Dance Rules (2008)

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Note: Changes from 2007 rules are highlighted in red.

The most important rule for RoboCupJunior Dance is 6.5.3!

These rules to be read in conjunction with Appendix 1: 'RoboCupJunior (International) DANCE - Suzhou, 2008.'

1. STAGE.

1.1. Size.

1.1.1. See also Appendix 1. Robots that move outside the marked boundary of the performance area are not disqualified, but will receive a score penalty. Human performers may be outside this marked area. Any performance involving a height greater than 4m vertically from the stage floor must be discussed with the judges and permission sought. The boundary of the performance area will be marked with a 50mm black tape line, surrounded by a 20mm red tape line. This will enable programming to be used to identify which side of the boundary a robot finds itself. The floor provided shall be made of flat (non-glossy) white painted MDF (compressed wood fibre). Teams are encouraged to practice on the same flooring type to reduce set-up time at the International competition. While floor joints will be taped to make them as smooth as possible, robots must be prepared for irregularities of up to 3 mm in the floor.

1.1.2. The dance stage will be made available for teams to practice on. In fairness to all teams who may wish to practice, a booking sheet will be used to reserve the stage for short periods of time. Last team practice on stage before performance time starts must fully clean up the stage and clear the stage area at least 3 minutes before the performance start time.

1.2. Lighting.

1.2.1. The organizers may make variable lighting including spotlights available, but teams should not expect the performance area to always be able to be darkened, with direct, intense spotlights available. (Hint: It is recommended that teams design their robots to cope with variations in lighting conditions, as lighting naturally varies from venue to venue. I f necessary, teams should come prepared to calibrate their robots based on the lighting conditions at the venue.)

1.3. Scenery.

1.3.1. Teams are encouraged to provide their own scenery. Organizers will endeavour to provide a projection screen and projector for teams wishing to use images from a digital source (e.g., computer) at the rear of the performance area as part of their performance.

2. ROBOTS.

2.1. Size.

2.1.1. Robots may be of any size.

2.2. Team.

2.2.1. There may be any number of robots on a team.

2.2.2. Each team may perform one and only one routine, though the performance of that same routine will be repeated if they proceed to the finals for their division. Some modifications (improvements) of the performance using the same music may be accepted. Please consult with judges if you have any questions regarding performance modications.

2.3. Control.

2.3.1. Robots must be controlled autonomously. No member of the team may make physical contact with the robot while it performs, unless this forms part of the performance and has been discussed and approved by the judges PRIOR to the performance. Robots must also be 'wirefree' in that they must not be connected to a computer or other management device, including power sources, while performing.

2.3.2. Robots may be started by humans, either manually or with remote control. See also 6.1.3.

2.4. Costumes.

2.4.1. Costumes for robots and/or human performers are encouraged, and will be awarded points.

3. ROUTINE.

3.1. Duration.

3.1.1. Each team will have a total of 5 minutes for their presentation. NOTE that this time includes the time for set -up, a possible and encouraged introduction and the performance, including any re-starts due to factors under the team's control. It does not include time needed for packing up and clearing the stage.

3.1.2. The duration of a performance routine is no more than 2 minutes and no less than one (1) minute.

3.1.3. If a team exceeds the time limits explained in 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 in any way by reasons that are their only fault, it will be penalized in assessment. The judges will start one clock at the moment a team member steps on the stage for the 5 minutes period, and another clock at the beginning of the music for the 2 minutes performance period.

3.2. Music.

3.2.1. Teams must provide their own audio source in a Compact Disc (CD-R, CD-RW) in one of the following formats: Audio track; MP3 file; These will be the only accepted audio sources with one (and only one!) file or audio track for the entire routine. Music should be given to the sound technicians during a team's practice period. Teams are encouraged to bring more than 2 copies of the CD. Each CD should contain only one copy of the music that the team uses for their performance.

3.2.2. Teams are strongly encouraged to bring a good quality audio source, since their evaluation depends also on the music quality.

3.2.3. The music should commence at the beginning of the audio source, after a silent leader of a few seconds.

3.2.4. The audio source should be clearly labelled with the team's name.

3.3. Humans.

3.3.1. Human team members may perform along with their robots, and will be considered a 'prop.' There is no penalty for humans not performing with their robots.

