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Jack's in dance hall daze at dream role

by Laura Kempself

A DEDICATED dance student, who has spent seven years training to become a professional performer, has landed a part in a brand new theatre production of High School Musical 2: Live On Stage.

Jack Wilcox, of Luton Road, Chilton, will appear in the ensemble of the touring musical, which opens at the New Wimbledon Theatre in London in August.

It is a dream come true for the 18-year-old, who has been honing his skills at the Tring Park School For The Performing Arts in Hertfordshire since he was aged 11.

"I'm absolutely thrilled," said Jack, who expected to have difficulty finding his first stage role. "Especially with the climate as it is at the moment, nobody is giving up contracts. It is all about getting on the ladder. Once you've got that first job you can be set up for a long time. Hopefully it will just lead from one thing to another."

His mum Anne said: "We weren't expecting it at all. It is lovely for him as it is what he wanted to do. We are really pleased. It is nice to see him get the work after all this training."

This is not the first time that Jack has danced with a professional company.

He has also performed in various productions with English National Ballet and National Ballet Theatre.



STEPPING OUT: Jack Wilcox has just landed a role in theatre tour of High School Musical 2

>> Copies of all Jane Russell's photos of Jack can be bought direct from our websites at www.lutontoday.co.uk and www.dunstabletoday.co.uk

And at the end of this month he will dance in the West End show Kerry Ellis Celebrates The Great British Songbook. The talented mover, who

was born in Walsall, started dancing aged six, following in the footsteps of his older sister Esther - who is now a midwife.

He said: "I was inspired by going to watch shows and I decided to give it a go. I started off with tap dancing. Me and my sister used to go to the same dance school together. In a way she was the one that inspired me to give it a go as well."

And Jack fell in love with the art that has now become his career.

He said: "It's weird to explain. You can escape as a person and become somebody else. I can lose a lot of emotion after a stressful day just by dancing. It is very disciplined and a lot of hard work but you get a big achievement from it."

The family moved to Bedfordshire after Jack decided the best way to become a professional dancer was to enrol at the Tring Park School For The Performing Arts.

And his hard work at the stage school, covering both traditional and contemporary dance, has paid off now he has his first part.

Anne said: "There's always been two sides for Jack. He loves classical work and musical theatre.

It has been perfect for him because the school covers both."

Jack said: "That's one of the main reasons that I came to this school.

"I can be a versatile performer and that's what you need to be because there are so few jobs around."

>> For more information about High School Musical 2: Live On Stage visit www.hsmonstage.co.uk