

United States Amateur Ballroom dancers Association, Inc.

In 1965 Norman Martin, a leading social and competitive ballroom dance champion put together a group of dancers known as the United States Amateur Ballroom Dancers Association, Inc. or USABDA. Their purpose was to petition the Olympic committee to include ballroom dancing in the Olympic program. Unfortunately they were not able to accomplish that goal at that time. However, while working on their bid to get into the Olympics, the group was setting up their bylaws and came to the conclusion that there was a definite need for guidelines for the large number of Social Dancers and American Style dancers, as well as the International Style competitors.

While working to help the dancers compete nationally and internationally they also helped to set things in motion to insure the availability of floors, music and locations for a group that turned out to be the backbone of the USABDA, the Social Dancers.

The early years for the USABDA only saw a small number of members in New York state, a few in the Washington, DC area and a small number on the west coast. In 1978 USABDA started its mid-eastern chapter and the push was on to take their little group to a national level. The next few years saw chapters being formed in several other states.

Throughout the 80's the USABDA recruitment efforts consisted of trying to get all amateur dance organizations to join them as a national organization with a regional chapter structure. In 1985 with their new bylaws in place the USABDA was given tax-exempt status by the IRS. With the unification process started the USABDA was officially recognized by what is now known as the International DanceSport Federation (IDSF). The USABDA now governs all forms of amateur ballroom dancing in the United States.

Over the last 12 years USABDA has promoted the growth of all forms of ballroom dance as well as coming up with a program to establish chapters in each state. They have enjoyed major growth in numbers of chapters, dancers, competitions, workshops and social dances each year. Each year the USABDA sends United States representatives to the World Games. The World Games provide a venue for Olympic recognized sports that have not yet been added to the Olympic program.

The USABDA's quest to get their spot in the Olympics is still going strong. To date the ISDF has been granted full recognition by the International Olympic Committee as the worldwide governing body for DanceSport and the USABDA has been granted affiliate membership recognizing them as the national governing Body of DanceSport in the United States. The last remaining step is for DanceSport to

be granted Program Status by the IOC at which time DanceSport would then be added to the Olympic program. With continued hard work and a little luck this will be accomplished in the near future.

The USABDA has grown into an organization with thousands of members who volunteer to help promote social and competitive dancing on college campuses and in communities across the country.