

UC Ballroom News

Issue 1

December 2003

San Jose State Competition, November 15, 2003

by Joshua Von Korff

If you've never been to a ballroom dance competition, or you've only watched one on television – you're missing out. Competitors from UC Berkeley, SJSU, Caltech, Cal Poly, USC, Stanford, UC Hayward, and the Imperial Dance Club took the floor this November in the annual San Jose State University Ballroom Classic Competition. Whether they were gliding, rising, and falling to a slow waltz, hotfooting it past applauding spectators to a energized jive, or undulating to a syncopated samba, our teammates impressed both the judges and the audience in the recent competition.



Erwin Tenhumberg & Stephanie Berger

And of all the teams in the audience, none shouted louder than UC Berkeley. "My favorite part of competing was seeing and hearing the team cheer for everyone," says new team member Kevin Sinats. "It was really great hearing all the Berkeley people cheer each other on."

Things are looking good for the future of UC Berkeley's ballroom dance team. Berkeley swept the newcomer division, taking five of the top six places in newcomer waltz, all of the top seven in newcomer quickstep, six of seven in rumba, and five of seven in cha-cha. Berkeley's performance in the other divisions was also respectable.



Randy Wu & Sarah Young

Here's a list of all 1st through 3rd place ribbons that Berkeley team members won. Obviously, many couples worthy of mention did not make it into this list. Some of the rounds were very competitive, with ten, twenty, or more couples.

Newcomer Standard Waltz
1 Ted Mao & Albertina Thai
2 Kevin Sinats & Rachel McCullough-Sanden

Newcomer Standard Quickstep
1 Kevin Sinats & Rachel McCullough-Sanden

2 Ted Mao & Albertina Thai
3 Donovan Sung & Alison Li

Beginner Standard Waltz
1 Sriram Balasubramanian & Daria Mashnik
2 Oleksii Sliusarenko & Robynne Klomp

Beginner Standard Foxtrot
1 Sriram Balasubramanian & Daria Mashnik
2 Ted Mao & Albertina Thai
3 Oleksii Sliusarenko & Robynne Klomp

Beginner Standard Quickstep
2 Sriram Balasubramanian & Daria Mashnik

Intermediate Standard Waltz
1 Harry Hsieh & Marina Felton
3 Henry Tang & Sarah Young

Intermediate Standard Tango
2 Harry Hsieh & Marina Felton
3 Henry Tang & Sarah Young

Intermediate Standard Foxtrot
1 Harry Hsieh & Marina Felton
3 Henry Tang & Sarah Young

Fall 2003 UCBD Team Members

Morgan Ames	Carl Mieczkowski
Alia Aidyralieva	Ruth Murray
Sriram Balasubramanian	Cesar J. del Peral
Stephanie Berger	Meryl Lynn Pestano
Elizabeth Bolton	Na Pi
Miriam Boon	Shauna Pirotin
Alexis Brovko	Kevin Purbhoo
Andrew Charman	Attila Remenyi
Michael Constant	Sabina Sadykhova
Josie Mae Cook	Krystine Saito
Andrew Cotton	Eszter Sarkadi-Nagy
Dwight Crow	Christina Shenvi
Marina Felton	Kevin Sinats
Geoff Forcella	Oleksii Sliusarenko
David Gibson	Donovan Sung
Royceleen Holmes	Erwin Tenhumberg
Wenjie Hu	Albertina Thai
Constance Ip	Yuk Fai Tham
Laura Jarvis	Win Thein
Argyris Kahros	Dmitriy Vasilyuk
Robynne Klomp	Brian Vogel
Kimberly Lau	Joshua Von Korff
Alison Li	Sohanya Welikala
Xiaojuan Liu	Alisha Woo
Arlene Liu	Mark Wu
Mei Luo	Randy Wu
Ted Mao	Kelly Yamamoto
Susan Mashiyama	Jennifer Young
Daria Mashnik	Sarah Young
Rachel McCullough-Sanden	Zhilei Zhang

Intermediate Standard Quickstep
1 Harry Hsieh & Marina Felton
3 Sriram Balasubramanian & Daria Mashnik

Advanced Standard Waltz, Foxtrot, & Quickstep
2 Harry Hsieh & Marina Felton

Advanced Standard Tango
2 Harry Hsieh & Marina Felton

Open Standard Waltz, Tango, Foxtrot, & Quickstep
2 Erwin Tenhumberg & Stephanie Berger

