

## Judges Watercooler 09 June 2021

In attendance: Korena Wharepapa-Vulu, Marica Campbell, Brian Wales, Robin Sutton, Stacy Grootjans, Danka Drengubiak, Jeff Alley, Jared Pivott, Chris Franks, Dianne Halstead, Jessie Stevens, Jeanette Greaves, Susan Rogers, Shane Taurima, Malcolm Mazur, Ashley Feck, Stephen Blase, Chloe Kuriger, Colleen Ryan, Karen Birch.

### Notes:

- Armchairs at competitions:

Recommended that the armchair judges for the entire competition though it was noted that there can be exceptions to this.

We heard from Danka's experience as a "sideline" armchair that it is important to set up those spectators around you to understand what you're doing and have a seat at the front of a table. There is an advantage in the judge preparing their own sheets so that they don't affect the officials.

Concern that armchairs should be included as part of the judging "pack", privy to judges' meetings and information, to help them get in the zone for judging that competition. General feeling that all armchairs should be part of the official judging group of the night, and we could look at ways to facilitate this. However, too many on the floor at once can be intimidating and frustrating for dancers and spectators. Suggestion that armchairs could judge to the side/stage and we should increase comms about what we are doing and why.

All fantastic discussion, thank you.

Action: Head Judge will work on a draft of possible guidelines to judges and clubs for judge feedback (via email and facebook). As competitions are starting now with a lot of judges wanting to judge this will be priority work – due to Judges for feedback by 20 June 2021.

- Best Dressed Male at Junior Nationals:

General consensus that age doesn't matter, however, size of suit matters, ill fitting gear is the problem and our junior males are not getting it right (comment that this can be an artform itself). It is harder for 5 years olds as they can't fit off the rack clothing from Hallensteins. We do need to be consistent in our approach to judging the best dressed so that competitors feel confidence putting themselves out there.

Comms is also an important element here and we can certainly increase our communication about best dressed to the clubs and competitors.

Action: Head Judge will look at the statistics for younger boys progressing through the section at nationals, add the Judges comments above and feedback to Invercargill. Completion by 30 June 2021.

Action: Head Judge will look at developing a simple one page guideline for competitors. This is to guide quality and not style or artistic taste. Completion by 30 June 2021.

- Heads up for August area meetings:

We will be trialling distance assessments at the August Meetings. No preparation required as we will be looking at what connections and devices are needed when we are there, how these might work and whether they provide a useable assessment. It would be good to have some clarity about

whether distance assessments are viable or – if not gold standard, then perhaps a good enough standard that can be used in extreme circumstances (e.g. couple in West Coast, Nelson, Australia...etc)

We discussed the costs involved with travelling to workshops for judges outside of Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch. We have a “tyranny of geography” in New Zealand (thank you Robin for the quote!)

Most prefer the opportunity to connect in with a greater number of judges at the workshops rather than more workshops around the country with smaller groups. The bi-annual central workshop is also appreciated for this reason.

We should acknowledge the difficulties for trainees as the meetings and competitions require a lot of self-paid travel by them. We do choose to be judges but it has gotten harder. We need our judges to represent all of New Zealand, rather than a geographical area – experience in other regions is essential for this reason.

It's noted that we don't want to be siloed as an area judge rather than representing all dancers nationally.

Online is great but not to take over the in person.

- New Trainee Drive:

Suggestion that we could have a group of judges training at a time (structured).

We have competing concerns.

1. We have an aging population of judges with very few completing training over the past decade. We have lost more judges from the list than we have gained. This is not a reflection of under valuing older judges – but we do need new judges coming through.
2. Some existing judges are not being utilised now – if we have more judges then this will impact existing judging rotation.

There were a number of priorities that the group felt rotation should address. In particular regions and best group of judges.

- Exec meeting is on Saturday 19 June:

No concerns though Robyn asked the question: what could WE do to support and encourage these competitions? Tyree will take this to Exec meeting as well as ask it on further watercoolers.

Thank you everyone. I hope you enjoyed the hour connecting in.