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Controversy reigns at Australian Dancesport. *Peter Smith* reports.

Story inside



UK Open - Amateur entries down, but pros remain strong. Reports coming right here soon. Loraine Barrichi on the Pro Ballroom, Goran Nordin on Pro Latin.

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Coming Soon

WDSF Grand Slam from Salou and WDSF World Formation Championship

Holiday Classic tops 14,000 entries in Las Vegas

UK Open Championships



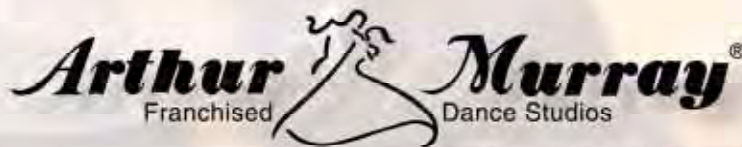
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The 66th ADS Australian DanceSport Championship featuring the 2011 Asian Pacific DanceSport Championship & WDSF International Standard & Latin Championships

An on the spot report by Peter S Smith.

Photographs courtesy of Mark Gadsden of DanceSportphoto.net

DanceSport competitors from all points of the globe descended on Melbourne for this presentation of this the last major event on the DanceSport calendar in Australia for 2011. Whilst this event has traditionally been what many would consider to be the premier event in Australia this year's event had lots of grey clouds hanging over it and these actually turned into the wildest of storms.

The Presidium of the WDSF had deemed six of Australia's top amateur couples banned from entry to this event due to the fact that they dared to compete in the "London Ball" earlier this year. As the Amateur Standard and Latin events have been WDSF (formerly IDSF) International events for some years now this ban on entry meant that these six couples could not dance in their own country's National Championship or vie for the right of World Championship entry, something that has brought outrage and disgust to the dancing fraternity at large within Australia. This decision of curtailing the careers of potentially six of the best couples this country has produced for a long time is something that the Presidium of the WDSF and their decision makers will have to think about. To say it has not gone down well is perhaps the understatement of the year!!



Matt & Anna during their "Honours Dance", with Anna wearing the offending yellow sash.

Photo supplied by persons unknown.

The banning of these couples has instigated massive across the country support for the "Freedom to Dance"

movement. The logo for this movement has been the wearing of Yellow Ribbons looped over similar to those generally used all over the world to support the troops in America, Aids and Cancer sufferers etc. This has been backed up by the simple use of Yellow as a token of support for this unofficial group by current Australian Professional Standard Champions Matthew Rooke & Anna Longmore who took a stance when being announced as Australian Professional Champions for the fourth time with Anna wearing a dress adorned in yellow. This brought a massive response from the audience and outrage from the Championship Event Organiser Margaret Lonsdale who initially refused them access to the floor to do their Honours Dance. They eventually took the floor for a very short Honours Dance after prompting from the audience via the slow hand clapping system only to find that when leaving the floor they were surrounded by security personnel and eventually escorted from the building under the direction of the Event Organiser. The politics of Australian Dancing has now reached an all time low!!!

Melbourne's Sun Herald Newspaper carrying a story on Sunday 11th December under the headline Strictly it's not on. "*Sequins Fly in Ballroom Brawl*" complete with a photograph of Matt & Anna with their trophy and the offending Yellow drape all publicity of the type DanceSport does not need. This has been followed up with sports, current affairs, and news programmes in the print media, radio, and television stations all over the country covering this development. It has also received huge exposure via such social Internet outlets as Face Book and Twitter, which has given it coverage worldwide.

This is indeed a crisis of mammoth proportions for the new President of DanceSport Australia Don McRobert and his fellow Directors and they will need to act and act quickly as there can be no alternative but to find a solution to this abhorrent incident and to prevent it occurring again. They need to start to negotiate with all parties from the WDSF to the newly formed Australian DanceSport Competitors Association, of which coincidentally Matthew Rooke is



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the President, and the Australian Dancing Society, the organizers of the Australian Championships where this farcical incident took place. There cannot be a repeat of this situation ever again within Australia or for that matter anywhere else in the world which was started by an International organization telling the powers to be what to do and how to do it in their own country when essentially they quite obviously do not have the interests of DanceSport Australia or its membership from the elite level right through to young up and coming competitors at heart. It is nothing more than an attempt to wrest complete control of all matters DanceSport away from anyone else and who suffers most - our precious and dedicated competitors.

