

PLAID NEWSLETTER

April Newsletter

Hey everyone! I wanted to apologize about the April newsletter. Due to my computers RAM being defective, my computer was out of commission for three weeks! It contains everything newsletter-related (this has now been fixed). And on top of this I was horribly sick for the past two weeks, making it even more difficult to find a means to make the newsletter. But I'm back on track! I will make sure each month's newsletter is completed on time from here on out.

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PLAID's Senior 8-hand Team in Ireland!!!

News and Updates

Worlds Results!

Our World qualifiers and the 8-hand team are back home safe and sound! They all had a wonderful time in Ireland and took many pictures, some of which are in this very newsletter!

Unfortunately our solo dancers were not recalled, and the 8-hand team had no better luck. But they all danced their best out there and, most importantly, they all enjoyed themselves onstage.

Yes, trophies and medals are nice. But I say if you don't have fun dancing, why dance at all? Good job girls!! Way to take advantage of the great opportunity you had – the chance to go to Ireland, dance in the World Championships, and have loads of fun!

Be sure to pick these girls' brains for all their fun-filled stories!

July Workshops

On August 3rd, we will have a workshop with Gerard Carson! He is a very good dancer and typically holds a fairly demanding workshop. So to prepare for his arrival, we have made some changes to classes in July, starting on July 9th and ending on August 2nd.

Before I continue, it is important to point out that everything explained below is **included in July tuition**.

On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays there will be a 'conditioning class' from 9:30am-12:30pm at the Fullerton studio. This class will

focus on, well, conditioning! Drills, running through dances multiple times, etc. This is pretty much a long dance class designed to whip you into shape before Gerard gets here.

Tuesdays and Thursdays are (in my opinion) the fun days! We will be having 'planned outings' such as Hikes, Biking, Beach Walks, Swimming, etc. These are cross training exercise events with a relaxed setting. All dancers at all levels may participate, and parents are welcome to join in too!

I am currently working on the list of events for these outings and will send out an email with more information as July gets closer. We are trying to choose fun events that also offer exercise as well as allowing for everyone to participate. An example would be biking. Since not everyone has a bike, we are planning on biking up and down Huntington Beach where bike rentals are available.

I personally am looking forward to these outings! I know many local hikes and LOVE to bike! This is kind of my dream come true- to have people share in my crazy adventures!



The girls posing outside the venue for Worlds.

Health and Fitness

Cross Training

Cross training has interested me for a long time. I currently cross train my dancing with cycling and have seen great benefits from this. But I have also heard very negative views on cross training for dancers in particular, so I did some research.

I found two myths about cross training for dancers that I will break now.

Myth 1: Doing any other form of exercise will make your muscles huge. Now as a guy, this doesn't seem so bad to me. But I can see how a girl might not want bulging thigh muscles and so I will explain a bit about weight lifting.

Lifting weights in general doesn't create huge muscles, but actually creates lean, fit muscle while burning fat! Bodybuilders have to alter their "weight-to-repetition ratio." This means they lift a large amount of weight with very few repetitions. A dancer should lift, or use, smaller amounts of weight for more repetitions to create lean muscle and burn fat.

Myth 2: One can get all the training they need from their dance class. This statement is both true and false. Irish dance in particular is very intense, but also very unique. When dancing, we are classified as "sprinters" whereas while doing drills we are "endurance." Added to this are the highly intricate steps we all have to do.

Although we try our best to make sure everyone is trained enough in the class itself, unfortunately in order to be the best you can be it is necessary to train outside of class as well.

So if cross training is beneficial, what does it do for us as dancers?

Well the main benefit is **injury prevention**, which I talked about in the March newsletter. It also helps to **fully develop your muscles**. When Owen Barrington had his workshop, he mentioned to us that Irish dancers have very overdeveloped outer calf muscles but very underdeveloped inner calf muscles. This is due to our turnout. In order to maintain a strong turnout our outer calf muscles must work hard, which also allows our inner calf muscles to relax. This leads to shin splints and ankle rolls due to our leg muscles being disproportionate in size and strength.

