



# RULE BOOK

## 2023-2025

### COUPLES

NATIONAL COUNTRY WESTERN DANCERS  
RULES, CONTEST PROCEDURES

SOUTH AFRICA

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# I. GENERAL INFORMATION

## A. NCWD'S MISSION & VISION

### 1. OUR MISSION

NCWD is committed to encouraging all dancers to strive for excellence and promote Country Western Couple Dancing & Line Dancing as fun and healthful pursuits and social activities and to enjoy the journey along the way. We believe each dancer has the ability to increase her/his physical, emotional and intellectual well-being through dance.

NCWD is dedicated to all studio families to ensure you are kept well-informed of the progress of each dancer. We believe in open communication and encouragement across cultures and that dance is essential to a healthy society, demonstrating the infinite possibilities for human expression and potential.

By providing national leadership and services, NCWD enhances the infrastructure for dance creation and distribution, education and dissemination of information.

### 2. OUR VISSION

NCWD will lead the professional dance industry by providing value to a strong, diverse membership base and encouraging the membership to be responsive to current economic, demographic and participation realities.

- NCWD will be accessible to all dance groups through a Dual Membership and will embrace strategic partnership on a local, national and international level to increase visibility, relevance and impact.
- NCWD will create value for members through strong core services of convening, advocacy and research that have a national focus and frequently evaluated.
- NCWD will offer tangible benefits to the membership based on timely needs.
- NCWD will be known as the national voice for professional Country Western Couple Dancing & Line Dancing in South Africa within and across the industry, the media and among international dance service organizations.

## B. NCWD BUSINESS OFFICE

The NCWD Business Office is the official center for submitting to the NCWD, information requests by letter, telephone, e-mail. Requests will be forwarded to the appropriate NCWD Directors as needed.

**Mailing Address:** National Country Western Dancers  
640 Rutgers Street  
Moreleta Park  
Pretoria  
Email: [ncwd.sa@outlook.com](mailto:ncwd.sa@outlook.com)  
Phone: +27 -71-673-0807

## C. NCWD WEBSITE

([www.ncwd.info](http://www.ncwd.info)) It is full of information about the organization and its dance events. It contains many valuable contact links.

## **II. DANCE RULES**

### **A. DANCE SEASON**

1. A year that begins on January 16th and continues up to January 15th of the following year.

### **B. ELIGIBILITY PERIOD**

1. Each competitor's period of eligibility is the two (2) previous Dance Seasons combined with the current Dance Season. (For example, on 3 October 2022, the eligibility period would be from 15 January 2020 to 3 October 2022. On 5 February 2022, the eligibility period would be from 15 January 2020 to 5 February 2022)

### **C. DANCE TYPES**

1. Couples

### **D. GENDER REQUIREMENTS**

1. In all Couple divisions except Mixed-Role divisions, a dance pair consists of one (1) male leader and one (1) female follower, where the leader leads and the follower follow. Only momentary role reversals are accepted.
2. In Mixed-Role divisions, a dance pair consists of one (1) follower and one (1) leader of any gender, where the leader leads and the follower follow. Both leader and follower must retain their roles throughout each Dance Category.
3. Points will be tracked.

### **E. AGE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Your age for the entire Dance Season for NCWD competition and any UCWDC Regional Event – (South African Classic) is the age you will be on the last day of that dance season.
2. Juniors competitors are those who are less than 18 years of age, with these stipulations:
  - a. All Junior Couples must dance in the older partner's age group.
  - b. Junior Primary – competitors are less than 10 years of age.
  - c. Junior Youth – competitors are at least 10 and less than 14 years of age.
  - d. Junior Teen – competitors are at least 14 and less than 18 years of age.
3. Adult competitors are those who are at least 18 years old, with these stipulations:
  - a. Open age division competitors must be Adults, except in couples where an Adult may dance with a partner who is 16 years of age or above.
  - b. Masters division competitors must be Adults, except in couples where an Adult may dance with a partner who is 16 years of age or above.
  - c. Age-Restricted division competitors may dance in any Age division for which they are eligible, with these stipulations:
    - i. Crystal division competitors must be at least 30.
    - ii. Diamond division competitors must be at least 40.
    - iii. Masters Plus division competitors must be at least 45
    - iv. Crown division competitors must be at least 40.
    - v. Crown Plus division competitors must be at least 55.
    - vi. Silver division competitors must be at least 50.
    - vii. Gold division competitors must be at least 60.
    - viii. Platinum division competitors must be at least 70

CATEGORIES	
Junior Primary	0 – 9 Years
Junior Youth	10 – 13 Years
Junior Teen	14 – 17 Years
Open	18 – 29 Years
Crystal	30 – 39 Years
Diamond	40 – 49 Years
Silver	50 – 59 Years
Gold	60 – 69 Years
Platinum	70+ Years

