

2009- 2010 SSSC Contest Rules

Note: Points earned in SSSC contests do not count towards WSSC (World Swing Dance Council) points. Although SSSC's points system is essentially the same concept as the WSSC points system there are some important differences. The most significant difference is that WSSC's system tracks points of competitors worldwide. Only points earned at 2 or 3 day local, regional or national events whose advertising contains the WSSC logo will accrue under the WSSC system. The SSSC points system tracks points earned only in SSSC contests. Your SSSC competition level does not determine the level in which you will compete at a weekend WSSC sanctioned event, or vice-versa. For further clarification, please contact SSSC Chief Judge: Lynn Gross, 425-242-0946 or swingstreet@comcast.net.

General Contest Rules

1. The contest year runs from April 2008 to March 2009. See Attachment "B" - Schedule of Contests.
2. Membership in SSSC or any other swing club is **not** required to enter and compete in monthly club contests prior to the year end finals (see Jack & Jill Year End Finals on page 2.)
3. Entry fee is \$6/person.
4. Competitors must sign up to dance by 6:30 p.m. Contests will begin at approximately 7:00 p.m. When two contests are scheduled for one evening, the second contest will begin at approximately 7:30 p.m. with signups for the second contest also closing at 6:30 p.m.
5. At the discretion of the Head Judge, a [mandatory] competitor's meeting may be held approximately 15 minutes prior to the 7:00 p.m. contest.
6. Competitors must dance 90% West Coast Swing in all contests except the Night Club Two Step Jack & Jill's. See Attachment "A" - Definitions.
7. Competitors will be judged with a focus on the 3 T's: Timing, Technique & Teamwork. See Attachment "A".
8. Competitors must do lead and follow movements. Choreographed routines are not allowed.
9. Separation in performance is permitted on spins, turns and recognized breakaways.
10. Lifts, drops, aerials, and acrobatics are not permitted. See Attachment "A".
11. In the dance performance, prohibited movements may result in a lowered placement with an equivalent reduction of points.
12. Conduct exhibiting poor sportsmanship may result in a lowered placement, equivalent reduction of points, and a warning from the Judging Committee. After a warning, any further such conduct will result in being banned from participation for a period to be determined by the Judging Committee.
13. Contest music will be selected by the method explained in these Rules.

Criteria for Participation in Jack & Jill Points Contests

1. If not already qualified under the Club's point system, contestants must pre-qualify with the Chief Judge prior to entering a contest.
2. Contestants must be proficient in dancing the following basic patterns: 4 Count Starter Step, Left Side Pass, Underarm Turn, Underarm w/ Hand Change, Right Side Pass, Push Break/Sugar Push, Turning Basic, Closed Tuck, Two Hand Tuck, Release Whip/Basic Whip, Closed Whip, Lock Whip/Basket Whip, Whip w/ Inside Roll, Whip w/ Outside Roll.
3. A dancer who has never competed will usually begin in the Novice Division. However, a dancer may be placed into the Intermediate Division or Advanced Division at the discretion of the Chief Judge.
4. Any dancer who teaches any style of partner dancing in group or private dance lessons, whether compensated or not, must check in with the Chief Judge, and alert him/her to the fact that they are teaching. The Chief Judge will then place him/her in the appropriate contest level.
5. Any unusual circumstances will be handled at the discretion of the Chief Judge.

Sign-up Procedures

1. The entry deadline for all contests is 6:30 p.m. on the day of the contest.
2. If unable to make the deadline, a contestant may sign-up by alerting either the Contest Coordinator or Head Judge prior to the deadline (see #4 below). If using e-mail to pre-enter, email must be sent no later than 11 a.m. on the day of the contest. Contestants using this sign-up option should not rely on being entered until they have received a reply to their request. Contestants must be present in time to attend the mandatory competitor's meeting, if held, or request to be excused by the Chief Judge.
3. Any unusual circumstances will be handled at the discretion of the Chief Judge.
4. The attached schedule of contests is subject to change. Please refer to the club website or newsletter for current contest dates and times, or contact one of the following: Contest Coordinator, Kevin Wright (206) 713-4934, nuomnicron@hotmail.com -or- Chief Judge, Lynn Gross (206) 313-5678, swingstreet@comcast.net.

