

August 2009

Attn: Judges and Competitors Committees

Dear Mayo and Kate, Sam, Glennis and Ron.

Whilst fully appreciating the good intentions behind the Rule Change #3 - Rule IX.A.1.g. Lifts and Dangerous Moves, passed at the last NDCA meeting, the wording of the rule is causing confusion amongst Judges, Choreographers and Competitors. Specifically in the lack of distinction between an assisted lift (illegal) versus connected jumps/leaps (legal?) and what exactly constitutes a Dangerous Move. There is also some concern at the prospect of having the rule enforced by judges (only two judges in agreement is enough to disqualify a couple) whose primary task is to evaluate the dancing.

We therefore request that the NDCA place a moratorium on application of the rule until the NDCA January meeting.

The purpose of the moratorium would be to create a breathing space within which to allow greater discussion and input from a wider array of choreographers, competitors and judges.

If any amendments or revisions arise from such discussions that are deemed desirable, they could be formulated into a proposed rule change rule to be voted on at the January NDCA meeting.

In the meantime the Chairman of judges has the authority to address any unseemly behavior on the competition floor as he or she might deem necessary.

Sincerely,

List of signatories

Judges:

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Competitors:

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Choreographers:

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Some of the Concerns Raised

- Fairness – To try to ensure fairness in the results, the more prestigious the event the more judges there are on the floor. This rule gives just two judges the power to get a couple disqualified or marked down.
- Competitors Right of Appeal – There is no mechanism in place to address the competitor's right to appeal a dangerous move assessment either upon notification at the event or after the event via videotape evidence.
- Rule is Too Vague –only example of "Dangerous Move" given is "High Back Kick", what else would qualify? On Lifts section there is no distinction drawn between lifts and connected Jumps/ Leaps. This is already stifling choreographers creativity due to their concern over possibly offending the sensibilities of any one judge and drawing a "D" notice down on the couple they are choreographing for.
- Lack of Context – A "High Back Kick" is not dangerous if performed in adequate space. Any basic move in any dance can be dangerous if the closeness of proximity to another individual results in contact.
- Education - There has been no systematic effort to inform fully the Judges, Choreographers or Competitors as to exactly what this Rule entails.