

**THE HISTORY  
OF THE  
CANADIAN  
AMATEUR  
DANCESPORT  
ASSOCIATION**

**By**

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(Founder Member)**

## **HISTORY OF THE CANADIAN AMATEUR DANCESPORT ASSOCIATION.**

### **FOREWARD.**

The following is intended to be an account of the development of, and the reasons for, the formation of the Canadian Amateur DanceSport Association.

Due to my immigration to Canada in 1969, I can only go back to that year for personal experience, but my relationship with other dance friends and colleagues has given me an insight into the situation of what existed before I came to Canada. Why should I writing this? It is because it was suggested to me that a historical record would be an asset. I have personally thought for some time that this should be done as I am almost sure that nothing exists about C.A.D.A.'s history, and the suggestion was sufficient encouragement for me to proceed.

To support this matter I should mention that my experience included holding approximately 75% of the different of positions on the Executive Committee the Amateur Association in Ontario, (including that of President) during the period from 1970 to 1985 and also as Secretary/Treasurer of CADA from 1979 to 1985 and then as President of C.A.D.A. from 1985 until 1990. I was also a member of the sub-committee that was set up by the Ontario Association to investigate and bring a reality to the formation of C.A.D.A. My main responsibility on this Committee was to be the Chair of the sub-committee for the compilation of the Constitution, Bylaws and Rules for the proposed National Association and for seeking the Canadian Federal Government's recognition of the proposed Association.

## **HISTORY.**

### **Pre 1969.**

According to the History of the International DanceSport Federation (originally the International Council of Amateur Dancers – I.C.A.D.) on its web site, Canada was a member of the international association before 1938. The then I.C.A.D. was, of course, dissolved with the advent of World War II.

I could find no information of what association existed in Canada before the Second World War, so it is concluded that some body must have existed, for membership in the original ICAD. However it is a fact that the Amateur Association in Ontario originated sometime in the late 1950's to organize dance competitions between the interested amateur dancers, who were few in number. At that time, competitions were open to both members and non members and there was only one competitive class. As time passed and the numbers of competitive couples increased, the grades of novice, pre-championship and Championship designations came into existence.

In 1969 the competitive dance scene in Canada consisted of the Canadian Dance Teachers Association and two "Amateur" and one Pro/Amateur associations. These were the Western Canadian Amateur Ballroom Dancers Association (W.C.A.B.A.D.) in Vancouver, B.C; the Canadian Amateur Ballroom Dancers Association (C.A.B.D.A.) in Toronto, Ontario and the Corte Club in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Corte Club's members included both amateurs and professionals. The professionals seemed to have some say in how the club and how amateur competitions should be run.

C.A.B.D.A.'s membership included competitors and non-competitors mainly from Ontario, although some of its members were resident in Halifax and possibly a couple from Vancouver areas. There were even some members who lived in the U.S.A.

In Vancouver, B.C. the Western Canadian Amateur Ballroom Dancers Association (W.C.A.B.D.A.) was in existence prior to its corporate recognition. (A founder member of C.A.B.D.A. who passed on in 2004 claimed that W.C.A.B.D.A. existed before C.A.B.D.A. but proof of this is difficult to determine.) W.C.A.B.D.A. obtained corporate recognition in 1968 from the Canadian Federal Government.

Each of the three area associations had its own Constitution, Bylaws and Rules. Its grades of competitions were classified as those in Ontario. The age of competitors was only Adult or over 16.

It should be noted, that at this time, C.A.B.D.A., on behalf of Canada, held the recognition from the International Council of Amateur Dancers (I.C.A.D.) which had its headquarters in Germany. This association is now known as the International DanceSport Federation (I.D.S.F.). At that time also the Professional international body was the International Council of Ballroom Dancers (ICBD). A joint committee of the ICAD and the ICBD ruled the Ballroom World under what was known as the Bremen Agreement which was signed in 1965

It was C.A.B.D.A.'s responsibility to send representatives to the I.C.A.D. Meetings and also for recommending the amateur couple to represent Canada at the Standard, Latin American and the Ten Dance World Amateur Championships. At the same time W.C.A.B.D.A. held the recognition from the Government of Canada for the whole of Canada.

Of these two recognitions it was considered by the Ontario Association that the International one was the more important as this united Canada with the rest of the competitive dancing World. W.C.A.B.D.A. also wanted the International recognition. An application by W.C.A.B.D.A. to I.C.A.D. for recognition was declined by the I.C.A.D. as it's policy was one country, one membership. W.C.A.B.D.A. was politely advised to merge with C.A.B.D.A. if it wanted international recognition.

