

Fabulous round of workshops with great content and discussions. Thank you to Christchurch, River City and Wellington for hosting the events and your awesome hospitality ensuring the whole day was comfortable for everyone. Thank you to all demo dancers who took time out of their busy schedules to allow us the opportunity to discuss elements of judging because, as judges our role is to serve the dancers.

Topics Covered:

Timing and the essence of how tempo is connected to basic timing.

The mood of the song and how that may be expressed within the dancing. Dancers can be in time to the main beat of the music but not in tempo. Dancing to our rock n roll rhythm expressing the mood of the song. We drew a graph with 'waves' on it to describe visually the mood of the song and what is trying to be conveyed such as;

Light	Graceful	Relaxed	Upbeat	Cheeky	Sad	Bold
Happy	Bouncy	Vibrant	Bobby	Smooth	Gliding	etc

It was acknowledged that there is a difference in tempo to how a slow song would be danced compared to a fast. A Fast is 'get down and boogie' sharp, stamina and a different energy to a slow.

Variety - Apples and Apples – different varieties – but they are still apples!

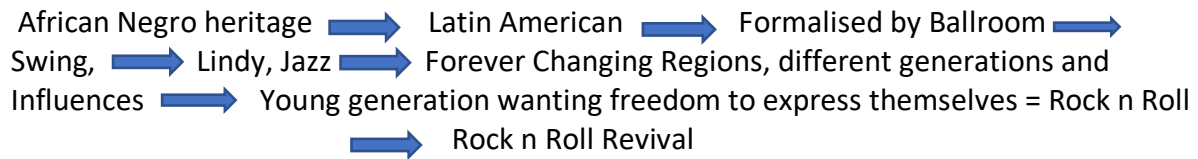
Breaking into groups to consider the many elements to variety with each group sharing ideas around Overall Variety (up to 5 points) and Acknowledge Competency (up to 4 points) and X FACTOR – Wow – Showmanship (up to 1 point).

A balanced routine would show good structure of movement, heights, direction of flow, proportion of all moves equal. Sequence needs to FLOW. A balance of dips, footwork, air moves, overall body movement, use of the floor and direction. Moves to fit the music. It will be whatever the dancers present but with CONFIDENCE AND SKILL. Be confident and competent. Using space, element of surprise, angles, body control. Entry and Exits to flow.

Acknowledge innovation and creativity - a great thought came from the Wellington workshop is that it's like 'mixing a cake' you need all the ingredients to make it taste and look good!

X Factor – that hunger and desire to do their utmost performance...you can see it in their eyes almost. X Factor – being the best of everything – bring ALL Elements together - ask yourself – what more could I want from them? Leaving it all out on the floor. That 'sixth sense' and feeling that there is a powerful energy you just cannot take your eyes off them! It's a performance.

Our Rock n Roll Ideals – Martin presented information with the history of rock n roll – here’s a very short version of his words and everyone felt this was a most useful history, thank you Martin.



Top Club and Senior Team

Team dynamics discussion and how the configuration of teams presented today is perceived.

The elements of T, H, V stand as the foundation of all dancing presented and definitely ultimate within a team dance.

Cohesiveness of the team is paramount – showing unison, harmony and expression and interpretation of the selected song. The music within the song is important not only the lyrics, however always a balance and good use of the song.

Polish and Precision, personality, good configuration of space and variety.

The dance to flow, no baulks, faults.

Always the degree of faults taken into consideration. ..was it a minor, medium or major influence in the execution of the move and how did it affect harmony within the team?

Stamina and energy and control of every move.

Questions to reflect upon - are they still dancing as a team? Use of the music/tempo/do the dancers feel the song? Dance Ability of the dancers/

Teams can break into any configurations they so wish – the question will be ..did that add value to the cohesiveness of the team or separate or take away from it?

Teams can move into the shape of ‘two groups of three’ and still operate as a team.

Trainee Pathway and Judges Status Criteria

A new Trainee Status card has been developed and this was presented to trainees at the workshops. The value of this will be for trainees to keep a record of their progress and have all events signed off by their mentor or Senior Judge of the event they are participating in. It was generally felt that it’s important to have a healthy number of trainees within the system as it takes a few years to bring through judges to the standard we have. The benefit of a Mentor is crucial in the successful outcomes of our trainee judges.

A call for all Clubs to please utilise our trainees as armchairs and in official capacity when appropriate, wherever possible.

It was agreed that the minimum standard of criteria per rule book is just that – a minimum standard and of course a generous amount of judging and attendance at workshops are the only way forward to ensure a continued high-level judging standard for all judges alike.

**Congratulations to Jessie Stevens and Nicole Reder
who have successfully attained the level of Association Judge!!**

Your dedication, enthusiasm and willing characters have ensured your readiness to the next level. I'd like to thank your mentors and all the judges who have helped Jessie and Nicole along their training over the years. Your lovely participation at workshops and insightful input is wonderful to see and the future of our rock n roll is within people like yourselves.

Feedback to Dancers

If asked for feedback it's always good to relate back to the guidelines as this will be most helpful to the dancers eg a 5 in timing might be consistent with the beat, however a 7-8 mark would show greater connection to the tempo, body expression, a 9-10 all elements coming together in the realms of excellence, confidence etc.

It was so good to meet and get together at these workshops and welcome our new trainees in. The time we are together is so valuable and the discussions, conversations, insights and ideas wouldn't happen if we didn't make it to these events. Thank you to everyone who could attend and thank you for your participation, fun and wisdom each person brought. It's paramount we share our knowledge as group as this supports our trainees and one's ongoing personal growth too.

Mini Workshops coming up will be on the Friday of Senior and Good Friday of Junior Nationals. Zoom webinars available at any time for people to connect and communicate and of course in 2020 will be the NZ Combined Workshop Day which will be held in Wellington.

Colleen Ryan
1 August 2019
Head Judge NZARRA