#### **F. DIVISIONS ARE OFFERED AS FOLLOWS:**

Specific division names

1. Couples Syllabus Divisions including Mixed-Role divisions
  - a. Newcomer IV
  - b. Newcomer III
  - c. Newcomer II
2. Couples Divisions:
  - a. Newcomer I
  - b. Classic III
  - c. Classic II
  - d. Classic II/i
  - e. Classic II/I
  - f. Classic I
  - g. Showcase
3. Ascension Divisions (competitors must earn ascension from the next lower division level):
  - a. Classic Masters (and Classic Masters Plus; when Masters has more than 5 competing entries and 2 of those are Masters Plus)
  - b. Showcase Masters (and Showcase Masters Plus; when Showcase Masters has more than 5 competing entries and 2 of those are Showcase Masters Plus)
  - c. Couples Classic Crown (and Classic Crown Plus; when Classic Crown has more than 5 competing entries and 2 of those are Classic Crown Plus)
  - d. Couples Showcase Crown (and Showcase Crown Plus; when Showcase Crown has more than 5 competing entries and 2 of those are Showcase Crown Plus)

#### **G. NCWD ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP & UCWDC MEMBERSHIP**

1. NCWD welcomes all fellow South Africans, dancers, dance teachers, club heads and associate bodies to feel free to register for membership with NCWD.
2. All Country Dance enthusiasts, who don't need to be contestants, may join the NCWD Associate Membership. New and renewed memberships become "current" the day the payment is received. Annual membership expires on the 31<sup>st</sup> December of each year.
3. Active membership is required, to track their competitive credentials for each Dance Season and eligibility period. This tracking is used to determine "NCWD Classic Series Championships Challenge" & "Worlds Championship" eligibility and to graduate contestants from one division to the next division.
4. Membership is compulsory for all Clubs or Dance Studios before their dancers may compete in any NCWD Classic Series Event. Registered Clubs or Dance Studios will also benefit from all workshops, etc. Online memberships registration are available on [www.ncwd.info](http://www.ncwd.info)

5. NCWD also offering Dual - Membership to contestants who are registered with another organization, who are recognized by NCWD, by a lower registration fee.
6. UCWDC Associate Membership is also mandatory for:
  - a. All competitors before they register for any UCWDC Division at UCWDC Sanction event, e.g., "South African Classic". This allows the UCWDC to track their competitive credentials for each Dance Season and Eligibility Period. This tracking is used to determine The Country Dance World Championships eligibility, Points Champions, and to graduate competitors from one skill level to the next at the end of the Country Dance World Championships.
  - b. Competitors can also only select the membership option: "Local Event Membership" if the competitor don't foresee to participate in the future in The Country Dance World Championships

## H. DIVISION ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

For crossover entry between Dance Type, see Couples Appendix B

1. Competitors in Newcomer I must not have multiple top 5 placements on any recognized dance sport circuit (e.g. Ballroom, World Swing dance Council, UCWDC, etc.).
2. Competitors with multiple top 5 places on any recognized dance circuit must enter no lower than Couples Division III.
3. Competitors with competition or performance experience in any genre of dance – including partner and solo dance genres – must enter at Newcomer II or higher.
4. Competitors in Newcomer I or above may enter any division for which they are qualified except for the following:
  - a. Couples competitors may dance for Overall Championship (see Section III) in only one skill level. While dancing the Overall Championship in that skill level, they may dance in the skill level above. If they dance for Overall in the skill level above, from that event forward they may no longer dance in their original level.
  - b. Couples' competitors may not enter both Classic and Showcase divisions with the same dance routines.
  - c. Couples partnerships may not enter as a ProAm or ProPro student-teacher partnership at the same event, or vice versa. Once a Couples division partnership enters ProAm or ProPro, then they may not go back to Couples in that same Dance Season, or vice versa.
5. When crossing over from one Dance Type to another or returning after the Eligibility Period, a competitor may move down one skill level.
6. Once a competitor has performed for Overall in a division of their choice, they may not compete later in a lower skill level in that Dance Type, except for the following:
  - a. Showcase and Spotlight competitors may dance either II or I in Couples Classic. Thus, Showcase and Spotlight competitors may not enter the Classic III level of dance or lower.
  - b. If the competitors do not compete during the entire current Eligibility Period
  - c. If Junior competitors advance into an older age division, he or she may dance one skill level lower, except Junior Primary Advanced and Junior Youth Advanced competitors may dance Novice as they advance in age.
  - d. Any new partnership or couple returning after the eligibility period may dance one skill level lower than the highest-level competitor.
  - e. Crown competitors may enter Classic Open I and Showcase Open to vie for Masters. When dancing Open I, or Showcase Open, they may not judge that Dance Type.
  - f. Masters may never move down, except when a Master dances with a new partner who is not master's eligible.
  - g. Competitors may not enter Masters and master's Plus or Crown and Crown Plus at the same event.
  - h. Dispensation may be granted to move to a lower skill level, pending a review of scores and marks across dances, and multiple events (if applicable).
7. If a competitor earns a qualifying win in a Showcase division, they must then enter their respective Classic division at the Advanced level for Line Dance or ProAm, or Division I for Couples beginning the next Dance Season.
8. Masters and Crown division candidates, who have become Ascension eligible, only achieve their status after they have danced a full program at that level of competition.
9. Professional Status Specifics:
  - a. Competitors have ProPro I status if they teach and /or compete with UCWDC Noice and above ProAm or Line Dance competitors, or Division III and above Couples competitors.

