

JAM DANCE TEAMS

DECEMBER 2013 NEWSLETTER

Happy Holidays, Officials and Coaches!

What a great start to the competition season! Four weeks of meets are already behind us! Teams are finding their rhythm and making those all-important team cuts and choreography changes. We are certainly enjoying the performances and we look forward to seeing how the routines will evolve over the next eight weeks.

As a reminder, these newsletters are meant to be entertaining and educational. If there are topics you would like to see us cover, please let us know!

We hope you all have a wonderful holiday with your families! Best wishes in 2014!

Enjoy your winter break!
JAM Core Group

JAM MISSION STATEMENT:

JAM was formed for the purpose of promoting, training and increasing the number of quality dance team officials throughout the state of Minnesota.

JAM subscribes to a four-fold mission: 1) To provide information and facilitate discussions between judges, coaches, activities directors and MSHSL. 2) To encourage standards of sportsmanship at meets and competitions. 3) To offer a mentoring program to new and/or inexperienced judges. 4) To maintain and support its quality judges and strive to increase our credibility as trained, knowledgeable professionals.



Competition Etiquette Reminder

Coaches, as we approach the second half of the dance team season, now is a good time to remind your dancers, their parents and your fans about proper competition etiquette. Most of the time, the announcer will have read some information about conduct and the majority of the spectators at our meets follow the guidelines very well. However, there are some who just don't seem to "get it."

Here are few notes to pass along to your fan base regarding conduct at a meet.

- There is to be no walking through the judges area. Even it's the fastest/easiest/most convenient way to get to your seat or your group of fans, you are not allowed to be in or go through the judges area. We don't like having to act as bleacher police.
- If you are entering the gym in between routines, find your seat quickly. You should be seated as soon as the announcer brings the next team onto the floor. There has been quite a bit of time spent waiting on spectators to take their seat this year. Help us keep the meet on schedule by exiting/entering/sitting as quickly as possible.
- If you are seated in front of the judges, please try to avoid clapping above your head or waving your arms in the air during a performance. This happens. A lot. It's hard to see what's going on during the performance.
- Chairs on the floor next to the coaches table are for dancers and coaches only. They are not for parents, former dancers or coaches, little sisters, children, etc. This is stated in the rules book and can result in penalties.
- As always, good sportsmanship is expected. Please be respectful of all teams performing and limit your chitchat during routines, especially if you are seated near the judges. We also notice when particular groups of fans cheer for all teams or just their team.

Below is an excerpt from a recent article on competition logistics from the MN HS Dance Team blog regarding officials.

"The judges are not refs of the NFL. They are professionals who deserve respect for the time and talent they freely offer to our sport for limited gain. While you may or may not agree with everything they say, dance team sportsmanship expects you to keep your words and actions appropriate towards them."

We want the competition experience to be a positive one for dancers, coaches, parents and fans. Please help educate your fans on the proper conventions at competitions.

Save the Date

Jan 11	SUPER HOT SATURDAY All Officials Needed
Jan 18	HOT SATURDAY Most Officials Needed
Feb 1	Core Group Applications Due
Feb 1	Section Meets
Feb 8	Section Meets
Feb 14	State Tournament (Jazz)
Feb 15	State Tournament (Kick)
Mar 1	Spring General Membership Meeting

CONNECT WITH JAM

WEBSITE:

www.jamdanceteams.org

CORE GROUP EMAIL:

jamcoregroup@gmail.com

SCHEDULING TEAM EMAIL:

jamscheduler@gmail.com



Mentor Program Update

JAM's annual mentoring program took place at three different meet this month. Five groups were graciously hosted at the Apple Valley invitational on December 7 and at the Fridley and Eastview invitationals on December 14.

Our mentoring program is now a requirement of all first and second year judging members. Previously, this program was optional but highly encouraged. We felt that the experience of the mentor program was such an essential piece of an official's education that we are now using this program as an extension of our mandatory training.

This year's mentors included **Stacy Abel, Becky Blissenbach, Kaelynn Kampa, Lauren Theobald** and **Missy Tutewohl**.

