



Charlie Womble 1990

CHARLIE WOMBLE

I was born October 20, 1944 in Raleigh, N.C. It was 36 years later before I discovered the SHAG & RHYTHM and Blues music. This discovery came while I was searching for new friends, entertainment, and something challenging for my life during the late seventies in Greenville, N.C. At that time Disco dancing was popular and I was a strong supporter. I'm sorry to admit that shagging did not impress me when I first saw it; however, after watching the good shaggers in the area for a while and attending several contests, I knew that I had to learn this dance. My first goal was to compete in the Labor Day Shag Contest in N. Myrtle Beach held annually at Fat Jacks - but I had to LEARN HOW TO SHAG first!

A couple of kind and patient girls helped me make the initial transition from disco to shag. I learned the basics and competed in several small contests - I was hooked. My first formal instruction came from Mike Pace. I can never thank Mike enough for his help even though he always did his best instructing when he had a crowd to witness the great difficulty I was having "doing it right". The greatest accomplishment in my dancing and life was made when I convinced Jackie McGee to dance with me and to date me. During our first year of competition we traveled 10,000 miles and competed in approximately 30 contests and loved every minute of it. Our early experiences and friendships will always have a special place in our hearts - the special thrill of competing, the clubs, the music, the people, the vacation-like atmosphere as we traveled across the Carolina's with friends.

Since the very beginning of my shagging experience I have received instruction, support, and inspiration regarding the dance in general and my dancing specifically from many people, including Hall of Famers, competition dancers past and present, and several generations of juniors. For example Harry Driver and Jack Smith were quick to point out my need to work on the pivot, Norfleet Jones informed me that "smooth" was still in vogue, Shad Alberty told me that my scissor step was hopeless, Doug Perry stressed balance and wearing those "funny" shoes, Billy Jeffers said to dance fast, and Chicken Hicks said that if I ever did anything right he would let me know! To each and every one who has taken time to offer encouragement and friendship and to all who offer inspiration through their dancing and love for the dance I thank you. Let's always remember to encourage the newcomers to shagging, and make them feel welcome - they are our future.

May God bless you all.