- If competitors have ProPro I status, they are eligible to enter Intermediate Line Dance or Couples II or above.
- b. Competitors have ProPro II status as a Pro in any lower levels of competitors in any genre.
  - If competitors have ProPro II status, they are eligible to enter Novice Line dance or Couples Division III or above.
- c. Competitors have ProAm Novice to Advanced status if they teach Wedding Couples, Studio New students specials or Group Classes, and/or social dance.
- d. If a competitor teaches any dance form, they may not enter any Dance Type at the Newcomer level. They must enter no lower than Novice.
- e. Competitors with ProPro status are not eligible to enter any competitive skill level that they teach, except when teaching Couples Division I or Line Dance Advanced, where they may only enter Couples Open Division I or Line Dance Open Advanced.
- f. If competitors regularly assist a dance teacher, they may enter ProAm as a student but may not enter the Newcomer level of dance or lower.

## I. DIVISION RULES

For an explanation of the movements listed below, see “Couples Appendix A”

### 1. Classic Format

- a. The songs selected by each DJ or Event Director, for each Couples division, are revealed the day of the competition. The songs played for contiguous heats of the same dance and division in Couples must be different and of approximately the same tempo.
- b. The basic timing(s) and rhythm(s), plus the musical tempo ranges for each dance, are listed in Point P. Dance Categories.
- c. All Couple competitors must enter and dance Two Step to be eligible to compete except for Newcomer, Juniors, Showcase, Masters and Crown divisions. Failure to do so will result in disqualification in that division.
- d. Classic Movement Limitations:
  - i. All Couples competitors must enter and dance Two Step to be eligible to compete except: Syllabus, Couples IV, Social, Juniors, Masters, and Crown divisions. Failure to do so will result in disqualification in that division.
  - ii. All Couples competitors, except Masters and Crown, must start with their bodies touching each other. Syllabus and Couples IV must start in one of the seven (7) Closed positions: Basic Closed (Right Inside Partner), Left Inside Partner, Right Parallel, Left Parallel, Promenade, Reverse Promenade, or Fan. Couples Social may start in of the closed positions or in two hand open.
  - iii. Couples competitors must follow the Basic Rule which requires them to dance one full, visible basic pattern of the dance per standard phrase of music (32 count for 4/4 time or 24 count for ¾ time). For phrased dances, the two measures of basic timing must be performed in each phrase of music but need not be back to back. The basic pattern must be performed within the character of the dance and in a connected position.
  - iv. Moves that include lifts (any type), throws, carries, aerials, acrobatics, drops (any type), rides, drags, slashes, pirouettes, fouettés, sitting on the floor, lying on the floor, or bridging on the floor are not allowed.
  - v. Jumps and jetés are not allowed.
  - vi. Dance movements that rotate on balance in adagio are permitted to turn only up to 360 degrees except Masters and Crown which may rotate more than 360 degrees.
  - vii. A stationary split or rotating pedestal is not allowed except for Masters and Crown. For Masters and crown, rotation cannot be seen as counter-balanced.
  - viii. Except in Masters and Crown, dance moves that incorporate shine are not allowed except for Chase, Contra-Chase, Circles, Contra-Circles, and Challenge in Cha-Cha. Contra-Chase is also allowed in East Coast Swing and West Coast Swing.
  - ix. Free spins are permitted only when they are led from a connected position. They must finish through re-connection or as appropriate to end-of-pattern and cannot initiate additional movement concepts without a physical lead (shine).
- e. Additional Movement Limitations for Newcomer divisions:

- The newcomer must start in one of the seven closed positions: Basic Closed (Right Inside Partner), Left Inside Partner, right Parallel, (Outside Partner) Left Parallel (Outside Partner), Promenade, Reverse (counter) Promenade, or fan.
  - Newcomer I competitors must use the basic timing(s) defined through each dance, with the exception of a foot change and patterns described in the UCWDC Syllabus that are not basic timing.
  - Newcomer IV, III, and II competitors, except for a starter step, must use only the patterns from the UCWDC Syllabus.
  - Hops, leans, lings, arabesques, penches, piques, at attitudes, developes, ronde de jambe en l'air and tele rondes are not allowed.
  - Adagio movement is not allowed except for kicks, flicks, floor sweeps or passe when done without losing the basic timing.
2. Showcase Format
- a. Showcase divisions dance to music which is pre-selected for each dance on a rotating schedule. The songs, artist names, and details for usage dates are available on request.
  - b. The choreographic interpretation of the music is one of the most important factors being judged. Competitors should select movement that they feel best interprets the musical nuances, tempo, character and mood of the musical selection and the dance's characterizing rhythm, motion and style.
  - c. Movements allowances and limitations for Showcase Couples:
    - A Couple may enter any dance category of their choice.
    - A Couple may begin in any dance position.
    - Aerials are not allowed except in Showcase masters.
    - Inverted lifts held on the vertical plane (rather than cartwheels that move through the vertical plane) and throws transporting the partner through the air are not allowed except in Showcase masters.
    - Two-beat rule (except Showcase Masters): A partner may be lifted for up to two beats of music as long as any part of the lifted partner's head, torso, arm, or leg remains at or below the shoulder level of the lifting partner and the lifted partner is not inverted. Medium lifts (with a part of the body at or below waist level) are allowed.
    - There are no movement limitations in Showcase Masters.

