

# New Team Selections

by Lynn Singer

## *Tryouts*

...are stressful enough for everyone involved! Help yourself, your judges, and especially your auditionees by keeping things moving as quickly and smoothly as possible.

## *Just the Skills, Please*

Remember that you're asking your judges to select individuals that show potential. You're not looking for your star performers here, rather, a core group that will blend well when performing together. Be sure your tryout routine contains the minimum basic skills that your team will perform, and perhaps a few more difficult steps that you'll incorporate in later routines or shows. You may choose to have splits or specific equipment skills executed after the main routine is completed.

Here is a basic checklist:

### Dance

- Chasse
- Pas de Bouree
- Pirouette
- Chaine/Pique Turn
- Grand Jete
- Toe Touch
- Kick Series
- Splits

### Auxiliary

- Spinning technique
- Posture (body carriage)
- Tosses
- Free hand positions
- Marching technique
- Also dance technique

Each group should take less than 10 minutes to complete the audition. Trust your judges' expertise. They will be able to see your stronger performers in this amount of time when you use a smart plan to showcase skills.

## *Simplify the Scoresheet*

Make your judges' job easy – keep the paperwork to a minimum. (Your tabulator will appreciate it too!) Whenever possible, use one sheet for each group that is trying out (see sample on next page). List the skills in the order the judges will see them. Make your total possible

points a number that is easy to add/subtract. Tabulation is easier when you look at a 100 point scale rather than a 70 point scale. Have your judges turn in their score sheets as each group finishes so the tabulation process will run simultaneously with the auditions.

## *Judging Standards*

Judging is a very subjective process. There is no universal standard for selecting new team members. So, it's your job to communicate your expectations to your judges. Are you looking for just the most technical performers? The best showmanship? All around skills?

First, be sure you've weighted your scoresheet to reflect emphasis on the areas that are important to your team. If technique is most important, give that area the highest point value.

Second, to help the consistency of your judging panel, set a minimum point value a student needs to score to make the team. Going into tryouts, everyone will know they need to score say, 70 or higher.

Third, tell your judges approximately how many team members you're looking for. This will help them assign points more accurately.

## *Personnel*

To keep the pace going, you'll need plenty of helpers with specific duties. Here's a list with job descriptions:

Director: Oversee; make sure everyone is doing his/her job

Inside Door Person: posted inside the audition room at the door where candidates will enter. Cues the outside door person to let the next group enter.

Outside Door Person: posted outside the audition room at the door where candidates will enter. Gets each group lined up in numerical order to enter as soon as the previous group finishes.

Music Person: just like it sounds, this person cues and runs the music for each audition group.

Administrator: required by some school districts, this is a principal or vice-principal present throughout auditions to verify the integrity of the process. Can be a real support for the director should a parent complaint arise.

Tabulator: adds, averages and ranks the scores.

