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BRAZILIAN ZOUK
DANCE COUNCIL

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BZDC RULES, POLICIES, AND GUIDELINES FOR

Find everything you need to know about rules, policies and guidelines for competitors. Please email any questions to the Brazilian Dance Council at info@brazilianzoukcouncil.com.

BRAZILIAN ZOUK DANCE COUNCIL

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BZDC COMPETITIONS:

A GUIDE FOR COMPETITORS

This document is designed to give competitors information about Jack and Jill competitions.

Jack and Jills are based on social dancing. This means that you are improvising a dance with a random partner to a random song. This does not mean that Jack and Jill competitions are exactly like social dancing.

For example, in competition you will be judged on elements including your appearance. And, your visual aesthetics are more important to competitions than in social dancing. You need to also be aware of things like facing the audience, in addition to the technique, timing, and connection that are staples of social dancing. This means that even great social dancers may need to adjust their dancing to do well in competitions.

Jack and Jill competitions are also a mix of luck and skill. Skill is how well you execute and fulfill the competition criteria. Luck is who you draw as your partner, when the judges are watching you vs. someone else, and what songs you dance to.

LIFTS AND DIPS

Dips (where at least one foot of each partner is on the floor) are permitted. Lifts (when both feet of one partner leave the floor and the partner's weight is supported) are not permitted in any division, and result in an immediate disqualification (non-finals) or last place (finals).

JUDGING CRITERIA & SHOE REQUIREMENT

Five criteria are used to judge you in competitions. This is described on our Judging Criteria page. You should review this page prior to competing.

Please also ensure you wear shoes. Foot Undeez and socks are not shoes. If you do not wear shoes, you will be disqualified.

CLOTHING & SHOES

In addition to stage presence and dance presentation, the Presentation component also can deduct points for being dressed inappropriately. This is similar to the Costume or Presentation element of a routine division. While you should not wear a costume for Jack and Jill, here are some things that are important for the appearance category:

Shoes:

Shoes are required for all divisions. Not wearing shoes results in a disqualification.

While some dancers do social dance or teach in socks or bare feet, it is not accepted for competitions. Foot Undeez and socks are not shoes. This is both for an appearance reason (showing your intention and professionalism as a JnJ competitor), and **hygiene/safety**.

Follows are encouraged to wear high heels, and the added level of difficulty is reflected in the difficulty score. However, you will not be penalized for wearing flats. Leaders will not be given a point bonus for high heels, as we prefer leads to be more grounded and ready to stabilize the follow in complicated movements (which heels can make more difficult).

Clothing:

Your competition clothing should be able to catch a judge's attention, provide you with freedom of movement, and be something you feel confident in. You should also try to wear something that allows judges to see your lines and technique. However, there are some rules and guidelines regarding what is considered appropriate clothing for competitions.

Clothing is expected to cover private areas (butt, groin, and breasts) at all times. Men must wear shirts. Judges are allowed to lower the Presentation score if parts/all of these areas are shown, but it will not disqualify you.

Competitors are encouraged to “dress up” (for example, classic or trendy jeans/pants/shorts, skirts with booty shorts, dresses or tops that securely cover the chest for women). We suggest that you not wear bodysuits or other gym wear, cargo shorts, sweatpants, etc. While bodysuits are a popular clothing choice in some areas and can be very intricate or sexy, they are still considered gym wear. Please note that this is a guideline - not a rule; you will not be judged on this. We want competitions to reflect professionalism - which is what this guideline is aimed to achieve.

Props are not allowed in any division and shoes are compulsory.

DIVISIONS

In BZDC Jack and Jill competitions, you may see the following divisions:

- Newcomer
- Novice
- Intermediate
- Advanced
- All-Star
- Champion (10+ years of teaching, international reputation, by invitation of BZDC only)
- Pro (for anyone who teaches for money)
- Invitational (by invitation of event organizer)
- Junior/Masters (age-based divisions)

As a competitor, you can gain points and level up through Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and All-Star divisions at BZDC Registered Jack and Jill competitions. Non-registered competitions or competitions that do not follow our event rules will not give you points in the database.