First and second year members participating in the program included **Ashley Bartlett, Amanda Clemens, Laura Christopherson, Alana Emmerich, Payton Erickson, Laura Grimlund, Kelly Hagen, Charity Hall, Emily Johnson, Kimberly Johnson, Shelbey Jurek, Amanda Kuehn, Natasha Meister, Melissa Penner, Rachael Rupp, Kate Schmaltz, Crystal Swenson, Britt Thelemann, Lindsay Weber, Sara Weis** and **Brianna Welle**.

The mentor program participants were coached in all aspects of judging, kick counting/timing and tabulation procedures. A unique element of our mentor program is the ability for the mentors and mentorees to talk about their scores in real time in the stands.

Below are some comments from this year's participants.

"My mentor showed us techniques that can help improve our scoring by showing us how to notice our own tendencies."

"My mentor was very helpful and answered all of my questions, and gave me lots of info on every aspect of judging."

"My mentor was great at giving us as much info as possible throughout the day and sharing her thoughts, as well as asking our opinions after each performance."

Special thanks to Apple Valley, Fridley and Eastview for hosting mentor program groups this year. We appreciate your support of JAM's continuing education and training!

Guest Interview: Matt Wallace



Many of you know the familiar voice and face of Matt Wallace, but we thought it would be fun to learn a little more about one of our go-to dance team announcers and sound technicians.

Q: What is your background?

A: I would honestly say dance team is a large part of my background because I've been around it for 18 years. From a "real job" standpoint, I've been in the radio industry for about 12 years and really love my job. I do a lot of emceeing of events and volunteer work. I have been married for ten years and have a five-year-old daughter and three-year-old son.

Q: How did you get involved in dance team meets?

A: I remember cutting music for my danceline girlfriend back at South St. Paul in '88. I used a dual cassette deck. I also recall going to watch State at the St. Paul Auditorium and thinking how I wanted to be like that short, smiley sound guy that was there.

Back in 1995, Jennifer Steenberg (of Simley) and I had worked on some music stuff together. I was starting a little DJ service at the time and had a capable sound system. I did the sound for their invitational and away we went! From that point on, I got asked to work meets a lot.

Now, I have a lot of professional relationships in dance, but also a huge friendship base. I've gotten to know so many coaches, judges and parents throughout the years. How awesome is that!

Q: When you're working a competition, what does your typical day look like?

A: Saturday invitationals are really long days for me. For a competition starting at 10am, I'm usually up by 5am and at the gym by 6:30am setting up for marking time that starts at 7:30. If awards are scheduled for 6pm, I'm usually home by 8pm after tearing down and loading all my equipment back into the trailer.

Q: What is your favorite part about announcing/running sound for dance team meets? How do you stay energized throughout long invitational days?

A: I look forward to all the great performances. I've been in this long enough that I do appreciate the routines.

I love when there is energy in the gym. Some fans are more enthusiastic than others. I like the gym loud. I like teams have the chairs full and need to pile additional dancers on the bleachers. Those girls usually support their team very loudly and I just think that brings a lot of energy to the whole event.

I do look forward to each little break, even if it's just a five minute break for the judges to switch sides. Each session completed feels like a milestone and gets you that much closer to awards. The pressure for me, personally, comes with actually pushing the "play" button. Announcing is the easy part. Making sure a team's music is played correctly and the same as all others is important.

Q: What do you see for the future of sound with dance team?

A: I think what we need is to find a few more sound guys that can tailor their sound systems to best fit this sport. We need more people that care, which can mean running cables around the entire gym, extra work taping down cables, having large enough sound to cover a large gym, speed control (duh). But it's a legit concern. We all have nightmares about having someone inexperienced coming in to do the job. Somehow we just need more people doing this job well.

Q: What is the strangest/funniest/most embarrassing moment you've had while working a meet?

A: My voice always breaks down at the end of really long events so it cracks a lot. I try to just move past it quickly, but it's embarrassing (and funny). Some of the most memorable moments happen at marking. One year at Sections, the parents had taped a sign to a trash barrel near the dancers' exit. It said, "Barf Here." You know how marking at Sections goes...nerves plus half the team is sick that time of year. Sure enough, that barrel saw lots of use that day. I've really seen it all...kicks to someone else's face that end up in bloody noses, nerves at marking that lead to peeing oneself, medical emergencies in and out of the gym. I really do have a front row seat to it all!

