

# UNC dance team gets kick out of cheering, competing

By LEIGH PRESSLEY  
Staff Writer

They jump like basketball players, juke around like football players, and the complicated moves they execute rival those of the wrestlers they support.

The High Kicking Heels, UNC's official dance team, is like a dynamic group of 18 Flo-Jos. Athletic and attractive, determined and dedicated, the squad continues to work overtime to gain the respect they deserve.

After a recent sixth-place win in the National Cheerleaders Association competition, the High Kicking Heels can add another notch to their belt. The national dance competition was held in Dallas on Jan. 5 and 6.

Tami Tickel, a senior nutrition major from Centerville, Va., said the squad makes a name for itself each time it goes to camp or contests.

"We jumped in competition and did well. We're definitely somebody to watch out for."

Quinton Alexander, the High Kicking Heels' coach, said the squad could win a national championship within two years. "They've gone from being a thought to an existence to a very good squad. They've come a long way in four years."

The squad was formed in 1985 and has placed as high as eighth in national competitions. In addition, the group won the Master Key to Spirit Award last summer at the largest dance/cheer camp in history.

Christina Benfield, a senior economics major from New Bern, founded the group and is the present captain. Benfield said people often saw the glitz and glamour of the squad, but never saw the hard behind-the-scenes work.

"People see us with our makeup on, our hair fixed and our nails done, but that's only three minutes of what we do. They don't see the kneecaps and sweat in the gym."

Alexander defined the High Kicking

Heels as more of a pom/dance team than a cheerleading squad or a drill team.

"We have girls that have taken technical ballet and we have girls that have cheered before. We use stiff motions that are similar to cheerleading, but use dance techniques for variety. We try to represent many areas of dance."

During football season, the squad works on halftime shows with the Marching Tar Heel Band. On Mondays, the band plots out the design of the show. Then, Alexander and the squad choreograph a routine to go along with the theme, and by Friday, the entire performance must be perfected.

"The band accents the dancers and the dancers accent the band," Alexander said. "It's a total performance."

Basketball season allows for more creativity in music and style, Alexander said. While the band serves as a support for the squad, halftime shows usually consist of mixed popular music.

Tickel said basketball season also gave

the squad more time to polish the routines. "We're spotlighted and we have more time to prepare. We choose our own music and it's a smaller atmosphere."

The High Kicking Heels also dance at several wrestling matches. After that, it's time for competition.

This spring, the squad will travel to Mardi Gras with the Marching Tar Heels and the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) to dance in several parades.

Members of the squad agree that time involvement is the most demanding aspect of the group. Each summer the squad must attend two weeks of band camp and dance camp. During football season, the dancers practice two days with the band and two days with a coach per week. Alexander said time commitments total almost 20 hours weekly during the fall.

In addition, members are required to have monthly weight and body fat

checks. If a squad member gains excessive weight, she must return to her starting weight within one month or risk suspension.

"If you're wearing a leotard in front of 20,000 people, you don't want to be overweight. That explains it all," Tickel said.

Among the most rewarding experiences of being on the squad are working together and performing, putting on a show and pulling it off, Tickel said.

"It's a great feeling to dance in Kenan Stadium and the Dean Dome."

In the future, the High Kicking Heels hope to continue giving Carolina students, faculty and alumni quality performances, as well as representing UNC across the country. Members said they hoped the University would accept them as a valid part of Carolina athletics and spirit organizations.

"It's hard to get something new started. We're at the bottom of the totem pole," Tickel said.

Benfield said she hoped the High Kicking Heels would receive more funding in the future so that different choreographers could be brought in for a variety in styles.

Although the squad has received generous funding from the band, other collegiate dance teams receive money for uniforms and equipment, Benfield said. The dancers now hold several fund-raisers and pay for many expenses themselves.

Tryouts for the High Kicking Heels will be held March 27-30 at 7:30 p.m. in Great Hall.

Alexander said he was looking for girls with dance ability, coordination, good technique, confidence and dedication. He said he hoped the squad could continue to have quality dancers to entertain the crowd at athletic events.

