

UCWDC® JUDGE CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS PROGRAM 2013

CEU # 1...Judge Methodologies

The purpose of this course is to educate our judges and provide methods to identify key points which are important for all judges to consider when adjudicating at UCWDC competitions. The content of this course is designed to assist our judge pool to be “more on the same page”. These points should be used in conjunction with the experience and expertise that each judge already brings to the table.

The Medals: General Definitions

Honorable Mention or “F” Grade: Failed Performance - given only on rare occasions where the appropriate expectations for the skill level for the ‘called’ dance are in no way performed. It was unrecognizable as the ‘called’ dance.

Bronze Medal or “D” Grade: Poor performance - not meeting the ‘minimum’ expectations for the skill level. For example, but not limited to, lack of proper timing (newcomer level) or rhythm (novice level)‘.

Silver Medal or “C” Grade: Average performance - meets ‘minimum’ expectations for the skill level.

Gold Medal or “B” Grade: Good performance - exceeds ‘minimum’ expectations for the skill level.

Gold with Honors Medal or “A” Grade: Excellent performance – meeting the ‘highest’ expectations for the skill level.

Gold Graduate Medal or “AA” Grade: Superior performance – meeting expectations that are above the skill level for that division. This medal should only be given when the judge determines that the dancer should be competing in at least the next higher skill level for that particular dance.

Notes to Presenters:

Please note that the perspectives of this CEU for the most part apply to both partner dance and line dance. The notes highlighted in yellow apply only to line dance. The notes in parenthesis apply only to partner dance.

The following is very important. Judges need to use the ideas conveyed in this program *as a guideline*. Each judge will still need to continue applying their own judgment, because not all contestants will exhibit all of the qualities outlined herein. Please stress that we need their judgment to be flexible and appropriate for each situation. Please use common sense. This CEU is not meant to be a singular and definitive method of judging. Please be sure the above statement, concept, is referred to several times

throughout the presentation so there is no confusion. There will be people not paying attention from time to time. There will also be those people who take everything literally and not use this information as a *guide*.

The Silver and Gold medal will stress primarily the physical or technical aspect of the dance while the Gold with Honors medal will include an emotional or artistic aspect of the dance. The Gold Graduate medal will include aspects of the dance that are above those that are expected at the level that is being judged. What is noted at the Gold Graduate are examples of skills that go beyond the expectations of the skill level, but are not limited solely to these examples.

Take into consideration that a male pro am student has the added responsibility of the role of leader; therefore, each judge should factor this into his or her medal placement. Please do not tell them what you do personally; we do not want to influence the judges with our personal method for dealing with this variable.

Keep in mind when judging the couple divisions that two amateurs dancing as a couple may not be able to create the same result as those individuals who were dancing with their Pro. Contestants need to be judged as a couple and not individually like in Pro-Am. Therefore marks should reflect the composite culmination of the couple's lead/follow, masculine/feminine paired performance. Please include this thought when choosing the appropriate grade. Likewise in Line dance, while placement will reflect the individual contestant's ability to dance solo without aid of a partner, artistically the opposite gender is still inferred as being 'present' as the individual performs either the masculine or feminine perspective of the dance.

Age Considerations:

When judging Primary, Youth, and (Gold) Platinum divisions, judges should adhere to the following:

1. No use of Honorable Mention or Bronze medals.
2. Place them fairly in the medal standing they deserve within Silver and above medals with regards to age. Expect to see only one physical or technical level, and one emotion or artistic level, unlike the other divisions in which one might expect to see two physical levels in the Silver and Gold assessments, and one emotional level in the Gold with Honors assessment, with the Gold Graduate assessment reserved for demonstrating the expectations of the next skill level.
3. Expectations start at Gold. Silver is below expectation. Gold meets the expectation. Gold with Honors is above expectation. Gold Graduate shows expectation that is at the next skill level.

Divisions and Skill Levels:

Syllabus A & B and Newcomer (or IV) Level

Honorable Mention or “F” Grade: Given only on rare occasions where appropriate expectations are in no way seen.

Bronze Medal or “D” Grade: Given when less than the average expectations are seen for the skill level.

Silver Medal or “C” Grade (Technical One): Given when the first level of physical expectations is met.

1. Basic Timing
2. Basic Footwork
3. Basic Connection (For Partner only)
4. Basic Patterns (Basic “Vanilla” for Line)

Please make allowances for Newcomer level where there may not be consistency throughout. For example if they are on time and get off and are able to get back on then a Silver medal could be appropriate. The same would apply for the rest of the list.

Gold Medal or “B” Grade (Technical Two): Given when the second level of physical expectations is met.

1. Posture & Frame
2. Turn Technique
3. Lead & Follow (For Partner only)
4. Balance and Grounding

Gold with Honors Medal or “A” Grade (Artistic): Given when emotional expectations are met. The quality of dance should be excellent for all listed aspects of this skill level.

1. Basic Animation (“Be Human”, not a robot)
2. Comfort and Confidence (Look like you’re having a good time)
3. Attempt at Free Arm Positioning
4. Attempt at Body Angles, or Columns

Gold Graduate Medal or “AA” Grade: Given when all aspects listed above are met, and expectations that are associated with the next skill level are seen, such as, but not limited to:

1. Attempt at Rhythm
2. Successful Styling: coordination of arm lines, shapes, and projected feelings for each dance

Novice (or III) Level

Honorable Mention or “F” Grade: Given only on rare occasions where appropriate expectations are in no way seen.

Bronze Medal or “D” Grade: Given when less than the average expectations are seen for the skill level.

Silver Medal or “C” Grade (Technical One): Given when the first level of physical expectations is met.

