

<p>Overview</p>	<p>Surrey Hills Dance Centre BALLROOM & LATIN AMERICAN DANCESPORT GUIDE</p>
<p>Introduction Like most other sports (and Ballroom and Latin American dancing is considered a sport), there are a number of levels of participation ranging from the purely recreational through to top international competitive dancing. Also like other sports, to achieve at the highest levels requires talent, commitment of time, intense training and money. <i>Here at SHDC, we offer the opportunity for those with talent the opportunity to dance at the highest levels. This paper outlines the various ways in which dancesport is pursued within the UK and opportunities for involvement from within SHDC, plus some of the commitment involved.</i></p> <p>TV and Other Events Since Strictly Come Dancing became a big TV success, Ballroom and Latin American dancing has become popular with TV producers and public event organisers. Couples have featured in 'Got to Dance' and 'Britain's Got Talent'. Scouts for these programmes attend major events and encourage top couples to audition for the shows. <i>A brief list of TV and events to which SHDC Open Circuit competitors have been invited are: Strictly Come Dancing 2005, 2006, 2007. Blue Peter 2005, 2006, Childline Ball 2009, Naming of the new 'Britannia' in front of Her Majesty the Queen 2015.</i></p>	<p>Dancesport in the UK. There are 5 ways in which dancesport is pursued within the UK. These are:</p> <p>Purely Social This mainly applies to adults who learn to dance as a pastime with a view to attending dances socially including tea dances, social events, dance holidays and for exercise. <i>We provide classes for all ages and private lessons in support of this.</i></p> <p>Medal Test Awards Our children's and youth's classes are geared towards this. Adults wishing to take medals do so via private lessons. <i>We are members of the ISTD and NATD professional societies and run our medal tests through the ISTD system.</i></p> <p>Medallist Competitions Each of the dance societies run a number of regional and one national competition days a year. At these individuals compete in age / grade categories. <i>We don't get involved in this category. Our reasons for this are that we train top competitors from all over the UK for the Open Circuit and encourage talented and committed class pupils into the Open Circuit. This means that we don't have the numbers of experienced dancers available to partner the less experienced which is a requirement of these events.</i></p> <p>Supadance League This is an inter-school league, where teams of couples compete for the school. There is a northern division and a southern division and like football leagues home and away matches – one home match per year for each team - all teams attend. <i>We don't get involved in this for the same reasons as our non-involvement in medallist competitions.</i></p> <p>Open Circuit Competitions The Open Circuit is the environment in which all the nation's top couples compete, plus couples who are 'up and coming'. There are a number of Open Circuit competitions around the county most Sundays with competitions for all ages, plus several national and international standard events. International championships attract hundreds of couples in each age group from around the world including Australia, USA, Canada, China, Japan, South Korea, South Africa, Russia and all of Europe. Many of the world's top partnerships are from 2 different countries. <i>SHDC is one of the top training centres for Open Circuit competitors, particularly in the Ballroom branch. SHDC trained couples have been England's selected representatives at World and European championships every year since 2007. SHDC successes include several British National champions, several UK Closed Champions, British Open Champions and a World Champion.</i></p> <p>Open Circuit Competition Grades Open circuit competitions usually comprise competitions for the following grades in Ballroom & Latin American: JUVENILE (Under 12 years): Under 11s, Juvenile Beginners, Juvenile Open JUNIOR (12-15 years): Under 14 years, Junior Beginners, Junior Open YOUTH (16-20 years) AMATEUR UNDER 35 YEARS: Beginners, Novice, Intermediate, Pre-Champ, Open SENIOR OVER 35 YEARS: Beginners, Novice, Intermediate, Pre-Champ, Senior 1 (Over 35's), Senior 2 (Over 50's), Senior 3 (Over 60's)</p>

Open Circuit Lessons

All open Circuit competitors have private lessons – anything from 2 to 6 hours a week is normal. Prices vary from £40 an hour here at SHDC to £200 per 1.5 hours with former World Professional Champions.

Practices

Competitive couples try to practice a minimum of 3 days per week at practice sessions in mutually accessible locations.

The SHDC competitors practice is open to all competitors and is on a Wednesday 8:00pm to 10:00pm at Walton on the Hill. Other local practices exist in South London and Kent.

Clothes

Juveniles (and all beginners) have a restricted dress code as well as restricted choreography. Clothes are available 'off the peg' or made to measure and cost around £200. There is a thriving 2nd hand market. Juniors and above have full-blown outfits as you would see on 'Strictly'. Tail suits for Ballroom are upwards of £800, Ballroom dresses around £1000, Latin men's top and trousers are around £700 and Latin dresses upwards of £800. There is a 2nd hand market.