The selection of couples to represent Canada at the World Championships, was always a difficult problem for C.A.B.D.A. W.C.A.B.D.A. and C.A.B.D.A. each had their own rating system, so C.A.B.D.A. used to try and choose a couple in accordance with the rating system in each of the areas. The problem was, that CABDA could not satisfactorily determine who was the better couple from each of the rating systems. Corte Club did not appear to have a rating system, but as many of Corte Club's senior competitive couples were also members of C.A.B.D.A. they were naturally included in C.A.B.D.A.'s rating system. Each year the Canadian Closed Championships had been held in Halifax. Ontario couples frequently went to Halifax each year to compete in the Canadian Championships and were normally placed higher than the Halifax couples. The Championships were open to all Canadian couples. It was seldom that couples other than those from Ontario and the Atlantic regions competed. For representation at the World Amateur Championships, the question therefore became, who had the better couples, WCABDA or CABDA?

## **Post 1969.**

At the end of 1970 it was decided, by C.A.B.D.A. that the most satisfactory solution to choosing a Canadian Representative for the World Championships, would be to hold the Canadian Closed Championships in Toronto. This was the nearest venue to the Centre of Canada where competitive dancing existed. Ontario was also willing to pay for one couple in each style to travel to Toronto and to pay for its hotel fees for two nights. The date of Easter 1971 was chosen as the first such event. The choice of Easter gave couples the opportunity to travel to the venue on Good Friday and to return home on Easter Sunday, thus not having to take any days off work to travel. The winner of the Championship would be the Canadian representative at the next World Championship. If no Ten Dance Championship was held then the highest couple who had competed in both the Standard and the Latin events would be selected. The current Latin American trophy was purchased as the perpetual Trophy at the 1971 event. The Standard Trophy was the one which had been used for many years in Halifax and was updated in 1972 with a larger shield added onto the rear. Both of these trophies are still presented.

In early 1970 CABDA had an internal dispute with regards to its rules and it was then decided that these should be completely revamped. The Executive Committee had numerous meetings of input to a new set of model rules and in December 1970 it approved them on a temporary basis and subject to confirmation of the Membership at its next Annual General Meeting of the Membership of the Association. These re-established C.A.B.D.A.'s Constitution, Bylaws and Championship Rules and were based on those of those of both the I.C.A.D. and the Official Board of Ballroom Dancing in the United Kingdom.

In 1972 competitors started to appear from Montreal, Quebec, in the Novice category and it was very obvious, from their standard of dancing, that before long the Quebec couples would soon elevate to the higher categories. This proved to be true within two years. They also had couples in the Junior and Youth age groups which, eventually led to the current Youth classification. The dominating Association in Quebec at that time was known as the Federation des Loisirs Danse du Quebec. This was an association run by professionals who tried to negotiate with C.A.B.D.A. for membership in ICAD. However this could not and did not materialise due to the membership of professionals. Eventually the amateurs separated and the Amateur Actifs de Danse du Quebec was registered on April 27<sup>th</sup> 1973 as a completely amateur association.

In 1974, the Ontario President declared to his Executive Committee, that because of the growth of competitive dancing in the different areas and particularly in Quebec it was becoming increasingly difficult for C.A.B.D.A. to execute its

international responsibilities. The Committee should therefore be looking into a way of amalgamating the four dance areas in Canada into a truly National Amateur

Association. The Executive Committee agreed and so started the amalgamation process that took approximately 5 years to complete. The main responsibility was the production of a National set of Rules that would be common to all four areas of dancing in Canada and a formal recognition by the Canadian Government.

The three other areas were approached and copies of their rules were obtained and analysed to find common set of National Rules. Also, investigations commenced to determine what was required for formal recognition by the Canadian Federal Government and the relinquishment of that held by WCABDA. The ICAD would welcome the new format, as the Canadian association would then be truly national representing all areas of Canada.

In the meantime, in Ontario competitions, novice competitors were dancing some of the more advanced variations used by the Championship grade couples. As novices were less experienced, the standard of the Pre-Championship category was therefore becoming more and more inferior due to the graduation of Novices into the Pre-Championship category. As most of C.A.B.D.A.'s membership couples were novices, it took three years to convince the novices that it would be to their advantage, if they would restrict their steps to the amateur medal syllabus of the C.D.T.A. They eventually agreed that the change would be beneficial and approved the proposed rule change. This was approximately 1975 or 1976.

This helped the Novices greatly as they received more and more experience in doing the basic steps correctly and giving them a good grounding for promotion to the Pre Championship grade. Unfortunately, another problem was rising. There was a surge of competitions being organized with no increase in the numbers novice competitors. This circumstance did not help the Pre-Championship category as many novices were still graduating without the requisite experience. Consequently a motion was entertained and eventually accepted that the Novice category be eliminated and be replaced with three other categories:- Bronze, Silver and Gold and also, that each category should be limited to the appropriate steps and variations within the C.D.T.A. medal syllabus. This was accepted and it gave the novices more experience and lots more opportunity to win and be placed at the various levels on the way up to the Pre-Championship level. There was some objection from C.D.T.A. adjudicators as they felt that they did not have enough time while judging to look for any infringements of the syllabus. In many cases this has necessitated the employment of an additional judge to invigilate the material used by competitors.

