

Welcome Rock n Roll Clubs of New Zealand to our AGM. I'd like to start by saying a big thanks to you all for your co-operation and flexibility in being able to get together under very different circumstances to ensure we do our best to continue the communications necessary for the future rock n roll success in all our communities.

I'd like to acknowledge the hardworking fellow Executive members who come together to ensure the running of our Association in multiple ways.

Currently we have 30 National Association Judges, 4 Association Judges and 20 Trainees.

During the year we were notified of the retirement of Dave Sayers from judging after many years of service. On behalf of our New Zealand community we thank you Dave for your friendship, fun and wisdom you so humbly shared with us all.

The past year saw an interactive and fun round of regional workshops with great content and discussions. Thank you to Christchurch, River City and Wellington for hosting these workshops 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 the many elements of judging.

Some of the highlights from the workshops are as follows -

The key topic of particular note for this series of workshops was Variety in all its forms as we dug deep to explore and articulate this concept.

The importance of connecting with our rock n roll ideals and history is always interesting and useful and Martin Anscombe presented information on this. Many found it most helpful. Here it is in a very concise format, thank you Martin.

African Negro heritage → Latin American → Formalised by Ballroom →
Swing, → Lindy, Jazz → Forever Changing Regions, different generations and
Influences → Young generation wanting freedom to express themselves = Rock n Roll
→ Rock n Roll Revival

Top Club and Senior Team dynamics discussions within workshops and how the configuration of teams presented today is perceived.

The elements of T, H, V (Timing, Harmony and Variety) 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 character of the song.

A new Trainee Status card was developed and presented to trainees at the workshops. The value of this will be for trainees to keep a record of their own progress and have all events signed off by their Mentor or Senior Judge of the event they are participating in. It can take a few years to bring through judges to National Association standard. 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 both as armchairs and in official capacity when appropriate, wherever possible please would be most helpful.

Congratulations to Jessie Stevens and Nicole Reder who have attained Association Judge level. Your lovely participation at workshops and insightful input is wonderful to see and we look forward to your continued progress. I'd like to thank your mentors and all the judges who have helped Jessie and Nicole along their training over the years.

Over the last 18 months at workshops around the country the topic of training and judging criteria was discussed in an effort to establish a clearer pathway and allow balance and flexibility in all situations. Supporting our judging values and serving our dancers is paramount for all judges.

It was felt a need to tidy up the Rule Book Section 8 for Judges Qualification Criteria to reflect the expectations judges have of themselves and to also encourage a communication opportunity throughout every step of the way. I want to thank the judges for your input and ideas and thoughts in assisting with this process.

This is the year for our Combined National Judges Workshop 18 July 2020, however, will have a different vibe to it this time around I feel. At the time of writing this report we will still be on limited travel and community restrictions. At this stage I envisage holding a ZOOM workshop that I hope most Judges will be able to participate in. Keeping it fun, energetic and thoughtful with good preparation prior to the event should see this proceed and still be of great value overall. We could consider rolling over the physical workshop to 2021 and talk about this at a later time.

Cheerleaders is back! We managed to get the excitement of Cheerleaders again after an absence of nine years! With a new wave of juniors across the country it's the ideal opportunity to start the weekend with this fun event to capture Club participation. It was wonderful to see the response with four or five Clubs showing interest this Junior Nationals.

Senior Nationals Christchurch 2019 was a brilliant event and the Host Club certainly gave us that southern hospitality like no other. Thank you for setting the stage for all guests to create a wonderful atmosphere of family. Each Nationals presents its own unique memories and congratulations to all our dancers, supporters – that's each of you, to bring the weekend together. The standard of dancing was stunning and the attention to detail in dress sections is as usual, highly contested and a pleasure to see.

Junior Nationals Hamilton 2020 – who would have thought we would be in this situation. Our hearts' go out to Drifters Host Club, who have prepared for the event for so long and all junior dancers, their dedicated parents and coaches. We send a message of empathy and

heartfelt compassion at the disappointment you must have felt. All is not lost as your hard work and growth will certainly get to be heard and seen one day soon.

These times remind us of how privileged our lives are and any opportunity we get to come together to dance and celebrate our lives through rock n roll is a great treasure indeed.

As always, I feel honoured and a big sense of responsibility and trust in holding the Head Judge role for our Association at this time. I seek to do my best to represent the judges with the best outcomes for our dancers and growth of rock n roll in all New Zealand communities.

Thank you Judges for your enthusiasm and dedication to the roles we each hold and the passion you bring to the dance sport we love - rock n roll, and thank you for your personal support to me in helping me facilitate my role.

Colleen Ryan
12 April 2020