



**Dare to Dance.** (Above) Each year, the fall sports kick-off is held in order to proudly announce West's sports teams. This year, dancers performed their kick routine in the auditorium to give a preview of their work. "Dancing at the fall and winter sports kick-offs are a really good time for other teams to have a chance to see what we do. Usually we're dancing at their events, so they don't get the chance to see us perform," said Spencer Bigalk '20.  
Photo By: Kami Seago



**Turning Point.** (Right) Diamond Dancers reminisce their experience at state during a routine from basketball season. The performed routine was a lyrical dance that was enjoyed by many. "Lyrical was one of my favorite dances from a basketball game. I think it's a lot of fun to do and it brought back a lot of memories from state," said Isabella Martens '23.  
Photo By: Samantha Zust

**Smile and Wave.** (Right) Sophia Iniguez '22 gets personal with the crowd while dancing at one of West's football games. Iniguez believed that she became more involved in the Falcon community during football season. "I think football season is my favorite. When I dance on the sidelines, I am close to people and get to cheer on the football players so I feel more involved," said Iniguez.  
Photo By: Shonda Nguyen



# Shine **BRIGHT** like a diamond

## Dancers discuss their success at state-level competition

How important is it for the Diamond Dancers to establish and maintain focus in preparation for state? While tensions run high throughout their everyday lives, West Diamond Dancers must find their focus on the dance floor and keep moving forward.

Dancers annually attend state-level competitions and have the chance to obtain awards. Although the team is smaller in size this season, dancers feel as though their drive skyrocketed to achieve goals. "We all work together towards common goals. And although there are less of us this year, it's actually a good thing because we can get more accomplished," said sophomore **Claire Westerhof**. With a smaller team headed to state this season,

preparation was key to success.

Diamond Dancers held practice before school each Monday through Thursday leading up to their competition. This year, the state competition was held at the Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines, Iowa. Senior **Hailey Hansen** is co-captain of the Diamond Dancers this year and found that it was important to push her dancers to their full potential.

"We always made sure that everyone was working hard and staying motivated during practices. Sometimes we brought food for them as an incentive to work harder at practices," said Hansen. As dancers rank high in categories, their dance routines must be learned and practiced from June until competition day.



Claire Westerhof



Hailey Hansen



Maddy Barnes

While at State this season, West's Diamond Dancers placed in all three of their dances, winning awards and leaving dancers shocked and overwhelmed with excitement. Sophomore **Maddy Barnes** said, "Placing in all three of our dances felt so amazing because I know my team and I worked really hard for it. I'm proud to be a Diamond Dancer because no matter what place we were in, we would have been happy." Dancers feel as though their hard work during each season pays off no matter the outcome of their state results.

Diamond Dancers find it extremely important to keep their motivation and focus leading up to state competitions.  
Story By: Daizie Johnson





**Changing Seasons.** (Above) Diamond Dancers perform a kick routine during the first home game of football season. Dancers found that their routines became more personal to the crowd during basketball season as opposed to football. "Football season is different because when you dance on the field, the dances are more visual. For basketball season, routines are closer up so the audience can feel the energy of the dances more," said Elise Nelson '22.  
Photo By: Kylee Harper

**Can't Touch This.** (Left) Diamond Dancers perform at state level competitions with the intent to win awards. This fall, dancers traveled to Des Moines, IA to showcase their work and were elated with their placing. "We placed in all three dances for the first time since I've been on the team. I'm really proud of the hard work everyone put in to get the results we wanted," said Kennedy Wink '21.  
Photo By: Samantha Zust



**All I Want.** (Left) The dance team annually performs a Christmas routine that incorporates a male partner. Their Christmas dance was held during a varsity boy's basketball game at halftime. "The Christmas dance is one of my favorite routines that we do. It's fun to have the boys there because it is appealing to the crowd and it's fun to see them transition from other sports or activities to dance," said Peyton Flynn '22.  
Photo By: kenzey Wogomon



**Diamond Dancers**  
**Front:** Hailey Hansen, Spencer Bigalk **Middle:** Alexandria Petersen, Kennedy Wink, Serena Arguello, Isabella Martens **Back:** Sophia Iniguez, Peyton Flynn, Claire Westerhof, Elise Nelson, Alyssa Broer, Sarah Bernick, Maddy Barnes

# Tips & Tricks



"Right before I do anything that has to do with dance, I do a jump called the farmer jump. It helps me stretch and feel more prepared. It also makes me less nervous about performing."  
-Alyssa Broer '22



"Jumps are my favorite because I'm really flexible, and it's my strongest skill. Before I do my jumps, I stretch out my legs and hip flexors to make sure my legs get more height and to make sure I don't pull any muscles."  
-Serena Arguello '21



"My favorite jump is the C jump because I like how much height I get when I do it. You have to be really flexible to be able to do it, so it's important to stretch a lot."  
-Alexandria Petersen '23

"Looking Back, my favorite memory from dance was when we went to camp in July. We got to bond as a team before school started and learn new things about each other.  
Moving Forward, I want our team to continue to grow and learn more about each other to help us achieve our goals."  
- Sarah Bernick '22