Music

The contest music will be chosen by the DJ with the following conditions. The Chief Judge or the Judging Committee may help in the selection of the music, or give guidelines regarding tempo and style selections. The contest music must be deemed acceptable by the Chief Judge and Judging Committee as being appropriate for West Coast Swing and the level of the contest. The DJ will supply the Chief Judge with a list of the Contest songs he/she either intends to play or plays for the contest. The list will include song title, artist and beats per minute, and may be given to the Chief Judge at any point prior to the contest(s) or by the end of the dance at which the contest is held.

Length of Contests

All contests will be finals. More than one heat may be required due to an unbalanced number of leads and follows. Partners will dance to a minimum of 2 songs.

Judges

1. Judges will be selected by the Chief Judge or by agreement of the Judging Committee.
2. Judges will be selected prior to the contest.
3. Judges will report to the Chief Judge 15 minutes prior to the contest start time.
4. Judges who are also competitors may only judge contests other than their own division.

Jack & Jill Year End Finals

1. Finals will be held in March of each year. See Attachment "C" for a list of awards.
2. Points will be accumulated in the SSDC Novice, Intermediate & Advanced Jack & Jills during the contest year.
3. The top 5 male and female point scorers in the Novice, Intermediate and Advanced Divisions will be selected for the Year End Finals. Only points earned in 2008-2009 contests will be used to determine finalists. (Points accumulated from year to year will count towards moving to the next division.) In order to qualify for year end finals, contestants must have entered and danced in a minimum of two Jack & Jill points contests during the 2009-2010 contest year. In order to dance in the year-end finals, a contestant must be a member in good standing of SSDC.
4. Couples will dance for approximately 2 minutes. At the end of a division competition in which the finalist couples dance spotlight or in small heats, all couples may be asked to dance as a group for 2 additional minutes to give the judges a second look.
5. All other rules of the Jack & Jill club contests will apply.
6. Any unusual circumstances will be handled at the discretion of the Chief Judge.

Points

1. Points are awarded to the 1st through 5th place winners of each Novice, Intermediate, & Advanced contest, including year end finals.
2. A competitor who places twice in a contest will receive points for his/her highest placement only.
3. Points will accumulate from year to year within the Novice, Intermediate & Advanced divisions as follows:

Point System

1 st Place	7 points
2 nd Place	5 points
3 rd Place	3 points
4 th Place	2 points
5 th Place	1 point

Contest Divisions

1. Novice Jack & Jill (See also "Criteria for Participation in Jack & Jill Points Contest")
 - a. A competitor must accumulate 28 points in the Novice Division before progressing to the Intermediate Division, and place either 1st, 2nd or 3rd during the most recent two years in the Novice Division.
 - b. A Novice competitor reaching 28 points during the contest year has the option of progressing to the Intermediate Division or staying in the Novice Division for the remainder of the year.
 - c. A Novice competitor who has accumulated enough points at the conclusion of a contest year to progress to the next division he/she may petition the Chief Judge for permission to remain in the Novice Division for another year. If the petition is granted, during the new contest year the competitor may move to the Intermediate Division at any time he/she chooses. Once the contestant has competed in the Intermediate Division, he/she may not return to the Novice Division.
 - d. A Novice competitor who progresses to the Intermediate Division after the contest year begins, starts at zero points in the Intermediate Division and is ineligible to compete in the Novice Year End Finals.

