



The Illinois State University have been named as the overall winners of the 47th Limerick International Band Championship PICTURES: SEAN CURTIN

Band championship brings the house down

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THE curtain was brought down on Limerick's St Patrick's Festival, as the enduring tradition of the International Band Championship continued.

The popular contest saw 18 marching bands bring a sweet sound for Sunday in the city, while 30,000 people braved rain, which once again provided an unwelcome backdrop to proceedings.

It was a the Illinois State Uni-

versity 'Marching Machine' band who were left shaking their pom-poms in delight, as they took the overall title at the event.

The 175-strong group brought about a party atmosphere on the streets with a rendition of Ini Kamoze's 'Here comes the Hot-stepper'. Their musical director Dr Gavin Smith said: "I'm in a bit of shock right now. It was a good experience for everyone, the trip over here. Everyone was so great. All the other ensembles were fantastic. It's not about winning and losing, it's

about the experience, coming over to a new culture, and new society."

The band will hold the International Band Championship perpetual trophy, brought in by event organiser Kieran Lehane last year.

Elsewhere, there were awards for a number of other bands, including the Pyjama Band from Shipley, in Yorkshire, England, whose night-wear won them Best Uniform title.

The Best Local Band title went to the Newcastle West and District Pipe Band, while Trommlerkorps, whose members hail from

Dortmund in Germany, won the Best International Band title.

Flying the flag for Limerick was the Redemptorist Centre of Music Concert Band, City of Limerick Pipe Band, St Mary's Prize Band and Botherbuoy Brass and Reed Band.

Koch Friedhelnn from Trommlerkorps group said: "The people of Limerick are very enthusiastic. Everywhere we went, we were applauded. We didn't expect to win an award. We were expecting a little prize just for taking part, but we did not expect this!"