



## **Houston DanceCity Championships**

### **ARTICLES OF THIS EVENT**

June 27, 2012

#### **ARTICLE I -NAME OF THE EVENT**

Houston DanceCity Championships

#### **ARTICLE II -PURPOSE OF THE EVENT**

- A. To preserve and promote a city competition dance for the local Houston area dancers, while maintaining the characteristic style of the slotted dance called the Push / Whip / Hustle/ Shag and West Coast Swing.
- B. To allow attendees the opportunity to mutually meet for the enjoyment of each other's company, using this competition/ social dance event as the basis for this action.
- D. To promote friendly dance contests for the purpose of improving the quality of the dance.

### **ITEMS FOR CONTEST RULES**

June 27, 2012

#### **ITEM I - GENERAL RULES**

- A. The "Houston DanceCity Championships organization has total responsibility for the contest function. The contest dates are Friday, July 27, Saturday July 28, and Sunday, July 29, 2012.
- B. The Houston DanceCity Championships results are approved by both the Chief Judge and the Tally Room Coordinator for the event.
- C. The Houston DanceCity Championships shall reserve the right to change or modify the rules of the event to accommodate large numbers of couples for all categories and converting them to heated contests including Jack & Jills. All contestants, in all categories with exception of Jack & Jills, must purchase weekend tickets. The Houston DanceCity Championships is responsible for arranging video coverage of the contest. No other video cameras or Still frame cameras are allowed without a pre-purchased video/camera media pass.
- D. Contest Results  
Displaying of contest results during contest weekend: The Overseer will post the results for the contests Sunday, following the completion of the awards ceremony. The results will not contain judges' raw scores, judges' names or judges' club affiliations but will contain relative placements, penalty point information, and final placements. Distribution of contest results: The final contest results will also be posted on the website: [www.houstondancecitychampionships.com](http://www.houstondancecitychampionships.com)

#### **ITEM II -CONTEST RULES**

- A. All contestants may enter as late as the dancers' meeting held during the contest weekend. A contest will be defined as an event consisting of two (3) or more couples. If a Choreographed Routines contest does not make and has only a single couple, they will be allowed to perform their routine as an exhibition.
- B. If the number of couples in any non-routine category exceeds five (5), at the discretion of the overseer, the category will be danced in heats.

C. The contestants must make adjustments, if needed, to their music, before being turned in at the Dancers' Meeting. Any adjustments in speed must be noted when the music is turned in.

D. CD's provided by contestants should be compatible with the sound system and should be clearly identified, including any special written instructions. The appropriate track on the CD must be clearly labeled. It is the responsibility of each contest to bring an extra backup CD, just in case the original is lost or corrupted.

E. Competing in a class improperly, poor sportsmanship and ugly outbursts and arguments will result in being disqualified from the current contest and the Houston DanceCity Championships' next contest. This will be determined by a panel consisting of the event director, chief judge and tally room judge.

F. No previous winners of a competition will be announced or exhibitions presented as a result of such championship prior to the competition if the dance couple has been entered in the contest.

G. Awards will be presented to each of the first Five (5) couples in each Choreographed Routines contest and the first Five (5) couples in each Strictly Swing style contest. The top Five (5) couples will be called to the floor individually, starting with the lowest place and progressing up through first. All awards shall be presented on at the end of the event on Sunday. The size and design of the awards will be at the discretion of the Houston DanceCity Championships organization.

H. A Dance Club / Dance Studio Plaque: A dance club of the year and a dance studio of the year plaque, will be awarded to the club/studio with the most points from all competition categories, excluding Jack & Jills. This will be a permanent plaque, going to the winning club/studio at the end of the contest weekend. Points are to be compiled in the following manner:

**I. Club & Studio Awards:**

Largest attendance receives 5 points for the dance club and for the dance studio

5th place receives 1 point for the club/studio  
4th place receives 2 points for the club/studio  
3rd place receives 3 points for the club/studio  
2nd place receives 4 points for the club/studio  
1st place receives 5 points for the club/studio

Points for inter-club couples shall be split equally between the partners.

Award plaque goes to top Club and to top Studio based on attendance numbers and competition participation.