You can level through Newcomer, Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and All-Star as follows:

Division	Requirement Minimum (when you may compete in division)	Requirement Maximum (when you must leave division)
Newcomer	Criteria determined by event. Usually new competitors or beginner dancers. Not all events offer this, in which case competitors start in Novice.	
Novice	No BZDC points	20 Novice points AND a 1st place win
Intermediate	20 Novice points	30 Intermediate points AND a 1st place win
Advanced	30 Intermediate points	40 Advanced points AND a 1st place win
All-Star	40 points in Advanced	Invited to Champion division by BZDC

BZDC also records points for other divisions, including Pro and Invitational divisions. However, these divisions are at the discretion of the event organizer in terms of what you need to qualify. Participating in these competitions also does not cause you to “level up” in other divisions. Therefore, we do not provide a guide for moving through these divisions.

SWITCHING BETWEEN LEAD AND FOLLOW

You are permitted to compete as a lead or follow, regardless of your gender or sex. You are also allowed to change which role you do at different competitions. However, you may only enter one BZDC levelled competition per event. For example, you cannot enter as both a lead and follow in Novice.

BZDC does not track points separately for leads and follows. Therefore, whatever your BZDC level is will determine what division you compete in - regardless of whether you are competing in that event as a lead or follow. For example, an Intermediate dancer must compete as Intermediate whether they are a lead or follow (unless they petition for a change).

PETITIONS

BZDC allows competitors to petition to compete up or down in other divisions. For example, a competitor can request to be allowed to compete in Intermediate instead of Novice, or as an Intermediate instead of advanced dancer.

Petitions **must** be pre-cleared by a BZDC board member before the close of competition registration. It is your responsibility to petition before the competition registration closes. This can be done by emailing BZDC, or by speaking to a board member in person or online. If you have not received permission by that time, you will not be allowed to compete in the petitioned division.

BZDC may choose to decline or accept any petition. Additionally, BZDC may decide whether the petition will be permanent, temporary, or subject to specific conditions. Some examples may include:

- Permanently allowing a competitor to compete in Advanced instead of Intermediate, even if they have no Intermediate points;
- Temporarily allowing an Advanced dancer to compete as an Intermediate when there is no Advanced division at a specific event; or
- Allowing a Novice competitor to petition for Intermediate, but only permitting them to remain as an Intermediate dancer if they place in the Top 3 of that division.

If there are specific conditions on a petition, BZDC will make that known to the competitor at the time that their petition is accepted.

AUGUST 2018 NOVICE POINTS CHANGE - GRANDFATHERED COMPETITORS

Prior to August 2018, BZDC required competitors to have 15 Novice points to move to Intermediate. BZDC allows anyone who gained 15 Novice points in or before August 2018 and

does not have any Intermediate points to choose whether they prefer to compete as a Novice or Intermediate competitor.

TEACHER EXEMPTION FOR NOVICE DIVISION

Any teacher who has been **regularly** teaching for a **minimum of 2 years** is eligible to compete starting in Intermediate division. This means they do not need to compete as Novice dancers. The primary purpose of this provision is to prevent teachers from competing against their more junior students. BZDC reserves the right to determine if a teacher has been teaching regularly enough to meet this requirement.

HYBRID DIVISIONS

Sometimes, you may see competitions that are a hybrid between two divisions. This is typically done when there are not enough dancers to have their own divisions.

In All-Star/Champion hybrids, dancers will be given points according to their current level. For example, an All-Star will gain All-Star points, whereas their Champion partner will get Champion points.

In cases where there is a hybrid between Novice/Intermediate or Intermediate/Advanced, points will be given to all competitors at the LOWER of the levels. For example, all competitors in a Novice/Intermediate hybrid will gain Novice points.

Tiers and Getting Points

Tiers are how BZDC determines how many points the finalists should get in a competition. It is designed to reflect the difficulty level based on the size of the competition. For example, it is more difficult to get 1st in a competition with 40 couples than with 10 couples.

