



The 17th Annual Valero Alamo Bowl was more than a year for a Texas tradition, and for many people in Richmond January 2nd was more than a competition between Texas Tech and Michigan State. This year it was a once in a lifetime chance for 160 kids from Texas. The Lamar Consolidated High School Mustang Band was chosen to perform at the Alamo Bowl halftime show, but their performance on the field didn't stop there.

Upon arrival on Thursday December 31 the band competed in the Alamo Bowl Marching Contest which determined the top notch band who would take center stage in the pregame march, performing prior to the Texas Tech and Michigan State bands. "The Mustang band – the only band from Texas to compete – placed first in every category in the large band division," said Jason Levin, LCHS band director.

The Mustangs swept the field, receiving first place awards for Outstanding Marching, Outstanding Music, Outstanding Percussion, Outstanding Drum Majors, Outstanding Colorguard, and Outstanding General Effect. The band not only made the play in the large band division, it was also named Overall Outstanding Band, meaning it had the highest score of all the bands regardless of size.

Due to their outstanding performance the Mustangs were chosen to play during the Alamo Bowl pregame and began their performance as Texas Tech football players exited the field. They were the only high school band of the 12 performing at halftime chosen to play during the pregame, an experience they won't soon forget.

It wasn't luck that got these kids on the field, it was hard work and serious practice. "We always tell the kids it's not OK to just be OK," said Levin who has been directing the band for two years. "We push them to perform at the highest level, and we want them to take individual responsibility for their performance. Before the contest we were practicing in the rain, in the cold," Levin shared of their determination. "These kids took it seriously – performing at the Alamo Bowl was a major goal for them."

The Mustang's hard work and enthusiasm exemplified the Texan spirit as they worked hard to achieve their goal, and they made their hometown proud as they went from Richmond to San

Antonio, sweeping the field with their music, marching and eyes wide, full of excitement and joy.

Source: www.fbherald.com