



# World Dance Council

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## The President

Donnie Burns MBE

A meeting took place as scheduled between the Presidium and Executive Board Representatives of WDC and many American competitors on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at the United States Dancesport Championships in Orlando, Florida. **This is the official report of those in attendance from WDC. Hear-say reports are not our domain.**

WDC were represented by President Mr. Donnie Burns MBE, Vice President Mr. Jack Rothweiler (from USA) Presidium advisor Mr. Martin Chiang of ABC, and Mr. Jerry Abrate and Sergey Ryupin of the Dancesport Executive Board.

Mr. Paul Richardson, Vice-Chairman of the World Competitors Commission also attended to represent the interests of the competitors.

The organizers, Mr. Martin Chiang and Mr. Wayne Eng were thanked for their co-operation and hospitality in providing the venue and supporting the WDC and the US competitors.

It was discussed and explained that whilst no formal complaint had actually been made and the NDCA (current WDC member for USA) and competitors commission indeed had actually been by-passed, nonetheless the WDC deemed it appropriate to respond to the true nature and with a view to accuracy concerning the alleged complaints.

The WDC President stated his regret at the apparent deterioration of journalistic standards which seemed to have reared it's ugly head recently.

**Discussion ensued as to information, confirmed in writing, that part-time staff from a chain-studio group in the US were actually shared with a US dance publication. This appeared to have been unknown. Mr. Rothweiler confirmed that Fred Astaire's were not involved.**

It was clarified that the alleged letter of complaint had actually been forwarded by a founder member of an alternative professional organization and the WDC, after having been contacted by several of the names mentioned in the letter, expressed their interest in finding out whether or not any of the names had actually signed. From communications during the week it would appear that most had not.

As a gesture of respect to the concerns of US competitors it was confirmed that the WDC had paid for the President to attend the meeting. A comprehensive list of all US invited judges from 1995 to today was prepared and distributed at the meeting, showing that far from being unjustly excluded the US had actually almost always been invited to adjudicate all five World Championships each year. Moreover, far from being unjustly dealt the recent tightening of rules regarding representation at WDC events proposed by the competitors

had been amended to include an exception for the situation in the USA, actually favoring the competitors from that country.

Whilst it is fair to say that of course the competitors from the US strongly wished to have US representatives on adjudicating panels, most did not know of the previous rule whereby the top three placed couples' countries would be automatically included in the next years' panel. They also did not know that this had been deleted and that minutes of that meeting appeared to indicate that the NDCA had voted for the deletion.

As a unanimous vote all competitors wished that this rule be proposed for re-consideration and hopeful re-insertion at the next appropriate meeting of the WDC Dancesport Committee.

It was fully explained to all that the Dancesport Executive Board exclusively, and not the President nor Presidium, selected the countries to adjudicate granted title events. All matters relating to adjudicator selection were dealt with only by the Executive Board.

After several clarifications the President of the WDC asked if all competitors fully understood this and was given confirmation that they did. Competitors in attendance who seemed to know little or nothing about selection above were referred to [www.wdcdance.com](http://www.wdcdance.com) where the competition rules were clearly available and could be downloaded for all.

Many competitors pointed out that they wished to register with the WDC but had no information nor any idea how to do so. A suggestion that an application form online be available was most positively viewed. The WDC pointed out that they would attempt to provide this but that the applications would then have to be forwarded to the NDCA for process.

No one present appeared to have any knowledge of selection procedures in the US for WDC adjudicators if invited, and the WDC will write to the NDCA on this basis.

In the light of all the above, a suggestion came from the competitors that they should form their own division for the US of the World Competitors Commission. Both the Competitors Commission representative and the WDC confirmed support for this.

The President of the WDC pointed out that although no US judges had been chosen for World Championships (only in 2007 and 2008) this was because of many factors. In fairness to all 64 countries, there is a current Dancesport rule that the selections must vary by a minimum of 30% each year. It was the duty of the Dancesport Executive Board to fairly balance the interest of 64 countries and not just one. An element of surprise occurred when the WDC asked why no questions nor complaints were raised at the 2007 and 2008 Dancesport meetings by the US competitor delegate. The answer "I am forbidden to talk" was strongly challenged.

Various other issues were discussed, including registration of the WDC's titles behind their backs by the NDCA members and previous delegates and a general feeling world wide by a majority of WDC members of disenchantment with NDCA and their actions and politics.

**Dancers were eager to know why the USA no longer hosted WDC granted-title events. They were informed that the granted-titles were given to countries 3 years in advance. The NDCA lost the vote for 2008 to Austria for the Worlds Latin**

**Championship by a land-slide majority and had not applied for any more after that, up to 2011.**

Notwithstanding the above, and although unable to influence the transparency and impartiality of the selection process of the Executive Board, the President of the WDC with the agreement of Presidium members promised to write a letter to the Dancesport Executive Board drawing to their attention the alleged concerns of US competitors and the non-inclusion of US adjudicators.

On a final note, information was provided that US adjudicators had actually been invited to the German Open Championships 2007,2008 (four judges from the US) and had actually adjudicated the World Pro-Am Championships 2007 and 2008. It was further noted that an invitation to the President of the NDCA to adjudicate the WDC Amateur World Championships 2008 had been declined with a consequential letter sent from the President of the NDCA to representatives of IDSF.

***The WDC Presidium and Dancesport Executive Board***