## J. FLOOR CRAFT

1. For all dances, competitors should be courteous at all times on the floor, as well as vigilant so as not to interfere with other competitors.
2. For Couples progressive dances, competitors should generally move in Line-of-Dance (LOD), counterclockwise around the outside of the dance floor. When a competitor performs a stationary movement in progressive dance, it should be to the outside of the floor, and as long as it does not block the inside lane, the stationary competitor has the right-of way. If another competitor slows or stops, trailing competitors should pass on the inside (toward the center of the dance floor.)
3. For Couples spot dances, competitors should generally remain in place. Once established on a spot, stationary competitors have the right-of-way over any competitor moving toward their space. When spot competitors use traveling movements they need to return to their original spot unless they are moving to an empty space. Stationary competitors have the right-of-way for their spot along with reasonable space in which to perform.

## K. COSTUMING

1. Competitors in all Divisions must wear
  - a. Costumes that are Country for Country dances and are appropriate to the dance, the arena, and the competitor wearing them.
  - b. Traditional looking Cowboy boots except:

- Syllabus and Social competitors who are required to wear boots at The Country Dance World Championships, and are encouraged, but not required, to wear boots at other events.
  - c. Traditional looking Cowboy hats for men, except:
    - Syllabus, Social, and Couples IV competitors must wear Cowboy hats at The Country Dance World Championships, and are encouraged, but not required, to wear Cowboy hats at other events.
  - d. Hose (tights) and dance pants (shorts) for women, if either are revealed during the dance performance.
  - e. Masters and Crown are permitted to discard articles of their costumes which, if used in dances other than Solo Medley or ShowDance, cannot remain on the floor when discarded. After all dance categories all articles must be removed by the competitors.
  - f. Sponsored logos on costumes are allowed if they are no larger than 5 inches by 5 inches (12.7 centimeter by 12.7 centimeter) in dimension per article of clothing. Logos should be tasteful and not detract from the costume.
  - g. Junior competitors may not wear boots or other footwear with more than a 1.5 inch/3.75 centimeters heel.
2. Newcomer IV, III and II and Social competitors are not allowed to wear costumes that have sequins, rhinestones, beads or metal embellishments build into the design of the outfit, or metallic threads or dots woven into or pressed into the costume. This does not include jewelry, which can include bracelets, necklaces, broaches, hatbands, hair-combs, rings, earrings, collar-tips, button snaps, belt buckles (but not the belt itself), boot bracelets, or stirrups. Discretion and tasteful decorum appropriate to the style of country and the style of the dance performed is highly encouraged.
  3. Please remember that how a competitor presents him or herself for performance is part of the final placement on every judge's ballot, in every dance, according to the style and story of the dance. It is essential to consider that the entire visual or "look" of the performance is judged including costuming as well as steps.
  4. Props are anything that is not normally worn as clothing and are only allowed in Spotlight. Props must be portable, not living, and delivered to and removed from the performance arena only by the competitors. Performers and props must not touch audience or staff. Time for setup will be included in performance time – no extra time will be allowed- and removal of the prop must occur on the walk-off after performers take their bow.

## L. CHOREOGRAPHY

Like music, under international law, all original choreography is automatically copyrighted when it has been performed and may not be copied, reproduced, or imitated without permission by the owner under penalty of law.

## M. MUSIC

Competition Music preview is not allowed for any ProPro/ProAm except Syllabus and Newcomer, where songs may rotate but all must be previewed. Warm-ups to music that is not used for competition or is a set of music that is randomly rotated, are encouraged for divisions not previewed. We request that DJ's make every possible effort to play phrased music for the phrased dances (Polka, Cha-Cha, NightClub, and Waltz). It is highly recommended that Polkas be 2/4-time, NightClub be 4/4-time and Waltz be 3/4-time. It is also highly recommended that within a set of selected music for a specific dance. That the intro of each song is the same phrase length, and that the music is played to the end of phrase after the 90-second stipulated song duration. For the non-phrased dances (Triple Two, Two-Step, East Coast Swing, and West Coast Swing), we request that all music to be pulsed appropriately. It is highly recommended that Triple Two has soft upbeats, Two-Step has definitive downbeats that are not double-timed, and both Swings are danced to backbeat swing music.

1. Competition Music length minimums are maximums (which may extend to the end of the phrase):
  - a. ProAm – 1 ½ minutes
  - b. ProPro – 1 ½ minutes
  - c. Linedance ProAm – 1 ½ minutes
  - d. Spotlight – 2 ½ to 4 minutes
  - e.
2. Showcase Music: The songs and artist names are posted under "Music" on our web page, [www.ncwd.info](http://www.ncwd.info) at least 2 months before they are first used at NCWD competitions.
3. For Event Music Selections, all Classic music must be as described below in.