"We want to vary performance styles to make an appeal to alumni and students. The girls want to perform not only for themselves, but also for the crowd."

# Spend time, not money traveling abroad via BUNAC program

By CHRISTINA NIFONG  
Staff Writer

You've looked through millions of brochures that promise a fun-filled and educational six months abroad. There is nothing in the world that you want to do more than spend a summer traveling in Europe, but you just can't afford the \$5,000 cost.

Does \$96 sound better?

British Universities North American Club (BUNAC) and the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) co-administer a non-profit program called Work in Britain that costs students only \$96 each plus airfare and allows them to spend a maximum of six months working abroad.

Christine McBride, a senior business major from Lexington, went to Europe last summer. "It was the best summer I ever had."

"By working, I was able to really find out more about the people. I was a part of it — it was my life. I learned so much more (than the summer before, studying in London)."

About 20 years ago, the British government approached the U.S. government about making it easier for students to acquire green cards. The two governments developed a program to give students a chance to broaden their view of the world and reality, said Sarah Grossi, director of Work Exchanges for CIEE.

Last summer, around 4,000 Americans and just a few more British swapped countries and lifestyles for the summer

to learn and work through BUNAC and CIEE. The program offers students housing information, student accommodations for the first few nights they are in London and a list of 20-30 employers that have expressed interest in hiring Americans, Grossi said.

Grossi said the office also planned social events and trips, but many students chose not to use this service. "A lot of them want to experience the British culture and society on their own."

The program provides these services with as little cost as possible to students, Grossi said. In addition, BUNAC provides a safety net — students know where they can go to get help.

Maria Bryan, assistant study abroad officer at UNC, said 164 UNC students received blue cards (the British equivalent to a green card) last summer. She said the British program was the most popular of the seven major CIEE programs. Other programs could send students to places such as France, Ireland and Jamaica.

Bryan said she thought one of the best parts of the BUNAC program was the short-term student accommodations. "The scariest part, I think, is getting off the plane and not knowing where you're going to live."

She said hotel rooms in London cost about 35 pounds a night, whereas the BUNAC accommodations were only about 12 pounds (just over \$19) nightly. Students usually use these accommodations for three days, until they find a job.

McBride found a job in one day through BUNAC. She worked as a waitress at and lived upstairs in a pub in London. The day she was hired she moved into the pub and the next day she went to work, she said.

She said that she decided to work in London because it was something different. "Money didn't have anything to do with it. It just seemed like something neat to do. I wanted to travel, backpack through Europe, but I didn't have anyone to go with."

Most of the people she worked with at the pub were young, about her age, and they were from all over the world. She liked the work she was doing — at first. "When you first get there, it's a way to meet people."

But, she said, "I got tired of it. It gets

old. I was around those people all the time. Everybody knew everybody else's business — there was no privacy."

McBride said working kept her very busy. "I worked so much — like 50 hours a week. There wasn't a lot of time for a social life." She worked a variety of hours, some in the morning and usually until the pub closed at midnight. She said most of her time off was a few hours in the middle of the day.

"Twelve o'clock (at night) is not always a prime time to have a date."

Bryan said working abroad was not the best way to experience another culture, but she said it was better than not going at all. "It's always better to go for a year — to study during the school year and work during the summer."

"It gives you experience working in a

different culture where you are forced to be independent."

But, when you are working to support yourself, one disadvantage is that you don't have time to do much else. It's like being in the real world, she said.

Many of the applicants (81 percent) wait until they have arrived in Britain to start looking for a job. And at that point, most of the jobs BUNAC is able to locate are secretarial or blue collar jobs. The BUNAC brochure emphasizes that students can find career-related jobs if they are willing to search for them in advance. Simply living in the country is the number one priority for the students that go.

Bryan agreed. "The most exciting thing (about traveling abroad) is that you leave every preconceived idea of you and your personality behind you. You

start with a clean slate."

She said many people found it difficult to return home after finding a new 'you,' but most succeeded. "Most people integrate the new and old and they are more happy with that person."

McBride talked about the contrast between the American and British cultures. "That's what I like about traveling. I like the differences."