Open Standard V. Waltz
2 Erwin Tenhumberg & Stephanie Berger

Beginner Smooth Waltz
3 Cesar del Peral & Alexis Brovko
(More results on page 2)

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2003 UCBD Officer Board



Joshua Von Korff (President), Ted Mao (DanceSport Coordinator), Andy Charman (Instructional Secretary), Krystine Saito (Publicity Secretary), Rebecca Middleton (Fall Ball Coordinator), Morgan Ames (Team Captain, Webmaster), Albertina Thai (Competition Coordinator), Alisha Woo (Rookie Coordinator), Daria Mashnik (Team Manager), Mark Voorhies (Wednesday Coordinator) Not pictured: Elaine Ashby (social coordinator), David Rosenberg (treasurer), Christina Shenvi (Team Captain through October 2003)

2004 UCBD Officer Board



Kevin Purbhoo (Wednesday Coordinator), Alison Li (DanceSport Coordinator), Joshua Von Korff (Rookie Coordinator), Krystine Saito (Team Manager), Donovan Sung (Treasurer), Morgan Ames (Competition Coordinator), Alisha Woo (Team Captain), Yuk Fai Tham (Spring Ball Coordinator), Albertina Thai (President), Zhi-Lei Zhang (Webmaster), Meryl Lynn Pestova (Publicity) Not pictured: Rachel McCullough-Sanden (Instructional Secretary), Robynne Klomp (Social Coordinator)

(Continued from front page)

Beginner Smooth Tango
2 Cesar del Peral & Alexis Brovko

Beginner Smooth Foxtrot
2 Cesar del Peral & Alexis Brovko

Newcomer/Beginner Salsa
2 Harry Hsieh & Marina Felton

Newcomer/Beginner Two Step
1 Mark Wu & Sarah Young

Newcomer/Beginner Hustle
2 Harry Hsieh & Marina Felton

Newcomer/Beginner Merengue
2 Cesar del Peral & Alexis Brovko

Newcomer/Beginner Lindy
3 Cesar del Peral & Alexis Brovko

Intermediate/Advanced Two Step
3 Harry Hsieh & Marina Felton

Beginner Rhythm EC Swing
1 Mark Wu & Sarah Young

Intermediate Rhythm EC Swing
1 Mark Wu & Sarah Young

Newcomer Latin Cha Cha
1 Kevin Sinats & Rachel McCullough-Sanden
2 Cesar del Peral & Alexis Brovko
3 Carl Mieczkowski & Na Pi

Newcomer Latin Rumba
1 Kevin Sinats & Rachel McCullough-Sanden
2 Cesar del Peral & Alexis Brovko
3 Geoff Forcella & Elizabeth Bolton

Beginner Latin Cha Cha
3 Dmitriy Vasilyuk & Alisha Woo

Beginner Latin Samba
2 Dmitriy Vasilyuk & Alisha Woo
3 Sriram Balasubramanian & Daria Mashnik

Beginner Latin Rumba
2 Dmitriy Vasilyuk & Alisha Woo

Intermediate Latin Cha Cha
1 Harry Hsieh & Marina Felton

Intermediate Latin Samba
2 Harry Hsieh & Marina Felton

Intermediate Latin Rumba
2 Harry Hsieh & Marina Felton

Intermediate Latin Jive
3 Harry Hsieh & Marina Felton

Advanced Latin Jive
3 Erwin Tenhumberg & Stephanie Berger

Annual Fall Ball Exceeds Expectations

by Rebecca Middleton

UCBD's annual Fall Ball was held on October 24, 2003 in the Chevron Auditorium of International House. The ballroom was beautifully decorated with blue and yellow streamers, blue balloons, yellow chrysanthemums, and gold stars and moons.

About 125 people attended from local dance studios and colleges in the Bay Area. Since it was a week before Halloween, some dancers wore costumes. The ball attendees included a pirate, a harlequin, a Dilbert character, and a Victorian lady.

The ball lasted from 8pm to midnight, and featured different types of ballroom music, from waltz and tango, to jive and hustle. The highlights of the ball were two fabulous demonstrations. One was an Argentine tango performance by Greg Olsen and his partner. The

other was a Lindy Hop dance team led by Persephone.

