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Ballet dancers with the Suncoast Academy of Dance in Palm Harbor pirouette during their ballet routine, *Madrid*, while competing in the second annual So You Think You Can Dance? competition at the Largo Community Center.

They are young, enthusiastic and have plenty of talent ...

Yes, they *can* dance

BY DOUGLAS R. CLIFFORD | Times Staff Writer

More than 200 spectators turned out to watch Largo's second annual So You Think You Can Dance? contest. The event, held Saturday at Largo Community Center, included a total of 35 individual and group entries.

There were ballroom, tap, hip-hop and ballet. "One interesting thing about it was that only two adults competed. The rest were students," said Craig Dolan, event coordinator. "It shows how prevalent dance will continue to be in Pinellas County."

The top honor, Overall Favorite Dance, went to Suncoast Academy of Dance in Palm Harbor for its jazz entry, *Jungle Drum*.

Five dancers between the ages of 14 and 16 performed a dance on "becoming infected with love," said April Joseph-Sykes, director of Suncoast Academy.

"They started out prim and proper, and slowly, during the dance, one became infected, and then the next one did and so on," she said.

Her dancers were surprised that they won the \$100 prize.

"Dance is a performing art, and that's what the girls do, they go out to perform, so we don't expect anything else, but it was great," said Joseph-Sykes.

The judges were Meg Mitchell of the Patel Conservatory in Tampa, Arlene Norman of Savoy Swing, and Carol Baker of Carol Baker Ballroom Studio.

Competitors were judged on technique, routine, presentation, music and costume.



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The 4-H Ballroom Bicycle Brigade dancers, from left, Nina Jenkins, 12, of Palm Harbor, Lindsay Nobles, 11, of Clearwater, and Abby Lang, of New Port Richey, watch from backstage as the Suncoast Academy of Dance performs *Jungle Drum*.



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Corina Wallis, 14, of Oldsmar, who is with the Suncoast Academy of Dance, performs *Asylum*, a tap dance routine.



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Courtney Fridella, 15, left, of St. Petersburg and Sarah Raines, 13, of Seminole wait to dance with Company B Ballet Center of Largo. They won first place for group ballet for their rendition of the *Dance of the Reed Flutes* from *The Nutcracker*.

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April Joseph-Sykes, director of Suncoast Academy



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Laurel Greer, 14, of Clearwater touches up her eyeliner before a ballroom dance.



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A 4-H Bicycle Ballroom Bicycle Brigade dancer, Abby Lang, 12, of New Port Richey, gets a dip from dance partner Dakota Hunter, 14, of Seminole. They won first place Saturday in the ballroom division of So You Think You Can Dance?