

Catch It!



U.S. NATIONAL BATON TWIRLING CHAMPIONSHIPS
DAYTONA BEACH
JULY 6-10, 2021 **FLORIDA**



INSIDE (click on title to jump to page)

THE ROAD TO 2021

JULY 4TH VIRTUAL PARADE

2019 NATIONAL FINALS WATCH PARTIES

TWIRLERS' CHOICE AWARDS

USTA CREATIVE CHALLENGE

uTwirl 2020

MAKE BATON COMPETITIONS FUN

NEW STRUT EVENT COMING

2021 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS



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Check out news and photos on
USTA's Facebook page and Twitter
and Instagram feeds!

As people in cities around the world protest police brutality and racism, we stand in solidarity with those fighting for racial justice and equal treatment for all Americans under the law and in our society. All of us are deserving of decency, respect and fundamental human rights, and we support those who are organizing to effect systemic change and remedy longstanding injustices.

We know that black lives matter.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear baton enthusiast,

I hope this publication finds you safe and well as we begin to emerge from three to four months of stay at home orders (depending on where you live), as well as weeks of social unrest.

Although our competitive season came to a screeching halt and total cancellation on March 14, the Board of Directors, department leaders and personnel of the U.S. Twirling Association have been hard at work preparing for a SPECTACULAR 2021 season. As the leading authority in the sport of baton twirling, USTA has been committed to supporting its athletes, coaches, judges and parents while keeping everyone engaged and hopeful during this challenging time.

You will find inside this publication the Road to 2021; a detailed roadmap leading us all to the upcoming season. It is an all-encompassing plan and has something for everyone. If you took advantage of USTA's many virtual opportunities in these past months, you know that they were extremely valuable, of high quality and were offered at no cost, except for judge certification workshops and athlete CAS evaluations. We were and remain in this with all of you. "We Are We."

I know you are all ready to get back to our great sport. The Board of Directors and leadership of the U.S. Twirling Association are committed to getting you there. Please travel with us on the "Road to 2021." It's going to be a great journey!

Stay safe and well!

Best Regards,

Karen Cammer

USTA President



THE ROAD TO 2021



USTA is excited to be traveling on “The Road to 2021.” This initiative is a collaborative effort to support athletes, coaches, judges and our broader twirling community as we move through the COVID-19 pandemic and twirl into 2021! The plan includes activities that many members have already taken advantage of, as well as exciting new opportunities coming later this year.

The Road to 2021 kicked off with the following:

USTA PRESENTS - a series of videos available on **USTA's Facebook page** and **YouTube channel** for coaches and athletes (from recreational to advanced!)

WEDNESDAY WEBINARS - free, interactive webinars for judges and those interested in learning more about the judging process for specific Championship events. The webinars were recorded and Professional members can access them using the instructions provide in the May Inside Loop.

ONLINE JUDGES WORKSHOPS - for Professional members who would like to earn their judge's certification, those who need seminar credit and those who would just like to observe how judges are trained! All Professional members, 16 years or

older, may attend for information purposes, but attendees must be 18 or older to test for certification. A Level I Part II workshop was held May 9; a Level II Part II workshop was held June 13 and a Level III workshop was held July 5. Check the **USTA Calendar** for future workshops as we move into the 2021 season.

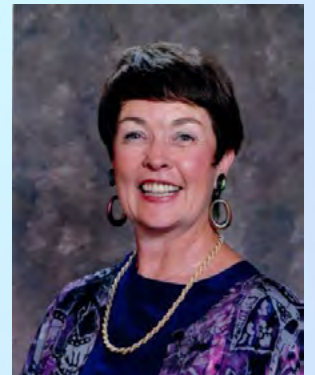
ONLINE CAS EVALUATIONS - online Compulsory and Movement Technique evaluations were offered Monday through Friday from May 11 to June 26. Congratulations to all the athletes who participated!

For more on future opportunities on the Road to 2021, see the stories on “Coming Attractions” on page 4, “uTwirl” on page 8, and Strut on page 9.