There were several dance contests during the evening. The first was a newspaper jive where couples danced on a sheet of newspaper. If they stepped off of the newspaper, they were disqualified. For the second round, they folded the newspapers in half and danced again. By the fourth round, none of the remaining followers had their feet on the ground. The winners of the newspaper jive were Rachel McCullough-Sanden and Kevin Sinats. There were also Jack and Jill contests in waltz and salsa.

Thank you to all our wonderful Fall Ball volunteers and attendees. We look forward to seeing you at our Bears' Ball on Friday, April 23, 2004! For more information, please contact springball@ucbd.org or visit our Web page, www.ucbd.org.



Clockwise from the top: Alisha Woo, Ted Mao, Albertina Thai, Daria Mashnik, Steven Chen, Rachel McCullough-Sanden, Josh Levenberg, Brett, Tim Motika, Scott Konishi, Marina Felton

TEAM TESTIMONIALS

"We are definitely one of the most enthusiastic groups around campus. We see each other up to four times a week, we hang out after practice, we laugh a lot, we have incredible amounts of fun, and sometimes we even eat dinner together. Oh, and we do quite a bit of ballroom dancing too, of course. But most importantly, we are a community, open and willing to accept each other, regardless of age, ethnicity, or any other benchmark. This community makes me feel like I belong somewhere, and for that, I am grateful."

–Donovan Sung

"There is nothing like walking home from dancing. Well, actually, dancing my way home, and getting confused looks from people on the street wondering why I seem to be so concentrated on walking slowly as they pass by."

–Josie Mae Cook



Dmitriy Vasilyuk, Geoff Forcella, Elizabeth Bolton, Donovan Sung, Sarah Young, Krystine Saito, Kevin Sinats, Meryl Lynn Pestano, Brian Vogel, Argyris Kahros

UCBD is a team that encourages everyone to have a good time and improve while doing so. The best part of my first semester here at Berkeley is by far being a part of UCBD."

"The best part of being on the UC Berkeley Ballroom dance team has been the great team atmosphere. It's a great place to get to know new people, and become accustomed to life in Berkeley as a new student. UCBD is a team that encourages everyone to have a good time and improve while doing so. The best part of my first semester here at Berkeley is by far being a part of UCBD."

–Kevin Sinats

"All the team members are wonderful people. We help each other out, cheer for each other. ... Our instructors are great. They spend so much time helping us, especially us beginners. I would love to have more opportunities ... to meet ballroom dancers at other universities, compete with them, and get better at dancing!"

–Alison Li

"I really like the ballroom dance team and all the activities we do together. I learned a lot in the [Bronze DanceSport] class and had a lot of fun and great experiences in the recent competitions. The teachers are great and all the senior [team] members are really helpful. It will be great if the team can go down to San Diego together in the spring!"

–Na Pi

"UCBD provides the resources and encouragement required to learn to dance. Participating is a great way to take a break from the busy academic week while still working hard and improving as a dancer."

–Ruth Murray

"I'm very excited to be part of UCBD this year. The size of our team has nearly doubled since the spring, and new team members include both complete beginners



Joshua Von Korff & Ruth Murray

and experienced dancers. A great deal of credit for the growth of our team should go to the instructors who have worked so many hours to teach us and inspire us. Yakov Bart, Stephanie Shaw, and Anya Solovyeva (and Yakov in particular) have been very generous with their time and advice, and we would not be where we are today without their help. Many thanks to Ava Kaye for teaching our silver DanceSport class with undiminished insight and wisdom for yet another semester; and to Renee Gallagher, Aira Bubnylyte, and Dan Kitsis for excellent instruction at our Saturday team technique classes."

–Joshua Von Korff



Yakov Bart

UC Ballroom Dancers Present:

BALLROOM DANCING FOR DANCERS AT EVERY LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE

WEDNESDAY SOCIAL LESSONS

Informal and fun, these weekly lessons feature popular club dances as well as ballroom classics. No dancing experience or partner is required.

BRONZE AND SILVER DANCESPORT

For the more serious dancer, these lessons aim at preparing individuals for competition. No partner is required; however, while no experience is necessary for Bronze, Silver is for advanced dancers who are already familiar with the Bronze syllabus.