In the Spotlight

Get to know...

KATE SCHMALTZ



Resides In: Coon Rapids
Occupation: Administrative Assistant at Associated Clinic of Psychology
JAM Member Since: 2013

Q: What is your favorite part about being a MSHSL dance team official?

A: Since this is my first year officiating, I am not sure what my favorite part is yet. I love that dance has returned to my life and I hope to meet several people on this awesome journey!

Q: Tell us a little about your dance background.

A: I started dancing when I was three. I was a really shy kid and dance helped me meet people and come out of my shell. I danced on the Brainerd Warrior Dance Team my freshman and sophomore year. I managed the team my junior and senior year because I could no longer dance after knee surgery.

Q: Favorite dance team trend.

A: I can't pick just one favorite!

Q: Outside of dance, what are your interests and hobbies?

A: I love to sew and quilt! I am also getting into other crafty things like painting and photography.

Q: What is something people would be surprised to know about you?

A: I am a certified doula!

LORA MEIER



Resides In: Ramsey
Occupation: Full-time Mom
JAM Member Since: 2009

Q: What is your favorite part about being a MSHSL dance team official?

A: It's so fun to be involved in dance without having to pull a muscle! I enjoy seeing what new things the dance teams have to show each year. The technique executed by the girls these days is amazing. It's also great to be a part of a group of like-minded ladies - we all love dance!

Q: Tell us a little about your dance background.

A: I started studio dance when I was ten and continued that for five years. I was an assistant teacher my last year at studio. I joined the Champlin Park dance team when I was a sophomore. I was a choreographer my junior and senior year and a captain my senior year. I was also on the St. Thomas dance team during my short stint as a student there in 1997.

Q: Favorite dance team trend.

A: I'm kind of loving the throwback look that I've seen on some teams this year. Some of the costumes are looking like a modern version of what I wore back in the day: high collar, long sleeves, ruffled skirts. I think they're leaving out the shoulder pads, though!

Q: Outside of dance, what are your interests and hobbies?

A: I am avid about going to the gym. I love good literature, bad reality TV and shoes, shoes, shoes.

Q: What is something people would be surprised to know about you?

A: I had lived in six states by the time I was eight. I was an "Army brat." When I moved to Minnesota from Kansas, the kids here thought I had an accent and I thought they all had an accent.

LISA HART



Resides In: Chanhassen
Occupation: Product Manager USA at MLT Vacations

JAM Member Since: 1999, founding member

Q: What is your favorite part about being a MSHSL dance team official?

A: The chance to stay involved in and be a part of something that I absolutely love and to see the changes and incredible dances year to year.

Q: Tell us a little about your dance background.

A: I grew up as a studio dancer and started at age two at Stage Door. I have traveled around the country for dance and attended many state, regional and national competitions - I was first in the nation at one point! I was a member of the St. Cloud State Dance Team and actually changed it over from kick to jazz. I have choreographed and taught dance and cheer camps for UPA and JFK across Minnesota, the Midwest, Canada and Mexico. I was a principal dancer in "The Entertainer" at the Guthrie Theater. I have danced at bowl games and professionally for the Timberwolves and North Stars. I have judged many studio dance competitions, dance scholarships, and several state, national and international competitions.

Q: Favorite dance team trend.

A: The inclusion of more stylized dance moves and the "out of the box" choreography.

Q: Outside of dance, what are your interests and hobbies?

A: Traveling, watching sports (my son plays football), shopping, riding on the back of the Harley, amateur photography.

Q: What is something people would be surprised to know about you?

A: I was a cheerleader in high school. And, I also work at the Emmy's, Oscars and Super Bowl halftime shows.