**I. Top Pro Award Plaque:** A top pro award will be given to the pro who dances in pro-ams.

Award is based on number of Ams in relation to placement and number of Ams they dance with.

Pros are limited to 7 Ams each. Pro-Am categories might be danced in heats. Winner is based on total number of points earned by the student placements only - not the pro. A tie is broken by dance club's or dance studio's recorded number in attendance to the event. Most attendees gets the point to break the tie.

Each Am contestant regardless of placement counts as 2 points

5th place receives 1 point  
4th place receives 2 points  
3rd place receives 3 points  
2nd place receives 4 points  
1st place receives 5 points

### ITEM III -DEFINITION OF CLASSES

A. Advanced Class: This class is intended for Advanced dancers / Open dancers or those who have danced as a Pro or as a Pro in a Pro-Am. However, any contestant may choose to dance in this classification.

B. Intermediate Novice Class (Referred to as Intermediate):

This class is for dancers who have never competed above the Intermediate Novice level in any swing competition, excluding Jack & Jills.

You must not have placed first (1st) in Intermediate Novice Class swing competition of equal or higher rank.

C. Novice Class:

This class is for dancers who have never competed above the Novice level in any swing competition, excluding Jack & Jills.

You must not have placed first in Novice Class swing competition of equal or higher rank. (Example: First place Novice winners must progress from City to State to Regional and may not compete at the same level as previously won.) First (1<sup>st</sup>) place winners of the Dallas D.A.N.C.E. Novice Traditional and Novice Strictly Swing categories shall move up to Intermediate Novice Class.

You must not be or have ever been a full or part time dance instructor of slotted swing dance earning any money whatsoever. Instruction as a volunteer or assistant with no earnings, no money, is excluded.

#### D. Newcomer Novice Class:

1. This class is for beginning or less experienced dancers who have never competed above the Newcomer Novice level in any swing competition, excluding Jack & Jills. You may not have competed more than five (5) times at any swing dance competition, excluding Jack & Jills.

You must not have placed first in Newcomer Novice Class swing competition of equal or higher rank.

You must have never been a full, part time or assistant instructor of any form of dance earning any money whatsoever. Instruction as a volunteer or assistant with no earnings, no money, is excluded.

#### E. Mixed Pro-Am Class:

To dance in this competition, every Advanced Class dancer must dance Pro status.

Any dancer competing in Am status must never have danced as an Advanced dancer.

Both male and female Pros may compete in this Class. Pros and Ams may only compete once in this Class.

The Am in a winning Pro-Am couple in this Class may remain Newcomer Novice, Novice or Intermediate Novice, but may not compete again with the same Pro in this Event's Pro-Ams.

#### F. Pro-Am Intermediate Class:

To dance in this competition, every Advanced Class dancer must dance Pro status.

Any dancer competing in Am status must qualify as an Intermediate Novice according to Item III.B.

Pros may compete with up to 5 Ams in this Class. Ams may only compete once.

The Am in a winning Pro-Am couple in this Class may remain Intermediate Novice, but may not compete again with the same Pro in this Event's Intermediate Pro-Ams.

#### G. Pro-Am Novice Class:

1. To dance in this competition, every Advanced Class dancer must dance Pro status.

2. Any dancer competing in Am status must qualify as a Novice or Newcomer Novice according to Item III.C or D.

Pros may compete with up to 5 Ams in this Class. Ams may only compete once.

The Am in a winning Pro-Am couple in this Class may remain Novice or Newcomer Novice, but may not compete again with the same Pro in this Event's Novice Pro-Ams.

#### H. Six-Pak Slammer Pre-Qualifier Class: (This is a New Class & Set of Categories) 1st year this is implemented.

1. Only Pre-Qualifiers may enter. To dance in this competition you must have competed during the Six-Pak Slammer qualifying series of contests and placing 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in any of the series of 6 qualifiers held during the current year.

There will be a Novice, Intermediate and Advanced level. There must be a minimum of 3 couples in your level in order for the contest to make.

## ITEM IV -STYLE OF COMPETITION

Refer to Appendix B, Judging Guidelines, for additional information.