The decision by the power brokers within the WDSF to ban Australian Couples from entry into their so called sanctioned events when all they have done is to compete in prestigious events on the other side of the world while they are already in Europe to train, study and compete is a ludicrous situation that has impounded on the careers of these couples and will have an impact for them for years to come whilst these faceless people sit in their ivory towers in various parts of the world gleefully reading the situation as a victory of control over the talent within the DanceSport world. The fact that the London Ball is not sanctioned by the WDSF is controversial in itself and immaterial because who gave the WDSF the power and authority to not sanction a new or even an established event for that matter. They produced this self-regulated authority out of fresh air without any consultation with any other sport, national or international body. The couples concerned are all registered with and financial members of DanceSport Australia and this does not make them direct members of the WDSF even by affiliation, although the WDSF promote the opposite theory.

There is even talk that the banning of entry for Australian couples in events sanctioned by the WDSF could be extended to those who have competed in other non-sanctioned but prestigious events such as the Dutch Open in Assen, The WDC Amateur League events at Euro Disney in Paris, The Singapore Open Championship and many more and in fact this is already happening with many couples receiving letters from the WDSF Secretary advising them of more or additional bans. This action and the previous scenario at the Hisense Arena has had a dramatic effect at least here in Australia and this is to dramatically reduce the support for the WDSF and their events whilst at the same time galvanizing support for the "Freedom to Dance" concept amongst the rank and file memberships of DSA, another issue that will need to be addressed in the immediate future.

In the year 2012 the U.K. Championship and the International Championship both accepted major events on the World circuit for more years

than most of us can remember are both on the WDSF banned list, this scenario is reaching ridiculous proportions. It is hoped that before long the WDSF will see the error of their ways and allow the couples the freedom to dance where and wherever they wish, which is in the best interests of the sport worldwide. They have by taking this stand in Australia reduced the biggest and most prestigious event in this country into a farce and caused untold damage to DanceSport, which may take years to recover if it ever does.

Despite this political drama unfolding before our very eyes we were indeed still treated to some excellent competitive dancing from both Australian based couples and visitors from overseas. There was also the dedication of this year's championship to the memory of the late, great Alf Davies OAM who sadly passed away in Sydney earlier this year. On both evenings of this championship we were treated to a montage of the dancing of Alf and his lifetime partner and loving wife Julie Reaby OAM on the big screen behind the stage. A sentimental trip down memory lane indeed and one made all the more memorable because Julie was in attendance at the championship and was accompanied by their daughter Kim and granddaughter Mia. There were also many life-long friends of both Alf & Julie in attendance, which made it a very special occasion for Julie and her family.

The star attraction this year was the current World & British Professional Exhibition Champions the South African pairing of Craig Smith & Natalie Wolf. We were treated to examples of their prowess and extensive repertoire on both evenings of the championship. The first night it was as if the audience could not believe what they were seeing such was their agility and excellent lift work, much of which has never been seen before in this part of the world. The second evening they performed two numbers both with the same prowess as we had seen the night before but by now the audience had accepted that what they were doing was indeed the impossible

Craig Smith & Natalie Woolfe



being unfolded before their very eyes. The result was the audience warmed to them and gave them the reception that their talents and expertise deserves. They are indeed great exponents of their art and have taken Exhibition Dancing to a new level and even moved the boundaries into areas many would have thought impossible a few short years ago.

The results of some of the major events over the weekend were: -

Professional Standard Championship

1st: Matthew Rooke & Anna Longmore (Vic): By virtue of winning all five dances off all adjudicators these two took this title for the fourth consecutive time and in the process have now recorded eleven Australian Championships as both amateur and professional. They danced with confidence and produced the quality that makes them the stand out Australian couple on

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Matthew Rooke & Anna Longmore

the international stage in all disciplines and all categories, congratulations a great effort.

