

The History of Development of Aerial Acrobatics and Pole Dance in Ukraine

Drach Tamara Leonidivna

Postgraduate student of Lviv State University
of Physical Culture named after Ivan Bobersky
Trainer-choreographer of the School of
Aerial Acrobatics "Shokolad" (Lviv)

Summary. The article explores the modern trends of aerial acrobatics and pole dancing, which have been actively developing in recent years both in Ukraine and around the world. The author emphasizes the growing popularity of these types of physical activity, which combine elements of sports, art, choreography and extreme movement. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of the conditions and factors that contributed to the spread of aerial silks, hoop and hammock, as well as pole dancing as a separate sports and aesthetic trend. The study examines the role of annual competitions, festivals, and studios in the formation of these disciplines, as well as the contribution of individual coaches and enthusiasts, particularly in the western region of Ukraine. The author notes that the first centers of aerial acrobatics development in Ukraine emerged on the basis of circus schools and studios, and later training methods were adapted to the fitness industry, making these activities more accessible to the general public. The methods of the study were the analysis of literary sources, Internet resources, as well as photo and video materials related to the development of acrobatics and pole sports. As a result, it was found that the active formation of these areas in Ukraine took place at the beginning of the twenty-first century. A significant contribution to their popularization was made by coaches and performers from Lviv, Kyiv, Dnipro, Kharkiv and other major cities who organized the first competitions, festivals and training programs. The results obtained indicate a stable dynamics of development of these areas, an increase in the level of skill of performers, an increase in interest in aerial acrobatics and pole dancing among different age groups, as well as the potential of these disciplines as effective means of physical education, self-expression and creative development.

Key words: history of development, aerial acrobatics, pole dance, Western Ukraine, competitions, festivals.

I. Problem statement.

Aerial acrobatics and pole sports are actively developing in Ukraine. In western Ukraine, there are all the opportunities to popularize and spread these areas. A methodological framework for their development has been created, and master classes and advanced training courses for coaches are regularly held. Nevertheless, the history of aerial acrobatics and pole dancing in Ukraine is still poorly understood. That is why we decided to study the stages of formation and development of aerial acrobatics and pole dancing in Ukraine.

II. Analysis of recent research and publications.

The analysis of scientific and practical sources shows the gradual formation of aerial acrobatics and pole dancing in Ukraine. At the same time, there is still a need for a deeper study of the history of their formation,

research into the processes of integration of these disciplines into the cultural and sports space of the country, as well as the creation of national standards and methodological materials for coaches and athletes.

The historical aspect of the development of circus art, including its genre diversity, is highlighted in the fundamental study by Guryev O. N. (2009) [1]. The choreographic component of technical and aesthetic sports, which is directly related to pole sports and aerial acrobatics, is analyzed in the works of Sosina V. (2021) [3] and Todorova V. (2018) [4]. The issues of motivation and physical fitness are considered in the study by Agans J.P., Davis J.L., Vazou S., Jarus T. (2019) [5], where circus arts are analyzed as a means of youth development with an emphasis on self-determination and intrinsic motivation. The evolution of pole dancing - from its origins to the modern sports format - is highlighted in Dale J.P. (2013) [6]. A significant emphasis on the physical training of athletes engaged in pole sports is made in the work of Sobko I.M., Velieva A.R., Sobko Y.O., Slastina O.O. (2022) [11]. International experience, in particular through the activities of organizations such as POSA, as well as analytics from specialized resources [12; 13], can be an important basis for the formation of strategic directions for the further development of aerial acrobatics and pole sports in Ukraine.

III. Formation of the article's objectives (statement of the task).

Therefore, the purpose of our study was to study the history of the development of aerial acrobatics and pole dancing in Ukraine. To this end, the following tasks were set: to analyze literary and Internet resources to study the emergence of aerial acrobatics and pole dancing in Ukraine; to get acquainted with photo and video materials.

IV. Summary of the main research material.

The history of pole dancing in Ukraine dates back only a few decades. This sport has become a hobby of the younger generation, and from the beginning it was focused only on women. Men became interested in this sport only a few years later, when awareness of the history of pole dancing spread around the world [1, p.50].