Emergency Procedures

It's that time of year again. Icy roads, white-out conditions, snowstorms and below zero temperatures are back. Although the weather might be frightful, it's not very often that dance team competitions get canceled. Follow these guidelines when dealing with bad winter weather:

- Consider the meet on until you hear otherwise.**
 The Superior Judge will be in contact with the meet coordinator or host school and if the meet is going to be canceled, she will contact the assigned officials immediately. During weekdays, if school is canceled, chances are the evening activities will also be canceled. Watch your inbox for a message from your Superior Judge.
- Plan ahead for time and traffic.**
 Allow yourself plenty of time to get to the meet. Don't put yourself in the position where you feel rushed or are running behind. Drive safely and beware of accidents and road conditions. Visit www.511mn.org before your trip to get up-to-date analysis of Minnesota roads.
- Use common sense.**
 If it is too dangerous to drive to your assigned meet, contact the Superior Judge and Scheduling Team immediately. Email AND call both parties. We may be able to find a last minute replacement or shuffle around the assigned officials. Your personal safety is more important than risking your life driving to a meet.
- Accidents happen.**
 No matter how well you prepare, sometimes things happen. A stalled or stuck vehicle or an accident are very real possibilities this time of year. Keep a winter emergency kit in your car. Make sure to save your Superior Judge's cell phone number in your phone and after you've called for emergency personnel, call her to let her know of your situation. It is better to know that you are okay but can't make it, than to not hear from you and wonder if you'll be coming.

The Benefits of Taking a Break

Excerpts from an article by Ashley Rivers, Dance Spirit Magazine

The holidays are just around the corner. Competitions are put on hold until early January and, for some teams, that means a break from practice, too. For others, practice will continue. Learn why taking a break might be just the thing your dancers need to take them to the next level.

A break is the perfect chance to let your body reboot for its next challenge and allow budding overuse injuries to heal. According to Kay Sandel, assistant professor of ballet, anatomy and pedagogy at Oklahoma City University, the benefits of taking a break can be as much mental as physical. A break is a chance to mentally process everything you've learned and prepare to receive new material. "You have to recharge your body and mind, and when you come back, you'll probably find that things fall into place much easier than they did before," she says.

"A break is repairing time," says Carol Holyoke, a physical therapist who works with dancers at The Juilliard School. She recommends taking the time to focus on eating lots of nutrients and getting enough sleep. It's a great time to cross-train. Basic yoga or Pilates can help keep muscles long and strong. Low-impact cardiovascular exercises such as swimming or biking are also great ways to keep your endurance up without putting strain on your already tired dancing muscles. Sandel also recommends incorporating visualization techniques into your break - imagine yourself performing your routine effortlessly.

Even with the benefits in mind, it can be difficult to take a full break. You may be worried that you'll fall behind. You may be taking one small step back but you'll be able to take two steps forward after the break.

Each team approaches winter break with its own training philosophy. You need to do what works and what is best for your team. Enjoy your break, however you choose to spend it!

Late Season Meet Requests

Email our Scheduling Team:
jamscheduler@gmail.com

We have now assigned officials through mid-January meets. There is still some room on the schedule for dual, tri or quad meets. Please contact the Scheduling Team as soon as possible if you wish to add these to our calendar.

2013-14 Scheduling Statistics

138 Total Meets Requested

58 Invitationals

38 Conference Meets

18 Conference Championships

12 Dual, Tri or Quad Meets

12 Section Tournaments

1,278 Total Officiating Roles

813 Judge Positions

267 Kick Counter/Timer Positions

196 Tabulator Positions

Thank you for your continued support of JAM! We love what we do and we're very happy to be a part of so many dance team events this season!

Member News



WEDDINGS & ENGAGEMENTS

Lauren Jenkins is newly engaged to Derek Hageness. Congratulations!



BABIES

Erin Lutz is expecting a baby girl in early February. Just in time for State!



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Nicole Heide	12/15
Britt Thelemann	12/18
Lisa Allison	12/18
Julie Bayerl	12/29
Bridget Tully	12/30