2nd: Craig Denham & Grete Kasi (WA): Their final analysis was second in all dances, however a perusal of their marks from the individual adjudicators shows a very mixed bag indeed with marks as low as sixth and varying to fourths and fifths regularly in every dance, very interesting indeed.

3rd Paul Montagnese & Marsha Khazanova (NSW) These two are newcomers in this field and they were fourth in Waltz and Quickstep and third in the remaining dances. They too received a very mixed bag of marks from this adjudicating panel receiving marks as high as second down to some sixth places, were therefore third courtesy of the skating system. They have a vibrant attack at all cost approach to the standard dances and it is a style that you either like or you do not which probably accounts for their variation in marks.

Professional Latin Championship

1st: Gleb Savchenko & Elana Samadova (NSW): Clearly won all five dances although not from all adju-

Gleb Savchenko & Elana Samadova

dicators. These two are quite recent arrivals in Australia and are a great addition to the competitive ranks in this country. They are strong attractive Latin dancers who give each dance the rhythmical interpretation they need, were I felt quite comfortable winners of this event.

2nd: Nathan Myers & Megan Alderton (Vic): They were second in all five dances, did however have two adjudicators mark them to win this event and also picked up some first placings off other adjudicators in the odd dance. Perhaps they were beaten because of the more consistent performance of the winners rather than on sheer dancing alone.

3rd: Adam Blakey & Zoe Unkovich (Vic): Consistently third in all five dances but like the others who finished in front of them they did receive a mixed bag of marks with some judges consistently marking them second others not so good. They were perhaps a little lacking in finesse and the resultant impact this brings on this occasion.

Professional New Vogue Championship

1st: Darryl Davenport & Natalie Smith (NSW): Very clearly won all five dances and therefore retained this title they first won last year. There

were some new couples in this field this year but in the end the polish, presentation, and unique interpretation of all the dances in this style won the day for them.

2nd: Jacob Grech & Zalie Merrett (Vic): Former winners of the amateur title in this style in 2007 – 2009 this was their first venture in this event since turning professional, they were second in all five dances.

3rd: Shane Lawton & Ashlea Milner (Vic): Their final analysis shows they were third in all five dances. They have a style and musicality that appeals and as such could feel slightly aggrieved that they did not finish one spot higher.

Darryl Davenport & Natalie Smith

Australian & WDSF International Standard

1st: Emanuel Valeri & Tania Kehlet (Denmark): It was great to have the current World Champions in Australia, as expected they won every dance in this championship and in the process did not drop one first place mark. They are exuberant and enthusiastic dancers with tons of personality who attack each dance from go to whoa. This knowledgeable audience loved them and they will all be looking forward to the next time they visit these shores.

2nd: Bjorn Bitsch & Ashli Williamson (Denmark): Great to have them back in Australia, they too are World Champions having just recently won the Ten Dance event. They were clearly second in all dances, although the odd adjudicator thought differently.

3rd: Markus & Maria Hirvonen (Finland): This brother and sister team are always very

Emanuel Valeri & Tania Kehlet

popular visitors to Australia as the consistent quality of the dancing they produce always impresses. They danced on this occasion with an excellent top line and shape and great musicality and were third in all dances.

Australian & WDSF Latin

1st: Hou Yao & Zhuang Ting (China): Won this event by virtue of winning all dances, although there were some quite low marks inherited along the way. They are positive Latin dancers with a good consistent action over all the dances.

2nd: Aleksei Kibkalo & Viktoriya Kechalko (Kyrgyzstan): Second in all dances except Jive where they were third. They also got a very mixed bag of marks, but were very much one of the audiences' more popular couples. A tall very strong couple that danced to one another and always presented a very polished interpretation of all the Latin dances.