The discipline appeared in Ukraine in the 2000s, but the first studio offering dance lessons opened only in 2010 in Kyiv. Of course, the capital still has the largest number of pole dancing studios, including the studio of Natalia Tatarintseva, a four-time world pole dancing champion, as well as specialized stores for buying everything you need for classes and performances. However, studios began to open in other major cities, such as Kharkiv, Odesa, Lviv, and Dnipro (Anna Rummyantseva's studio). Pole dancing is now "moving" to small towns, and dancers can take part in local and international competitions where they show their skills and demonstrate the art of owning their own body [2, p.38].

In the West, the Lviv Federation of Pole Dance and Fitness (LFPDF) was created and the First Lviv Network of Specialized Pole Dance and Aerial Acrobatics Studios Caramel Pole Dance, founded in 2009 by Oksana Karamelina, bronze medalist of Miss Pole Dance Ukraine 2011, operated.

Oksana Karamelina (Oksana Popyk) is the initiator of the Pole Dance movement in Lviv and the Western region of Ukraine, the founder, methodologist and head coach of the First Lviv Pole Dance Studio Caramel Pole Dance, has trained more than 30 practicing pole dance instructors of a high level of professionalism: finalists, winners and prize-winners of regional and national pole sports competitions [6, p.381].

There are also pole dance studios from the network of women's fitness clubs Kiwi Fitness; in the South there are several schools and studios, a significant number of them are concentrated in Odesa, one of the largest is the dance fitness studio "Almond". And at the national level, pole dance is represented by the Ukrainian Association of Pole Dance and Fitness, which aims to popularize pole dance in the country's dance and sports system [11, p. 42].

In 2017, the dance studio HardKim, founded by Yulia Hard (Borodiy) and Kateryna Kim (Prysiashna), entered the sports scene of the western region of Ukraine, hence the name of the studio. During the first year of its existence, the students of the studio won first places at national competitions [7, p. 215].

In Lviv, the School of Aerial Acrobatics "Chocolate" played a major role in the development of aerial acrobatics and pole dancing, its founder Nataliya Granat began to actively apply these areas in the educational process, so aerial acrobatics groups appeared, and the coaches in the studio were Victoria Uhrynovych, Yana

Zherebetska, Oleksandra Hrosheva, Olga Magera, Iryna Bublyk, and others. Natalia Granat independently founded aerial acrobatics and pole sports competitions in Lviv, which are held three times a year. Participants come from all over Ukraine and other European countries. A highly qualified jury determines the best performers in each category [14].

The opening of the Chocolate Dance and Aerial Acrobatics Studio took place on June 3, 2013. The first directions were pole dance and pole exotic. Since 2018, the studio has been offering aerial acrobatics, as the studio acquired the Caramel halls [14].

Since 2018 Nataliya Granat and Ruslana Tritiak became the sole organizers of the International and Ukrainian Aerial Acrobatics and Pole Sports Championships and Festivals in Lviv. In 2024, they founded the All-Ukrainian Federation of this sport and continue to develop this area.

Nataliya Granat continued to develop the studio on the basis of Caramel studio, in addition to the development of pole dancing, she devoted a separate role to the development of aerial silks, hoop and hammock.

Her studio has been home to such aerial acrobatics and pole dancing coaches as Victoria Ugrynovych (Fire), Yana Zherebetska, Oleksiy Smutok, Oleksandra Hrosheva, Olha Mahera, Iryna Bublyk, and others.

Over its thirteen-year history, it has visited several locations in Lviv and managed to establish itself as a professional and modern dance, aerial acrobatics, and pole dancing studio.

Nataliya Granat founded the annual Fusion Air Cup aerial acrobatics and pole dancing competition in Lviv, which brings together performers from all over Ukraine every six months who are engaged in aerial acrobatics and pole dancing. Currently, the studio has more than ten locations in Lviv and Lviv region and continues to grow.

