



New Zealand Amateur Rock'n'Roll Association Inc.



HEAD JUDGE REPORT

September 2011

WHAT'S IN A TEN?

Judges should feel encouraged to award a 10 in any category, if a couple/combination has earned it, in their opinion.

- If you are awarding a 9 or 9 ½, ask yourself - what more do I want?
- What more can the couple/combination do to earn that extra 1 or ½ point?

Judges talk about “perfection” when defining a 10.

- What is perfection?
- Are our expectations reasonable and fair?

Judges need to be careful when using the word perfection. Is anything in this world absolutely perfect, including the person making the judgement? While we can use the definition of perfect as “flawless”, I think a better definition is “to be complete” i.e. what more do I want?

To be clear – dancers must still earn their points – but judges shouldn't be afraid to award a 10 if it's deserved.

POSITIVE JUDGING

Judges should take a positive and constructive approach to all judging engagements/assignments.

- How many points can I award, rather than *how many points can I deduct?*
- Dancers must still earn their points – but, we should always be fair and reasonable when making our judgements.

CHOCOLATE CAKE - VARIETY GUIDELINES/DEFINITION

- What is a well balanced routine?
- What is a good chocolate cake recipe?

We all have our own definitions of a well balanced routine and invariably it will come down to our own personal dancing/coaching and judging experience(s).

I apply the same thinking to what makes a good chocolate cake recipe. Did you know there are more than 46,500,000 recipes on Google? I wonder how many prepared routines have been put together over the years and continue to be formed?

As judges we're asked to judge the best chocolate cake recipe and ultimately the best tasting and looking chocolate cake.

We all have our own favourite recipes. There are some that have been handed down from generation to generation. There are contemporary recipes that use modern day ingredients and/or technology. There are slight variations from one recipe to the next. There may be different ingredients, e.g. one recipe may use cooking chocolate, where as another may use cocoa. The measurements may vary. The cooking methods may vary.

There is one common goal for all cooks – to bake the tastiest and best looking chocolate cake. There is one common goal for dancers – to perform and present a creative and innovative diverse combination of moves in line with our rock n roll ideals to sustain our interest and entertain us.

How do we judge a cake? We look at neatness, appearance, technique, use of colour and creativity and of course the taste test.

How do we judge a well balanced routine? We look at presentation, technique, execution, creativity, diversity, complexity, mastery and of course, how it makes us feel on the day.

What do all good recipes have in common? There are key ingredients – flour, butter, sugar, eggs etc.

What do all well balanced routines have in common? There are key ingredients – a spread of moves, in time to the music that cover 3 heights – low - dips, medium – floor work, spins and high – aerials, high arm movements etc.

As judges we have to remember there are different recipes that may contain different ingredients and cooking methods. Our job is to judge the appearance, presentation, technique and creativity.

Most judges feel that the current **Variety definition** is working well and I am a strong advocate of – “if it aint broke, don’t fix it”. However I agree with Central judges, that there is ambiguity in small parts that could be tweaked to provide better clarity. I would like to discuss this further at the National workshop.

Here is a summary of key words/concepts/themes that judges consider and take into account when judging Variety. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- A1 Timing: all moves must be in time with the music
- Variation of body movement: dips, floor, height
- Competency: do it well, confident presentation, skill, ability & flair
- A spread of moves that entertains and sustains interest: complexity/simplicity, must have impact, must compliment the dancers and music
- Execution – ins and outs
- Creative & Innovative
- Male and female involvement
- Uninterrupted flow – smooth transitions from one move to another
- Expression: using moves to interpret the music
- Performance: Dancers have to sell it
- Showmanship: Wow/X-factor
- Poetry in Motion

There are some points of difference that we will discuss at the National workshop including the X-factor/Wow point. Some judges felt it should be removed from the current allocation of points.

MILEAGE RATE

The Association has raised the reimbursement rate for all officials from 45 to 70 cents per kilometre. There is no obligation whatsoever on clubs to use this rate when reimbursing judges or officials at their club/regional events. The expectation is that clubs cover all reasonable costs – but ultimately this is set and determined by clubs and should be made after consultation with judges. If judges feel the rule change could affect their chances of being invited to officiate at a competition, I encourage them to contact clubs and discuss a fair and reasonable term and rate of reimbursement.

GIVING FEEDBACK

It is reasonable for dancers to seek our advice and feedback and I would hope that all judges are friendly, approachable and open to give constructive and useful advice. All judges are expected to behave with a high level of decorum and I would expect that any approach made by a competitor/dancer to a judge be conducted in the same fashion.

NATIONAL WORKSHOP

The National Workshop is confirmed to be held on **Saturday 25 February** at the Brentwood Hotel, Wellington. Please confirm your attendance and make payment of \$20 per person by **30 November**, by posting a cheque to: Head Judge, PO Box 37051, Parnell, Auckland or online or manual banking at any branch of Westpac:

NZARRA
03-1534-0002945-00

Please record your name against any deposit or email me a note so that we can track all payments.

Judges have asked that the workshop focus on judging dancers and the 3 categories - Timing, Harmony & Variety.

THANK YOU

I would like to thank Drifters, Christchurch – Brenda & Dennis Neill and Ramblers for their kind hospitality and for organising dancers and music.

I would like to thank all judges for their time and continued dedication to our movement. The discussions were thought provoking, robust and most importantly, forward thinking and constructive. We - judges, dancers, coaches and supporters are all the better for it.

I look forward to seeing you at the Senior Nationals or in the near future.

All the best with your future judging.

Shane Taurima
NZARRA Head Judge