A. The annual Houston DanceCity Championships contest shall consist of the following competitions:

Newcomer Strictly Swing • Novice Jack & Jill Contest Strictly Swing • Intermediate Jack & Jill contest Strictly Swing • Advanced Jack & Jill contest Strictly Swing • Female Pro-Am Novice Strictly Swing • Male Pro-Am Novice Strictly Swing • Female Pro-Am Intermediate Strictly Swing • Male Pro-Am Intermediate Strictly Swing • Novice Strictly Swing • Intermediate Strictly Swing • Advanced Strictly Swing • Novice Choreographed Routines - WCSwing • Intermediate Choreographed Routines - WCSwing • Advanced Choreographed Routines - WCSwing • Mixed Pro-Am Adv. Strictly Swing • Masters Strictly Swing • Mixed Pro-Am Novice Routine • Mixed Pro-Am Intermediate Routine.

B. All Strictly Swing style contestants will dance from (1) minute fifteen (15) seconds to two (2) minutes, as determined by the DJ.

Competitors in the Newcomer Novice class, and the Pro-Am Strictly Swing contests will dance in heats of no more than four (4) couples. The number per heat will be determined by the Overseer/Chief Judge.

Novice, Intermediate Novice and Advanced Strictly Swing dancers may choose dancing from one of two speed ranges: Dance Slow - 90 to 112 bpm or Dance Fast - 112 to 130 bpm.

No lifts, drops, aerials, apart dancing, or entrances are allowed. Couples are expected to dance to one another, but may project toward the audience / judges / camera. Side by side steps will be allowed as long as the couple maintains body contact. Dancers are allowed to break contact during free spins.

The couple will begin their dance in a closed position. **Dress: Costumes are not allowed, but matching colors are acceptable. Dingy t-shirts or faded jeans with holes in them are not permitted (Bad taste in dress is considered disrespectful of the dance, the event, and grounds for disqualification).**

### C. Choreographed-Routines.

Routines - contestants will dance for a period of at least two (2) minutes, but not more than three (3) minutes. Dancers stopping before two (2) minutes will have their scores tallied as zero (0).

Couples may select their own music to which they may choreograph their routine. All music must be received at the Dancers' Meeting prior to the contest. Contestants will be responsible for bringing an extra backup CD and picking up their music after the competition. Lifts and drops are permitted; Aerials (throwing your partner up in the air) are not permitted.

Entrances (fifteen (15) seconds) are allowed with apart dancing. Apart dancing is not allowed after the entrance.

Couples may dance to one another as well as project toward the audience / judges / camera. Dancers are allowed to break contact during free spins. **Dress: costumes or like colors are permitted. Dingy t-shirts or faded jeans with holes in them are not permitted (Bad taste in dress is considered disrespectful of the dance, the event and grounds for disqualification).**

## ITEM V -CONTESTANTS

A. A dancer may compete in more than one (1) Style / Category within the same Class / Level of competition.

B. Contestants must draw for positions at the Dancers' Meeting. Music must be turned in at the Dancers' Meeting. A couple not represented or not turning their music at the Dancers' Meeting will automatically dance in first position and must turn their music in to the DJ at least two (2) hours prior to the contest or they will not be allowed to dance.

C. All contestants must complete and sign an entry form. No one may compete without completing, and returning this form to the dancers' meeting.

D. Unsportsmanlike conduct: Any individual or contestant(s) found guilty by the Supervisors of the Houston DanceCity Championships organization, of unsportsmanlike conduct or intentional violation of the governing rules of this dance event shall be barred from attending or competing in any Houston DanceCity Championships contests indefinitely or until such time as the individual or contestant(s) is reinstated by the event director. Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include verbal, written, physical, and any other form of harassment by any contestant toward any other attendee(s), judges, tally room representatives, contestants, event officers, and/or any other persons associated in any way with Houston DanceCity Championships' activities.

Contestants agree to abide by the decision of the judges. If they do not, and create a situation of unsportsmanlike conduct, they shall be subject to the terms above. Refusal to accept an award is considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

E. Problems: If mechanical, clothing, injuries or other problems occur during a performance, the dancers may stop and make the problem known. They will request judgment from the Overseer/Chief Judge, and if granted, the couple will start the dance over as if nothing had happened. If the judgment is not granted, the couple has lost the opportunity to dance again and the judges will score the performance as danced (minimum times apply). An error is not a reason to start again. Grievances may be filed to appeal these judgments to the Chief Judge/Overseer.