Competitions

Sunday circuit competitions occur most Sundays. Locally competitions occur in Leatherhead, Horsham, Guildford, Chessington, Bromley, Reading and Basingstoke.

National / International Events

There are a number of majors:

Jan – Open UK (Amateur & Professional only) – Bournemouth – 3 days

Jan – Champions of Tomorrow (all grades) – Blackpool – 1 day

Easter – European Open Championships (Juvenile, Junior, Youth, Amateur, Professional) – Blackpool – 2 days

Easter – Junior British Open Championships (Juvenile & Junior only) – Blackpool - 5 days

May – Galaxy Imperial Championships (Youth, Amateur, Professional only) – Copthorne – 1 day

May – British Open Championships (Youth, Amateur & Professional only) – Blackpool - 9 days

Jul – UK Closed & Bournemouth Masters Championships (all grades) – Bournemouth – 4 days

Oct – Imperial Championships (Youth, Amateur & Professional only) – Copthorne – 1 day

Oct – International Championships (Juvenile, Junior, Youth, Amateur, Professional) – Brentwood – 2 days then last 30 onwards for Amateur & Professional at Royal Albert Hall, London – 1 day

Nov – British National Championships (Juvenile, Junior, Youth, Amateur, Professional) – Blackpool – 4 days

Open Circuit – Personal Profiles

Michael Foskett

Michael started dancing in our younger children's class at the age of 5 years. Inspired by Strictly Come Dancing, in January 2005 he started private lessons to get his dancing up to an appropriate standard for competing. In February 2005, he partnered Carla Garratt from Reading. They danced together for 5 years in which time they became England's no.1 ranked Juveniles, no.1 ranked Juniors, British National Junior Ballroom champions and England's representatives at the world championships in Riga (Latvia), Moscow, Finland, Kiev (Ukraine) and Italy. In 2010 Michael formed a new partnership with Korina Travis from St. Helen's, Merseyside. They were 2nd in the British and UK Youth Championships and England's world reps in Barcelona and Austria. In 2013 Michael partnered with Nika Vlasenko from Kiev, Ukraine. Nika now lives with us. Michael is at the University of Surrey studying for Master's degree in Maths and Nika is at the University of Kingston doing a Business Studies degree. During 2013 /2014 Michael and Nika were the world's most successful youth Ballroom couple winning the British National, British Open, Imperial, Embassy (USA), Closed UK and World Championships and the world 'Young Dancers of the Year' award.

Miles Chapman

Miles also started in our younger children's class in 2005. We recognised that he had talent and suggested he tried open circuit competitions. He partnered Lorna Arnold from Reading and followed very much in Michael's footsteps, 1 year behind. They made the British Open Juvenile Ballroom Championship final in 2007 and won the UK Juvenile Ballroom Championship the same year. The partnership split in 2012. Miles is now dancing again in Southampton after a break of nearly 3 years.

Dan Malov

Dan moved to Southwater, Horsham from Norwich in 2007, having originally come to the UK from the Ukraine. With his Norwich based partner, Molly Ward, he won the UK Juvenile Ballroom Championship in 2008. Since then Dan has had a number of partners from such diverse places as Caerphilly, Russia, Ukraine and Sweden. He is a world ranked youth competitor.

Aimee Falvey

Aimee started dancing in our young children's class at the age of 5. She competed with a lad from Kent initially, then Will Duffin from Southwater. Aimee and Will made it to the top 2 rankings in the Juniors and represented England at world championships in Moldova, Moscow and Barcelona. Aimee had two youth partnerships after Will but has now stopped dancing to focus on her career.

Will & Matt Duffin

Will and Matt are brothers from Southwater. They initially learned to dance at a local dance school in Horsham and moved into competitions from there. They changed schools to SHDC in 2008. Will now lives in Leicester with his partner Mellissa Kirkpatrick and competes at Youth / Amateur level.

Matt, the younger brother first partnered Isabel de Roche from Cranleigh. Together they were Juvenile winners of Champions of Tomorrow. Matt then danced with Ellie Beacock from Redditch, Worcestershire. They won the Juvenile British Latin American championship. In 2011 Matt changed partners to dance with Jade McCabe from Essex. They were successful international Junior competitors representing England at world championships in Moscow, Barcelona and Italy. In 2013 Matt reformed his partnership with Ellie, and in 2014 they were British National Junior Latin Champions. Now 16, Matt dances in Youth competitions with Leah Tuson from Basingstoke.

Fionn Nolan

Fionn started in our children's classes in 2015 and initially danced with class-mate Faye Green from Horsham in competitions. They were Champions of Tomorrow grand finalists in the beginners Latin and winners of a number of local competitions. On turning 12 years, Fionn has moved up to Juniors and now has a successful partnership with Issy Dulam from Basingstoke.