1. Timing Variations (Basic “Vanilla” variations)
2. Basic Rhythm
3. Basic (coordinated) use of body parts, i.e., head weight, arm use, use of levels of core and sides, leg use

Gold Medal or “B” Grade (Technical Two): Given when the second level of physical expectations is met.

1. Initial performance of Phrase Changes
2. Floor-craft awareness (of others on the floor – etiquette and movement management)
3. Lead & Follow with regards to Smooth and Rhythm dances: (Partner dance only)
With Smooth versus Rhythm turns, i.e., Smooth versus Rhythm mechanics
(For Line: appropriate frame, posture, and carriage for Smooth and Rhythm dances)

Gold with Honors Medal or “A” Grade (Artistic): Given when emotional expectations are met. The quality of dance should be excellent for all listed aspects of this skill level.

1. Smooth vs. Rhythm styling, separating the dances by group, then individually
2. More coordinated and fuller rendition of beginning “big-picture” presentation
(Vanilla variations projected to audience: dancing in Proscenium Theatre)
3. Emotional Context: conveying the unique feeling that should accompany the dance

Gold Graduate Medal or “AA” Grade: Given when all aspects listed above are met, and expectations that are associated with the next skill level are seen, such as, but not limited to:

1. Attempt at Motion
2. Delivering Story Line, i.e., the story of two separate male and female parts. The feelings should project the couple expressing separate but compatible emotional context relative to the man/woman relationship.

Intermediate Level

Honorable Mention or “F” Grade: Given only on rare occasions where appropriate expectations are in no way seen.

Bronze Medal or “D” Grade: Given when less than the average expectations are seen for the skill level.

Silver Medal or “C” Grade (Technical One): Given when the first level of physical expectations is met.

1. More refined use of Footwork, i.e., using different kinds of weight change to strike, parts of the feet, sizes of base, etc.
2. Basic Motion, showing use of torso, especially sides of the body, with upper or lower core action
3. Varied use of core that delivers Full Flight and changes of perceived Speed (acceleration and deceleration)

Gold Medal or “B” Grade (Technical Two): Given when the second level of physical expectations is met.

1. Correct use of Adagio and Theatre Arts
2. Variety and Texture in Movements and Positions
3. Difficulty in Dance, i.e., concepts more tightly timed, tightly positioned, tightly partnered
(More complex variations correctly applied to Phrase Endings per Line rules)

Gold with Honors Medal or “A” Grade (Artistic): Given when emotional expectations are met. The quality of dance should be excellent for all listed aspects of this skill level.

1. Male and Female roles should be easily and highly distinguishable, showing a defined understanding of the masculine and the feminine, “frame and picture”
2. Multi-Faceted Feelings, showing an ability to execute a variety of facial expressions and body language within a single dance performance
3. Fullness of a styling concept, that it emanates from center, reaches an apex, and then recoils or dissipates; creating presentation that animates throughout the concept; creating “magic”, full extension and full expansion

Gold Graduate Medal or “AA” Grade: Given when all aspects listed above are met, and expectations that are associated with the next skill level are seen, such as, but not limited to:

1. Advanced Lead and Follow per dance (partner dance only), showing the ultimate in partnership (or, for Line, Advanced free use of frame, center, balance, and carriage)
2. Full Characterization seen as a compatible two-person Story Line, with a theatrical awareness of the floor, understanding the stage and the audience

Advanced Level

Honorable Mention or “F” Grade: Given only on rare occasions where appropriate expectations are in no way seen.

Bronze Medal or “D” Grade: Given when less than the average expectations are seen for the skill level.

Silver Medal or “C” Grade (Technical One): Given when the first level of physical expectations is met.

1. Using the floor as a stage, showing various speeds, heights, depths, and intertwining of partners, and choreography that expresses theatrical presentation that reaches deep into the audience, hence ‘bigger’ animation
2. Ultimate complexity in Partnership that uses appropriate compression and extension relative to smooth and rhythm dances, that demonstrates a variety of holds, touches, and ‘signals’ in the sequencing of moves and positions (a shared not co-dependent experience)
(For Line: ultimate complexity in individual use of frame, center, balance, and carriage)

Gold Medal or “B” Grade (Technical Two): Given when the second level of physical expectations is met.

1. Comprehensive choreographic concepts showing contrast and texture of phrase structures, offering choreographic continuity with core concepts of the dance appropriately ‘spiced’ with elements of surprise, pizzazz, dramatic flair and flourish: a fully conceived performance
2. Musical Interpretation relative to Classic or Showcase environments, and if Classic; matching to the mood of the music, and if Showcase, matching the melody of the music, having the ability to control the delivery of the choreography in phrase and floor-craft, dancing soft or hard, loud or quiet, fast or slow, as musically appropriate

Gold with Honors Medal or “A” Grade (Artistic): Given when emotional expectations are met. The quality of dance should be excellent for all listed aspects of this skill level.

1. Ultimate demonstration of the Maximum Personality and Performance while equally showing the integrity and structure of the ‘called’ dance, with delivery of each individual line, shape, adagio piece, and attitude with the utmost depth and development
2. Judges, as a member of the audience, were significantly engaged and emotionally affected by the full Characterization of the dance’s Story Line

Gold Graduate Medal or “AA” Grade: Given when all aspects listed above are met, and expectations that are associated with the next skill level are seen, such as,

1. Contestants, having met all the expectations of all skill levels, and by virtue of the ‘story’s’ visual imagery, are now seen to have demonstrated a dance ability that approaches the level of ‘professional’ performance, consistency, and ingenuity. Or showing the technical and artistic ability commensurate for Masters (for Couples) or Super-Stars (for Line).