2013-2014 Meets Scheduled with JAM

Date	Day	Site	Type
11/18/13	Monday	Chisago Lakes	Mississippi 8 Conference Meet
11/21/13	Thursday	Wayzata	Lake Conference Meet
11/22/13	Friday	Coon Rapids	Northwest Suburban Conference Meet
11/23/13	Saturday	Maple Grove	Invitational
11/23/13	Saturday	Shakopee	Invitational
11/23/13	Saturday	Southland (Adams)	Small Invitational
11/25/13	Monday	Monticello	Mississippi 8 Conference Meet
11/26/13	Tuesday	Lakeville North	South Suburban Conference Meet
11/26/13	Tuesday	Pierz	Dual Meet
11/26/13	Tuesday	Sauk Rapids-Rice	Central Lakes Conference Meet
11/26/13	Tuesday	Shakopee	Missota Conference Meet
11/26/13	Tuesday	South St. Paul	Classic Suburban Conference Meet
12/2/13	Monday	Andover	Northwest Suburban Conference Meet
12/3/13	Tuesday	Brainerd	Dual Meet
12/5/13	Thursday	Fridley	North Suburban Conference Meet
12/5/13	Thursday	Hermantown	Dual Meet
12/5/13	Thursday	Holy Angels	Missota Conference Meet
12/5/13	Thursday	Minnetonka	Lake Conference Meet
12/6/13	Friday	Rochester John Marshall	All-City Triangular
12/7/13	Saturday	Apple Valley	Invitational
12/7/13	Saturday	Chaska	Invitational
12/7/13	Saturday	Detroit Lakes	Invitational
12/7/13	Saturday	Forest Lake	Invitational
12/7/13	Saturday	Hayfield	Invitational
12/7/13	Saturday	New Ulm Cathedral	Quad Meet
12/7/13	Saturday	Rogers	Invitational
12/7/13	Saturday	Target Center	WOW Factor Sports Invitational
12/9/13	Monday	Blaine	Northwest Suburban Conference Meet
12/9/13	Monday	Farmington	Missota Conference Meet
12/9/13	Monday	North Branch	Mississippi 8 Conference Meet
12/10/13	Tuesday	St. Croix Lutheran	Tri-Metro Conference Meet
12/10/13	Tuesday	Tartan	Classic Suburban Conference Meet
12/11/13	Wednesday	Eden Prairie	Lake Conference Meet
12/12/13	Thursday	Aitkin	Northern Lights Conference Meet
12/12/13	Thursday	New London-Spicer	Wright County Conference Meet
12/12/13	Thursday	Zimmerman	Granite Ridge Conference Meet
12/14/13	Saturday	BOLD	Invitational
12/14/13	Saturday	Bemidji	Invitational
12/14/13	Saturday	Eastview	Invitational
12/14/13	Saturday	Edina	Invitational
12/14/13	Saturday	Fridley	Invitational
12/14/13	Saturday	Hutchinson	Invitational
12/14/13	Saturday	Lakeville North	Invitational
12/14/13	Saturday	Rochester John Marshall	Invitational
12/14/13	Saturday	Zumbrota-Mazeppa	Invitational

2013-2014 Meets Scheduled with JAM

Date	Day	Site	Type
12/16/13	Monday	Buffalo	Mississippi 8 Conference Meet
12/16/13	Monday	Elk River	Northwest Suburban Conference Meet
12/16/13	Monday	Forest Lake	Suburban East Conference Meet
12/16/13	Monday	Rosemount	South Suburban Conference Meet
12/17/13	Tuesday	Fergus Falls	Quad Meet
12/17/13	Tuesday	Northfield	Missota Conference Meet
12/19/13	Thursday	Edina	Lake Conference Meet
12/19/13	Thursday	Marshall School, Duluth	Dual Meet
12/19/13	Thursday	Mayer Lutheran	Minnesota River Conference Meet
12/19/13	Thursday	TMB	Quad Meet
12/20/13	Friday	Benilde-St. Margaret's	North Suburban Conference Championship
12/20/13	Friday	Frazee	Invitational
12/20/13	Friday	Richfield	Classic Suburban Conference Championship
12/20/13	Friday	Rochester Mayo	All-City Triangular
12/20/13	Friday	St. Cloud Tech	Central Lake Conference Meet
12/21/13	Saturday	Burnsville	South Suburban Conference Championship
12/21/13	Saturday	Holy Angels	Invitational
12/21/13	Saturday	Lake City	Invitational
1/4/14	Saturday	Alexandria	Invitational
1/4/14	Saturday	Belle Plaine	Invitational
1/4/14	Saturday	Henry Sibley	Invitational
1/4/14	Saturday	Plainview-Elgin-Millville	Invitational
1/4/14	Saturday	RCW	Invitational
1/6/14	Monday	BBE	Invitational
1/6/14	Monday	Sauk Rapids-Rice	All-Area Meet
1/6/14	Monday	Willmar	Quad Meet
1/7/14	Tuesday	Jordan	Minnesota River Conference Meet
1/7/14	Tuesday	Litchfield	Dual Meet
1/9/14	Thursday	ACGC	Small Invitational
1/9/14	Thursday	Holy Family	Wright County Conference Meet
1/9/14	Thursday	Hopkins	Lake Conference Meet
1/9/14	Thursday	Rochester Century	All-City Triangular
1/9/14	Thursday	St. Cloud Cathedral	Granite Ridge Conference Meet
1/11/14	Saturday	Aitkin	Invitational
1/11/14	Saturday	Chaska	Missota Conference Championship
1/11/14	Saturday	Hawley	Invitational
1/11/14	Saturday	Lakeville South	Invitational
1/11/14	Saturday	Maple Grove	Northwest Suburban Conference Championship
1/11/14	Saturday	Marshall	Invitational
1/11/14	Saturday	Minnetonka	Invitational
1/11/14	Saturday	Park (Cottage Grove)	Invitational
1/11/14	Saturday	Rochester Century	Invitational
1/11/14	Saturday	St. Francis	Mississippi 8 Conference Championship
1/11/14	Saturday	Waconia	Invitational
1/11/14	Saturday	Winona	Invitational