2. Intermediate Jack & Jill (See also “Criteria for Participation in Jack & Jill Points Contest”)
 - a. An Intermediate Competitor is one who has accumulated 28 points while in the Novice Division **and** placed either 1st, 2nd or 3rd during the most recent two years in the Novice Division, or who has been approved for the Intermediate Division by a simple majority vote of the Contest Committee Judges.
 - b. An Intermediate competitor reaching 28 points during the contest year has the option of progressing to the Advanced Division or staying in the Intermediate Division for the remainder of the year
 - c. An Intermediate Competitor who has accumulated enough points at the conclusion of a contest year to progress to the next division may petition the Chief Judge for permission to remain in the Intermediate Division for another year. If the petition is granted, during the new contest year the competitor may move to the Advanced Division at any time he/she chooses. Once the contestant has competed in the Advanced Division, he/she may not return to the Intermediate Division.
 - d. An Intermediate Competitor who progresses to the Advanced Division after the contest year has begun, begins at zero points in the Advanced Division and is ineligible to compete in the Intermediate Year End Finals.

3. Advanced Jack & Jill: An Advanced competitor is one who has accumulated 28 points while in the Intermediate Division **and** has placed either 1st, 2nd or 3rd during the most recent two years in the Intermediate Division, or who has been approved for the Advanced Division by a simple majority vote of the Judging Committee.

4. Masters Jack & Jill: A Masters competitor is any competitor age 50 or above. All levels may enter. General Contest Rules apply. No points will be earned in this division.

5. Open Role Jack & Jill: This division is open to all levels of competitors. Contestants, regardless of gender, may choose whether they lead or follow in the contest. No points will be earned in this division.

6. Open Jackpot Jack & Jill: All levels may enter. All entry fees for this contest will be split equally by the first place winners. No points will be earned in this division.

7. Strictly Swing: Contestants sign up as a couple to compete in this division. All levels may enter. No choreography is allowed. No points will be earned in this division.

8. Open Night Club Two Step Jack & Jill: All levels may enter. Contestants will dance Night Club Two Step. Instructors are not permitted to enter this division. Couples are strongly encouraged to dance the original form of Night Club Two Step, i.e., using triple rhythm as the base, with check steps occurring on the downbeats of the music (as opposed to the form which usually uses the verbal call “slow, quick, quick” which places the check steps on the upbeat of the music.) In addition to being judged on the 3 T’s, couples will be judged on their use of courteous, considerate and *safe* floor craft, and their consistent use of one of the two forms of Night Club Two Step.

Attachment "A" - Definitions

A. West Coast Swing Content

The definition that Judges will use to identify the presence of West Coast Swing content is as follows:

West Coast Swing is an American Rhythm Dance in which patterns are executed within a slot. It is identified primarily by 6-beat and 8-beat patterns that incorporate a wide variety of rhythms, including triples. Six-beat patterns include, but are not limited to, passes, underarm turns, push-breaks, and open-to-closed/closed-to-open position moves. Eight-beat patterns include, but are not limited to, whips. In addition, 2-beat and 4-beat extensions and 4-beat rhythm breaks may be incorporated to phrase the dance to the music, to extend a pattern, and/or to accent breaks.

