

FIESTA! Non-Gendered Competition Dance Rules

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General Rules

Costuming

-  If the dress code is not adhered to, there will be a mandatory placement drop in that dance. This also includes the Pro of a ProAm partnership with a mandatory placement drop in that dance. i.e. Any placement in a 1st place will result in an automatic drop to 2nd place, etc.
-  Costumes must be appropriate for a Country/Western venue, and an audience of ALL ages
-  No bare legs allowed for either Leader or Follower
-  No Bare midriff allowed in Novice or below. A bare midriff is any bare skin that is showing on the center part of the torso, from the breast line to the waistline and from side seam to side seam. Bare midriff exposure IS ALLOWED in Division II/Intermediate and higher.
-  LEADER/FOLLOWER - Western style shirts or collared shirts with vest, western style jeans or pants, cowboy boots, and cowboy hat required except as is outlined below; Western style shirts or blouses, skirts, jeans or western style pants, dresses, and western boots except as is outlined below
-  Leaders are requested and strongly encouraged to wear a cowboy hat. While costuming for individuals shall not be “gender” specific, Lead/Follow roles must be clearly discernable

Music

-  All music may be played at a BPM of +/- 2% of the optimum BPM listed in APPENDIX C
-  ProAm and Couples music will be approximately 1-1/2 minutes (90 seconds) in length
-  Music used in the *FIESTA!* Non-sanctioned event must be “Country” music. Country music is defined as any music with country style. The usage of non-country music in the Cha Cha and West Coast Swing will be allowed at the Event Directors’ discretion.
-  Random music appropriate to each division and of appropriate BPM will be selected for ProAm and Couples competition by the D.J. or Event Director.
-  Music warm-ups for all divisions will be randomly selected by the DJ. Warm-ups for the *FIESTA!* Non-gendered competition will take place prior to the session in which they are heated at the same time as mixed-gender couples.
-  Spotlight music shall be 2½-4 min and shall have no BPM limitations. One non-country song may be integrated into the dance, but more than 50% of the music selected must be country music.
-  Showcase Competitors: This division has self-selected music. A full program has Waltz, Two Step, and Solo Medley, and will be danced in that order. Maximum length for Waltz & Two Step is 3 ½ minutes. Solo Medley may be 4 to 7 minutes in length. With internal requirements of at least two rhythm dances and one swing dance with each a minimum of 45 seconds in length. Medleys are judged on entertainment value and should be themed, theatrical presentations. Non-country music may be used in the Solo Medley.
-  Classic Masters: All contestants will dance their chosen dances in two flights in the following order:
Slow Dance Flight: Waltz, Night Club, Triple Two, and West Coast Swing
Fast Dance Flight: Two Step, Cha-Cha, Polka, and East Coast Swing
There will be a break of at least 10 minutes between flights. Music will be 1-1/2 minutes maximum in length. The Show Dance will be 2 to 2-1/2 minutes in length. The Show Dance must be a single dance and can be one song or a medley of songs.

ProAm General Rules

-  ProAm is for AMATEUR competitors ONLY. Competition is for students dancing with their instructor.
-  A Contestant's age for the entire dance year shall be based on what their age is on the last day of the current calendar year.
-  Age Division competitors may dance in ALL age divisions they are qualified for and may also dance in any of the younger age divisions as well as the open division at the same event.
-  Open competitors may dance "up" one experience level but may not compete for an overall placement in that level.
-  **Dance Categories (The dances) are the same for both ProAm and Couples. See Appendix (C)**

ProAm Divisions

(ALL DIVISIONS OFFERED IN LEADER AND FOLLOWER)

Junior Primary:(4 Skill levels) These age divisions are for students who are under 9 years of age.

Junior Youth:(4 Skill levels) These age divisions are for students who are 10 to 12 years of age.

Junior Teen:(4 Skill levels) These age divisions are for students who are 13-17 years of age.

Open:(4 Skill Levels) This division is for students who are a minimum of 18 years of age.

