



NZSDA PRESENTS

*New Zealand*

# SALSA

**CHAMPIONSHIPS**

AMI Netball Centre - St Johns, Auckland

**SAT 19 NOV 2011**



**TICKETS FROM \$20**

[WWW.NZSALSACHAMPIONSHIPS.CO.NZ](http://WWW.NZSALSACHAMPIONSHIPS.CO.NZ)

# 2011 NZ SALSA CHAMPIONSHIPS

## INTRODUCTION

**NZSC & NZSDA OBJECTIVE:** The objective of the New Zealand Salsa Championships (NZSC) and New Zealand Salsa Dance Associates (NZSDA) is to run a structured competition acknowledging and rewarding dancers, instructors and schools in New Zealand for their effort, commitment and passion for Salsa dancing. The competition will also act as way to educate Salsa dancers in New Zealand about dance competition standards, structure and ethics around the world.

NZSDA will nurture leadership in the field by providing a comprehensive Salsa Dance Competition Curriculum and facilitating dialogue and action about significant issues for the future of the art form. NZSDA is committed to achieving a transparent competition with judges feedback based on which we aim to continuously raise the standard of Salsa dancing in New Zealand. As a result we are looking for more representation of New Zealand salsa dancers at international Salsa events and competitions.

To be fair to all competitors, the rules and boundaries listed below must be in place and must be followed by all competitors. It is the competitors' responsibility to read and understand the relevant Category rules.

1 – General Rules & Regulations - All competitors need to read and understand the General Rules & Regulations in this section.

2 – Category Rules - All competitors need to read and understand the Category information section relating to the category/categories they are entering. See Divisions link on the website for Category information.

Extensive consultation has been undertaken with several major salsa schools in New Zealand to ensure that the Rules & Regulations and the format of the event are fair, accepted and understood by all.

It has been noted that the structure of previous NZ Salsa competitions allowed quite easily for dancers who were inexperienced to salsa to become New Zealand Salsa Champions. This occurred because the criteria for judging had failed to place sufficient emphasis on those elements that define salsa as a separate and recognisable style of dance within its own right. It focused on general dance techniques and steps NOT unique to Salsa. Previous structure and judging criteria had set out to find the best and most entertaining dance performance, NOT the best dancer of the genre of Salsa specifically. Therefore restrictions will be in place for each of the graded categories in order to educate NZ Salsa dancers on the fundamental steps and moves for what is recognised as Salsa dancing at major Salsa competitions around the world today.

Since salsa dancing is more than just a showpiece, the New Zealand Salsa Championships will place additional emphasis on the freestyle heats of the competition.

As an example for Graded division; Beginners will be restricted to display basics only and may not combine any basics within one (1) whole 8 count. Intermediate dancers are allowed combination of basics, however must maintain the basic timing of salsa stepping count 1 on the left (for leaders) and count 5 on the right (for leaders) - throughout the dance, even in 360s. Advanced dancers will have more freedom and musical interpretation will be the focus. These are just some of the examples, please see full judging criteria for each category [here](#).

**THE JUDGES:** The judges have been selected from various regions in the New Zealand and Australian salsa dance industry. Please see Judges link.

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

**NOTE:** The Rules, Regulations & Judging Criteria 'weighting' for the NZSC have been amended from the World Latin Dance Cup and World Salsa Open Rules, Regulations & Judging criteria weighting. This has been done to better suit the New Zealand Salsa dance industry. Any couples or teams moving onto the World Latin Dance Cup or World Salsa Open will need to take this into account.

The goal is to acknowledge the best Salsa dancers, not just the best performers or choreography. To become a New Zealand Salsa Champion, competitors will have to demonstrate a true understanding of the music and rhythm of Salsa and interpret it in a creative way in Freestyle and where Choreography is required. For the Amateur and Open Categories, the Freestyle heat will be judged equally to the Performance heat. Couples will be competing individually on the floor in the Freestyle heat as well as for the Choreography heat.

The NZSDA reserves the right to;

- Cancel any categories if there are not enough entries
- Change the schedule of events without notice

## DIVISIONS & CATEGORIES

The 2011 New Zealand Salsa Championships will feature 4 Divisions.

