

Fandango your way to fitness in Dancefit season

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

Never mind what the brochures tell you; Dancefit instructor Laurie Burns can summarize the intent of this unique exercise program in one brief statement: "It's fun, that's the main thing."

As Mrs. Burns pointed out in an interview with The Herald Thursday, there's little doubt that Dancefit's overwhelming popularity is based on two current trends: movies like "Saturday Night Fever" and "Fame" have renewed the world's love affair with dance while, at the same time, even the Canadian government is encouraging everyone to do something—almost anything—to get physically fit. Dancefit merely blends the two ingredients.

It will be Dancefit's third semester in Georgetown when the fall ten-week program begins Sept. 28 in the Wrigglesworth gymnasium.

Earlier this year, Mrs. Burns conducted spring and summer sessions and now she'll be joined by assistant instructor and Georgetown resident, Virginia Walker, a student of the program since it began in the community.

"I started with the program last spring," Miss Walker explained, "and assisted Laurie in the summer and I'll now be with her in the fall. I felt like I wanted to get out and get some exercise because I thought I was putting on and getting a little lazy."

DIET PLAN
But Dancefit, Mrs. Burns

The first Dancefit class of the fall session is scheduled to begin Sept. 28 in Howard Wrigglesworth School on Georgetown's Guelph Street. There will be two classes each week; the Monday class being held in the school while the Wednesday evening lesson will be held in Cedarvale gym located in the recreation centre at Cedarvale Park. Both days' lessons will begin at 7:15 and last an hour. Mrs. Burns has indicated that if enough people show up for registration she will form another group which will meet for its lesson Monday and Wednesday nights following the first class.

added, is not meant to be a complete weight loss program. Sure, it will help trim stomachs and firm up thighs but for individuals concentrating on losing pounds they also need a comprehensive diet plan. The program was originally

daily training it to work at a steady pace during the exercise without over-exercising the body.

How Dancefit does this is really quite simple, so simple in fact, that students can practice at home using the trusty household radio.

In each Dancefit session, there are five dance sequences for popular songs which the students are required to learn. The dances and the songs are re-choreographed for the next ten-week series.

"Every lesson is divided up into three distinct segments," Mrs. Burns said. "First we have our warm up, then we get into our dance routines to bring everybody up to their cardiovascular level and then we 'cool down'."

"There are four or five

dance sequences and it takes about five weeks to put them to 12 songs. The last five weeks of the program are spent going through the songs and their sequences (some of the dance steps are tagged with such interesting monikers as the "Pat-ha", "Lindy", "Drag-pull" and "rock march", polishing each routine into a snappy dance.

Everybody participating in the dancefit program—and it is open to men and women—sports a heart-shaped button on which is inscribed the bearer's name and the "working range" of his or her heartbeat. This is calculated by taking one's pulse for a brief period of time and multiplying by one of the factors of 60.

Working ranges are ideally

maintained over a period of 20 minutes. In fact, most exercise programs recommend that people to remain fit should give the heart a good workout at least twice a week for 20 minutes each time.

FEW TIMES
"I can feel a real difference in the way I feel now after having taken the program a few times," Miss Walker said, "and I've met a lot of new people."

Something about the atmosphere generated in each lesson—the fact that there is little pressure on the individual to turn himself into an outstanding athlete with Dancefit—means that participants are more relaxed and friendships quickly solidify. When the last Dancefit session closed in June, Mrs. Burns' class hon-

ored themselves with a small wine and cheese and pool party.

Certainly, Miss Walker agreed, some of the steps, especially for first-time Dancefit members, can be a little tricky. No problem, she said, just "fake it."

"If you can't do the move—fake it! Just don't stop, but fake it!"

Quite often during the first few weeks of the Dancefit classes, the participants split into different groups to discuss new moves and share a laugh over fumbled efforts to acquire them.

"Learning is easier if you have two people instructing," Miss Walker said. "You can have one person standing at one end of the hall and one at the other. That way, when the

group turns around during a dance they can still keep an eye on what's going on."

Warm-ups shouldn't spook anyone from joining the program, Mrs. Burns maintained. While most people who are edging toward a fitness program of some kind cringe at the thought of push-ups and sit-ups or stretching exercises, Dancefit will show you a variety of ways to tone the same muscles. There are exercises, after all, that have recently come under criticism among the medical profession for causing too much strain on other parts of the body even though they do wonders for one set of muscles.

DOCTOR OKAYS
Individuals wishing to join the Dancefit program are re-

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