Viktoriia Uhrynovych also started her coaching career in the Caramel studio, then she moved to the Chocolate studio, and later founded her own studio and now works in the Lviv circus and trains new generations of aerialists. Despite the serious injury she received during one of her performances in the circus, Victoria found the strength to resume both her coaching and performing activities.

Iryna Bublyk is another famous trainer of the Chocolate studio. She graduated from the Ivan Bobersky Lviv State University, became a master of sports in athletics in 1989, a multiple champion of the Lviv region, and a prize-winner of national championships. She began her career as a coach by teaching physical education at a secondary school. She has 15 years of experience in aerial acrobatics and pole sports, and 8 years of teaching experience. She is the 2015 champion of the IPSF regional competitions. Iryna Bublyk is also considered the oldest pole dancing and aerial acrobatics coach in Ukraine.

Olga Magera is also a qualified aerial acrobatics coach in Lviv. She started her coaching career working at the Caramel studio, but later moved to train at Chocolate. Among her students are prize-winners and diploma winners of Ukrainian and international competitions: Hanna Boichuk, Alina and Emilia Vavrukh, Anastasia Zhuravel, and others. Olga Magera has a special approach to her students, although she trains both children and adults, she nevertheless finds a professional approach to each student.

Another professional aerial acrobatics trainer who started her coaching career in the Caramel studio and later started working at the Chocolate Aerial Acrobatics School is Yana Zherebetska. Yana is an artist of show programs; aerial trainer with more than six years of experience; certified trainer by the Ukrainian Federation of Aerial Acrobatics and Pole Sports UAAPSF; participant and judge of Ukrainian competitions, master classes and courses. Currently, Yana Zherebetska has founded her own studio in Lviv.

Another professional aerial acrobatics and pole dancing coach in Lviv is Oleksiy Smutok. Oleksiy Smutok is a certified choreographer, choreographer and ballet dancer; European champion in contemporary dance; top 50 dancers of Ukraine in TW project "All Dance 4.5 season"; top 50 dancers of Poland in TW project "So you think you can dance" Poland; top dancers of Ukraine in TW project "World Of Dance" 2022. Currently, Oleksiy Smutok has founded his own studio Super Girl, where he continues his coaching activities.

Oleksandra Grosheva, an aerial acrobatics coach, also started her coaching career in the Chocolate studio, and later founded her own aerial acrobatics school Sova in Lviv, whose students represent their school at national and international aerial acrobatics and pole sports competitions.

A significant contribution to the development of aerial acrobatics and pole sports in Lviv was made by Ulyana Shnyr, who founded the RedMoon School of Sports and Dance. Among the titled students of the RedMoon studio are Marta and Yulia Baran, Marta Stepanova, Anna Ostapenko, and others, all of whom continue their coaching and performing activities. Among the aerial acrobatics coaches currently working in the RedMoon studio is Pavula Kateryna, she is a trainer in such areas as the air hoop, aerial silks, loops and stretching; she has 6 years of experience in aerial acrobatics; she graduated with a master's degree in "Physical Culture and Sports" from the Ivan Bobersky Lviv State University of Physical Culture, with 5 years of coaching experience.

Together with Ruslana Tritiak, Nataliya Granat annually organizes the Fusion Air Cup competition, and she is also the founder of the Five Stars aerial acrobatics and pole sports festival. Together with Oksana Pachkovska, a technical organizer, and Ruslana Tritiak, they help to organize the annual reporting concerts of the School of Aerial Acrobatics Chocolate at the best sports and concert venues in Lviv.

Nataliya Granat, together with Ruslana Tritiak, founded the Ukrainian Federation of Aerial Acrobatics and Pole Sports. The federation coordinates the work of sports clubs and trains pole athletes and coaches in the following sports disciplines: pole sport, artistic pole - artistic dance, ultra pole and para pole - for people with disabilities. "The Federation of Pole Sports and Aerial Acrobatics of Ukraine is a non-profit organization that actively promotes the pole as a projectile for acrobatic sports. The Federation was created to promote the development of pole sports throughout the country. The Federation supports athletes, coaches, judges and enthusiasts to develop and unite the sport. Today, the Federation is run by voluntary members of the community of active athletes and coaches of Ukraine.