WORDS OF WISDOM

The late Patsy Hamilton, USTA Professional from California, was loved and respected within all the pageantry arts. From baton twirling to winter guard to drum corps, her presence truly exemplified the ultimate professional.

In the early 90's at a USTA National Convention, Patsy spoke to our coaches and judges. Her thoughts are timeless. Patsy, you are remembered with love and we thank you for numerous contributions to our sport. Here is what she had to say:



PROFESSIONALISM

As a professional, you always appear to know what you are doing. Of course, the best way to accomplish this is to really know what you are doing.

As a professional, you are authoritative, not authoritarian.

As a professional, you are held accountable, accountable for every aspect of the job -your behavior, your

ethics, your judgments.

As a professional, you can command respect because you show respect for yourself and for your colleagues.

As a professional, you bring an attitude to each environment. Because you are a professional that attitude is positive, confident, caring.

As a professional, you value your

time and energy and regard your contribution and those of your colleagues as worthwhile.

As a professional, you are willing to use what you know as a foundation to learn about what you don't know.

As a professional, you leave a legacy.

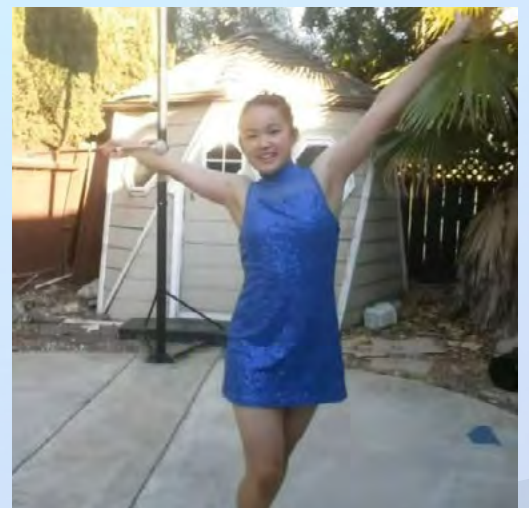
Would I want to work with me again?

JULY 4TH VIRTUAL PARADE



Thanks to all the athletes, coaches, parents and twirling fans who participated in USTA's First Virtual 4th of July Parade! It was AWESOME! If you missed it on Independence Day, you can watch it again [HERE](#).

Special thanks to Lindsay Pederesen, our parade producer, for creating the graphics and floats and putting together a wonderful program that celebrates the USA and the sport of baton twirling!





UNITED STATES TWIRLING ASSOCIATION PRESENTS...

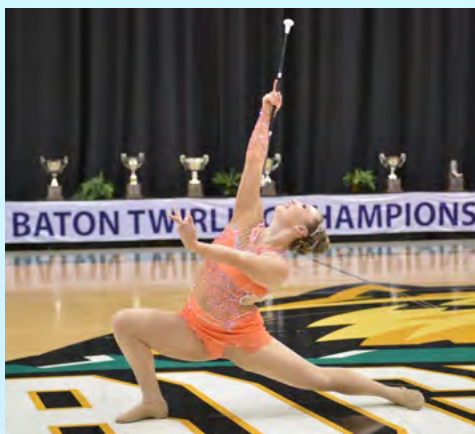
2019 NATIONAL FINALS WATCH PARTIES

Join us to relive the excitement and marvel at the excellence of the athletes in the 2019 National Finals Show and National Team Finals during two free watch parties!

The 2019 National Finals Show Watch Party - featuring the finalists in the individual events of 2-Baton, Strut, 3-Baton, Artistic Twirl, Men's Solo and Solo - will be held at 8 p.m. EDT/ 5 p.m. PDT on Thursday, July 9.

The 2019 National Team Finals - featuring the finalists in the Twirl Team and Dance Twirl Team events - will be held at 8 p.m. EDT / 5 p.m. PDT on Friday, July 10.

Watch USTA's **FACEBOOK**, **TWITTER** and **INSTAGRAM** feeds to find the livestream links!



TWIRLERS' CHOICE AWARDS

Get ready for the first Twirlers' Choice Awards

USTA will host the first Twirlers' Choice Awards at 8 p.m. EDT / 5 p.m. PDT on Saturday, July 11, 2020!