3rd: Yumiya & Rara Kubota (Japan): These two were never far away from the ultimate honour in this event with some adjudicators marking them to win. It was the marks they received at the other end of the spectrum that was their undoing. They ended up third in all dances except jive where they were fourth.

Australian Open New Vogue

1st: Andrew Nolo & Shannen Clarke (Vic): They won this event for the first time by virtue of wins in all dances except Carousel. The battle for top honours in Amateur New Vogue events in major championships all over the country in

Hou Yao & Zhuang Ting

2011 has been pretty fierce and on this occasion this young Victorian couple managed to hold off all challengers.

2nd: Jarrod & Jane Dawson (Qld): Probably the pre-event favourites to secure this title and take it back to Queensland with them, however on this occasion they could only manage to win Carousel and were second in the others. They consistently had four adjudicators marking them to win, whilst others thought the opposite, hence the skating system took over, and it was the runners-up spot for them in 2011.

3rd: Sean van der Poel & Lauren de Rozario (WA): They were third in Twilight Waltz and Carousel and fourth in the remaining three dances. These two are very competent competitors in the New Vogue style and are always a threat in major events, just never seem to be able to make the break through when needed.

Youth Open Standard

1st Darren & Christina Morrissey (WA): They took this title by virtue of winning Tango, Foxtrot & Quickstep and being second in the remaining two dances. This couple as usual danced with enthusiasm to burn, but on occasions this enthusiasm seemed to dominate the music and the subtlety of the individual dances was lost.

2nd Christopher Wilson & Victoria Ngau (Vic): They won both the Waltzes and went close in some of the other dances, but not quite close enough. These two young couple have been rivals for some years now and they will no doubt continue this rivalry as they continue their dance careers.

3rd: Tyler Blah & Taylor Curry (QLD): They were consistently third in all five dances but

such was the standard of this event that they too received some excellent marks that on any other given day could have seen them in a higher spot. Excellent dancers these youngsters and like the two couples who finished in front of them on this occasion have a huge future in front of them if they keep working hard.

Youth Open Latin

1st: Lyn Ishizuka & Samantha Nicholson (N.Z.): These two have for sometime now been consistent raiders of Youth event titles on trips across the Tasman Sea, thus sticking a thorn in the side of their Australian contemporaries. This time they pulled off the big one and really did it in style by virtue of winning all five dances quite clearly. They have huge floor appeal and are an exciting vibrant young couple that are a pleasure to watch.

2nd: Darren & Christina Morrissey (WA): This brother and sister team are well versed in all the three styles that these youngsters dance here in Australia, but if they are vulnerable in one style it is the Latin and this was proven on this occasion. They were second in all dances except Cha Cha where they finished fourth.

3rd: Hin Ting & Chui Mei Chan (Hong Kong): Another foreign raider who more than made their presence felt. They were a consistent third in all dances except Jive where they finished fourth. Once again a merry mixture of marks, which again tested the skating system to produce a result.

Junior Open Events

The Junior stars from Western Australia **David Santalucia & Brianna Pincer** dominated all these championships in this age category. The future of Australian dancing is in the hands of couples like these two and when you see the quality of the dancing they consistently produce you know that all augers well for the future. David & Brianna won all three titles on offer and in doing so won twelve of the fifteen dances they competed in over the three styles. A great effort and one where their parents, coaches, family, and regular supporters can very proud, they are a credit to all of them and to DanceSport generally long may your success continue. The minor placings in these three championships were spread around with **Netanel Abisedon & Alisha Panetta (NSW)** taking the runners up spot in both the Standard & Latin events and in the process won Rumba. The runners-up in the New Vogue were **Olansi Key & Kathleen O'Reilly (NSW)** and in doing so they manage to wrest two dances of the champions. Third in the Latin event were **Adam Wang & Vivienne Ngau (Vic)** who were third in all dances except Jive where they were fourth. The very consistent and much improved **Morgan Flowers & Em-**

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ily Kranz (QLD) were third in both the Standard and New Vogue events, these two are developing a very pleasant maturity about all their dancing and well deserved these results.