2013-2014 Meets Scheduled with JAM

Date	Day	Site	Type
1/13/14	Monday	Melrose	Mini Invitational
1/16/14	Thursday	Belle Plaine	Minnesota River Conference Meet
1/16/14	Thursday	Concordia Academy	Tri-Metro Conference Meet
1/16/14	Thursday	Minnetonka	Lake Conference Meet
1/17/14	Friday	Pine River-Backus	Northern Lights Conference Meet
1/18/14	Saturday	Delano	Wright County Conference Championship
1/18/14	Saturday	Faribault	Big 9 Conference Championship
1/18/14	Saturday	Farmington	Invitational
1/18/14	Saturday	Mayer Lutheran	Invitational
1/18/14	Saturday	Monticello	Invitational
1/18/14	Saturday	Pelican Rapids	Invitational
1/18/14	Saturday	St. Charles	Three Rivers Conference Championship
1/18/14	Saturday	Totino-Grace	Invitational
1/18/14	Saturday	Wayzata	Invitational
1/18/14	Saturday	YME	Invitational
1/23/14	Thursday	Becker	Granite Ridge Conference Championship
1/23/14	Thursday	YME	West Central Conference Championship
1/24/14	Friday	Goodhue	Hiawatha Valley Conference Championship
1/24/14	Friday	Pequot Lakes	Northern Lights Conference Championship
1/25/14	Saturday	Blaine	Invitational
1/25/14	Saturday	Canby	Camden County Conference Championship
1/25/14	Saturday	Eastview	Showcase
1/25/14	Saturday	Fergus Falls	Invitational
1/25/14	Saturday	GFW	Invitational
1/25/14	Saturday	Holy Angels	Catholic Jamboree Invitational
1/25/14	Saturday	New London-Spicer	Invitational
1/25/14	Saturday	Prior Lake	Invitational
1/25/14	Saturday	Simley	Invitational
1/27/14	Monday	Brooklyn Center	Tri-Metro Conference Championship
1/28/14	Saturday	Dover-Eyota	Invitational
1/30/14	Thursday	Cannon Falls	Invitational
1/31/14	Friday	Lakeview (Cottonwood)	Invitational
2/1/14	Saturday	Chisago Lakes	2AA Section
2/1/14	Saturday	Mound Westonka	3AA Section
2/1/14	Saturday	Sauk Rapids-Rice	4AA Section
2/1/14	Saturday	Wayzata	2AAA Section
2/1/14	Saturday	Elk River	4AAA Section
2/7/14	Friday	Paynesville	Dual Meet
2/8/14	Saturday	Dover-Eyota	1A Section
2/8/14	Saturday	Bloomington Kennedy	2A Section
2/8/14	Saturday	Montevideo	3A Section
2/8/14	Saturday	Aitkin	4A Section
2/8/14	Saturday	Austin	1AA Section
2/8/14	Saturday	Bloomington Kennedy	1AAA Section
2/8/14	Saturday	Bloomington Kennedy	3AAA Section