She said that some of the people who went to the pub went there every day. "That's such a part of their lives." Married men would come in every night after work and stay until it closed. "It was like they weren't even married." Some people would stay at the pub from open to close.

Her worst experience? "The guy that I dated this summer (in London) is still calling me."

## Sports

# Tumbling humbly Suto maintains high scores and a low profile

BETHANY LITTON  
Staff Writer

If gymnastics is a sport of bouncy, tumbling extroverts, an activity mothers put their hyperactive daughters in to give them a chance to exhaust their endless energy, then Carrie Suto seems to be in the wrong sport.

Although she has a gymnast's petite build, Suto's unassuming, private manner makes her seem more like the quiet girl next door, the one mothers always wished their live wires would be like.

Her least favorite event has always been the floor exercise, the junior from Wayne, Penn., said, because of the showmanship and dancing it requires.

"Floor's always been the hardest for me," Suto said. "I've always been more quiet, and people say you need to sort of let loose and let go when you do your floor, especially in your dance parts, and that's always been hard for me."

Suto also admitted that, until college, she never wanted her parents to come to her meets. "My parents have always supported me, but in private club I never really wanted people to come watch

me," she said.

And, when asked about the team's performance against Radford on February 3, Suto described the Tar Heels' win over a less-skilled Highlander team without even mentioning that she won first place in both the all-around and the balance beam competitions.

Although humility is all that shows, Suto must be proud of her accomplishments as a gymnast. She has been one of UNC's most consistent gymnasts for her three years on the team, ranking among the top three all-around UNC performers since her first meet as a Tar Heel.

"Carrie came in and had an immediate impact on the team," head coach Derek Galvin said.

As one of the oldest members of the squad, Suto has emerged as a leader with quiet encouragement for her teammates and a relentless attitude toward work. "Carrie's a very hard worker," Galvin said. "She works just as hard in practice as she does in competition. She will work over and over again on meticulous details of her routine."

According to Galvin, because of



Carrie Suto

Suto's emphasis on technique, she seldom makes mistakes of execution in her routines, and she is constantly striving for perfection in every event.

Her first exposure to gymnastics came in the second grade, and she stuck with it instead of sports like softball and soccer out of sheer enjoyment for the thrill of the sport. She especially liked the challenge offered by the individual nature of the competition.

"I always want to go in and prove myself and make it better," she said. "But it keeps being fun because it's a team thing."

The unity of the UNC team is unusually strong this season, Suto said, and so is the support from her teammates.

"Knowing the team is behind you, and that we're all working for the same goal, it just makes it easier," she said.

Suto and junior Debbie Sigler are the only members of the team who have been to NCAA regional competition — UNC last went two years ago — and Suto said she hopes to be a leader in helping this year's squad qualify for

postseason competition.

"My goal for the team is to make it to regionals," she said. "As an individual, I just want to know that I contributed to the team score to get to regionals."

The difficulty in her routines, particularly on the uneven bars, has increased in her tenure in Chapel Hill, and Suto said she has felt strong and healthy in the past three meets, a blessing on a team that has already been plagued by illness and injury.

When she isn't practicing or competing, Suto spends much of her time in her other role — as a student. A business major, she was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa as a junior, and she has appeared on the Dean's List every semester.

Suto said she chose North Carolina because of the combination of strong academics and strong gymnastics it offers, and she likes the different experience of life in the South.

"It's a more relaxed atmosphere than up North," she said. "People smile at each other more."

Although she doesn't plan to work with gymnastics in an official sense when she graduates, Suto said she would like to follow the sport closely and if possible coach in an informal setting. She plans to pursue a career in the business world, but she said she wants a job that will help other people in some way.

Traveling abroad for a semester something else Suto has always wanted to do but never had the time, and she also said she would like to see what the real world is like.

"Sometimes I think I want to get a job, explore, see what's out there, because I really don't know," she said. "I really haven't been able to do that different kind of stuff. My resume is going to say 'gymnastics.'"

It may not sound like much to Suto, but if employers really look for the individuals who tackle one or two things with complete dedication, she should have more than a few job opportunities when she graduates.

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