



Thursday, January 17, 2002

Dance team places third at nationals

By **Jeff Samoray**, OU Web Writer

Images, Oakland University's dance team, put on another impressive showing in this year's **National Dance Team Championships**, held in Orlando, Fla., Jan. 11-13. The team finished third in Division I behind Cal State-Fullerton and the University of Delaware.

"The competition was really tough this year," said Images co-captain Erin Shea. "Every year you think your team gets a lot better, but the other teams also improve. Each year the dances become more intricate."

Last year, Images finished second at the national competition.

To qualify for the competition, each team was required to submit a videotaped performance to a panel of judges. Images submitted a tape containing its performance from October's Midnight Madness celebration, which the team developed at the Universal Dance Association College Spirit Camp. Of the 26 teams, OU finished second in the semifinal bracket before moving to the finals. Of the 11 finalists, OU finished behind both teams that were placed directly into the finals bracket.

"We were really happy with how we finished," Shea said. "We did really well in the semifinals and found some things we wanted to work on. There were some little mistakes due to nerves. A lot of the girls on the team were nervous because it was their first time at nationals."

Images' routine was developed in conjunction with a professional choreographer. Beginning last November, the team perfected their routine by working on it four times per week, and up to four hours per practice session. Each team was allowed a maximum of 14 members for its performance.

"Just like last year, we had a choreographer come in, but the girls really changed the dance this year to meet their own style and talents," said Images Coach Teri Bossi. "There was no theme to the routine, just a tough girl type of dance with a real sleek costume that changes into a shocking girly girl top. We used a splice of five different songs for a total of one minute, 55 seconds."

Two team members had their mothers make the tops to their dance outfits for the competition.

"For a while we've tried to come up with something new for our costumes," Shea said. "We practically designed the whole costumes ourselves. We wanted to be able to rip a piece of something off while we were dancing. The coolest part of our routine was where the black top came off to reveal another layer from underneath. Right after that we went through a series of turns, which is one of the more difficult parts of the dance. Our pants were made of stretchy, shiny black material, made to be comfortable to wear, but they looked like leather."

Bossi said the team performed its dance better than she had seen it in practice.

"I had no idea what the judges would think, but I could not expect any more from my team," Bossi said. "They brought me to tears, my whole body was covered in goose-bumps. My hands were shaking and my whole body felt numb."

But until the final results were announced, Bossi said she wasn't sure how the team had ranked.

"We had no idea what to expect because of all of the new teams coming in. The team that took third last year didn't even make it into the finals this year," Bossi said. "I knew just by how we performed that we would make it into finals, but it is hard to say what the judges will like. Out of personal experience as a national dance team judge, I can tell you everyone looks for something different."

Shea said the biggest gain from the competition is increasing Images' stature as a nationally recognized dance team.

"We're really excited to start building a name for ourselves," Shea said. "We did the best we could at the competition and really feel we've made an accomplishment."

Images regularly performs short routines during halftime and official time outs at **OU basketball** games. They also perform publicly and provide community services. The team will conduct tryouts for the 2002-2003 season in May.

SUMMARY

Images, OU's dance team, put on another impressive showing in this year's National Dance Team Championships, held in Orlando, Fla., Jan. 11-13. The team finished third in Division I behind Cal State-Fullerton and the University of Delaware. Last year, Images finished second at the national competition.

Created by CareTech Administrator (webservices@caretechsolutions.com) on Thursday, January 17, 2002

Modified by CareTech Administrator (webservices@caretechsolutions.com) on Thursday, January 17, 2002

Article Start Date: Friday, October 3, 2003