

‘Dancing with the Stars’ makes spectacular return

By Mackenzie Byerlee
Features Editor

“Dancing with the Stars” brought us back into the ballroom with a cast that is already raising my expectations for season 35. The two episode season premiere was a brand new addition that spiced up the competition from the jump. Typically, the first elimination does not occur until week two. But, this year they had two eliminations in the first week. They approached this by having all of the male celebrities compete on night one and all of the female celebrities on night two. Night one started off strong with performances that highlighted the stars’ various abilities. Comedian Guillermo Rodriguez and his partner Whitney Carson gave a very entertaining performance despite it not being the best when it came to technique. My personal favorites of night one were social media star Connor Wood and Rylee Arnold and actor Harry Shum Jr. and Jenna Johnson. Wood and Arnold’s cha-cha was a great first dance. I was not expecting Wood to be this good so early on, but his country

inspired dance showed how much he has already learned from Arnold. Shum Jr., who is known for his roles on Glee and Grey’s Anatomy, gave a showstopping performance. Now, it does make sense given the fact that he was a professional dancer, but he is not trained in ballroom so his skills on week one were impressive. As for who was eliminated night one, I was not surprised. Reality star Conner Leavitt and his partner Adele Zaikman were all over the place. It was bad technique wise and honestly hard to watch in every regard. I was much more excited for night two because I knew more of the women than I did the men. While “Summer House” star Ciara Miller and Brandon Armstrong’s dance was not the best, I will always be rooting for them. I also think that her main issues were her lack of facial expressions and not following through with her arm movements, both of which are easy fixes. Actress Julia Stiles and Ezra Sosa performed a high energy quickstep to Dolly Parton’s “9 to 5.” The dance was an entertaining tribute to Parton and



“Dancing with the Stars” season 35 cast photo posted on Sept. 2.

PHOTO | INSTAGRAM

showcased the skills that we have not seen from Stiles since her film “Save the Last Dance.” My absolute favorite of the night was reality star Maura Higgins and Mark Ballas’ foxtrot. The pair previously worked together in season 4 of “The Traitors” which inspired their routine and made their chemistry even better in the ballroom. Night two eliminated reality star Sarah Jane

Nader and Hailey Bills. I was not very surprised by this either, as their performance was my least favorite of the night. What was interesting about both of this week’s eliminations, was the fact that it got rid of both of the new pros. Zaikman recently won the first season of “Dancing with the Stars: The Next Pro,” which gave her the opportunity to become a pro on this season.

I do feel bad that she put in all of that work to only get to compete one week. All of the eliminated pros do still get to dance every week, so at least she has something to do. Hopefully, she will return next season but I have no idea what their plans are for that. I am very excited for what season 35 has in store and cannot wait to text 21523 every Tuesday night again.

Editor-in-Chief details New York skyscraper experience

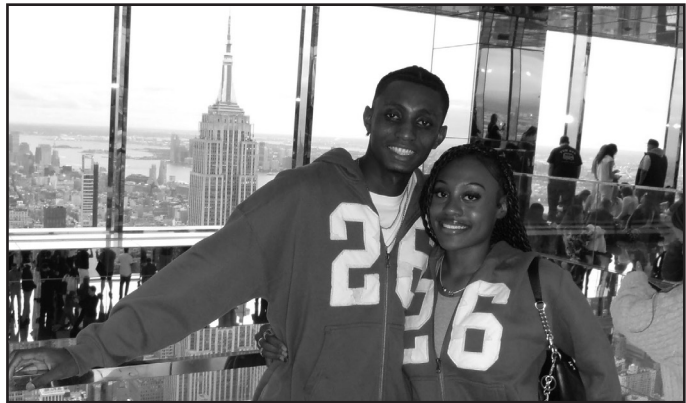


PHOTO | BRIANNA WALLEN

University alum Tyvonn Thompson and journalism major Brianna Wallen, a senior, on Sept. 19.

By Brianna Wallen
Editor-in-Chief

I have spent most of my life looking up at New York City’s skyscrapers. On Saturday, Sept. 19, I finally got the chance to look down from one. My boyfriend Ty and I visited SUMMIT One Vanderbilt, and for a few hours, I got to experience New York like a tourist. And honestly, it was kind of magical. SUMMIT One Vanderbilt is an immersive observation experience at the top of One Vanderbilt, one of New York City’s tallest skyscrapers.