Another large benefit is **stamina**. A cross training exercise should be aerobic, such as swimming or biking. These exercises tend to work on burning fat and increasing cardiovascular performance.

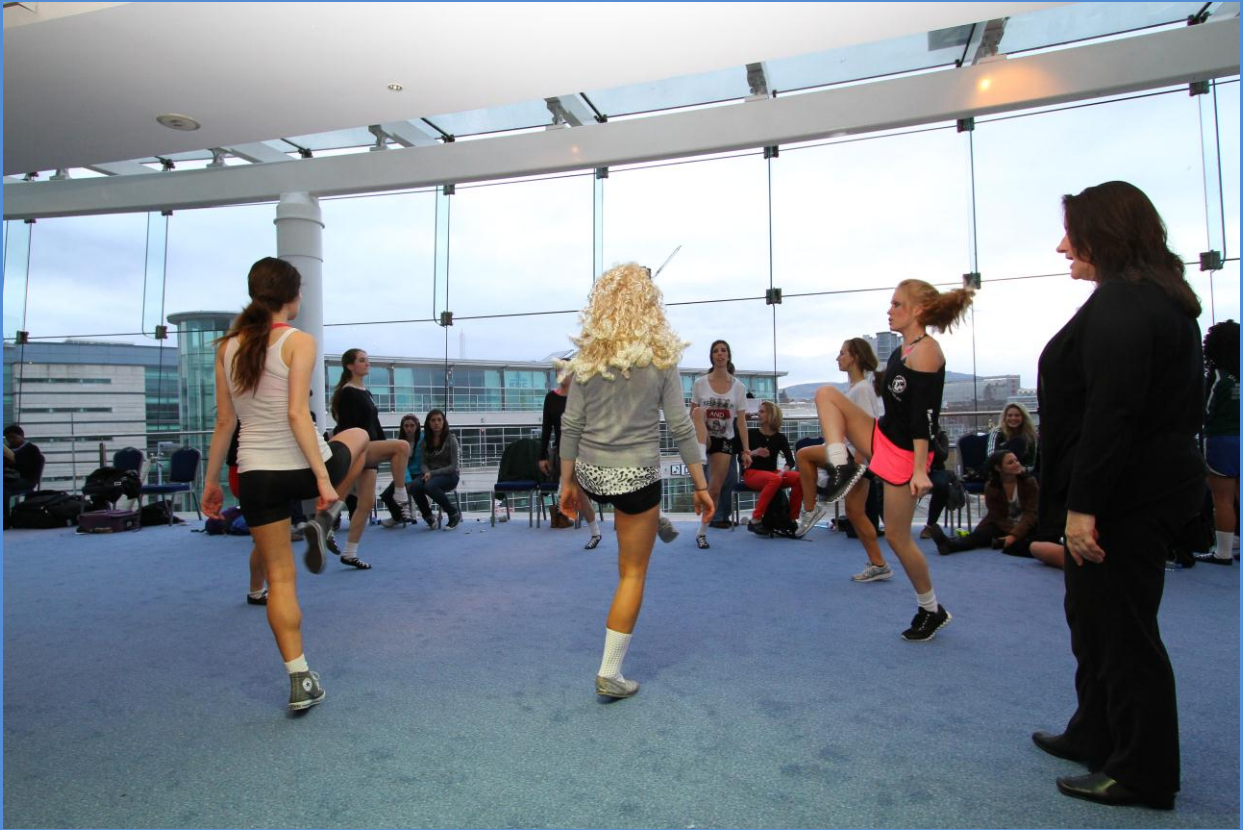
So from what I can see both from research and personal experience, cross training has very real benefits for us dancers. Hopefully now I will get some biking partners out of this article ;) haha!

Oh and one more thing: be sure to give yourself time to rest! Allocate at least one day of the week to doing no exercise at all so your body can rest and recover.



Our PLAID girls huddling for warmth!

Pictures



The team, and Michelle, working hard!



Fun photo of the team posing on... lily pads??? THEY'RE FROGGIES! :D