4. Competitor-selected music limitations:
  - a. Competitor-selected music must be as described below for all parts of their performance except:
    - i. Masters and Showcase Crown Solo Medleys where only music used for internal requirements must be as described below.
  - b. Showcase Masters competitor-selected music for Waltz and Two-Step must be a single song. If the song is edited, it may not contain anything not found on the original CD and may not be longer than the original song.
  - c. For the purposes of selecting competition music for our organization, music and artists that are identified by the following categories or descriptions are considered acceptable for country dance competition music within the NCWD:
    - i. Country
    - ii. Contemporary Country
    - iii. Country Pop & Country Rock
    - iv. Americana/Alternative Country
    - v. Classic Country/Hillbilly
    - vi. Neo-traditionalist
    - vii. Western Swing
    - viii. Honky Tonk/Hardcore Country
    - ix. Bluegrass
    - x. Bakersfield
    - xi. Nashville/Countrypolitan
    - xii. Progressive Country & Outlaw Country
    - xiii. Urban Country
  - d. Two competition dances, Cha-Cha and West Coast Swing, have roots outside the country music genre. Therefore, Tejano music is acceptable for Cha-Cha and Blues music is acceptable for West Coast Swing. These music types are allowed only for these dances.
  - e. Country music artists and songs appropriate for NCWD competition may be identified by their presence on these platforms or by membership in these organizations:
    - i. Billboard or similar country music charts
    - ii. AM/FM/Satellite radio airplay on country stations
    - iii. iTunes, Spotify, internet-based music services in the country genre
    - iv. Record labels within the country genre
    - v. Halls of Fame – national, state and regional
    - vi. Nashville songwriters performing their own material
    - vii. Nominations for country categories at Grammy's and other music industry awards
    - viii. Included on soundtracks for country-themed movies
    - ix. Performs/ed at the Grand Old Opry
  - f. Competitor-Selected Music:
    - i. It is the competitor's responsibility to submit music 24 hours prior to the competition at every Regional Event where it is to be used and at least 96 hours prior to the performance at The Country Dance World Championships. The music must be accompanied by a properly filled out Competitor-Selected Music
  - g. Brief, recorded introductions and curtain calls are permitted. Clocking begins when the performance-sound begins. Clocking ends when the performance-sound ends (not including curtain calls).

#### **N. GRADUATION / PROMOTIONAL POINT SYSTEM – NCWD CLASSIC SERIES**

Points are awarded to finalists only within final dance off and not Semi-Finals. Where sections are combined due to few entries in specific level, actual place may be awarded points and not a result for each age group that was combined.

Number of eligible wins:

Division IV level if they have eligible wins at two (2) or more NCWD events during the current Eligibility Period.  
 Division III level if they have eligible wins at two (2) or more NCWD events during the current Eligibility Period.  
 Division II level if they have eligible wins at three (3) or more NCWD events during the current Eligibility Period.

Eligible wins occur if there are three (3) or more competitors competing for overall, except if the majority of judges' marks grades of S or less. In the case of less than three competitors competing for overall, a win counts toward graduation if the majority of judges' marks GH and GG. At least 25% of all grades must be GG.

If the contestant feel that they are not ready to move at the end of dance season, they may ask for dispensation to remain on current level for an additional year. Any points obtained over and above the points required for promotion, will be forfeited in the next grade.

All promotions / graduation work on a point system as follows:

COMPETITORS	1st PLACE	2ND PLACE	3RD PLACE	4TH PLACE	5TH PLACE
1	0.5 point				
2	0.5 point	0.15 point			
3+	1 point	0.25 point	0.15 point		
10+	1 point	0.5 point	0.25 point		
15+	1 point	0.5 point	0.25 point		
20+	1 point	0.5 point	0.25 point	0.25 point	
25+	1 point	0.5 point	0.25 point	0.25 point	0.25 point

- Required points level for promotion to the next level are:

#### Line Dance Division

- Newcomer: 2 points to obtain before advancing to Novice Level
- Novice: 4 points to obtain before advancing to Intermediate Level
- Intermediate: 6 points to obtain before advancing to Advance Level
- Advance: On these level contestants must earn ascension from the organization to move up.

### O. GRADUATION CRITERIA – UCWDC REGIONAL & WORLDS EVENT

1. Competitors graduate on the first day of the next Dance Season, except for the following:
  - a. When a Couple dances the first two (2) time in a Dance Season and accumulates a majority of GG's in their dance(s), they must immediately graduate to the next higher level once they are informed by the Vice President of Rules.
2. Eligible wins occur if there are three (3) or more competitors competing for overall, except if the majority of judges' marks grades of S or less. In the case of less than three competitors competing for overall, a win counts toward graduation if the majority of judges' marks GH and GG. At least 25% of all grades must be GG.
3. Graduation Earned at UCWDC Regional Events:
  - a. Graduating in one Dance Type will. Not cause graduation in other Dance Types unless a competitor is already in separate levels. No competitor may dance more than one (1) level different in another Dance Type without a dispensation. For crossover between Dance Types, please see Line Appendix B.
  - b. If a competitor qualifies for an overall in a division, at a particular skill level, they may dance one or more dances in the next higher skill level at the same event (and must dance Two-Step if it is required). If the competitor dances overall in the next higher skill level, they have self-graduated into the higher skill level and may no longer dance in the lower skill level. Competitors may not dance at a higher skill lever at The Country Dance World Championships.
  - c. Number of eligible wins:
    1. Couples competitors must graduate to the next higher level from the:
      - Division IV level if they have eligible wins at two (2) or more UCWDC events during the current Eligibility Period.
      - Division III level if they have eligible wins at two (2) or more UCWDC events during the current Eligibility Period.
      - Division II level if they have eligible wins at three (3) or more UCWDC events during the current Eligibility Period.