Watch USTA's social media for more information on where to watch the free livestream! This fun event is designed to encourage twirlers to have fun, show their creativity and bring our twirling community together to celebrate our twirlers in a virtual social event.

You'll be able to vote for your favorite twirler in two special events: **The Free Twirl Event** and the **Collegiate Event**.

The Free Twirl Event will have three divisions:

- ▶ Twirlers' Choice - Pop Star - 5th grade and below
- ▶ Twirlers' Choice - Mega Star - 6th grade to 8th grade
- ▶ Twirlers' Choice - Icon - 9th grade and above

The Collegiate Event will have one level of competition:

- ▶ Twirlers' Choice - College Idol

So get ready to watch the livestream on July 11 and vote for your favorites in USTA's Twirlers' Choice Awards!



USTA CREATIVE CHALLENGE

Potential financial support for your baton twirling business

Dear USTA Professional Members,

I pray that you are currently healthy and staying productive as we all go through this unprecedented time. I loved the quote that Steve Perelman shared recently with us: *"We are not all in the same boat, but we are all in the same storm."*

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically affected our community and our sport. Now, more than ever, USTA and your Board of Directors wants to provide encouragement and support to you and your baton twirling business.

Two years ago, the USTA Board of Directors developed the USTA Creative Challenge to support and reward innovative Professional Members. Because our 2020 season was dramatically affected by the pandemic, this is a perfect time for you to consider submitting an application for the 2020 USTA Creative Challenge. You could be awarded a grant of up to \$5,000 to fund new and innovative opportunities for your baton twirling business.

Please read through the [2020 USTA Creative Challenge Guidelines](#) for more

information on procedures and deadlines. Then submit your application! This could help you get your 2020-2021 twirling season off to a strong start!

I am extremely optimistic, as are my fellow board members, that as we begin to come out of this pandemic, we will be stronger than ever and have the best twirling season USTA has ever seen!

Please stay safe and positive!

John Chamberlain,
USTA Vice President coordinator for
USTA Creative Challenge

uTwirl 2020

To bring fun, learning and growth on The Road to 2021

USTA is proud to announce uTwirl 2020, a series of educational expos for athletes, coaches, judges and even parents, which will be held in several locations across the country in the fall of 2020.

Modeled after iTwirl, national educational expos that were held in 2015, 2017 and 2019, uTwirl will offer “something for everyone,” including:

- ▶ Evaluations for Solo, Freestyle and Teams
- ▶ Competitive Foundation Events
- ▶ Variety of classes for athletes, coaches, judges and parents, taught by renowned clinicians
- ▶ Fun for everyone at a special social event
- ▶ Here are the types of classes you'll be treated to at uTwirl 2020:
 - ▶ Building the Foundation: From rec level to elite athlete
 - ▶ Behind the Scoresheet: Judging Q&A for parents and coaches
 - ▶ Collegiate twirling and the audition process
 - ▶ Contact, rolls, aerial tricks are the staples
 - ▶ The new face of Strut

All events will be held in compliance

with health guidelines in effect at the time. Logistical details are still being finalized, but the targeted states for uTwirl 2020 are California, Florida, Indiana/Ohio, Maryland, New York, Tennessee and Texas. The targeted dates are September 26-27, October 3-4 and October 10-11, 2020.

Once details are confirmed, you will receive information via email, the USTA website and USTA's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram feeds, so you can make plans to attend uTwirl 2020!

Hope to see you there!



HOW TO MAKE BATON

By Corey Kinyon Cruz



I still have a vivid memory of driving home from my first baton competition. Exhausted, I laid down in the back of our station wagon. When I closed my eyes, I saw silver batons spinning, a mirage of beautiful sparkling costumes and brilliant trophies. I was hooked! I could not wait until I could compete again. It is my wish that every twirler experience that magical feeling!

Organization and planning are the first steps in creating a fun and memorable competition. Once you have your date, venue, tabulators, announcer, sound system and judges, the contest director should secure volunteers to help with the many responsibilities that will make the competition a success. Make a list of duties.

