OSU band to perform at Indy 500

By Phil Shie
Lantern staff writer

The OSU Spring Athletic Band will perform at the Indianapolis 500 parade on May 29, and at the Indianapolis 500 on May 30, said Jon R. Woods, director of OSU Athletic Bands.

After marching in the nationally televised parade on Saturday, the group will march on the racetrack Sunday before the race, then stay and watch what maybe the single largest sporting event in the nation.

"Performing in front of 600,000 people is a real thrill for the kids," said Brad McDavid, a graduate assistant and veteran of the parade. He was previously a graduate assistant for the Purdue University Marching Band, the official host band of the Indianapolis 500.

The parade will include 18 bands, coming from as far as Louisiana. The only other band from Ohio will be the Sycamore High School Marching Band. The parade will also include celebrities such as John Ritter, Markie Post and Regis Philbin.

Transportation and rooming are provided, but the students had to pay a $40 fee to cover other costs.

"While we were able to cover some of the costs out of our own budget, since this is not a university-sponsored athletic event, we couldn't ask the university to cover all of our expenses," Woods said.

Erick Hayes, a senior from Lima, said he didn't think the cost was too outrageous.

"Yeah, it's fair," Hayes said. "It's not really an athletic event for the university, so I can understand why we have to pay some."

The trip to Indianapolis seems to have had an effect on the size of the Spring Band — it has almost doubled from last year. This year's enrollment of 208 musicians, 172 of whom are going to the race, is a record for the group, Woods said.

The Spring Band is designated for students who wish to keep playing through the spring and "enjoy both marching and concert playing," Woods said.

The Spring Band includes a full complement of woodwind instruments, one difference from the OSU Marching Band that takes the field in Ohio Stadium in the fall.

"While the Spring Band isn't at the level of the fall marching band, it can compare with a lot of major-college marching bands," Woods said.

Other activities the Spring Band has scheduled include a joint concert with the symphonic and university bands at 7:30 p.m., June 1, and a performance at the opening ceremonies of The Memorial Golf Tournament June 2 at Muirfield Village.