4. Graduation Earned at The Country Dance World Championships ('Worlds'):
  - a. Every competitor who wins a first place Overall title at The Country Dance World Championships with grades of G or better must graduate to the next higher level of competition, unless they have fewer than three (3) competing for Overall in their division. In this case, competitor will graduate only if the majority of judges' marks are grades H and GG. At least 25% of all grades must be GG.
  - b. In addition, all competitors who dance for an overall award at The Country Dance World Championships graduate to the next higher division on a scale which depends on the total number of competitors. They graduate if they have one (1) eligible win at a regional Event and they won:
    - Second (2nd) place overall at The Country Dance World Championships where there were ten (10) to fourteen (14) overall competitors.
    - Second (2nd) or Third (3rd) place over all at The Country Dance World Championships where there were fifteen (15) to nineteen (19) overall competitors.
    - Second (2nd), Third (3rd), or Forth (4th) place overall at The Country Dance World Championships where there were twenty (20) to Twenty-four (24) overall competitors.
    - Second (2nd), Third (3rd), Forth (4th), or Fifth (5th) place overall at The Country Dance World Championships where there were twenty-five (25) or more overall competitors.

## P. DANCE CATEGORIES

1. Couples Dance Categories – The Country Dance World Championship Classic and Showcase Couples Dance Categories Are Triple Two, Polka, NightClub, Cha-Cha, Waltz, Two-Step, East Coast Swing, and West Coast Swing, danced in this order at all UCWDC events except for Masters and Crown Classic, which will dance their chosen dances in two flights in the following order. First flight, slow or andante dances: Waltz, NightClub, Triple Two, and West Coast Swing; Second flight, fast or allegro dances: Two-Step, Cha-Cha, Polka, and East Coast Swing. The music for all flights will be automated with exactly a 30 second break between dances. A warning town will sound 5 seconds before the music. Competitors will signify they are not dancing a specific dance by stepping off the floor in which case they are required to stand within 3 feet (1 meter) of the floor and not consume food or beverages and in the true spirit of good sportsmanship must remain on the side of the floor when not dancing until the end of the flight. Flights will be in the same dance session with at least 10 minutes between flights.
2. These NCWD contest dance categories list the minimum, maximum and preferred musical tempos in beats per minute (BPM) for Classic Couples. These basic timings fulfill the Basic Rule for each dance. Timing notations in the dance categories: Black indicates a weight change; Grey (or Red) denotes no weight change. To meet the Basic Rule for the 'phrased' dances e.g., Waltz, Polka, NightClub, ad Cha-Cha, two measures of basic timing must be performed in each phrase of music (32 counts for 4/4-time or 24 counts for ¾-time) but need not be back to back.
  - a. The Country Dance World Championships Core Dances:
    - i. **Two-Step:** *For Syllabus, Division IV, Newcomer, Platinum: 172-180, 174 preferred. For Division III and Novice; 180-188, 184 preferred. For Division II or Intermediate and above: 188-196, 194 preferred.* Basic Two-Step timing are 1 2 3 4 5 6 ; 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 ; and 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 (QQS S ; QQS QQS ; QQQQS S). Two-Step is a smooth, progressive dance with weaved patterns and rhythm accents that separate the quicks and slows, emphasizing slows.
    - ii. **Waltz:** *For Syllabus, Division IV, Division III, Newcomer, Novice, Platinum: 86-92. For Division II or Intermediate and above: 80-86.* Basic Waltz timing 1 2 3 4 5 6. Waltz is a progressive dance that uses patterns that move diagonally and are performed with Rise & Fall accentuated with Swing & Sway emphasizing hover. Waltz tempos in self-selected music division must be 120 BPM or less. The Country Dance World
  - b. Championships Swing Dances:
    - i. **East Coast Swing:** *For Syllabus, Division IV, Newcomer, Platinum: 126-132, 130 preferred. For Division III or Novice: 132-138, 136 preferred. For Division II, Intermediate or above: 138-144.* Single, Double and Triple time swing are all permitted and interchangeable. Basic Triple East Coast Swing timings are: 1&2 3&4 5 6 and 1&2 3 4 5&6 7 8. Basic Single East Coast Swing timings are: 1 2 3 4 5 6 (S S QQ) and 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 (S QQ S QQ). Basic Double East Coast Swing timings are: 1 2 3 4 5 6 (S S