TEAM

The UC Ballroom Dancers Team is for serious beginning or advanced dancers who are willing to commit to weekly practices and wish to participate in competitions. Benefits include free practice space and weekly practices supervised by advanced dancers (for beginning dancers) or a professional instructor (for advanced dancers).

For more information about these programs and other dancing opportunities, please see our website: www.ucbd.org

Did you know...

Number of dances our club teaches: 26

Number of competitions we attend annually as a team: 4

Number of new team members recruited this year: 50

Number of fliers we put up in a week: 200

Number of couples entered in the SJSU Competition: 21

Average cost of an new standard dress: \$1200

Average registration cost for a college competition per person: \$15

Number of hours team members practice a week, on average: 4

Cost of a new pair of ballroom shoes: \$40-150

Cost of a one-hour private lesson: \$50-100

Cost of a 3-hour Wednesday social dance lesson and party: \$3

Club Sets the Ball Rolling for Dancing—Casual and Competitive

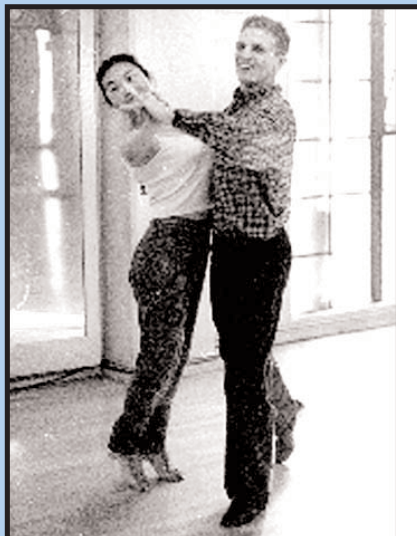
By Asya Passinsky
Published in The Daily Californian
Thursday, October 23, 2003

In a generation of pop culture and hip-hop, it's hard to find something as classic and elegant as ballroom dancing. "Our grandparents danced, but our parents didn't. It's not cool to do what our parents did," says UC Ballroom Dancers President Josh Von Korff.

Well, I say, cheers to our grandparents, because ballroom dancing seems to be in full swing again. This semester alone the UC Ballroom Dancing club (www.ucbd.org) attracted 40 new members, bringing the competitive team count to 70 dancers.

The great allure, besides the obvious benefit of becoming graceful and charming, may be that no prior experience is necessary. In fact, most members never danced before coming to college.

Of course, that means a lot of practice. After learning new steps Tuesday night and dancing socially Wednesday night, dancers perfect their cha-chas and twirls with the team coach on Saturday. While beginners train anywhere from two to five hours a week, the advanced hardcore dancers can go up to three hours a day.



Xiaojuan Liu & Joshua Von Korff

But in order to get to that level, first they need to find a compatible partner. For beginners it's fairly easy, but advanced dancers use an online partner search to look for suitable matches.

"It wasn't until my third year that I found a regular practice partner, and she ended up as my girlfriend," says dancer Ted Mao.

That can be an added bonus, but the main goal of the club is to be eligible for collegiate competitions, the first of which is coming up on Nov. 15 at San Jose State University. There, dancers can compete at varying levels, all the way from newcomer to an open category, where there are no restrictions.

Newcomers do not wear costumes, but more advanced dancers show off elaborate \$1,000 gowns in the hope of catching the judges' ever-coveted eyes. Other tactics are used as well.

"In the jive you can be jumping, winking at the judges...anything to get the judges to notice you," explains Team Captain Christina Shenvi.

For this reason, competitions tend to get very noisy and rowdy, as every college diligently yells out the number of its couple (the man has a number pinned on his back) so that the judges will pay attention to them.

According to Von Korff, the hardest part of competition is holding your arms up for so long. "Very little strength is required to do it wrong, but a lot of strength is required to do it well," he says.

Adds Shenvi, "It doesn't necessarily look like you're doing much, but some dances, just to stay in the right posture requires a lot of muscular exertion."

It's that combination of grace and athleticism that makes ballroom dancing so unique.

"The body is creating art, but a lot of technical skill is necessary in order to create that art," says UC Ballroom Dancers Secretary Krystine Saito.

For those of us that aren't up to creating art, there's always social dance every Wednesday night at Hearst Gym, where no commitment and no experience is necessary. And the annual Fall Ball, where students of all levels can have fun and show off their dance skills, is this Friday. So don your best gown and dance the night away.

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