Tiers are calculated by role - not by couple. For example, a competition with 15 leads and 20 follows would be a Tier 1 competition for leads and Tier 2 for follows.

The BZDC recognizes three tiers with the following associated points:

Tier	# Competitors	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	Additional Points
1	5-15	5	4	3	2	1	None
2	16-39	10	8	6	4	2	6th to 10th get 1 point
3	40+	15	12	10	8	6	1 point for all finalists

No points are ever awarded for non-final rounds. Scratched (no-show) competitors are not counted towards the total number of competitors. For example, a competition with 16 registered follows where only 15 attend preliminaries would still be a Tier 1 competition.

DIVISIONS WHERE SOME DANCERS DANCE TWICE

In some cases, a competition final may have an imbalance between leads and follows. In these cases, some dancers will be required to dance twice. If a dancer gets more than one placement that should result in points, only the higher placement will get the points. For example, if a competitor gets both 1st and 3rd place, they will only get points for the 1st place finish.

Minimum Number of Couples

Competitions are required to have a minimum of 5 couples prior to being recorded by BZDC as an official competition.

PRELIMINARY, QUARTER-FINAL, SEMI-FINAL, AND FINAL ROUNDS

If there are more than 15 competitors in either role, there **must** be at least a preliminary round. BZDC recommends (but does not require) the following:

- Tier 1: Straight to final, or optional preliminary round
 - (if spotlight final, prelim if more than 10 couples)
- Tier 2: Must have prelim; semi-final optional
- Tier 3: Must have prelim; semi-final strongly recommended

JUDGING CONFLICTS

BZDC only permits judges to judge their significant other or immediate family member when there are no other qualified judges to take their place. While most judges attempt to remain impartial regardless of who is competing, we do this to ensure that competitions are as fair as possible.

However, if there are no other available qualified judges, from time to time a judge may be responsible for judging their family member or significant other.

EXPLAINING DIFFERENCES IN SCORES

If you have looked at scores, you may sometimes see a very large range of scores. One judge may have placed a couple first, and one may place that same couple 10th. This is especially common in heated divisions.

Often, really big ranges indicate that a competition was very close. Since relative placement doesn't use raw scores, the difference between 1st and 10th can be very big or very small. For example, in some cases, it may be less than 2 raw score points of difference!

So, extreme consistency often means that a competition's result was very clear, and there was a wider gap between that placement and others.

In non-spotlight divisions (where more than one couple dance at a time), it can also be the result of when the judges saw particular people. So, if a judge sees only part of your dance, whether you are 1st or 10th could depend on what part of that dance they saw.

FEEDBACK

Some judges are willing to give feedback. Some can't remember, and others sell their feedback as part of a private lesson. You can also hire a pro to watch your competition (live or video) to give you feedback on it. This is between you and the judge or pro.

Generally, judges will not provide feedback until the results of a competition are announced.

It is rare that there are many notes on judging sheets because of the speed judges need to make decisions - and the fact that taking notes means they can't watch the competition properly.

MINDSET AND PREPARATION

HEALTHY COMPETITION MINDSET

While competitions generally reward dancers who have strong technique, not making finals or not placing should not be seen as a measure of your social dance value or potential. It does mean that based on the criteria, your dancing was not as strong as other competitors while the judges were watching you.

Further, making finals or placing in one competition is not a reflection that you have nothing left to learn. It is entirely possible to come 1st in one competition, and then to not make finals in a different one.

It can be useful to use the videos and any feedback to target your training to address deficiencies that prevented you from having better competition results. Even if you did well, you can still get this feedback to help you continue to do well in the future.

PREPARING FOR COMPETITION

You should make sure you are adequately warmed up through stretching and movement before a competition. We strongly advise not dancing cold. Feel free to stretch, jump, or otherwise get your blood moving while you are waiting in line. You should also think about eating something light, using the washroom, and getting a water bottle before you line up. Bring a sweater to keep warm in case you are standing or sitting for a while.

Props are not allowed in any division and shoes are compulsory.