The adjudicators throughout these championships used the electronic scrutineering system developed by Dallas & Martha Williams and their team at DanceScore Scrutinering Systems, with each adjudicator having a portable electronic notepad on which to record their marks which in turn is fed directly into the central computers. Dallas and Martha have worked hard over a long period of time developing this system and at long last their efforts are bearing fruit. It is this system that is downloaded into my Iphone, which has enabled me to source the marks to use in this report all technical data that just a few short years ago would have seemed impossible to achieve. I personally thank them for providing me with this electronic information and congratulate them on the end result. However, knowing Dallas and Martha like I do I believe they will be working away to fine tune this excellent system even further.



David Santalucia & Brianna Pincer



2nd

3rd Daniel Gallaro and Kimberly Taylor

Their last competition and came very close to annexing the runners up position however the detail required in W and FT with Craig and Evgeniya's long bodies was always going to be an uphill task.



3rd

The 2011 British Closed Professional Championship

By Stephen Hannah

Photos by Andrew Miller

www.dancefotoman.co.uk

1st Warren and Kirsty Boyce

Clear winners in all five dances. Not at their very best yet unchallenged from the remaining finalists. Each couple below have their demons to deal with, which left them almost untouched in action and finished product.

2nd Craig Shaw and Evgeniya Sutyaginskaya

2nd in W Ft and VW, Held off a very strong challenge from Daniel and Kimberley in T and Qs. The full package still eludes them across all dances. They started well in Waltz and FT got mixed up in creating energy and movement in Tango and forgot to create the stillness necessary to show strength in masculine energy. In quickstep they attempted to over swing it. In Viennese rescued it by staying to naturals and reverses and out of trouble



1st

4th Alex Sindila and Katie Gleeson

Produce a package high in rotation across all dances, judges either loving it or hating it (like marmite)

5th Richard Still and Morgan Hemphill

The new kids on the block, challenged well in QS where their love of high energy release paid off. To challenge higher a clearer understanding of finishing actions would pay higher dividends

6th James and Kelly Anne Prouton

Attempting to show competitive actions through choreographic interpretations which did not quite come off. Clearly there are skills that as



4th



5th



6th



7th

sidered further across the 5 dances. So the exercise here seems to be of focusing in on where the lady needs more time to create musical time through space given by the hands

Fisher/Main

Problematic in so much that the swing action in Waltz and foxtrot is good however once energy comes into play, the arms of the man create so much over energy that imbalance passed to the lady makes it impossible for clear translation of musical time.

Gillespie/Petkove

Trying hard to create a backdraft of musical time that 1 in Waltz was too short and 2 and 3 was too long. Clear base actions need to be looked at to create image and character through all 5 dances. Not impossible, but time needs to be spent on it to progress further.

Summers/Summers

Clearly have skills that as yet need refining to challenge further. Coordination with base actions with finished shape with end of the bar would pay good dividends.

yet did not come to the surface. Perhaps a simpler answer is available that they have not pursued.

7th Sehyong and Adele Jang Dong

6th in Viennese Waltz, with a clear uninhibited swing. To progress further more of the nuts and bolts must be present in more than one or two bars. They both show a good amount of understanding however speed and progression overwhelm the balance and pictorial finishing power they could so easily annex in their favour.

In the Semi – Final;

Romeo/Barsuk

Notes that I made in the 1st round indicates that they were in the same space too often to be con-



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WDSF World Formation Championship Standard 2011



In Brunswick (Germany)

Braunschweiger TSC Formation A-Team Won the Title with "Immortality"!

*Report and photos by
Helmut Roland*

www.sportevent-photography.de

The WDSF World Formation Championships Standard creates their own rules. In the last five years the winner of the World Formation Championship Standard was the host of the event. In 2006 Vera Tyumen from Russia won in Moscow. In 2007 1.TC Ludwigsburg

from Germany won in Stuttgart. In 2008 the DSC CoDreanca Team from Moldova won in Chisinau. The winner of the 2009 competition was 1. TC Ludwigsburg again. The event took place in Ludwigsburg. In 2010 the formation teams competed in Elblag/Poland. The lucky winner was ST Lotos Jantar Elblag.

