



Dancing like somebody is watching: Lee Edmands struts her stuff with partner Gordon Chase

Two to tango

WHAT DO A Dunedin chartered accountant and a communications connoisseur in Auckland have in common? Lycra, limber limbs, and a love for latin lunges.

Lynda Jacket CA, financial accountant for Image Services Ltd, and Lee Edmands, Auckland Branch communications and special interest group coordinator, are both keen Ceroc dancers and are wowing the crowds nationwide with their debonair dance steps.

Ceroc, coming from the French *c'est Rock* and sometimes called modern jive, incorporates elements of dance styles salsa, swing, rock 'n' roll, and jazz/funk. It is popular because it can be danced to a very wide range of music.

At the recent Masters Games in Dunedin, Lee placed first in senior division freestyle event with partner Gordon Chase, and Lynda and partner Clint Trewin placed second in the Showdance division.

"Normally Ceroc is danced freestyle – the guy just leads the moves on the spot making them up as he goes," explains Lynda. "However the Showdance was a choreographed dance which we put together, depicting an old couple who start out dancing stooped and slow, but end up fast and zappy, with the motto being that dancing keeps you young.

"You can be very creative – we had two swift costume changes mid-performance, aided by a bit of creative sewing and lots of Velcro."

Lynda has been dancing for five years and initially started it for fun and to meet new people. After making the final of the Dancing with a Stranger division at the South Island Champs two years ago, she realised she didn't only enjoy it, she had talent too.

"You make a lot of friends through dancing, and by travelling to different cities to compete you meet lots of varied and interesting people."

Lee, who has been dancing for three years, agrees.

"As well as being great for fitness and energy levels, it's very social. I've met lots of people from all over the country. And the greatest thing about Ceroc is that you can dance to most music you hear on the radio.

She says she wasn't always keen on competing but has grown to love it.

"The thrill of entertaining, the buzz of pushing myself creatively and physically in a sport I adore, plus the camaraderie and friendly rivalry amongst the dancers keeps me coming back for more. And of course dressing up is fun!"

While Lynda is training hard for the South

Island Champs in April, Lee has been literally floored by a foot injury. She still hopes to be dance-fit for the event though, so she can add to her other wins and titles. "I'll be devastated if I can't compete, and am going a bit mad wobbling around in my moon boot, but fingers crossed I'll be ok, and can remember all the moves after missing out on training."

SUGGESTIONS FOR BECOMING

A CEROC SENSATION

Lynda: "Anyone can learn to do Ceroc because the class rotates so you don't need a partner. Just smile, don't stress and enjoy what you're doing. You're more likely to dance better if you're happy and relaxed, and that fun and composure then reflects onto the judges and audience. Oh and whatever you do ... don't break a leg! Or foot!"

Lee: "Some of the dances can put you in situations which look rather raunchy to the uninitiated. You need to shed your inhibitions pretty quickly if you want to compete – it's one of the hardest obstacles to overcome for most people. Freestyle dancing relies on you "reading" your partner's leads (hand signals) to perform moves and "create" a dance, interpreting the music as you go. It's challenging but rewarding."

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