



# Cambridge Dancers' Club

## ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

January 2008

Issue 6

### *Keeping you in step with CDC*

#### How it all began ....

Happy new year! 2008 looks to be another busy year for CDC. We are still running over 30 hours per week of classes at half a dozen different venues and this year we have brought back classes in Argentine Tango. The dancesport and Rock n Roll teams are also working hard to retain their national titles this year. We also hope to offer more advanced workshops this term as well as the traditional end of term balls at the St Ivo centre. The masked ball theme at last term's ball was popular and the event was a sell out. Over 250 members were treated to ballroom and latin demos by England's two top under 21 couples. This term, if you want the chance to relive the inter-College rivalry Cuppers will be held on 16th February.

CDC continues to promote dancing amongst Cambridge students and residents by offering a range of classes at affordable prices and supporting the teams. But how did it all begin ...

In late 1949, during the post-war era when ballroom dancing was beginning to thrive, a group of young friends decided that a club should be formed in the city of Cambridge, to encourage the ever-increasing trend. And so the foundations of a new society were laid; with Chris Reynolds, a student at Clare College as Captain, Peggy Green as Secretary, Robert Stevenson as Vice-Captain, and Dennis Peck as Treasurer, the Cambridge Dancers' Club held its first meeting in October 1950. The club was an instant success and as dancers from both the University and the town began to flood through its doors, membership soon rose to well over 500. The increasing popularity in other forms of music led to a sharp decline in the 1960s. But 1970 saw the beginning of a new era as the club was finally accepted as a registered University society and sent students to compete in the annual Inter-Varsity Dance Championships for the first time. The club saw a rapid recovery in its membership during the seventies. At this time classes were run for a 23 year period by Charles and Lilah Simpson. In 1979 had its first win at IVDC in Lancaster, ending Liverpool's run of five consecutive victories. Cambridge's dancesport team has since won the competition eight times. The first varsity match was held in 1974 and has been held annually ever since with women achieving half blues status in 1991 and men receiving half blues status in 1999. The first full blue was awarded to Fai Assakul in 2003 for her outstanding performance at an international level.

Since then, the Cambridge Dancers' Club has gone from strength to strength. Now with an annual membership

between 2,000 and 2,500, it is the largest annual membership society in Cambridge University and is also believed to be the largest dance club of its kind in Europe. A third of all Cambridge students join the CDC at some stage during the course of their degree. It was estimated that Robin and Glenis Marsh had over 10 000 beginners in their ballroom classes since 1984 before they retired a few years ago. In recent years the club has diversified in the repertoire of dance styles on offer, and ballroom now only accounts for just over half of the club's weekly classes. The "Dance Diversity scheme" which entitles all our members to a free taster class in a different style to the one they first join; our two styles being defined as ballroom and 'alternative' was first introduced in 2000 and has helped to encourage members to try other dance styles. Rock 'n' Roll was the first to be added in the early 1980s, followed by Alternative latin classes in response to the salsa craze which began in the 1990s. There are now several different types of salsa on offer: LA, Cuban and Rueda and the past couple of years have seen big salsa events held in conjunction with CDC. CDC introduced swing and Argentine tango classes in 2000, but these have been sporadic ever since. Offbeat became an official class in 1990, but due to the popularity of the Contemporary Dance Workshop from 2006 the club decided to concentrate on partner dances and drop offbeat classes.

In 2003 the classes were redesigned to incorporate a dancesport stream and a social stream, recognising that there are members who wish to compete and learn complex technique and members who just wish to be able to get round the floor at a dance. Classes progress in level from beginners through to A, B and C. The range of teachers has expanded so that there are now five professionals teaching ballroom and latin classes and the team has eight people acting as coaches or assistants to the coaches. During this academic year more practice sessions have been offered to advanced competitive couples. The club is also committed to inviting the top professionals from each field to Cambridge to coach members, the Rock n Roll team in particular have taken advantage of some world class Rock n Roll professionals and we are pleased to offer more advanced ballroom workshops this term.

Let's hope CDC continues its success during the next 40 years



## CUDT – the start of the year

The year for CUDT started off in early October with trials which produced a promising team with many new dancers.

The reunion match was held in November. The day proved a success with current team members competing alongside past members and non-competitive club dancers. There was also a very encouraging turn out from beginners which bodes well for the season ahead.