3.3.2. However, human team members must not touch the robots (except to start them). See 2.3.1.

3.4. Start of Routine.

3.4.1. An official will start the music for the routine.

3.4.2. One human team member will start each robot, either by hand or remote control. (Hint: Teams are very strongly encouraged to program their robot to begin the routine a few seconds after the music starts. This is because it is extremely difficult to judge precisely when the music will sound after the audio source is started, and it is hard to time the robot's choreography without knowing exactly when the music will begin. Also, depending on the configuration of the dance stage and the sound system at the venue, it is possible that the human starting the robot will not be able to see the official starting the audio source; and vice versa. Teams should come prepared for these conditions.)

3.5. Re-starts and repeats.

3.5.1. Teams are allowed to restart their routine if necessary, at the discretion of the officials. Any re-start, unless due to a problem which is not the fault of the team, will result in a score penalty. A maximum of two re-starts will be allowed.

3.5.2. Teams are allowed to repeat their routine, at the discretion of the officials.

3.6. Security.

3.6.1. In order to avoid hazardous situations such as routines including explosions, smoke or flame, use of water, or other substances that could lead to dangerous situations, each team whose routine includes any situation that could be deemed hazardous, including a situation that damages the stage, must submit a report to the chief judge BEFORE the competition, outlining the content of their dance routine. At his/her discretion, the Chief Judge could request a demonstration of the activity. Teams not conforming to this request may not be allowed to present their routine, at the discretion of the Chief Judge. Wherever possible teams shall avoid the use of mains electricity for any aspect of their performance. If necessary, teams may apply to the Chief Judge PRIOR to performance for exemption from this rule.

4. JUDGING.

(Refer also to Appendix 2)

4.1 Authenticity and Originality.

4.1.1. All teams will be assessed through an interview, and performance of a dance routine. Each team's overall score will be decided by the total of their (best) performance and their interview.

4.1.2. The performance is to be unique. Teams who, in the opinion of the judges, have knowingly produced duplicate robots, costume or performance movement (duplicate music is allowed) will be interviewed by a panel of 3 Dance officials. Penalties for close duplication of another team range from a possible 10% score penalty to a maximum penalty of exclusion from the competition.

4.2 Officials.

Refer to Appendix 1.

4.3. Categories.

Refer to Appendix 1.

4.4. Awards

Refer to Appendix 1.

4.5. Collegiality.

Refer to Appendix 1.

5. CREATIVITY.

5.1. The Dance challenge is intended to be very open-ended! Teams are encouraged to be as creative and entertaining as they can. Teams who show creativity and innovation will be rewarded by the judges with high point scores in the relevant sections.

6. CODE OF CONDUCT.

6.1. Fair Play.

6.1.1. Humans that in any way cause deliberate interference with robots or damage to the stage will be disqualified, if part of a team. If not part of a team they will be ask to leave the venue.

6.1.2. The team is responsible for removing all debris left from their routine that may interfere with the performance of subsequent activities.

6.1.3. While performing, any robot on stage may communicate with another robot from the same team that is also on stage. Teams should take great care that their use of devices with infrared (IR) communication (such as the LEGO RCX) does not affect other teams. An exception to this rule is if the communication involves radio frequencies. No team is permitted to use radio signals as part of their performance or preparation, as this may interfere with robots in other leagues.

6.1.4. It is expected that the aim of all teams is to participate in a fair and clean competition.

6.1.5. Remember: "Help those in need, as tomorrow it could be your team needing help!"

6.2. Behavior.

6.2.1. All movement and behavior is to be of a subdued nature within the tournament venue.

6.2.2. Competitors are not to enter set-up areas of other leagues or other teams, unless expressly invited to do so by team members.

6.2.3. Participants who misbehave may be asked to leave the building and risk being disqualified from the tournament.

6.2.4. These rules will be enforced at the discretion of the referees, officials, conference organizers and local law enforcement authorities.

6.3. Mentors.

Refer to Appendix 1.

6.4. Sharing.

6.4.1. An understanding that has been a part of World RoboCup Competitions is that any technological and curricular developments should be shared with other participants after the competition.

