

Ready for European Cup in machine dancing



Photo by: Eirik Helland Urke

GROWING: Machine dancing is becoming more and more popular in Norway, and the Norwegian Dance Association has accepted the activity as a sport. Soon the European Cup in machine dancing will be held in Norway.

... and now 20 people can dance simultaneously!

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Tuesday 15.03.2005, 13:26

Updated 16:21

(Dagbladet.no): Dance Dance Revolution, in good Norwegian *machine dance*, is a rapidly growing phenomenon in Norway. Here you dance on a dance pad that is connected to a machine, and it's all about stepping on the pad as the machine shows you.

The Norwegian Dance Association has taken machine dance under its wings, resulting in that we are actually talking about an official sport. Earlier, an official Norwegian Championship in this sport was arranged, and now the European Cup is coming up.

In attendance will be participants from 14 countries, where all have had to first win national tournaments to qualify for this Cup, says Ole Petter Høie at the Norwegian company Positive Gaming, who are arranging the Cup.

Norwegian Favorite

This all happens at the game meeting The Gathering at Vikingskipet in Hamar from 25 until 26 March. The finale starts at 17:30 on Saturday.

In total over 60 players will participate in the tournament. One of the favorites is a Norwegian 14 year old, Jens Aasgaard. But there are several very good participants from

other countries. Especially Italy, England and Sweden, who along with Norway are amongst the best countries in machine dance, says Høie.

Even though this is not an official sports event, the General Secretary of the Norwegian Dance Association will be handing out the prizes. The first prize is a weekend for two in Europe, plus a premium quality dance pad and other effects.

Up to 20 players

The most recent news is a multiplayer version of machine dance. Until now it was usual for 2 people to play against each other, either on one of the approximately 50 coin operated machines that are located around the country, or at home in front of the TV.

Positive Gaming however, think that the more dancers – the more fun. Thus they have developed a method for up to 20 players to dance simultaneously in front of a big screen.

The 20 dance pads are connected to a PC, and via a projector the dancers can follow the instructions on the screen.

This is something that we have developed in-house, and we have strong faith in this concept. We had a test project going in The Netherlands, where we measured the effects of machine dancing on obese children and youth. The results are good, and now we are looking at the possibilities for cooperation with the fitness industry and school – and this is perfect for the physical training classes, says Høie.

Positive Gaming is the only company in the world that specializes in machine dance. In addition to the multiplayer version of DDR, they will also launch an in-house developed dance pad in April, as well as an own setup where players from all over the world can compete in machine dancing via the internet. This is to be ready later this year.



Photo by: Eirik Helland Urke

FAVORITE: 14 year old Jens Aasgaard (right) is one of the favorites for the European Cup. Here is dueling with Oddgeir Justiniussen during the Norwegian Championship at OsloLan last year.



Photo by: Mats André Kristiansen

MORE: Positive Gaming is developing a multiplayer version of Dance Dance Revolution.



Photo by: Mats André Kristiansen

IN SYNC: Up to 20 players can dance simultaneously in front of a big screen.



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VENTURE: Positive Gaming hopes that amongst others, school classes can play Dance Dance Revolution during their physical training hours, now that 20 people can play simultaneously.

THE FACTS

Machine Dance

- Dance Dance Revolution (DDR) started in Japan during the 90's. The first arcade machine came to Norway in 2001.
- DDR was registered as a sport via the Norwegian Dance Association in April 2004.
- The lobby organization DDR Norway comprises 8 official machine dance clubs – in total there are approximately 450 members in the country.

- There are 50 dance machines in the whole country.
- You can machine dance at home, on a PlayStation2, Xbox or PC. Dance pads cost between 200 and 2000 NOK.
- When 14 year old Jens Aasgaard won the Norwegian Champion title in October last year, he danced to a song that requires that he steps on 5 arrows per second (on average) for 90 seconds – during the most intense parts it is up to 10 arrows per second.

On to something slightly different. Christian from Trondheim has sent in a little story that is so sweet that I just had to share it with you:

Hi!

You will not believe what I experienced a few evenings ago! I am a grown up man with three children and follow the times (I thought at the time).

My parents are the grandparents to four children. On said evening I had to pass by them to pick up something, and I went in without announcing my arrival. When I came into the entrance I heard frantic activity in the living room, and I must admit that I thought “jeez, they’re still at it!” This was reinforced when I saw my mom stick something pretty large under the sofa, and my father was frantically struggling with the TV remote control.

I will not go into more details than absolutely necessary, but when I finally managed to stammer my hellos, and we all felt a bit strange, my mother burst out “We were dancing, you know!”

I put on my best face and answered politely “I see”. Then came the biggest shock. From under the sofa comes out a pad with wires and colorful crosses. “We dance on this!”. Still totally out of it, I manage to continue with my “I see”. Then they began to enthusiastically explain to me about the new dance game on PlayStation! Thought you’ve heard it all?