B. Judging Criteria

1. **Timing.** Swing is danced beginning on the downbeat. Timing extends to much finer distinctions than a single beat. It includes the spaces between the beats (the "&a" counts) and whether a competitor is fractionally ahead of or behind the beat and "&a" counts. Timing also extends to footwork such as points, kicks, taps, etc., to body isolations, as well as hand/arm actions.
2. **Teamwork.** Swing is a connected partner dance. The demonstration of this connection and appearance of "lead/follow" or "action/reaction" between partners is the goal of teamwork, i.e. a balanced performance with give-and-take between partners. One partner ignoring, "out-dancing," disrespecting, or jeopardizing the safety of the other partner (or of other competitors) indicates poor teamwork. Compensating and adjusting for one's partner are components of good teamwork.
3. **Technique.** How well the competitors execute the movements comprising their dance constitutes technique. This includes elements such as control of balance and weight, foot placement, bodylines, and turns and spins.
4. **Choreography.** The selection and order of movements and transitions executed during a dance comprise choreography. Good choreography demonstrates an intimate connection with the music, and the ability to match patterns and syncopations to the phrasing of the music. It must also include identifiable West Coast Swing patterns that provide variety and contrast and meet the required percentage of swing.
5. **Music Interpretation.** Adjusting the flow of the dance to fit the style, tempo, mood, and rhythm variations in the music comprises good musical interpretation. Couples should strive to demonstrate the ability to hear and interpret nuances in the music throughout their dance.
6. **Presentation.** Creating an atmosphere of excitement by inviting interest in a performance is the desired effect of good presentation. Good presentation begins with the selection of appropriate attire. While providing a good show is one aspect of presentation, it cannot substitute for good dancing. Competitors should aim primarily for demonstrating a positive chemistry as a couple. Gratuitous mugging to the audience or the judges may result in a lower score. Good sporting conduct before, during, and after the dance is also an element of good presentation.

C. Lifts, Drops, Aerials & Acrobatics

Lift. A lift is any intentional maneuver lasting longer than a full beat of music where the feet of one dancer are clearly off the floor and the partner supports the weight. This definition shall not include any of the following common syncopations or moves: "flea hops"; "bunny hops"; "heel clicks"; "Flying Lindy" (and its obvious adaptations to other swing styles); "jumps" by competitors over the leg of the partners and leveraged slides. *Lifts are prohibited in all SSDC club contests.*

Drop. A drop is a move in which the follower's head and/or shoulders are lowered below the leader's waist. *Drops are prohibited in all SSDC club contests.*

Aerial. An aerial is a move in which one dancer is lifted with the assistance of his/her partner and the head and torso is in a position higher than the waist of the supporting partner. *Aerials are prohibited in all SSDC club contests.*

Acrobatic Moves. A dancer independently passes his or her leg or body over and across the plane of either partner's head, i.e. walkovers, hand springs, cartwheels, deep backbends and full splits. *Acrobatic moves are prohibited in SSDC club contests.*

Novice Jack & Jill

April 5, 2009
June 7, 2009
August 2, 2009
November 1, 2009
Finals: March 7, 2010

Open Jackpot Jack & Jill

Picnic Dance - August 23, 2009

Open Role Jack & Jill

June 21, 2009
Christmas Dance - December 6, 2009

Intermediate Jack & Jill

May 17, 2009
July 19, 2009
August 16, 2009
January 17, 2010
Finals: March 21, 2010

Masters Jack & Jill

December 20, 2009

Open Strictly Swing

June 21, 2009
February 7, 2010

Advanced Jack & Jill

May 17, 2009
July 19, 2009
August 16, 2009
January 17, 2010
Finals: March 21, 2010

Open Night Club Two Step Jack & Jill

April 19, 2009
October 4, 2009

Attachment "C" - Year End Finals Awards

Novice: A Personalized Award Plaque for each finalist
1st Place: \$150 per couple
2nd Place: \$50 each toward a private lesson with the instructor of your choice
3rd Place: 1 Easter Swing Bonus Book each
4th Place: 1 free dance pass each
5th Place: 1 free dance pass each

Intermediate: A Personalized Award Plaque for each finalist
1st Place: \$250 per couple
2nd Place: \$60 each toward a private lesson with the instructor of your choice
3rd Place: 1 Easter Swing Bonus Book each
4th Place: 1 free dance pass each
5th Place: 1 free dance pass each

Advanced: A Personalized Award Plaque for each finalist
1st Place: \$500 per couple
2nd Place: \$75 each toward private lessons with the instructor(s) of your choice
3rd Place: 1 Easter Swing Bonus Book each
4th Place: 1 free dance pass each
5th Place: 1 free dance pass each