

# USA DANCE 2012 NATIONAL DANCESPORT CHAMPIONSHIPS

## Held March 30 – April 1, 2012 at the Renaissance Harborplace Hotel in Baltimore MD

BALTIMORE, MD – Nearly 1,000 of America's top ballroom and Latin dance athletes competed in Baltimore, Mar. 30 – Apr. 1, at the 32nd annual **USA DANCE 2012 National DanceSport Championships**, organized and hosted by **USA DANCE, Inc.**, the National Governing Body for DanceSport in the United States, and USA member organization of the U.S. Olympic Committee and the World DanceSport Federation (WDSF).

Celebrating its 32nd year, the USA Dance 2012 National DanceSport Championships is the official national championships for Ballroom and Latin competitive dancing, a recognized sport by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) known as DanceSport. And with Ballroom and Latin dancing popularity at an all-time high globally, the USA Dance Nationals is the most prestigious and largest competitive dance event of its kind in America.

Carrie Ann Inaba, celebrity judge on ABC-TV's top-rated show "Dancing With The Stars," joins USA Dance not only as its Official National Celebrity Ambassador beginning 2012, but also as Honorary Judge at the USA Dance Nationals for the prestigious 3rd annual USA Dance Star Quality Awards, on Friday and Saturday evenings.

At the USA Dance National DanceSport Championships, approximately 1,000 amateur DanceSport athletes have qualified throughout the year at the USA Dance National Qualifying Events. These athletes represent America's top ballroom and Latin talent. In Baltimore, they vied national titles and placements on the USA Dance World Teams to compete at upcoming World Championships, sponsored and sanctioned by the World DanceSport Federation (WDSF), member organization of the International Olympic Committee. DanceSport couple finalists were selected for competition at 11 World Championships held throughout the year in countries around the globe.

In addition to hosting an elite judging panel of nationally and internationally acclaimed adjudicators, USA Dance is proud to note throughout the weekend, many of the celebrity youth and adult couples who have performed on ABC-TV's "Dancing With The Stars", "So You Think You Can Dance", "America's Got Talent" and other television dance and talent shows also competed in their respective divisions.

### Nationals

*by Michael Mecham, American Dancer Magazine – May 2012*

The big time. The mother load. The major leagues. The granddaddy of them all. For amateur ballroom competition in the United States, the USA Dance National DanceSport Championships held in Baltimore was all that and more. In addition to the nation's top amateur dancers in action, there were workshops, social dances, and a myriad of vendors for all to enjoy.

As usual, champions were crowned, and the competition was fiercer than ever. In addition to the ballroom styling of hundreds of competitors, this year's competition had some added flavor for the ballroom connoisseur. Carrie Ann Inaba returned to the competition as the official celebrity judge of the Star Quality Awards. In addition to Carrie Anne, national ballroom wheelchair champions Nick Scott and Aubree Marchione performed a special dance number for the astonished attendees.



One spectator who proudly admitted to attending the last six years of the competition said the level of competition was better than ever. It's a combination of the judges, the parents, the coaches, the volunteers, and the dancers that continue to make this competition "a world-class competition with the best dancers in the country!"

## Spinning & Spinning

Dancers spin all the time, but when they are literally spinning on wheels, it is a remarkable sight. Nick Scott and his partner Aubree Marchione are the national wheelchair ballroom dance champions. Even though some people may think that Nick would be limited by his wheelchair, anyone who has seen him dance knows that that is certainly not the case. Nick and Aubree performed a Cha Cha routine to the song "I'm Sexy and I Know It," which was immediately rewarded with a standing ovation.



Nick and Aubree shot to stardom status among some of the attendees and so many people wanted a copy of Nick's documentary "Journey: The Nick Scott Story" that within the hour following their performance, every copy of the movie that they had brought was gone. Nick and Aubree also taught a wheelchair-dancing workshop during the next day of the competition. Both Nick and Aubree shared that they believe dancing can be a powerful tool in rehabilitation. "We're just trying to spread the word," said Nick. "The more people who know about wheelchair dancing and how powerful it can be, the better."

## The Red Carpet

Scores of dancers and their families were lined up in the hotel lobby waiting. Waiting for what? They were waiting for the chance to have their pictures taken with celebrity judge Carrie Ann Inaba. As a judge on ABC's hit show "Dancing With the Stars" and as the judge for the Star Quality Awards at the USA Dance 2012 National DanceSport Championships, there was no shortage of people hoping for the chance to get their picture taken with Carrie Ann on the red carpet.

Carrie Ann was all smiles as she greeted every person who wanted a minute of her time. "My girlfriend will never believe me," remarked one fan that insisted on taking four pictures on his smart phone, which he immediately sent to his girlfriend. There was a constant line during the hour and a half that Carrie Ann waited on the carpet. During this time she signed programs and nametags, gave hugs and words of encouragement, and received thanks after thanks from gushing fans.



## Spirit of Baltimore

*By Jean Krupa, Social Dance VP, USA Dance Inc.*

It's nice to see all the talented dancers who attend the national championships, but this competition is also about socializing and making new connections. Throughout the weekend of dancing, there were several workshops and dances for those who wanted to mix and mingle.

Walter and Judy Schultz from Portsmouth, Virginia led several of the workshops in Rumba, Cha Cha and West Coast Swing. They also handled the music for the evening social dances. In addition to workshops, some dancers were able to go on a cruise of the inner harbor. Jean Krupa said about the cruise, "We had another great time on the Spirit of Baltimore as we ate, socialized, danced and got to know one another." There is always something for everyone at the national competition.