Each problem is judged differently depending upon the nature of the problem. Generally, if the problem is within your control, don't stop. If it is outside your control, the ruling may be favorable; it is the chance you take.

If a problem arises as a result of a sound system equipment malfunction, which can be verified as a fault of the system and not the dancers' music, the Chief Judge/Overseer may allow a re-dance without calling a special meeting.

A couple that submits music that is not acceptable to the DJ, but who insists on dancing to the music regardless of the DJ's opinion, shall not be granted a re-dance based on poor quality of the music or volume of same.

If a couple's music needs adjustment, the couple has ten (10) seconds after their performance starts to request adjustments. Contestants should notify officials of any complaint about the dance floor conditions one (1) hour prior to competing.

F. Grievances: Grievances must be filed in writing and submitted to the Overseer/Chief Judge within thirty (30) minutes after completion of the tally room activities.

After a grievance is submitted, the Overseer/Chief Judge will meet with the Tally Judge and Event Director and make a judgment on the grievance. Do not reproach or blow up out of control on any of the Officials. You will be scratched and banned from the competition and any future events also.

# JUDGING GUIDELINES

Revised June 27, 2012

## JUDGES SELECTION AND CONDUCT

A. Judges will be chosen by the governing officials of this event. A list of volunteering judges and tally room representatives will be provided to the event officials prior to the Judges' Meeting at the competition location. Anyone whose name is not on this list will not be allowed to serve in either capacity at the competition.

A list of judges will be kept by the Chief Judge/Overseer, Tally Room/Overseer and Event Director.

In the event that at the time of the Judges' Meeting there are not sufficient judges available, the Chief Judge/Overseer will be responsible to recruit additional judges.

B. Judges' Meetings will be held after the Dancers' Meeting & after before each contest during the event. All judging candidates must be present for these meetings.

C. The order of judge selection will be as follows:

Overall performance judges (minimum 5 needed).

Referee judge (is handled by Chief Judge).

Timekeeper (1 needed). The timekeepers will write the exact amount of time each couple danced beside the couple's name on a sheet of paper, which will be turned in to the Chief Judge/overseer at the same time as the judges' scores are turned in. The timekeepers will hold up one hand with an open palm five (5) seconds prior to the time limit and close it to make a fist at the time limit. Any couple which has not danced the minimum of two (2) minutes will have their scores tallied as "zero".

D. The judges shall not carry on conversations, smoke or drink alcohol during the competition they are judging, and must pay strict attention to each couple's performance.

E. Judges are allowed to change their scores prior to submitting them to the Overseer/Chief Judge. Scoring range is 1 to 100 points. Judges scoring a "zero" (0) shall have their scores thrown out. Any judge who scores a zero (0) will be prohibited from judging an event for two (2) years. Judges providing duplicate scores will have their scores for that contest thrown out by the Tally Room.

F. Immediately following each contest, the Overseer/Chief Judge will see that the judges' score sheets are collected and taken to the tally room to be tabulated.

G. Judges' scores and/or final placement grievances are not applicable except by the tally room.

Although judging is inherently subjective, contest judges are expected to utilize the following six guidelines in judging sanctioned contests:

## JACK & JILL CONTESTS

All Judges must make sure they have the contestant name and number of both the leader and of the follower for every couple dancing in both preliminary contests and finals. The size of the heats dancing in jack & jills will be determined by the chief judge & tally room coordinator at the time of the contest.

## ITEM I – CHARACTERISTIC STYLE OF THE DANCE

A. The competition is primarily weighted to West Coast Swing (WCS), a partner dance in which the dancers combine movements in two-beat increments to form patterns. Normally, the partners dance in a slot, with the follower moving back and forth in the slot and the leader moving in and out of the slot as necessary to allow the follower to pass by. In their fundamental forms, WCS patterns begin with a "walk – walk" on the first two beats of a pattern and end with a triple step done in place on the final two beats. Although these are the basic features of the dance, it is far too rich to be limited by them. Therefore, dancers may introduce variety in individual patterns by varying one or more of the basic features of WCS described above and /or incorporating elements from other dances and other forms of swing, to the extent permitted by the rules for individual contests, discussed below.