Crystal: (4Skill Levels) This age division is for students who are a minimum of 30 years of age.

Diamond: (4Skill Levels) This age division is for students who are a minimum of 40 years of age.

Silver: (4 Skill Levels) This age division is for students who are a minimum of 50 years of age.

Gold:(4 Skill Levels) This age division is for students who are a minimum of 60 years of age.

Platinum:(4 Skill Levels) This age division is for students who are a minimum of 70 years of age.

ProPro: (Only one level and two divisions – I and II) This division is for the professional who is continuing their dance training with another professional. ProPro is not judged as a couple, only the competing Pro is judged.

ProAm Spotlight: A single dance or medley of dances choreographed to music of the contestant's choice. Each dance portion must be recognizable in pattern, accent, motion, and character to one of the competition dance Categories listed in Appendix (C). Tear away skirts are allowed in the solo medley. The syncopation rule does not apply to this division. Only ProAm dancers at Intermediate (Level 2) or above are eligible to compete in this division. Spotlight shall be judged by placement.

ProPro Spotlight: Refer to the above explanation for ProPro and Spotlight. All ProPro dancers are eligible to compete in ProPro Spotlight.

ProAm Levels

-  **Newcomer (4):** This division is for the student who has NO dance training and NO competition experience. THIS LEVEL IS INTENDED STRICTLY FOR THE BEGINNING C&W AMATEUR DANCE COMPETITOR. Level 4 rules will apply to this division. **Leans, leverage, balance, acrobatic moves of any kind, developé's, aerial ronde's, splits, pantomime and shine movements will not be allowed in this division.** Floor sweeps, where the sweeping foot stays in contact with the floor, will be allowed. Couples must begin in one of the seven (7) closed dance positions (i.e. right or left inside partner position, right or left outside partner position, promenade or counter promenade position, and fan), not to include single or double hand hold starting positions. Breaking these rules will be a drop in placement. (i.e.: A 1st place will result in an automatic drop to 2nd place, etc). Please check ALL Level 4 limitations in couples' level 4.
-  **Novice (3):** This division is for the student that is no longer considered a beginner level dancer. Couples division I, II, and III rules will apply. Novice dancers are eligible for division III.
-  **Intermediate (2):** This division is for the moderately experienced student. Couples division I, II, & III rules will apply. Intermediate dancers are eligible for Division II.
-  **Advanced (1):** This division is for the more experienced student who has advanced in their dance training. Couples Division I, II, and III rules will apply. Advanced dancers are eligible for Division I.

Couples General Rules

-  Couples must consist of one Leader and one Follower. Couples may not “switch” Leader/Follower roles during the competition; each couples entry shall have a clearly defined Leader and Follower. If the couple wishes to “switch” roles, they can only do so by entering as a second “couple”, with the Leader/Follower roles switched on the registration.
-  Dance Categories (The dances) are the same for both ProAm and Couples.

Couples Divisions

-  Contestant’s age for the entire dance year shall be based on what their age is on the last day of the current calendar year.
-  Couples may dance in ALL age divisions (including Open) for which they are qualified:

Junior Primary: This age division is for couples who are 9 years old and under.

Junior Youth: This age division is for couples who are 10 to 12 years old.

Junior Teen: This age division is for couples who are up to 13 – 17 years old, with 1 partner being at least 13 – 17 years old.

Open Divisions (4, 3, 2, 1, & Masters): For couples where each partner is at least 18 years old.

Crystal: For couples where each partner is at least 30 years old.

Diamond: For couples where each partner is at least 40 years old.

Silver: For couples where each partner is at least 50 years old.

Gold: For couples where each partner is at least 60 years old.

-  **Couples Spotlight:** A single dance or medley of dances choreographed to music of the contestant’s choice. Each dance portion must be recognizable in pattern, accent, motion, and character to one of the competition dance Categories listed in Appendix (D). Only Couples dancers at Intermediate (Level 2) or above are eligible to compete in this division. Tear away skirts are allowed.

