

GRAND ENTRY

The Wacipi begins with the Grand Entry of all the dancers entering the arena. Leading the Grand Entry are the flag bearers. These flags may include the eagle staffs of various tribes and families in attendance, the United States and Canadian flags, tribal flags, service flags and P.O.W. flag. Flags are usually carried by veterans. Native Americans hold the United States flag in an honored position. For us, the US flag has two meanings. First, it is a way to remember all of the ancestors that fought against this country. Second, it also reminds people of those people who have fought for this country.

An eagle staff consisting of 38 eagle feathers was made by Glynn Crooks (Dakota) in 1979. Each feather commemorates one of the 38 Dakota executed in Mankato on December 26, 1862. It also commemorates those veterans who have served in times of conflict.

Following the flagbearers are other important guests of the Wacipi including tribal chiefs, elders, and royalty. Next in line, are the men dancers followed by the women dancers, then the children. Once everyone is in the arena, the entrance song ends. The entrance song is immediately followed by a song to honor the flag and a song to honor the veterans. This is followed by an invocation.

During Grand Entry, the flag song, veterans song, and the invocation, spectators are asked to stand and men are asked to remove their hats.