Your to-do list might include:

- ▶ Create and have someone double-check your set system.
- ▶ Make a program to be printed online.
- ▶ Print and staple programs to be sold the day of the competition, assign a volunteer to sell.
- ▶ Order awards, assign a volunteer to set up, organize and hand out awards.

- ▶ Designate a volunteer to be in charge of keeping the hospitality room for judges and contest staff clean, and well-stocked with food, snacks and water.
- ▶ Form a committee to be in charge of concessions for the day.
- ▶ If your event will have t-shirts available, appoint someone to handle pre-sale, pick-up, and distribution the day of the event. Also, secure additional stock to be sold the day of the competition.
- ▶ Select a crew of lane starters well before the competition date, have them report before the contest begins.
- ▶ Delegate a group of table movers who will be ready to move tables quickly when needed.
- ▶ Assign a volunteer to handle decorations for the event, including set-up, maintenance throughout the day, and tear down at the conclusion of the competition.

Now comes the fun part! It's time to choose a theme. Set your event apart from the rest, make it memorable, make it appealing, create an atmosphere of celebration. Make them want to come back! An exciting theme, beautiful decorations,



The annual Holiday Contest hosted by the New Jersey Baton Council features holiday costumes and a visit from Santa!

upbeat music played during down times, games, "no drop" recognition and prizes, and gorgeous awards will generate the excitement you want. Choose a theme that means something to you, if you are

unsure, look to current trends for inspiration.

Here are some ideas to generate a theme by month:

- ▶ October-Harvest Festival, Halloween, Magic
- ▶ November-Thanksgiving, Fall Festival
- ▶ December-Christmas or Holiday, Welcome Winter, Frozen, Hot Chocolate, Gingerbread
- ▶ January-Welcome the New Year
- ▶ February-Valentine's Day
- ▶ March-St. Patrick's Day, Rainbow, Hello Spring
- ▶ April-Easter, Tea Party,
- ▶ May-Memorial Day
- ▶ June-Summertime, Beach

Traditional themes:

- ▶ Carnival
- ▶ Beach
- ▶ Hollywood
- ▶ Masquerade
- ▶ Decades-50's, 60's, 70's, 80's
- ▶ Neon
- ▶ Western
- ▶ Fire and Ice
- ▶ Galaxy
- ▶ Nautical
- ▶ Rock Star
- ▶ Luau
- ▶ Roaring 20's
- ▶ Jungle
- ▶ Ship wrecked
- ▶ Pirate

When choosing your theme, consider the scale of the decorations needed to make an impact. Set a budget for your decor. Scene setters are available at party supply retailers for very reasonable prices. Make sure to check dimensions before ordering. You have a large area to cover.

COMPETITIONS FUN!

It takes two 30' long scene setters to cover the closed bleachers of a gym. It will be important to secure some large-scale decorations. Proper placement of these items is crucial to getting your planned effect. Also keep color in mind when selecting a theme. The yellow of the gym



The California Baton Council and member groups often use themes and decorations to make their contests more fun.

lights and floor can wash everything out. Include the hospitality room, announcer's table, tabulation area, awards table, judge's tables and entrance area if possible in your decoration schematic.

Choose awards that are appropriate to the event and category. Stock trophies, medallions, ribbons and medals are available in hundreds of designs, and colors to match your theme. Custom logo awards are also available for an additional charge.



Beautiful awards (that sometimes match the contest theme) can make any competition more appealing.

Crown Awards offers high quality awards for every budget. The trophy table should be a source of inspiration to the athletes. Have fun with the awards presentations. Bring back the sash. These can be made easily with 2.5" wide ribbon, glue and glitter. Make them specific to your theme.

You can add a tiara, available online for less than \$2, to make your winner feel like a princess! Remember to make it special for these young athletes, they are the future of our sport!

Recognize the performer who can do their routine without a drop! Come up with a clever prize that can be given on the spot for these important performances. For instance, if your theme is western, give a "train ticket." Hawaiian theme, "ticket to paradise." Roaring 20's theme, "play money", write the date and name of



Sweetheart Pairs, an event featuring a twirler and his or her special someone, is one of the most popular events at the Colorado Baton Council's February contest.

the contest, and "no drop" award on these, they will be treasured forever. Have the judge stand up and recognize the athlete quickly on the spot, the announcer can give a shout-out to make it truly special!