- **Graded Division**
- **Team Division**
- **Couple Division**
- **Solo Division**

Each Division will have different Categories;

### **Graded Division**

- Beginners Category
- Improvers Category
- Intermediate Category
- Advanced Category

### **Team Division**

- Youth Salsa Team Category
- Small Salsa Team Category Adult
- Large Salsa Team Category Adult
- Latin Showcase Category

### **Couple Division**

- Masters 45+ Category
- Amateur Category
- Open Category

### **Solo Division**

- Shines Category
- Mr Salsa & Ms Salsa Category

Each Category will have a separate Rules & Judging criteria & weightings. Please see Division page on the website for these specific rules.

## **THE NZSC FREESTYLE COMPONENT**

This structure will be applied at Finals only to the following categories; Amateur and Open Categories.

It is the aim of the New Zealand Salsa Championships to ensure that all competitors are able to demonstrate that they are knowledgeable within the genre of Salsa, as well as their skills as polished dance performers.

In this way we aim to ensure that NZ Salsa dancers are not only polished performers, but also genuine salsa dancers with in-depth knowledge and experience of salsa and be able to hold their own worldwide as respected Salsa dancers within the international community.

The Freestyle component of the New Zealand Salsa Championships will ensure that the competitors have in-depth knowledge of salsa specifically as an independent art and dance form; including detailed knowledge of traditional salsa music and its structure.

### **The Freestyle structure**

- I. Instead of freestyle being one component of an overall score within the whole competition, freestyle is to be a separate component, with its own judging criteria. After the initial introduction of competitors to the judges and the public, couples will be called back to the floor individually to compete; in much the same way as has been done for the choreography section to date.
- II. Couples will be asked one by one to demonstrate their skill within freestyle salsa for 2:00 min to a randomly pre-selected medium to fast pace song choice. The NZSDA will make these musical selections and competitors will not know what piece is to be played.
- III. Once the Freestyle section is over, couples will be asked one by one to perform their Choreography section for the remaining part of the competition.

## **JUDGING SYSTEM**

### **SUMMARY**

Because Salsa dance performances cannot be measured in time or meters the NZSDA has committed themselves to upgrade the existing judging system to a more modern, comprehensive and transparent system in order to ensure fair results.

The corner stones of the new system are:

- A competition system based on comparison
- Selection in the qualifying rounds
- Ranking in the final
- Objective criteria for judging
- Code of Conduct and Standards of Ethics
- Sanctions against breach or rules

As Salsa dancing is constantly evolving, the Judging System will always be an important focus area for the NZSDA.

## CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

An adjudicator or judge is a person who is appointed to form and give an opinion on the dancers and their dancing, through careful weighing of evidence and testing of criteria. In addition the judge will give an authoritative opinion on the merits of dancers and their dancing and determine the result. Judging involves much more than just an individual taste or personal opinion. It is making an informed decision based on a thorough knowledge of the subject and experience.

If all the judges have the same point of departure and share an awareness of the conventions and traditions of Salsa dance, it is more likely that they will share the norms, standards and criteria for what constitutes a dance performance of merit. Once these general standards are in place, the reasons for decisions have more chance of being shared, agreed upon and understood collectively.

It is clear that evaluation must be the primary process through which opinions are made and the result arrived at. Evaluation is completely different from attributing a personal value to something. It requires skilful judgments. Judging consists of two main phases.

**The first phase** is founded on understanding and knowledge and involves factual observation of what is there.

**The second phase** estimates the value of what the judge has observed. This forms a base upon which comparison is made.

The New Zealand Salsa Championships judging is based on comparison and ranking. The dance performance is not measured on an absolute scale. In order to make judging as objective as possible, a clearly defined system of judging criteria and a definition of their relative value to each other are needed.

Clearly defined criteria of judging are tools that an adjudicator uses to assess the performance of a couple, team or soloist.

The criteria can be looked at as pieces of a big puzzle. A well educated and experienced judge knows what the completed picture looks like, what he or she is looking for, and can recognize when there are pieces of the puzzle missing making the picture incomplete.