The first competition of the season, Nottingham, was a very successful one. The opens saw success for Alex & Lenka, who won the Advanced Latin, Florian & Kadia, who won the Intermediate Modern and Kevin & Shoko, who won the Intermediate Latin. In addition, Nejc and Diane made a welcome comeback to win the ex-students samba.

In the team match, Cambridge triumphed in the B and C-team competitions, along with a victory in the A-team match which was shared with Oxford. Individual successes were plentiful:

- Alex and Lenka winners A-team cha

- Blaise and Fely winners B-team waltz
- Kenny and Jenny winners B-team jive
- Naomi and Anna winners C-team cha
- Hwyl and Caroline winners C-team quickstep
- Kevin and Shoko winners C-team jive
- Yuki and Sam winners D-team waltz
- David and Dafni winners D-team cha

It was a tremendously successful day. Well done to all and many thanks to those who came along to support.

After the success this term CUDT are looking forward to the new term filled with competitions and culminating in the Inter Varsity Dance Competition in Blackpool Winter-Gardens on 8th March.



Andrew Cuerden & Hanna Haarala, assistant team coaches who will be demoing at the Easter Ball

## CDC Events [www.cambridgedancers.org/events](http://www.cambridgedancers.org/events)

**Ballroom workshop by Victor Fung**      **Saturday 29th January from 2pm**      **Lee Hall, Wolfson**  
Foxtrot workshop for advanced dancers 2-3.30pm, followed by a basic quickstep workshop 3.30-5pm. Each 90mins workshop costs £12 for members, £16 for non members. Some private lessons available.

**Cuppers**      **Saturday 16th February from 1pm**  
Relive the inter-College rivalry and compete in the team match for your old College. See opposite for further info.

**Other workshops**  
Hopefully Stephen and Jennifer Hiller will be coming to Cambridge to teach ballroom workshops on Sunday 17th February and Sunday 4th May. We also hope to host latin workshops by Alex and Lisa Ivanets on 1st March and Karen Hardy next term — please check the website for the latest updates.

**CDC Ball**      **Friday 14th March 2008 St Ivo Centre, St Ives**  
7.30pm—1am      Dress: Black Tie  
Coaches depart from Queens Rd at 7pm  
Live music, bar open until midnight and professional latin demonstration by Andrew Cuerden & Hanna Haarala

**Future Ball Dates:**  
Friday 13th June 2008 at the St Ivo Centre  
Friday 5th December 2008 at the St Ivo Centre  
Friday 13th March 2009 at the St Ivo Centre

## Competitions 2008

For information on open circuit and student competitions and details of social events and workshops around the country and to discuss dancing in our discussion forum with other current and former students see:

[www.universitydancesport.com](http://www.universitydancesport.com)

Dates for next term are below. Please come along to support although if you wish to dance all comps have an ex-student event. Please contact the competition organiser.

The Sheffield Social:  
9th February at the Octagon

SUDC: 23rd February  
Hosted by Cardiff at the  
University of West England Sports  
Hall, Bristol  
[SUDC2008@gmail.com](mailto:SUDC2008@gmail.com)

NUDC: 23rd February  
hosted by Warwick  
[nuda0708@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:nuda0708@hotmail.co.uk)

IVDC: 8th March at the  
Empress Ballroom, Winter Gardens,  
Blackpool  
[president@universitydancesport.com](mailto:president@universitydancesport.com)

Varsity Match 10th May  
hosted by Oxford at the Iffley Gym  
[http://team.oudancesport.co.uk/  
varsityblues](http://team.oudancesport.co.uk/varsityblues)



Inter Varsity *Dance* Association  
[universitydancesport.com](http://universitydancesport.com)

## Rock n Roll

The team has continued to expand and in the summer the Rock n Roll team went to a dance camp in Sweden, where they were trained by a professional couple, Wim and Griet.



In October an professional Rock n Roll couple from Austria came over to teach a weekend of workshops.



Some team members competed at Nottingham and Manchester, and won both the acro and footwork rounds at each comp.

Next term the team are performing at the Churchill spring ball and will compete at Sheffield, SUDC and IVDC.

## What can we do for you?

If you'd be interested in any CDC reunion events, whether a dinner back at a Cambridge college or an informal drink in London, let us know. We are keen to keep as many CDC members in touch as possible and we'd like to hear what events would interest you.