Instead of simply looking out from a traditional observation deck, visitors walk through three floors filled with glass walls, interactive art and panoramic views of the city. The experience starts before even reaching the observation decks. After putting on shoe covers, we stepped into an elevator that shot us up to the 91st floor. The ride was so fast and high up that everyone in the elevator immediately started scrunching their face and holding their ears due to pressure. I thought that was bad

on the way up, but the ride back down was even worse. Once the doors opened, I immediately understood why people come here. There I was, standing about 1,100 feet above street level, surrounded by glass and views of the city. The first thing I saw was the New York skyline stretching out in every direction. I could see the Empire State Building, the Statue of Liberty and countless skyscrapers below me. Skyscrapers looked like miniature buildings, cars looked like dots and the streets below seemed miles away. I stood at the edge and felt like Batman looking over the city. And that was only the first floor. As we moved through the three levels, there were interactive floors that featured art on display. One room had shiny silver balloons flying everywhere, while another featured clouds moving across a screen. The clouds took the faces of guests who had visited the exhibit.

There was also a glass box where you could look straight down at the streets below. That part? Terrifying. I stepped into the glass box and immediately started panicking. Unfortunately, there is a strict one minute time limit which included pictures, so I had to relax and smile for the camera. My advice to everyone is: don’t look down! I definitely would have liked a little more time to take in the view, freak out, and get a picture. Throughout the experience there are photographers and photo machines that capture your experience, but there is a catch – you have to buy a photo package at the end to receive them. Speaking of pictures, I have one major complaint: the crowds. SUMMIT was packed. There were people in almost every corner, and getting a picture in front of the skyline took a minimum of 10 minutes. Some visitors were camping on the floor or staying in front of the best

views for what felt like eternity. If you are like me and love taking pictures, be prepared to have multiple people walk in front of your camera. My advice? Go during a weekday, early in the morning between 8 and 11 a.m., or later at night after 8 p.m. Luckily the Ascent experience made me take back every bad review I had. The Ascent is an all-glass elevator that travels outside the building. The elevator quite literally and figuratively took this experience to new heights. It made me feel like I was floating above New York. We arrived around 5 p.m., which ended up being perfect. We watched the sunset from above the city and stayed long enough to see the skyline turn into a sea of lights. I would give SUMMIT One Vanderbilt a 7.5 out of 10. The crowds definitely took away from some of the experience, but I would still go back. I recommend everyone reading this to take the trip.

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Reporter critiques video game

By Noah Nunez
General Reporter

“Onimusha: Way of the Sword” has to be one of the biggest disappointments I have had the displeasure of engaging with from a studio I adore, like Capcom. Going into Onimusha with not only the context of Capcom’s incredible streak of work but also as a revival of an older franchise gave me so much hope in what this game could be. There is just one problem: they forgot to tell a story. Onimusha sees Miyamoto Musashi, a clumsy but well-meaning samurai, wishing to fight his way to the top and make it as the greatest samurai ever to live. And to the game’s credit, the opening to the game puts his dreams and goals on display in a wonderfully hilarious and gripping way. Having Miyamoto Musashi start and win a fight against a samurai teacher, only to be chased out by that samurai’s students as he fights for his life, grabbing onto everything and using his surroundings, perfectly displays his resourceful and silly attitude. But when he does subsequently die, only to be revived by a gauntlet that helps him slay the demon oni that populates Kyoto, his position shifts. With this gauntlet giving him all the power he has strived so desperately to attain, his initial reaction to the gauntlet’s trivialization of his growth leaves him rather miffed. It creates a clear divide between the wandering swordsman we see in the intro, and the demon-slaying Onimusha Musashi will become as he learns to lean on and help his eventual companions. However, this never feels like a natural progression for him. After the first chapter concludes and Musashi begins to befriend other people to show how power is not attained by yourself, or however you want to phrase the game’s moral, he takes a major backseat from the plot. Instead of delving more into why Musashi wants to become so powerful by himself and how he is handling the power the gauntlet has given him, it instead turns into Assassin’s Creed. Running back and forth between waypoints in an empty hub world, all so two characters can babble back and forth about nothing or to introduce another historical Japanese figure. Musashi goes from a goofy samurai whose confidence matched his incredible skill to an errand boy transporting his gauntlet to places so it can do all the plot rather than himself. It makes that moral I discussed earlier feel almost null by the end, when all Musashi has done is let other characters get involved in the deep politics of Kyoto while he stands on the sidelines and cracks a couple of jokes. For as strong as Onimusha opens, I cannot help but feel the other 19 hours of the game I spent watching Musashi fall over was not because we would learn to see him lean on others; it was because everyone else realized they were more important and ditched him.