Showcase Masters

Showcase Masters is for couples who have graduated out of the Open Level 1 Couples Division in any nationally recognized competition circuit, or contestants who already compete in those organizations highest competitive Open Division.

Props are allowed but the contestants are the only ones allowed for set-up and take-down and can do so without delaying the contest. There are NO movement limitations in Showcase Masters. No syncopation rules apply.

Classic Masters

This division is for couples who are not eligible for Division I or who last won a Championship title in the highest possible division in any other regional or national competition. A full program consists of Two Step, Waltz, one Swing dance, two Non-Swing dances, and a Show Dance.

Low lifts that come off the floor no higher than waist level and for no longer than 4 measures are allowed.

The syncopation rule does not apply to this division.

Clarification: there is **NO** crossover between Classic Masters and Crown.

Classic Crown

This division is for Age Division couples who are not eligible for Age Division I or who last won a Championship title in the highest possible division in any other regional or national competition.

Classic Crown is for Age Division competitors at least 30 years of age.

Showcase Crown

Showcase Crown is for Age Division competitors at least 30 years of age. This division has the same self-selected music rules as Showcase Masters.

Couples Levels

 In the event that two ProAm competitors partner together to dance couples, the following guidelines apply: If either Am is Advanced, they must dance in Level 3 or Novice Age or above. If both Am's are Advanced, they must dance in Level 2 or Intermediate Age or above. If two (2) Newcomer Am's partner, they can dance in Level 4. If Two Novice Am's partner together they may also dance Level 4 in Couples. New partnership and they have not competed in two years may drop down a level. **Level 4** is for Newcomers only. However, someone that dances in couples may not drop down a level; if they moved into a ProAm partnership they must stay at the same level.

 Competitors may dance "up" one difficulty level but may not compete for an overall placement in that level.

 A "Pro/Instructor" must enter Division II/Intermediate or above. An individual who regularly assists a "Pro" or dance instructor must enter Division III/Novice or above.

 Competitors in Division II through Masters/Crown may drop down one division if they have not competed in two years or if they are no longer competing with the partner with which they last competed.

 Members of a Couples Partnership MAY have multiple partners IN DIFFERENT DIVISIONS. All partners must dance at the same ability level. Couples may dance in All Age Divisions for which they are qualified and dance in the Open Division of the same level. Example: Leader Doe with Follower A in Silver Novice, Leader Doe with Follower B in Bronze Novice, and Leader Doe with Follower C in Level 3. Novice and Level 3 are equal, Intermediate and Level 2 are equal, and Advanced and Level 1 are equal.

 **READ CAREFULLY** the professional versus Amateur status rules. **Couples Level 4** is strictly for pure amateurs. **Couples Level 3** allows a competitor to assist teaching without compensation. **Couples Level 2 and above** allows entry for any Professional/Instructor.

Newcomer Level 4

This division is for the new dancers who have minimal dance training and competition experience, and who have never competed in an organized interstate dance competition in a COUPLES Novice or Level 3 Division or above. **Leans, leverage, balance, acrobatic moves of any kind, develope's, aerial ronde's, splits, pantomime and shine movements will not be allowed in this division.** Floor sweeps, where the sweeping foot stays in contact with the floor, will be allowed. Couples must begin in one of the seven (7) closed dance positions (i.e., right or left inside partner position, right or left outside partner position, promenade or counter promenade position, and fan), not to include single or double hand hold starting positions. Costuming is optional but dress code must still be adhered to. Level 4 dancers are eligible for ProAm Newcomer only. **ONLY AMATEURS AS DEFINED ABOVE ARE ALLOWED**

Novice Level 3

This division is for the dancers who are no longer considered beginner level dancers and who are not eligible for Division 4, or who last competed in Division 3 in any other regional or national competition. Division 3 dancers are eligible for Division 3 or Novice Age divisions, if qualified, and ProAm Novice Divisions. **ONLY AMATEURS THAT ASSISTED IN GROUP CLASSES AS DEFINED ABOVE ARE ALLOWED.**

