

Dazzlers face their fears at Nationals

By Alyssa Crowl and Samantha Mayberry

“Dancing at Nationals is one of the best feelings in the world,” said junior Bailey Creighton. She explains the experience as being a rush of insane energy and adrenaline. “It makes you feel like you can do anything.”

Nationals is the largest competition the Dazzlers go to every year. It is owned by the Universal Dance Association and teams from all over America come to compete against one another. The event is so widely popular that it’s even broadcast on ESPN. The team leaves on the 28th of January and compete on the 30th and the 1st of February. The Dazzlers must be completely ready for such an important event.

“We practice all the time. From all day practices over winter break to three-a-days during the school week,” said Creighton.

Although the practicing is harsh, the dance team looks forward to Nationals every year.

Sophomore Maddy Robinson said that there is no better feeling than winning. Hearing the team’s name called last and to know in the end that it’s all worth it. The thrill of winning mixed with the exhilaration of being onstage makes the whole experience a living fantasy.

“It is completely surreal,” said alumnus and former Dazzler Shelby Sneed. “The energy is incredible. The building is packed from floor to ceiling and all eyes are on you.”

Sneed was an FC Dazzler through her entire high school career and has continued with dancing in college. She has performed multiple times, including at Nationals.

“It’s honestly the scariest, yet most exciting thing I have ever experienced,” said Sneed.

The alumni play such major role in helping to build up the next team.

“The alumni of this program mean the world to me! It is amazing how I still hear from girls that I coached nearly 20 years ago, especially around nationals season. The alumni also motivates me to keep the program at the highest level. If I allow the program to lose its luster I would be destroying a legacy that so many women helped me build,” said coach Todd Sharp.

This big event that defines the Dazzlers’ whole



Jennifer Didat/ Submitted Photo

Dazzlers execute a team toetouch while performing at the Just Dance Competition in Indianapolis, Indiana. The team had made it into the finale and later that night discovered they had won it all.

year has not only brought the team together, but created some very cherished memories.

For senior Katie Tarr the best memory was double titling her freshman year.

Then for Sneed, the most amazing memory would be her performance in the preliminaries, which is the competition that every high school team must go through to precede onto finals. She describes this experience as “truly breathtaking.”

The team has a legacy and it seems that they improve upon that legacy every year.

“To me it is simple. I have not lost my passion for coaching this team. My desire to win and be the best we can be is just as strong this year as it was my first year coaching 20 years ago,” said Sharp.

Unfortunately there have been a few bad memories to go along with the remarkable ones, on this rollercoaster of a competition.

Sophomore Ceci Quinn said that her scariest experience at Nationals was an unfortunate occurrence in which she was separated from the rest of the team and could not find her way back. This was the same year that she hurt her back and was not able to perform.

However, when everyone comes together and waits for that final name to be called at this enormous event, nothing can compare to the feeling of accomplishment. Everyone had worked so hard and it had finally paid off.

Sharp said, “I cannot begin to describe the sense of pride I have every year when my girls take the nationals floor. I am so proud of the legacy we have built as the most winning high school dance team in history. Each year we overcome so many new obstacles as a team to get to that moment. It’s an indescribable feeling!”