooses, it's bound to be an outstanding performance.

Moving down to the 4-A plateau a small, but well tuned foursome of chapters wait in anticipation for the chords to ring out. Belleville, which has gained attention from much of the district with their lofty second place finish last fall, may opt to stick with their once-a-year showing and bypass the spring fling. Lake County, under the direction of Matt McFadyen, has steadily been moving up in the district rankings thanks to the polish and fine tuning they received from IDAH coaching these past two years. Our spies tell us that we should anticipate some entertaining surprises from the boys from Coles County, as well as a possible return of those wacky "deer men" from up north and the Rockford Metro chorus. The sparks are sure to fly in plateau 4.

Plateau 3-A competition will leave no holds barred Aurora, Elgin, Springfield and Sterling-Rock Falls face off against each other. Aurora should be as creative as ever, if the fun they had during their last show would indicate Nicole Chapin has the Lamplighters smiling up a storm. Elgin, under the slick directing style of Doug Smith, will be at full throttle, while Springfield returns to add another in the long line of consecutive district contest performances to their contest collection. Sterling-Rock Falls has been pretty quiet since the fall convention. Director Tim Pashon would like nothing more than to add a 3-A plateau award to his recent district quartet championship.. Plateau 3-A is going to be a barn burner.

Plateau 2-A could prove to be the surprise match up of the convention. Any of the seven choruses in this plateau could streak to the top of the pile. Favorites could be the South Cook guys who have been working on doubling their size with a dual member program with nearby Joliet. Director Kirschbaum can't wait to hit that first downbeat. DuPage Valley provides a huge threat, as they have also gained numbers with the addition of a goodly group of dual members from up West Towns way. Co-directors Woods and Alhgrim will have their troops ready for anything. Word has reached us that the guys from Kankakee have gotten serious about moving up into the 3-A plateau and, like the cream, have their sights set on the top.
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The men from the Greater Rockford chapter have taken a few contests off to re-organize and we are certain that director Dillett will have his troops ready and eager for action. As we go to press things are not for certain with the Carbondale gang. They have made the long trip to Peoria several times in the recent past and director Alvey may make a surprise visit with the men from down Shawnee Forest way. Another mystery chorus entry could provide big surprises with those stalwart men from Chicago Metro and director Jarmela Speta. From our viewpoint, Plateau 2-A is a wide open race.

Believe it or not a total of 14 choruses reside in Plateau 1-A. It's true that many of these chapters have not been seen on the district stage for a few years now, but that should not prevent any of these groups from making the trip to Peoria and walking away with the 1-A trophy. The 1-A group is too large to mention here, but it sure would be great to see the Arlingtones back in convention mode again. Danville, with their new director, is back and growing again. along with our friends from Decatur, Danville, Macomb and Waterloo. Just to name a few. Check out the plateau list at www.illinoisdistrict.org and get ready to rumble in Peoria this spring.