E-mail [alumni@cambridgedancers.org](mailto:alumni@cambridgedancers.org)

If you or your company are interested in advertising with CDC contact the President on: [president@cambridgedancers.org](mailto:president@cambridgedancers.org)

You can also find CDC and CUDT listed on [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and [www.friendsreunited.co.uk](http://www.friendsreunited.co.uk)

## CUPPERS

Saturday 16th February  
Doors open 12pm for a 1pm start.  
Last waltz ~8pm  
£5 or £3 for 1 comp; £1 spectators  
Beginners (basics) W Q C J  
Novice (basics) WQ CJ  
Intermediate WQ CJ  
Advanced WQ CJ  
Open T F V S R P  
Basic F R  
Rock n Roll acro and non-acro  
Salsa  
Team match W Q C J  
Opens in lounge wear  
Team captains are listed on the website

## University Dance Challenge

30 student couples from 7 different Universities attended the West London Open Championships on 9th December. 10 teams were represented in the University Dance Challenge - a traditional University-style team match where teams consisting of student and ex-student couples compete against each other across four dances, waltz, quickstep, cha and jive. The final consisted of teams from Oxford, Imperial, Surrey and Southampton. Oxford had strong ballroom and latin couples and their A team retained their title and won the event. The runners up were the team from South-

ampton. It was encouraging to see so many students attend and be so successful in the open events as well as so enthusiastic in supporting the team match. This is the second team match the Inter Varsity Dance Association has hosted in conjunction with an open comp promoter and we hope future events will encourage more students to attend open comps and to continue to dance once they graduate. If any former Cambridge dancers would like to take part in next years event, then get in touch!



## XS Review of 2007

2007 has proved to be an exciting year for XS Latin. The Cambridge based formation team has competed five times with their 'On Broadway' routine, saving the best for the end of the year.

Taking its inspiration from some of the classic musicals of the 1960s and 1970s, *On Broadway* aimed to capture the feeling of the Broadway or West End theatre land. Opening with the Lieber and Stoller track, *On Broadway*, taken from the film musical *All That Jazz*, the routine included such standards as *Aquarius* from *Hair*, *Big Spender* from *Sweet Charity* and *Don't Cry For Me Argentina* from *Evita*. Fosse influences can be seen in the opening choreography and the dresses, in bright blue with black fringing, penny-droppers and feathers, were designed to create a show-girl look.

XS was proud to take *On Broadway* to perform in its first every IDSF European Championships in Düsseldorf at the beginning of May 2007. This also made *On Broadway* the XS routine with the shortest span from concept to first competitive performance – a feat which says much for the hard work of the team members. Less than a month later, XS competed at the British Open. Seven teams competed and XS were delighted to finish fourth, once again the highest placed British team.



November saw XS travel to Blackpool once again to defend their national title. Despite a performance many felt as their best ever in a competition, the team failed to win the title for the third time, with the Encore Latin Formation team from the Midlands claiming the crown. However, a fortnight later, at the World Championships in Bremerhaven, the team overturned this result, placing 15<sup>th</sup> out of 22 teams, with Encore dancing well at their first Worlds but finishing in joint last place. This result, the best XS finish at a World Championship, delighted the team but was eclipsed two weeks later at the Donaukopal Invitational in Vienna. Twenty five teams from seven countries were invited to compete in the main tournament and XS were thrilled to finish in eighth place, one mark away from making this prestigious final.



The team has started work on a new routine in January which has a Saturday Night Fever theme. If anyone would like to join the team or just find out more about XS Latin then they should contact David on [david@xslatin.org](mailto:david@xslatin.org), Mary on [mary@xslatin.org](mailto:mary@xslatin.org) or visit our new website at [www.xslatin.org](http://www.xslatin.org) XS also has a facebook group.



## Cambridge Dancers' Club

We have set up a mailing list for all alumni which will allow you to stay up to date with the latest news and receive details of club events via e-mail. Please register on: [www.cambridgedancers.org/alumni](http://www.cambridgedancers.org/alumni)

For details on events please e-mail: [events@cambridgedancers.org](mailto:events@cambridgedancers.org)

For any other queries please e-mail Rachelle on: [alumni@cambridgedancers.org](mailto:alumni@cambridgedancers.org)

## GENERAL DANCING

The Cambridge Dancers' Club tradition of free social dancing on a Friday night continues.

**Social Dancing every Friday 8.30-10.30pm**

2nd floor, University Centre off Mill Lane

Details can also be found on our website: [www.cambridgedancers.org](http://www.cambridgedancers.org)