

A LONG TIME COMING!

When StarQuest launched 16 years ago it proved that a competition COULD always run "On Time". Now, we need to show that families can feel secure that what their children will watch on stage is safe for "family viewing"!

The most sensitive topic in the dance competition industry today is inappropriateness. StarQuest is a family oriented competition experience and, as a founding member of the FDC, we strongly support the guidelines regarding inappropriate routines established by the FDC. These guidelines are:

"Choreography, costuming, and/or the use of dance themes such as rape, suicide, murder, sex, domestic violence, anorexia, and dark undertones chosen and/or presented to competition audiences with a lack of "artistic discretion" is considered inappropriate. The FDC appreciates the art form, creativity and desire to heighten world awareness of these themes through dance but deem it inappropriate to present them to audiences that include children of every age. We recognize that this is extremely subjective and sensitive. Therefore, each competition will individually address these performances as they surface at each particular event. An entry that is ultimately deemed inappropriate by an FDC competition will be adjudicated only. We urge all studio owners, teachers, and especially parents to keep performances thematically and choreographically appropriate."

Therefore, any routine which our judges deem as inappropriate will be announced as "Adjudicated Only". This means that although the routine will receive its true adjudication level of Platinum, High Gold, Gold, High Silver, or Silver it will NOT be eligible for Top Score Awards. The performers in the routine will not have points deducted and will still get their well deserved adjudication award for their execution of the routine. However, the routine will remain completely ineligible for Top Score consideration. This penalizes the routine for inappropriateness but NOT for the performance of the routine. We believe this is an important distinction because it is up to the Studio Owner and the Choreographer to insure that the routine is family oriented.

We encourage all choreographers to push boundaries but to also maintain a heightened awareness of who is in the audience. Appropriateness begins in the studio and StarQuest will do its best to help maintain it. We know that some of you may find the decision of the judges this season to be too lenient while others may find the judges too strict. Either way, we are resolved to improve the competition experience for everyone. Hopefully, we will begin to see immediate positive results.

I have instructed my Tour Managers to heighten the judges' awareness of this issue every single weekend. We will have 3 different judges in every city and they have diverse tastes and styles. Appropriateness and scoring accuracy are our top priorities. I believe we can turn the tide in 2009 and look forward to an incredibly positive and "family oriented" season. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to share with us any thoughts or ideas in

this regard.

If you have ANY question about the “appropriateness” of one of your routines please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you again and have a great holiday!

Steve Wappel