There are different areas needing to be considered when making an assessment. For each of these areas specific Criteria for Judging are defined.

Most of the individual criteria are interrelated. These connections are clearly explained and supported by practical examples.

Under each heading there is a definition of what is unacceptable and has to be taken into account when evaluating the competitive performance.

The judge is not required to use all the criteria at all times. The criteria used may change according to the phase of the competition.

**At the first phase** of the competition, criteria related to the basic requirements are employed, i.e. correct dance hold, basic technical competence, movement in time with the music, etc. The dancing is primarily judged for its correctness.

**The further we progress** in the competition, more sophisticated criteria are applied relating to accuracy of execution, dynamic qualities, characterization of Salsa dance, partnering skills, body rhythm, etc.

**In the finals** the judges focus also on the artistic value of the performances (where applicable). The winning couple or team is therefore judged to have most successfully fulfilled most or all of the criteria and receive the highest merit award within the group for that success.

## **COMPETITION & JUDGING SYSTEM**

A Salsa dance competition is based on the overall performance of each couple in freestyle and choreography where applicable.

Judging a Salsa dance competition involves a mixture of assessment approaches.

The first instruction to the judge will be to select a certain number of couples who will progress to the next round. The basis for the selection is comparison. A judge selects according to criteria comparing similarities and differences until he or she has selected the required number of couples by marking their numbers.

All dancers dance in the Qualifying round. In couples divisions, if necessary, they are randomly divided into heats of no more than 6 couples. Heats may vary from category to category.

As the competition progresses the number of couples and teams selected diminishes and the standard of the performances rises. The selection becomes based on evaluation and comparison.

In the final the best six will take the floor. Each judge has to rank the couples or teams from 1 to 6 based on evaluation and comparison. The same ranking cannot be given twice. As the level of difference between the dancers is not measured on an equidistant scale the difference between 1 and 2 is not necessarily the same as between 2 and 3. Ranking only tells us that 1 is better than 2 and that 2 is better than 3, but it does not tell us how much better.

We could have a situation where all six finalists are so close that there is barely any difference in quality, but the judges still have to rank them. That is usually the case when we see varying marks.

In the finals, couples that are required to present choreography, get a chance to perform their own choreographed piece to the music of their choice, (i.e. only one couple on the dance floor). This allows them to perform uninterrupted and demonstrate choreography skills. It gives the judges the possibility to see the dancers in their elements and their interpretation of Salsa. This better assesses the qualities of the couple, in particular the artistic aspect of their performance.

After all finalists have finished their solo dance they return to the floor together and repeat one final freestyle dance as a group. That gives the adjudicators a chance to reaffirm the judgment from the solo performances or amend it, as they have a possibility of a direct comparison again.

At the time of placing and announcement of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th place, the finalists will be on the floor in one row together and the judges in another row. When the number of the competitors is read out to find out the judges ranking, the judges will hold up their ranking to the public, competitors and scrutinizers who will compile all the rankings from all judges in a table. A computerized system referred to as the Skating System is used to compile the marks.

The NZSDA encourages all judges to make an individual assessment based on the criteria for judging and the performance they see on the day.

## **JUDGING GUIDELINES**

Dancers will be judged in the following categories relating to their division in the Freestyle and/or Choreography section:

- Timing
- Technique
- Difficulty
- Connection
- Partnering Skills
- Choreography
- Musical interpretation
- Execution
- Synchronicity
- Formations
- Costuming & Appearance
- Showmanship

Judges will decide their final rankings following the above listed guidelines. Please see relevant Judging Criteria for each Category for more information.

Contestants are encouraged to wear costumes or matching outfits. Casual clothes are not to be used as costumes. Ladies wearing dresses or skirts should wear nylons or fishnets. Choose costumes that enhance your natural assets. Avoid costumes fraught with the possibility of wardrobe malfunction. Avoid costumes that draw attention away from your dancing and create a distraction.

## **RESULT TALLYING**

Members of the NZSDA have been selected to monitor, calculate and cross check the results ensuring that as much care and precision has taken place. One member is responsible for reading out the scores, one member is responsible for overseeing the reading and one member is responsible for entering the scores. The NZSC results are FINAL. Once the results have been announced, that will be considered final. Each individual judge's rank for the top 6 competitors will be placed on the NZSC website with the relevant judges names for public viewing 1 week after the event.