6.4.2. Any developments may be published on the RoboCupJunior Web site after the event.

6.4.3. This furthers the mission of RoboCupJunior as an educational initiative.

6.5. Spirit.

6.5.1. It is expected that all participants, students and mentors, will respect the RoboCupJunior mission. In addition, participants should keep in mind the values and goals of RoboCupJunior. Any presentations that include violent, military, threatening or criminal elements will be excluded. Any team using an inappropriate name or logo will also be excluded. Participants are asked to carefully consider the wording and messages communicated in their presentations: what seems acceptable to them may be offensive to friends from a different country or culture.

6.5.2. The referees and officials will act within the spirit of the event.

6.5.3. It is not whether you win or lose, but how much you learn that counts. You will really lose if you don't take this opportunity to fraternize with students and mentors from all over the world. Remember this is a unique moment!

7. DOCUMENTATION.

7.1.

Refer to Appendix 1.

Queries regarding these rules or their interpretation may be sent to the Chairman of the Technical Committee for Dance, Ian Maud (Australia), at: icmaud at stpaulswgl.vic.edu.au

Appendix 1

RoboCupJunior (Portugal) DANCE - Aveiro, 2008

Note: The following information applies specifically to the RCJ national selection event to be held in April, 2008 in Aveiro, Portugal.

Changes from 2007 rules are highlighted in red.

These rules to be read in conjunction with the document: 'RoboCupJunior (International) DANCE Rules - Suzhou 2008.'

1. STAGE.

1.1.1. The dance stage will be a flat area. The size of the performance area for Suzhou will be a marked rectangular area of 3 x 4 m for robots. Human performers may be outside this marked area.

4. JUDGING.

4.2 Officials.

4.2.1. Performances will be judged by a panel of four officials, at least one of whom will judge all performances. This panel may be different to that assessing the interviews.

4.2.2. The four officials will be designated prior to the tournament.

4.2.3. The officials shall not have any close relationship with any of the teams entered in the tournament.

4.3. Categories.

4.3.1 Performances will be judged according to the following categories:

- Programming (eg: use of loops, jumps, sub-routines, type of programming language used, etc)
- Construction (eg: robots should be of sound construction, components should not fall off , appropriate use of gearing, smooth and reliable operation, interesting movements, effective use of mechanics to achieve a purpose, etc)
- Using Sensors effectively (eg: to trigger different parts of the program, for detection of boundary line, etc. This category also includes 'other technologies' apart from sensors.)
- Choreography (eg: robots to move in time with music, and change actions as music changes tempo or rhythm. Choreography of humans and robots will be scored separately, etc)
- Costume (Costume of humans and robots will be scored separately)
- Entertainment Value (eg: How much does the performance entertain or delight the audience? Originality and creativity of the presentation, etc)

4.3.2 Each section will be given approximately equal weighting.

4.3.3 A standard scoresheet will be used for judging the interviews and dance performances: see Appendix 2 for scoresheets.

5. CODE OF CONDUCT.

5.1. Mentors.

5.1.1. Mentors (teachers, parents, chaperones and other adult team-members) are not allowed in the student work area, except to assist carrying equipment in or out of the area as teams arrive or depart, and to assist with moving equipment on or off the stage. If a problem is encountered with a computer or other device that is clearly beyond the reasonable ability level of a student to repair, a mentor may request permission from the organizers to enter the work area for the sole purpose of attending to that repair. They must leave the work area immediately this is completed. Rule 6.3.3 still applies at these times. Mentors may not set up such equipment on stage, as this should be the responsibility of the team members. Organizers will assign volunteers to teams that need assistant for stage set-up. Teams should request this assistance from the officials. A mentor found in the student work area without acceptable reason will be shown a yellow card. A second breach will result in a red card, and the team(s) for which they are mentor or associated shall receive a scoring penalty. Should a further breach occur, the team may be disqualified.

5.1.2. Organizers will endeavour to provide sufficient seating for Mentors to remain in a supervisory capacity around the student work area.

5.1.3. Mentors are not to repair robots or be involved in programming of students' robots. See 5.1.1

5.1.4 Teams will be responsible for read the updated information during the event. The updated information will be provided on notice boards in the venue, and possibly on the RCJ website. The information about website information will be announced at the beginning of the event and will be posted on the notice boards as well.

6. DOCUMENTATION.

6.1 Authentication

6.1.1 All teams must bring written and/or photographic documentation describing their preparation efforts. This documentation must be present during the interview, and may be called upon to help establish the authenticity of a team's entry.