Intermediate Level 2

This division is for the moderately experienced dancers who are not eligible for Division III, or who last competed in Division II in any other regional or national competition. Division 2 dancers are eligible for Division 2 or Intermediate Age Divisions, if qualified, and ProAm Intermediate Divisions. **ALL PROFESSIONALS MUST ENTER COUPLES LEVEL 2 OR ABOVE**

Advanced Level 1

This division is for the more experienced dancers who have advanced in their dance training and who are not eligible for Division II or who last competed in Division I in any other regional or national competition. Division I dancers are eligible for Division 1 or Advanced Age Divisions, if qualified, and ProAm Advanced OR ProPro. **ALL PROFESSIONALS MUST ENTER COUPLES LEVEL 2 OR ABOVE**

SPECIAL DISPENSATION

 **SPECIAL DISPENSATION:** Please note that all rules apply equally to everyone. However, in some situations where an event director or contest coordinator may not be able to satisfy some unforeseeable situation or condition that may escape the boundaries of these rules, the contestant may in writing contact the Event Director(s) of New Mexico Dance Fiesta for “Special Dispensation.” If needed, the Director(s) will consider some possible variance, and then forward their suggestion on to Contest Coordinator for review. Issues such as health or division eligibility or costuming variances for medical reasons are a few examples, and there could be many more. Decisions by the Director(s) are final.

APPENDIXES:

APPENDIX (A) - Movement Limitations

NO LIFTS, DROPS OR AERIALS --- The use of these movements will be grounds for disqualification in that dance. A Judge's meeting is required if a couple demonstrates one of these movements.

NOTE: Masters and Crown Divisions have no movement limitations.

1. **LIFT** - where both feet of either partner are off the floor with the weight being supported by the other partner. Lifts are allowed in Masters and Crown Divisions.
2. **DROP** - where both the head and torso of either partner are below the knee level, with the weight supported by the other partner. Drop are allowed in Masters and Crown Divisions.
3. **LEAN** - is any stationary move where the head or torso of either partner is at or above the knee level standing of the other partner and weight is partially supported (leaning-in) or countered balanced (leaning-out) by the other partner. A lean is not allowed in Division IV or in the ProAm Newcomer level.
4. **JUMP** - any move where a contestant compresses into the floor and uses knees and thighs to independently propel both feet off the floor. A jump is seen as a contestant becoming airborne by design.
5. **AERIAL** - where both feet of a dancer are airborne (off the floor) at the height of waist level or above.
6. **ACROBATIC** - is any move where a contestant independently or in partnership passes their foot, leg, or body above and across the plane of their head or their partner's head, or passes their body through the legs of the other partner, while maintaining contact with the floor. Acrobatic moves are not allowed in division IV or the ProAm Newcomer division.
7. **DEVELOPE'** - any move where either partner has one foot placed with full supporting contact to the floor and elevates the opposite leg. The elevated leg is extended with a bent knee forwards and upwards until the elevated leg is straightened at the height of the movement. A Develope' is not allowed in Division IV or the ProAm Newcomer level.
8. **RONDE'** - any move where either partner rotates his/her body while having placed one foot with supporting contact to the floor, sweeps the second foot around his/her body in an arc with the foot and leg being in the air. Ronde's are not allowed in Division IV and the ProAm Newcomer level.
9. **SPLIT** - any move where feet separate while staying in contact with the floor and the body is lowered to the floor; angle of leg is greater than 45 degrees or right angle. Splits are not allowed in Division IV or the ProAm Newcomer level.
10. **SHINE** - any move where a contestant in the pair's performance is not bodily connected to their partner and the move is deemed non-leadable. Shine is not allowed in Division IV or the ProAm Newcomer level.

APPENDIX (B) – Scoring

All ***FIESTA! Non-Gendered Competition*** Divisions and Levels will be scored using the “Skating System” (1964) by Arthur Dawson, re-written by NDCA Scrutineer Jeff Carlsen in “**Certified Correct: The Dancesport Scrutineer's Rulebook and Observer's Guide to Competition Marks**” (1993)

All contestants will receive placements in their dances (no medals).