At some point in your contest, play a game that every level of twirler can participate in. A "drop" contest is always fun! Divide your twirlers by "spin" level, call out tricks appropriate to their ability, when they drop, they sit down. Winner gets a prize, or they all get a prize and the winner gets something special. Another

game is "minute to spin it" created by Paige Campbell. All twirlers report to the floor and do the designated twirl, variations can be added, the twirl can be modified to challenge every level. At the



Many councils, including the New Jersey Baton Council, get parents out on the floor for "Mom's Marching" or "Father-Daughter Duets" and other fun events.

end of the minute, everyone gets a prize! The prize should be theme specific. Oriental Trading Company is a great source for cute, thematic prizes in bulk.

Our athletes deserve a memorable event to show off their hard work and training. Let's bring some good, old-fashioned fun to our competitions! Use your imagination, get creative, take a risk. Our future stars are worth it!

Corey Kinyon Cruz is a USTA Certified Coach, the 1980 Grand National Strut Champion, 1983 and 1984 WBTF Gold Medalist and a staff member of Syndication Baton Club and Wheaton Dance Teams.

NEW STRUT EVENT COMING!

All eyes will be focused on “the new face of strut” as the 2020-2021 season approaches!

USTA is now “in-step” to return the grandeur and popularity of the Strut event. The changes – which will be announced later this year – promise to bring renewed excitement.

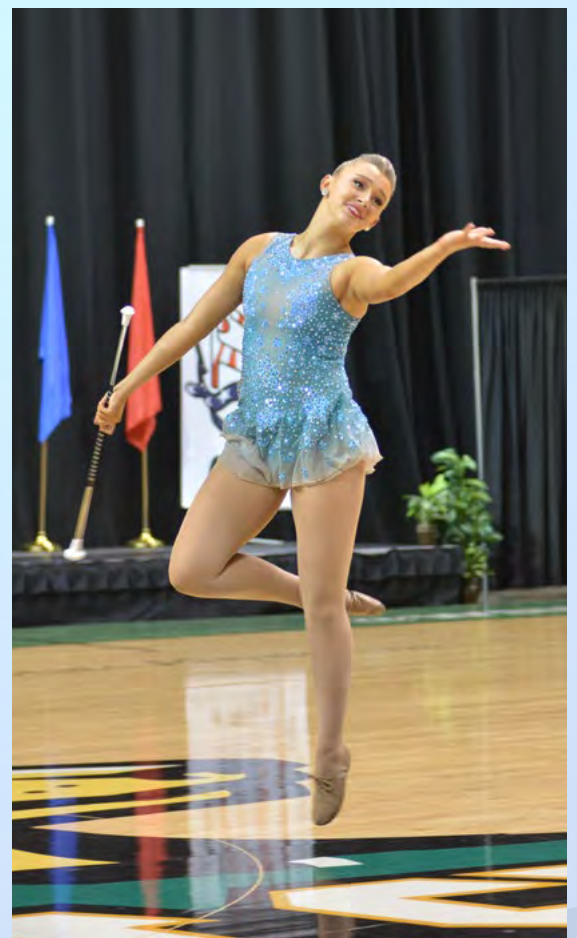
Athletes and coaches can look forward to the debut of NEW music - music that is fun, expressive and full of personality. In

addition, enhanced judging criteria will preserve the integrity of this unique event.

Stay tuned as you’ll be hearing many “presentations” of “the new face” of Strut as it rides the “forward motion” into 2021!



2019 Grand National
Strut Champion
Laney Puhalla



THE ROAD TO 2021 LEADS TO DAYTONA BEACH

After the 2020 COVID-19 cancellations, the 2021 U.S. National Baton Twirling Championships, including the U.S. PreTrials, the IBTF World and Nations Cup Qualifier and the Festival of the Future, will be bigger and better than ever!

Make plans now to join us in beautiful Daytona Beach, July 6-10, 2021!

Watch for hotel, schedule and entry information on www.ustwirling.com later this year!