- QQ) and 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 (S QQ S QQ). East Coast Swing is a stationary dance that uses rotary patterns and is performed with semi-Cuban, emphasizing downward compression.
- ii. **West Coast Swing:** *For Syllabus, Division IV, Division III, Newcomer, Novice, Platinum: 104- 112, 108 preferred. For Division II, Intermediate or above: 96-104.* Basic West Coast Swing timings are 1 2 3&4 5&6 and 1 2 3&4 5 6 7&8. West Coast Swing is a smooth, stationary dance with slotted patterns and rhythm accents, emphasizing back-beat.
  - c. Non-Country Dance World Championships Swing Dance:
    - i. **Pony Swing:** *For all 102-116, 106 preferred.* Basic Pony Swing timing is &1 &2 &3 &4 &5 &6 &7 &8. Pony Swing is generally stationary with revolving patterns performed with Lilt, emphasizing downward action on the numbered counts.
  - d. The Country Dance World Championships Alternate Dances:
    - i. **Triple Two:** *For Syllabus, Division IV, Division III, Newcomer, Novice, Platinum: 86-92. For Division II, Intermediate or above: 80-86.* Basic Triple Two timings are 1 2 3&4 5&6 and 1 2 3&4 5 6 7&8. Triple Two is a smooth, progressive dance with looped and laced patterns performed with curved sway and shaping actions, emphasizing connected feathers.
    - ii. **Polka:** *For Syllabus, Division IV, Division III, Newcomer, Novice, Platinum; 112-116. For Division II or Intermediate and above: 116-120.* Basic Polka timing is 1&2 3&4 5&6 7&8. Polka is a progressive dance with 2-rail (streamlined) patterns performed with Lilt motion, emphasizing downward action on the numbered counts.
    - iii. **NightClub:** *For Syllabus, Division IV, Division III, Newcomer, Novice, Platinum; 58-62. For Division II or Intermediate and above: 54-58.* Basic NightClub timing is 1 2&3 4&5 6&7 8& (SQQS QQS QQS QQ). NightClub is a stationary dance with linear and geometric patterns performed with draping sway and counter sway, shaping actions, emphasizing developed slows.
    - iv. **Cha-Cha:** *For Syllabus, Division IV, Division III, Newcomer, Novice, Platinum; 104-110. For Division II or Intermediate and above: 110-116.* Basic Cha-Cha timing is 1 2 3 4&5 6 7 8&. Cha-Cha is a stationary dance with intersecting patterns performed with Cuban motion, emphasizing the first beat of each measure.
  - e. Non-Country Dance World Championships Alternate Dances:
    - i. **Shuffle (Ft. Worth Shuffle):** *For all 102-114, 108 preferred.* Shuffle timings are 1 2 3, 4&5, 6&; or 1 2 3, 4&5, 6 7, 8&). Shuffle is a progressive dance with leap-frog or pig-tail patterns, performed with Flat motion shaped in its movement. The dance accents 2 3 (six-count timing), or 2 3 and 6 7 (eight-count timing) with two progressive walks.
    - ii. **Schottische:** *For all 120-132.* Basic Schottische timing is 1 2 3 4[kick] 5 6 7 8[kick]. Schottische is a progressive dance performed with plié on 2 and relevé on 4, with zigzag patterns accented with lifted kicks, scoots, hops, or brushes.
    - iii. **Rhythm Two (Arizona Two-Step):** *For all 148-160, 154 preferred.* Basic Rhythm Two timing is 1 2 3 4[kick or touch] 5 6[kick or touch] and 1 2 3 4 5 6[kick or touch] 7 8[kick or touch]. Rhythm Two is a spot dance performed with semi-Cuban motion and circular patterns.
  - f. Solo Performances:
    - i. Solo Medley for Showcase Masters and Crown: A musically-mixed, multi-dance Showcase category of 4-7 minutes for Masters and 2 ½ - 5 minutes for Crown with no BPM limitations. A medley of dances choreographed to music of the competitor's choice that must include a combined total of at least 45 seconds each of: a swing dance and three (3) other Country Dance World Championships dances for Masters, and a swing dance and 2 other The Country Dance World Championships dances for Crown; not to include Two-Step and Waltz for either, and which must be recognizable in pattern, rhythm, motion, and character. Recognizable patterns from non-UCWDC dances (e.g., Quickstep, tango, Samba, Rumba, Charleston, Clogging, Hip-Hop, et cetera) may only be used as appropriate for musical interpretation.
    - ii. ShowDance for Classic Masters and Classic Crown: (2 to 2 ½ minutes, of which 2 minutes must be dancing to music and timing begins when the music starts). A dance category which must be a single dance, and must be one of the 8 UCWDC dances defined above in Section. The song can be one song or a medley of songs and may not contain anything not found on the original CD(s). Other dances are allowed momentarily for musical interpretation. The competitor order must be a scheduled drawing for choice or, if no time is scheduled, then random drawing/generator will be used.

## **Q. COMPETITOR CONDUCT AND ETHICS**

1. All decisions of the contest judges, the Contest Coordinator, and Event Director will be final. Competitors are expected to act and comply with the standards and rules. Competitors are required to provide on any competition registration form their full name, mailing address, birthdate, phone number (cell preferred), e-mail address and NCWD Associate Membership number.
2. All Associate Members and participants acting on behalf of the NCWD are expected to comply with all applicable laws at all times. The NCWD reserves the right to exclude any competitor from an event for acting in violation of applicable law, or contrary to the NCWD's mission, Associate Membership Code of Conduct as determined in the NCWD's sole discretion.
3. Before entering a NCWD Event, competitors may be required to sign an event waiver form that limits the event's liability with regards to injury or other damage, allows data collection and tracking, assigns the distribution rights of audio and video recordings of the attendee(s) to the event, and addresses privacy. Competitors under the legal age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian who has written parental permission to act as 'guardian', and who is responsible for the minor's safety and conduct at all times.
4. Information provided on the competition registration form will be used for tracking of performance results to determine divisional graduation status, divisional age eligibility, County Dance World Championships eligibility, and The NCWD Classic Championship Points Championships.
5. All attendees are expected to act in a friendly, cordial, respectful, and professional manner throughout the event.