For ProAm/ProPro, Leaders will be judged against other Leaders competing in the same division; Followers will be judged against other Followers in the same division.

Overall Championships will be calculated from the rankings in 2-Step, Waltz, the best score from swing (EC, WC) and the two (2) best scores from the alternate dances (T2, PK, NC, CC) unless otherwise noted.

Showcase Masters and Showcase Crown Overall Championships will be calculated using rankings in 2-Step, Waltz and Solo Medley.

All Spotlight Divisions will be considered Single Dance Championships.

APPENDIX (C) – Dances

TRIPLE TWO

26 beat syncopation limit, Optimum BPM: Newcomer/Novice = 86 to 90 Intermediate/Advanced = 80 to 86

A step pattern that uses six beats of music and includes two triple steps and two 1 beat steps and progresses counter-clockwise around the dance floor. A smooth and semi-circular dance with a repetitive dance count of: 1,2, 3&4, 5&6

POLKA

28 beat syncopation limit, Optimum BPM: Newcomer/Novice = 110 to 116 Intermediate/Advanced = 116 and above

A step pattern that consists of continuous triples and progresses counter-clockwise around the dance floor. A pitched dance with lilt and a repetitive dance count of: 1&2, 3&4

NIGHT CLUB

28 beat syncopation limit, Optimum BPM: Newcomer/Novice = 56 to 62 Intermediate/Advanced = 52 to 56

Any 8 count basic Night Club pattern (1, 2&, 3, 4&, 5, 6&, 7, 8&) may be used that has a generally stationary pattern. The dance generally accents counts **1 and 5** with a slow developing “side step” and has a definite sway motion to it.

CHA-CHA

26 beat syncopation limit, Optimum BPM: Newcomer/Novice = 104 - 110 Intermediate/Advanced = 110 - 118

A step pattern of any combination of eight count (1, 2, 3, 4&, 5, 6, 7, 8&) Cha-Cha patterns that breaks (rocks) or accents the 2nd and 6th beat of music. “Chase” patterns are considered a basic part of cha-cha and may be danced beyond the 26 beats of music.

WALTZ

24 beat syncopation limit, Optimum BPM: Newcomer/Novice = 86-90 Intermediate/Advanced = 80-86

Progresses counter-clockwise around the dance floor, using the step pattern of (1,2,3 / 4, 5, 6)

TWO-STEP

26 beat syncopation limit, Optimum BPM: Newcomer/Novice = 172-180 Intermediate/Advanced = 180-194

A pattern that has a generally forward counter-clockwise progression accenting the downbeat and contains the Two-Step rhythm of:

1, 2, 3, 5 (Q,Q,S,S) **OR** 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 **OR** (Q,Q,S, Q,Q,S) **OR** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 (Q,Q,Q,Q,S,S)

EAST COAST SWING

26 beat syncopation limit, Optimum BPM: Newcomer/Novice =126-132 Intermediate/Advanced = 132-144 (Average)

A step pattern of any combination of six or eight count swing patterns that has a generally stationary, circular step pattern, each style having mutually performed rock steps or variations thereof. 6-count or 8-count swing may include single, double and/or triple rhythms. Basic dance rhythms are: (1&2,3&4,5,6) **OR** (1&2 ,3,4, 5&6, 7,8)

WEST COAST SWING

26 beat syncopation limit, Optimum BPM: Newcomer/Novice = 102 - 108 Intermediate/Advanced = 96-112

A step pattern that consists of any 6 **OR** 8 count swing pattern that has a generally stationary, slotted step pattern: Basic dance rhythms are: (1,2, 3&4, 5&6) **OR** (1,2, 3&4, 5,6, 7&8) A coaster step is considered a forward progressive step and is not allowed in place of the anchor step.

Syncopation - Splitting the beat of music or a step pattern variation. A couple may vary the step pattern for the given number of beats for each dance before returning to the basic step pattern.