## FAIRNESS CLAUSES

The following points have been put in to ensure that the competition is fair and devoid of bias.

- Competitors may not communicate with the Judges on the day of competition in any way. Not prior to or during the competition.
- Judges will not be able to communicate with other judges during the judging of events.
- An odd amount of judges have been allocated to reduce the likelihood of a draw.
- Once the judges have marked your scores, the papers will be taken away from them. Judges will not be able to go back and adjust the scores.
- Judges will each use a new scaling table to compare competitors to ensure the marking and ranking of each competitor remains just and relevant across the board (a scaling table is a tool for each judge to compare his or her own notes) PLEASE NOTE: this system is accredited and currently used by the World Salsa Championships.
- Results will be open for viewing by the competitors after the results have been announced. Please Note: If under the unlikely circumstances that the NZSDA is not able to provide the results directly after the announcement of placings, the NZSDA will provide the scores within the reasonable period of 24 to 48 hours maximum.
- Competitors will be allowed to 'ask for feedback' regarding their judges scores after the results have taken place. Please note: Competitors approaching judges should do so in a courteous and respectable manner. Although the NZSDA monitors and regulates the judging as much as possible, each judge will ultimately have his or her own consistent method and style of judging that may not necessarily be comparable to the next judge. Please also note: It is at the judges' individual discretion to give feedback and what amount of feedback to give, judges are NOT required to give feedback.
- The top 6 results of each competitor will be placed on the NZSC website with the relevant judges names for public viewing after the event has taken place. These results displayed on the NZSC website for public viewing will be the final PLACING only, not the complete score sheet with criteria breakdowns.
- CONFLICT AND DISAGREEMENTS: Any competitor complaints wishing to be filed must be done so in writing and in a professional manner to the NZSDA directly. Under no circumstances will the NZSDA condone or accept any other means of complaint including public outbursts of un-sportsmanship behaviour or any public comments on public forums in relation to the matter or the New Zealand Salsa Dance Associates or New Zealand Salsa Championships. Any person(s), group or organization found to be making any other public means of complaint or comment other than an official written complaint directly to the NZSDA may be subject to court proceedings, including and not limited to a law suit. Failure to do so will be investigated by the New Zealand Salsa Dance Associates Disciplinary Committee (NZSDADC) and may impose a warning, suspension, disqualification or permanent expulsion from the NZSC.



# REGISTRATIONS

The official closing date for all entries is – **FRIDAY 04 NOVEMBER, 2011**

Registration payments for the NZSC may be paid directly to the collaborating studios OR processed directly through the websites Pay Pal system on [www.nzsalsachampionships.co.nz](http://www.nzsalsachampionships.co.nz). Please state your full names, contact details, representative studio, choreographer or instructor and category when making your payment.

The website will have all categories as separate 'products', please ensure you select the correct category. When making your payment through Pay Pal, please ensure that the payer is the very same person that is registering to compete - if in the rare event that this is not possible please note competitors names in full in the notes section of the application.

**LATE ENTRIES:** will be accepted up to MONDAY 07 NOVEMBER, 2011 and are subject to the payment of the late lodgement fee of \$100.

For any questions regarding registrations please email >> [info@nzsalsachampionships.co.nz](mailto:info@nzsalsachampionships.co.nz)

# GENERAL RULES & REGULATIONS

The New Zealand Salsa Championships (NZSC) is about dancing and having lots of fun. This event is the culmination and celebration of all those lessons, classes, rehearsals, sweat and possibly even tears that you have put in throughout the year. This is the time to get recognition and acknowledgement for your hard work. To ensure fairness to all competitors the following rules and boundaries have been developed and it is the competitor's responsibility to read and understand them.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

NZSDA requires all contestants to:

- be ethical, fair and honest in all their dealings with other contestants, judges and NZSDA
- treat all persons with respect and courtesy and have proper regard for their dignity, rights and obligations
- comply with NZSC rules and guidelines
- operate within the rules and spirit of the New Zealand Salsa Championships
- be responsible and accountable for their conduct.

## CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

- To compete at the NZSC competitors must be New Zealand Residents.
- Adults is defined as 18 Years and Over.
- Youth is defined as 17 Years & Under. Eligibility is determined by the age of the eldest member on the day of the Championship.
- A couple is defined as one male and one female dancer. Couples of the same sex are not allowed in any categories with the exception of Latin Showcase.
- A team is defined as 2 couples or more.
- The NZSDA requires all Amateur couples to represent a NZSDA member studio or instructor in order to be eligible to compete at the New Zealand Salsa Championships.
- If no studio is represented on the entry form, your entry will automatically be entered in the Open division.
- The NZSDA restricted curriculum applies to these Championships in Beginners, Improvers, Intermediate and Advanced categories.
- If entering the Graded Divisions, make sure of your eligibility for the category you choose to enter. Entering the wrong category may result in no placing or at worst disqualification. Read thoroughly through the definition, rules and judging criteria for each category. If in doubt contact your studio or the NZSDA directly.
- Competitors entering as Amateurs are reminded that the NZSDA Amateur Rules & Guidelines apply to these Championships. Make sure you read thoroughly through the NZSDA Amateur Rules & Guidelines.
- Competitors may only participate in one (1) category in the Graded Division (i.e. You cannot dance in Improvers and Beginners category). In all other Divisions, competitors may enter multiple categories, but only once in each category (i.e. You cannot be part of two teams in the Small Salsa Teams category, however, you can enter Small Salsa Teams, Large Salsa Teams and Latin Showcase – all in the same division, but different categories).
- No dancers can change divisions during the Championships. The category that you qualify in is the division that you must compete in at the NZSC Finals.
- A dancer who is part of a Team performance must compete at the same level which they qualify for in any other Graded category.

- Competitors in the Beginners or Improvers category may not be part of a team using choreography beyond the restricted curriculum for Beginners and Improvers. Both the individual Beginner couple and Team may be penalized or disqualified.
- Once you qualify you cannot change partners.
- Beginners, Improvers, Intermediate, Advanced, Teams, Shines, Masters 45+, Open & Amateur category competitors ARE required to enter the Qualifying rounds. Mr Salsa & Ms Salsa competitors are NOT required to pre-qualify and may enter the NZSC Finals directly.
- The previous year winners of each couple in the Amateur and Open categories AUTOMATICALLY QUALIFY for the NZSC Finals, as long as the couples are of the same partnership.
- Masters 45+ competitors (both partners) may also dance in Amateur divisions. However, in making this choice, due to the running order competitors must be prepared to dance continuously and change attire when/if necessary. Events will not be held up or changed from the scheduled running order. Proof of age may be required.
- The same choreography may not enter the same division more than once, i.e. same choreography for Small Salsa Teams and Large Salsa Teams where the only difference is the number of dancers.
- The NZSDA reserves the right to cancel any categories if there are not enough entries.

## ENTRY LIMITATIONS

- Competitors in the Graded Division categories who have placed 1st, 2nd & 3rd at the 2009 & 2010 NZ Salsa Nationals, may NOT enter the same category in 2011. They must move on to a higher category or enter a different division. This does not apply to competitors in the Advanced Category. Competitors in all other divisions may re-enter the same division and category.
- Couples and teams that placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd in previous competitions may not enter with same choreography.
- Competitors entering a higher Graded Category at the South Island Salsa Competition or any other Salsa competition in New Zealand, where there is a graded system in place, may not enter a lower Graded Category at the NZSC.

## GENERAL PERFORMANCE RULES

- All choreography should be minimum of 1:30 min and no more than 2:00 min with the exception of Latin Showcase which can be up to 5:00 min.
- Music must be 100% salsa for Salsa Teams categories, Shines category, Amateur and Open Category.
- You are allowed to mix no more than 3 different songs in one choreographed routine with the exception of Latin Showcase which does not have restrictions on mixing music.
- If you are using any other style of music other than Salsa, you must enter Latin Showcase category.
- Teams entering Latin Showcase category are allowed to have other music besides salsa. It can be any music of your choice as long as it is 80% Latin origin and the choreography is also 80% recognizable Latin dance ie. Bachata, Zouk, Cha Cha, Tango, Merengue, Reggaeton. Remaining 20% may be of any style of your choice.
- No sound effects and no voice overs is allowed in the choreography section, with the exception of Latin Showcase.
- Heel caps must be worn before taking the floor. You will not be able to compete without heel caps (protectors).