Whip and Push are styles of WCS, each of which is recognizable by the characteristic (but not exclusive) use of a particular pattern ending, i.e., Whip's hesitation step and Push's double resistance rock step. Whip and Push also tend to place greater emphasis on complex patterns than certain other styles of WCS. Judges shall give fair and equal consideration to all stylings of WCS (including Whip and Push).

## **ITEM II -CONTEST CATEGORIES (Styles)**

There are two categories of contests in West Coast Swing: Strictly Swing (which is intended to mimic social dancing styles as far as possible) and Choreographed Routines.

### **A. Strictly Swing Style:**

No lifts, drops, aerals, apart dancing, or entrances are allowed. Costumes are not allowed, but matching colors are acceptable.

Couples may draw their music from one of two speed ranges: 90-112 or 112-130 bpm.

Couples are expected to dance to one another, but may project toward the audience / judges / camera. Side by side steps will be allowed as long as the couple maintains body contact. Dancers are allowed to break contact during free spins.

The couple will begin their dance in a closed position.

### **B. Choreographed Routines Style:**

A maximum of three (3) lifts or drops are permitted; no aerals are permitted. Dress is dancer's choice.

Couples may select their own music to which they may choreograph their routine.

Entrances (fifteen (15) seconds) are allowed with apart dancing. Apart dancing is not allowed after the entrance.

Couples may dance to one another as well as project toward the audience / judges / camera. Dancers are allowed to break contact during free spins.

## **ITEM III -PRESENTATION**

A. **(NO TORN JEANS or T-Shirts) - Dingy t-shirts or faded jeans with holes in them are not permitted (Bad taste in dress is considered disrespectful of the dance, the event, and grounds for disqualification).** Dress up for the occasion! Dress, grooming, and music should be in good taste. Judges will not look favorably on overly skimpy outfits, poor grooming, or music with offensive language.

B. Partners should complement one another in appearance and styling. They should appear as a team, balanced in their abilities and presentations, dancing together to achieve a common goal.

C. Pleasing facial expressions, appropriate to the music, are a part of attractive dancing. For example, mock expressions of surprise or fear may be used to emphasize especially showy or difficult moves or breaks. However, obviously forced smiles, talking, excessive singing with the music, gum chewing, and habitual mannerisms (such as hops, limps, ducks, or winks) are not attractive features of a good performance and will not be evaluated favorably.

## **ITEM IV -EASE OF EXECUTION, PATTERN DIFFICULTY, AND PATTERN VARIATION**

A. Correctness and Ease of Execution -- Judges shall reward moves and patterns to the extent they are executed cleanly and with apparent ease. The following are examples of what judges may look for in common types of movements:

Spins -- A person executing a spin should enter and exit the spin with proper posture, good balance, and appropriate foot and arm placement, should maintain proper timing and balance during the spin, and should come to a secure conclusion.

Lifts, drops, and aerals -- Couples executing these movements should maintain proper balance, pleasing lines, and appropriate timing throughout the maneuvers.

Footwork patterns and show steps -- Footwork patterns and show steps may be exaggerated but should maintain proper timing and should be appropriate to the music.

B. Pattern Difficulty, Variation, Transitions, and Phrasing -- Judges shall reward couples who create unpredictable, interesting, versatile, and innovative performances by:

Varying basic patterns;

Avoiding repetitive patterns;

Utilizing advanced patterns;

Making smooth transitions from one movement to the next, except where intentional holds or breaks are appropriate to the music and are well executed;

and Combining patterns and movements in a manner consistent with the phrasing of the music.

## **ITEM V -TIMING**

Dancers should dance using movements consistent with the rhythms of their music. Therefore, judges should look for, and reward, appropriate timing. When timing errors do occur, judges should note how quickly the dancers are able to recover from them. Intentional variations in basic timing and rhythm (e.g., syncopating, holding beats, and rushing rhythms) are commendable parts of a well-executed dance when they are appropriate to the music and, therefore, should be rewarded as such by the judges.