## **R. REPORTING AND STAGING PROCEDURE**

1. For all heated divisions, competitors should report to the Floor Coordinator thirty (30) minutes before a division's first contest heat to check-in and preview their music or warm up, unless the size of the contest warrants an earlier reporting time (see event schedule). When reporting, each competitor will make themselves known to the Floor Coordinator by competitor number, confirming that they are dressed, ready, and able to perform in the proper division. During the contest, competitors must remain in the staging area, except for costume changes.
2. Competitor numbers must be touching the spine and must be worn in all divisions except self-selected music categories. However, Choreography competitors must wear numbers.
3. Even though NCWD contests post the heats of competition for all divisions, the exact heat order is not guaranteed to any competitor. A competitor who fails to report to the Floor Coordinator on time or fails to answer the calls of the Floor Coordinator for a specific heat will be scratched (disqualified) from that dance category.

## **III. AWARDS & CHAMPIONSHIPS**

### **1. OVERALL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

1. An "Overall Champion" title is awarded only to the first-place overall winner in each specific division. When used in a competitor's dance resumé, the full name of the division must precede that title. i.e., "John Doe is the ProAm Male Silver Novice Overall Champion."
2. Conversely, when used, 2nd Place through 5th Place Overall winners' titles must be followed with the full name of the division. i.e., "John Doe is the 3rd Place Overall Male Classic Male Silver Novice" winner.
3. Titles are bestowed upon winners by the NCWD. Titles which are abused by the recipient to misrepresent the credential or dupe the public in its declaration may be voided and withdrawn.
4. Overall Eligibility:
  - a. Syllabus divisions and ProAm offers NO Overall Championship.
  - b. Social Divisions may or may not have an overall at each Event Director's discretion. If an overall is offered, competitors qualify by dancing every dance offered.
  - c. Couples Overall entries, (except Masters, Crown, and Legends), must dance in at least Two-Step, Waltz, one (1) Swing dance, and two (2) Alternate dances.
  - d. Showcase Masters and Couples Showcase Crown must compete in Two-Step, Waltz, and Solo Medley.
  - e. Classic Masters and Couples Classic Crown must compete in Two-Step, Waltz, one (1) Swing dance, two (2) Alternate dances, and a ShowDance.

#### **IV. COUNTRY DANCE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS (WORLDS)**

Each year the UCWDC presents the Country Dance World Championships, which offers world-class Couples, ProAm, ProPro, Line Dance, ShowTime, and Team competitions.

##### **A. ELIGIBILITY**

1. Associate Membership: Each individual competitor may not begin to accrue qualifications for Worlds until their Associate Membership dues are current and paid for the Dance Season.
2. To be eligible to compete at The Country Dance World Championships:
  - a. Competitors who are permanent residents of North America and Europe must qualify by competing at three (3) or more UCWDC Events during the preceding Dance Season, except for all juniors and Manitoba and western Canada who must compete at two (2) or more events.
  - b. Competitors who are permanent residents of Asia and Africa must qualify by competing in at least one (1) UCWDC Event during the preceding Dance Season.
  - c. Competitors who are permanent residents of continents other than North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa may enter without pre-qualification but must be active, dues paid Associate Members before dancing at The Country Dance World Championships.
  - d. SuperStars, Line Dance Showcase Open, and Line Dance Classic Open Advanced must qualify by dancing three (3) full programs except in Asia and Africa where they must dance one (1) full program.
3. The Country Dance World Championships qualification in Line Dance does not count for any other Dance Type.
4. The Country Dance World Championships competitors must have competed for the Overall Championship or the single dance Championship (ProAm Line Dance) at least once in the division in which they intend to compete, except:
  - a. Masters, Couples Open 1, and Couples Showcase Open competitors in Europe and North America, who must have competed for the Overall Championship three (3) times (in Classic or Showcase or a combination of the two (2)) over the course of three (3) or more NCWD events.
5. For each Dance Type entered, The Country Dance World Championships competitors must compete in the highest division where they danced for overall during the preceding Dance Season.
6. In a new partnership, at least one partner must have competed at three (3) UCWDC Events and the new partnership must have competed at least once overall in the division they intend to compete at The Country Dance World Championships.

##### **B. WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE**

1. An "Overall Champion" title at The Country Dance World Championships is awarded only to the first-place overall winner in each specific division. When used, the year and the full name of the division must precede that title. i.e., "John Doe is the 1988 UCWDC Line Dance Male Silver Novice World Champion."
2. Conversely, when used in a competitor's dance resumé, 2nd Place through 5th Place Overall winners' titles must be followed with the full name of the division. i.e., "John Doe is the 3rd Place Line Dance Male Silver Novice" winner at the Country Dance World Championship.
3. Titles are bestowed upon winners by the UCWDC. Titles which are abused by the recipient may be withdrawn.

#### **V. JUDGES CODE OF ETHICS**

1. During his or her shift on a panel, each Judge must focus all of his or her attention on the competitors, have a positive demeanor and facial appearance and complete his or her ballots only in the last few seconds of each song.
2. When not on shift, Judges are encouraged to socialize equitably with patrons. They may not isolate themselves in the company of any competitor(s) that they might judge during the event. i.e., room with, privately converse with or publicly fraternize with.
3. Private lessons may not be given to competitors until after they have finished competing.

4. A judge may never coerce, intimidate, or in any way perceivably threaten competitors into taking private lessons or coaching from them.
5. Judges may not discuss dance information with any competitor they are judging until after the contest session has been completed.