## **PLEASE NOTE:**

**MUSIC AND CD:** Prepare at least 2 CDs on different CD brands with the music for each routine. Example: Two routines equal 4 CDs. The CDs should be ready to be played as is. There should only be music for one routine on each CD. The DJ will not slow down or speed up your CD. Please protect your CD's by having covers for each one. Also please identify your CD by putting your name, length & category on each CD. Please test that each CD works on at least 2 CD players. **THIS IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT.** If a CD fails to play, the back-up CD will be used. If the back-up CD fails to play, 2 attempts will be done. After that the competition will move on to the next performance and you will forfeit your chance to perform for the judges.

## **DANCE ETIQUETTE:**

Contestants must:

- Conduct themselves at all times with professionalism and grace.
- Refrain from distracting others while they are competing.
- Promptly respond to the directions of the stage management.
- Exit the stage swiftly and quickly.
- Refrain from all uncontrolled emotional outbursts.
- Refrain from any loud behaviour until back in the changing room area.

## **JUDGING CRITERIA**

- Freestyle for Graded Divisions will be judged according to the NZSDA restricted curriculum.
- Freestyle for couples and solo divisions will be judged according to the criteria set out for each category.
- Choreographed routines will be judged according to the criteria set out for each category.

## **BREACH OF THE RULES**

NZSDA has set up a Disciplinary Committee to deal with complaints regarding any breach of NZSDA rules, including Competition Rules.

The Disciplinary Committee shall have the authority and power to impose the following penalties: warning, suspension, disqualification or expulsion from the NZSC.

Any disqualifications are final and will not be discussed.

## Grounds for penalties and disqualifications

Depending on the level of breach, competitors may be penalized or disqualified for the following:

1. Excessive amount of choreography in freestyle sections
2. Any competitor performing any lifts in the freestyle sections of each category
3. Any competitor contradicting the NZSDA restricted curriculum (see category information for competition level definition). i.e. An Intermediate dancer entering Beginners category is contradicting the curriculum.
4. Competitors in the Graded division displaying moves or figures that are contradicting the NZSDA restricted curriculum
5. Should a "Beginner" competitor perform Intermediate or Advanced moves in a Team routine the whole performance team will be penalized.
6. Should an "Intermediate" competitor perform Advanced moves in a Team routine the whole performance team will be penalized.
7. Any dancer proven to be competing at a level below what they should be (see [category information](#) for competition level definition)
8. It is the responsibility of the Choreographer to ensure that all moves performed are at the correct level for which dancers would qualify to compete.
9. Any competitor executing more lifts than allowed in their category
10. Any competitor who is not in the marshalling area and ready to enter the floor when called upon will not compete.

**Note:** It is every competitor's responsibility to familiarize themselves with the general rules of the competition and the rules for their chosen category. Please read all these rules carefully and do not break them, as it is heartbreaking for judges having to penalize or even disqualify competitors.

The goal is to have no penalties and no disqualifications at the NZ Salsa Championships.

## COMPENSATION, INSURANCE AND OTHERS

- By entering this competition, competitors agree to release New Zealand Salsa Dance Associates, and their directors and all others associated with the development and execution of this Championship from any claims, actions, and liability for any injury, losses and damages resulting from participation in this contest.
- All finalists agree to have their names, biographical information, and photograph published by any of the above mentioned entities.
- By entering this contest, entrants accept and agree to be bound by the General Rules and Regulations and relevant Category Rules.
- The results and decisions of the Judges will be final, binding, and conclusive on all matters.

For rules and regulation clarifications please email your questions to >>  
[info@nzsalsachampionships.co.nz](mailto:info@nzsalsachampionships.co.nz)

2011 NZSDA