Would this "rule" help the Standard A-Team of Braunschweiger TSC this year to win back the title? It was in 2005 when Braunschweiger TSC won the World Formation Championship Standard. The event took place in ... No! It was in Elblag / Poland then. The rule can accept exceptions.

So more than 6,000 people had come to Volkswagen hall in Brunswick / Germany on November 26th 2011 to see the best 19 teams in formation standard dancing in the world. It really was a spectacular event again. Starting at 2 p.m. with the first rounds we saw fantastic formation



Rüdiger Knaack

standard dancing teams from all over the world. First time the Ulaan Sarnai – Red Rose team from Mongolia had come the long way from Asia to join the competition. And they achieved a good place in the midfield.

Of course all the World Formation Champions in standard section of former years had come to Brunswick to win back the title. So we had several aspirants for the title this year again such as titleholder ST Lotos Jantar Elblag from Poland, 1. TC Ludwigsburg from Germany and Vera Tyumen from Russia of course.

Andreas Neuhaus, Master of Ceremony, managed to create a sportive fascinating atmosphere in the hall during the whole afternoon and especially in the evening session when German TV broadcasted live from the event.



We saw 14 teams in the 2nd round dancing for a ticket to join the final round. At last six teams had been qualified by the seven adjudicators.

The formation teams managed to enhance their performances and the audience gave it back with frenetic applause to all teams. With eagerness the camp-followers from the different countries waited to see their teams. When the formation team of Braunschweiger TSC came in to demonstrate "Immortality" the audience in Volkswagen hall was blustering. They followed the new fantastic choreography, created by Rüdiger Knaack, chief trainer of the BTSC for more than twenty years, and they gloried in the fantastic music going along with the new choreography. It was a risk to try with a complete new choreography, but Rüdiger Knaack and his fantastic Formation A-Team were lucky to win the title with six out of seven 1st places at the end. The whole audience thanked Rüdiger Knaack and the out-



standing dancing Formation A-Team of BTSC with standing ovations for minutes.

Who would win 2nd place? The seven adjudicators didn't find a team for 2nd place. Due to the skating system there was no chance to distinguish between the teams from Poland and Russia. So title-holder ST Lotos Jantar Elblag from Poland and Vera Tyumen from Russia had to share 2nd place.

4th place was given to 1. TC Ludwigsburg, the former world formation champions of 2009 and 2007. The team had performed excellently too, but this evening ST Lotos Jantar Elblag, Vera Tyumen and of course the A-Team of BTSC were ahead of them.

We should not forget Impuls Cheliabynsk from Russia, who achieved 5th place, and the team of TSC Unvers Minsk from Belarus attaining 6th place. These two teams performed excellently too, but they had very strong competitors. Nevertheless it was a great pleasure to see their wonderful dancing.

5. Impuls Cheliabynsk
(5,5,5,6,5,6,5)
Russian Federation

6. TSC Unvers Minsk
(6,6,6,5,6,5,6)
Belarus

Adjudicators

A Volker Günther Germany
B Johnny Olesen Norway
C Ludwig Wieshofer Austria
D Peter Loja Slovakia
E Galina Goulay Russian Federation
F Andrzej Mierzwa Poland
G Marcel Wauters Belgium

Chairman

Manfred Ganster Germany

See more pictures
of the event and
videos of the
finalists at

www.sportevent-photography.de



Next year, the best teams of formation dancing in the standard section will gather in Ludwigsburg again to find the World Formation Champions Standard. We wonder if the "rule" we be still working.

Final Rounds

1. Braunschweiger TSC A-Team
(1,1,1,1,2,1,1)
Germany
2. ST Lotos Jantar Elblag
(3,4,4,2,3,2,2)
Poland
2. Vera Tyumen
(4,3,2,3,1,3,4)
Russian Federation
4. 1. TC Ludwigsburg
(2,2,3,4,4,4,3)
Germany



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