In the meantime negotiations for the formation of a National Association were still continuing. When a proposed Constitution, Bylaws and Championship Rules was prepared and checked by the Ontario Executive copies were sent to the

other three areas for their opinions. The different areas made proposals for some changes.

These were discussed and those found acceptable were agreed upon and approved. Government departments provided information on how a National Association should be registered as a corporation and what documentation was necessary for such recognition. Eventually an "all areas meeting" was held in the Velodrome in Montreal, Quebec in the spring of 1978 where their representatives discussed the formation of a National Association. The proposed Constitution, Bylaws and Rules were voted in to existence. They also agreed that a workable National Amateur Association then existed and that matters should be finalised and a submission to the Government for recognition as a corporate body should be made. A National Executive Committee was then elected. Mr. Bill Clark of Ontario was elected as President. The required details were established with the federal government and the necessary forms obtained. The appropriate forms and Letters Patent were sent to all areas for signature and then sent to the Government. (The Signatories from each of the areas are listed below). The letters Patent were eventually issued on 11<sup>th</sup> October 1979 and the Seal of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs was affixed on October 31<sup>st</sup> 1979. A true Canadian Amateur Ballroom Dancers Association then became legal.

Following the formation of National C.A.B.D.A. the Ontario association became the "C.A.B.D.A. Ontario" but later changed to Ontario Amateur Dancers Association. Subsequently, when the recommendations came through from the I.C.A.D., that the word Ballroom be substituted by the word Sportdance, C.A.B.D.A. National changed its name to Canadian Amateur DanceSport Association. Ontario became the Ontario Amateur DanceSport Association.

For many years C.A.B.D.A. (Ont.) felt that there was no real benefit in being recognised as a Corporation, but due to the responsibilities that were becoming more and more important it decided to seek Corporate Status as a non-profit corporation and this was received on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1991 under its name at that time.

W.C.A.B.D.A. retained its W.C.A.B.D.A name until 1990 when it changed to the B.C. Amateur Dancers Association. In 1996 it changed it's name again to B.C Amateur Dancesport Association and then again in 2001 to DanceSport B.C.

In Quebec the Amateur Actifs de Danse du Quebec changed to the Association Amateurs de Danse Sportive du Quebec Inc. in 1991.

The Atlantic region called itself C.A.B.D.A. Atlantic and subsequently C.A.D.A. Atlantic. It is currently known as DanceSport Atlantic Association.

The I.C.A.D. changed it's name in 1990 to the International DanceSport Federation.

In 1987 after previously submitting its appropriate documentation in writing, a delegation was received from Alberta at the C.A.D.A. Annual Meeting requesting membership. It was accepted as the fifth province in C.A.D.A. and was named the Alberta Amateur Ballroom Dancers Association. Previous to this Alberta competitors were under the “adoption” of W.C.A.B.D.A. as required by C.A.D.A. rules. In 1990 there was a name change to Alberta Amateur Sport Dancers Association. In 1990 it changed again to Alberta Amateur DanceSport Association and again in 2001 it changed to DanceSport Alberta Association.

At its Annual general Meeting in 1996 in Toronto, Ontario, C.A.D.A. established the C.A.D.A. Olympic Committee as a Standing Committee of C.A.D.A.’s Board of Directors to oversee its application for membership in the Canadian Olympic Association. It received such recognition in April of 1997.

#### **SIGNATORIES ON THE LETTERS PATENT.**

|                   |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| British Columbia. | Dave Morrison.    | P. F. MacTaggart. |
| Ontario.          | Dennis J. Taylor. | Dave Stevenson.   |
| Quebec.           | Gaston Boucher.   | Nicole Jolicoeur. |
| Atlantic.         | Wendal Wamboldt.  | Bruce Hart.       |

#### **PRESIDENTS OF C.A.D.A.**

|                         |                  |                     |
|-------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1978 - 1979             | Bill Clark.      | - Ontario.          |
| 1979 - 1985             | Gordon Hawboldt  | - Quebec.           |
| 1985 - 1990             | Dave Stevenson   | - Ontario.          |
| 1990 - early 1997       | Ken McGrail      | - Nova Scotia.      |
| Early 1997 - March 1997 | Nicole Jolicoeur | - Quebec            |
| 1997 - 2005             | Jim Fraser       | - British Columbia. |
| 2005 -                  | Sandy Brittain   | - Ontario.          |

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Respectfully submitted  
by Dave Stevenson.

Signed

March 2007

On April, 2011 the CADA Board past a motion changing the name of CADA to Canada DanceSport.