## ITEM VI -PENALTIES

For the infractions listed on the following penalty chart, the judges will indicate the type and total number of occurrences committed by each couple on their score sheets.

Penalty Item

### Choreographed Routines Allowance

Entrance - Special entrances & start positions are allowed - Fifteen (15) second maximum for entrance.

Apart dance during entrance allowed - Fifteen (15) seconds during entrance.

Apart dancing during routine not allowed except for spins or special footwork that uses maximum of 16 beats.

Lifts and drops - Allowed - Maximum of five (5)

Aerials - None allowed

### Strictly Swing Allowance

Entrance - None allowed, Dancers must start in closed dance position

Apart Dancing - Not allowed

Dress - Matching colors are allowed

Speed of Music - Dancer's choice of fast or slow

Lifts and drops - None allowed

Aerials - None allowed

The Overseer/Chief Judge is responsible for timing entrances and apart dancing and indicating penalties for violations of those items. The Overall Performance Judges shall indicate penalties for dress, lifts and drops, and aerials, as well as scoring the overall dancing of the couples. Only the items listed above are to be subject to penalties.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Aerial:** From the point that both feet of one partner leave the floor until they return to the floor and incorporating multiple body movements requiring balance and leverage for ease of execution.

**Apart Dancing:** Deliberate / intentional dancing without maintaining any contact. Can occur facing any direction. There is a two beat allowance after the last spin / turn to make contact. "Contact" does not specifically include only hand connections, and does include other contact such as arms hooked at the elbow, or arm around the shoulders, waist, neck, etc. Excludes spins / turns by one or either partner. Excludes accidental hand breaks during a given move when the intent was to maintain contact.

**Choreography:** Executing selected dance movements to accentuate the highs and lows throughout an entire piece of selected music.

**Closed Dance Position:** "Starting Step": Couple facing, follower's right hand and leader's left hand clasped with arms extended; follower's left hand on leader's upper arm, and leader's right hand at some point between the follower's shoulder blade and waist.

**Coaster Step:** Three weight changes to two (2) beats of music, the movement of which can be described as back-together-forward.

**Costume:** Attire specifically designed or selected for a couples competition and would not generally be worn on a social dance floor.

**Dance Area:** The area established by the position and direction of both partners.

**Double Resistance:** The partners in a locked arm position so that the follower executes a hesitation occurring at count "1" of the next pattern. (*aka.* hesitation, hitch step, and variations thereof.)

**Drop:** From the point that one partner supports the other vertically (not horizontally) until both are self supportive.

**Entrance:** Anything other than closed dance position.

**Footwork:** A series of seemingly non-leadable movements initiated by the leader and mirrored by the follower. Once a lead has been established and is generally known, this series of movements is no longer a "routine", but rather a "pattern".

**Lift:** From the point that, with assistance from the other partner, both feet of one partner leave the floor until they return to the floor.

**Lining:** "Striking a line..." portions of the couple's bodies (*i.e.* arms, legs, torsos) visually line up either in the same direction or opposite directions while creating a visual image of symmetry.

**Pattern:** A series of movements which begin with a walk-walk, hitch step, hesitation or variation thereof initiated by the leader which may require only one lead at the beginning or additional leads prior to the completion of the pattern, which is a double resistance hesitation, coaster step or variation thereof.

**Performance:** Movements executed from beginning to end by a couple while dancing.

**Rhythm & Blues:** Music which has the primary rhythm accent on counts "2" and "4", among other elements.

**Show Step:** Other styles of Swing (St. Louis Shag, Carolina Shag, Lindy, Etc.) are considered show steps.

**Slot, Primary:** The follower's path of travel.

**Slot, Cross:** The leader's path of travel which is the center point of the follower's slot and an area only wide enough for the follower to pass by the leader while the follower maintains the primary slot.

**Spin - Natural:** Clockwise spin (to the right).

**Spin - Reverse:** Counter-clockwise spin (to the left).

**Step:** Movement involving a weight change from one foot to the other.

**Touch / Tap:** Placement of the ball of one foot upon the floor without a weight change.