Thus, aerial acrobatics on canvases and pole dancing are gaining their well-deserved popularity due to the availability and qualified training of coaches in these areas in Ukraine. A well-developed system of training halls and regular competitions and festivals contribute to the development of these areas in Ukraine and the world.

V. Conclusions.

Thanks to the scientific research, the literature and Internet resources were analyzed, and it was determined that pole dancing and aerial acrobatics are young trends in Ukraine. Pole dancing began to spread in our country in 2010, and aerial acrobatics began to develop intensively in 2017. The main figures who influenced the development of aerial acrobatics and pole dancing in Ukraine are Oksana Popyk, Natalia Granat, Ulyana Shnyr, Natalia Tatarintseva, Anna Rumyantseva and others. In Ukraine, there are several federations of aerial acrobatics and pole sports whose mission is to develop and popularize these sports in Ukraine.

REFERENCES

- [1] Gur'eva, O. N. (2009) Vytoky vynyknennia osnovnykh zhanriv tsyrkovoho mystetstva.[Origins of the main genres of circus art]. Mariupol. 125 p. (In Ukrainian)
- [2] Nevelka A., Sutula O.(2022) Istoriia vynyknennia povitrianoi akrobatyky, yak vydu sportu.[History of the emergence of aerial acrobatics as a sport]. Physical Rehabilitation and Recreational and Health Technologies. No. 7(1), pp. 38-40. (In Ukrainian)
- [3] Sosina V.(2021) Khoreohrafiia v sporti.[Choreography in sports]: a textbook. Kyiv: Olympic literature. 276 p. (In Ukrainian)
- [4] Todorova V.G. (2018) Khoreohrafichna pidhotovka v tekhniko-estetychnykh vydakh sportu. [Choreographic training in technical and aesthetic sports]: monograph. Lviv: LDUFK. 252 p. (In Ukrainian)
- [5] Agans J.P., Davis J.L., Vazou S. & Jarus T.(2019) Self-determination through circus art: the 6. study of youth development in the context of new activities. J Youth Dev.,№14(3), c.110-129 (In English)
- [6] Dale J.P. (2013)The future of pole dance. Australasian Journal of Popular Culture, №2(3): c.381-396.(In English)
- [7] Kartali I. (2018) Pole dance fitness. 1st edition. Meyer & Meyer Media. 416 p. (In English)
- [8] Kozina Z.H., Shepelenko T.V., Sobko I., et al.(2017) Factor structure of the integral readiness of aerobics athletes (women). Journal of Physical Education and Sport;5,227: 2188 - 2196. (In English)
- [9] Saldana C.G.O, Gavira J.F., Oliver A.J.S.(2017) Evaluation of motivational factors in the practice of pole sport: preliminary validation. Revista de psicologia del deporte, 26: 62-67.(In English)

- [10] Santos S. (2013) Simply Circus. Introduction to Rigging Lyras and Trapeze Bars. Simply Circus: Inc. 218 p. (In English)
- [11] Sobko I.M., Velieva A.R., Sobko Y.O., Slastina O.O.(2022) Factors of special physical fitness of athletes involved in Pole Sports. *Health, Sport, Rehabilitation*. № 8(4), p. 42-53. (In English)
- [12] POSA Pole sports and art federation [Internet]. 2024 [cited 2024 May 21]. Available from: <https://www.posaworld.org/documents/>
- [13] Pole UNIVERSE 2021 [Internet]. 2021 [cited 2024 May 21]. Available from: <http://www.royalpoledance.com/pu.html>
- [14] Ukrainian Pole sport and Aerial acrobatics Federation [Internet]. 2024 [cited 2024 May 21]. Available from: <https://www.polesportua.org/sport-na-piloni>.
- [15] Pony Poison. Simply Circus. Aerial silk. [Internet]. 2024 [cited 2024 May 21]. Available from: <http://www.simplycircus.com.au/face-painting--balloons.html>.