

WDSF Grand Slam Finals

Salou Spain



*Reports by Helmut Roland &
Asis Khadjeh-Nouri*

Photos by Helmut Roland

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In this edition we focus on the WDSF Grand Slam Finals from Salou in Spain.

Enjoy the scintillating photography of *Helmut Roland*, plus his detailed report.

Also *Asis Khadjeh-Nouri* offers his critique of the finalists in the Standard division.



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You can see video and the complete results here:

<http://www.dancebeatworld.com/members.php#anchor998>

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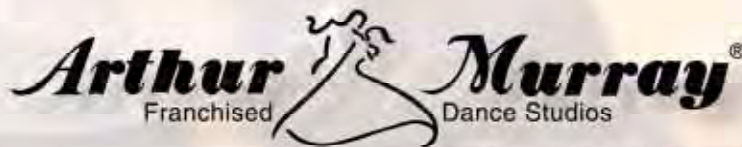
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WDSF FINAL GRAND SLAM STANDARD AND LATIN 2011 IN SALOU, SPAIN



EMANUEL & TANIA AND ANDREY & ANNA AT THE TOP



Report and photos by Helmut Roland www.sportevent-photography.de

XIII Spanish Open set the stage for this year`s WDSF Final Grand Slam competitions in the Standard and Latin sections on December 3rd and 4th, 2011 in Salou, Spain.



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The Grand Slam Series and the New Scoring System

Six competitions comprise the annual run. In the Standard section the couples had to start in Seoul, Korea. Next stop was Chengdu in China followed by Stuttgart, Germany and Aarhus, Denmark. The last chance for winning a ticket to the Final Grand Slam in Salou was in St. Petersburg, Russia. In the Latin section the couples started in Copenhagen, Denmark. The next competition was held in Chengdu followed by Stuttgart and Aarhus. The last chance for the Latin couples to win a ticket to the Final Grand Slam was in Ostrava, Czech Republic.

You can expect to see some hundreds of couples coming to join the Grand Slam competitions all over the world. In Stuttgart, for example, 334 couples started in the Standard section and 336 couples started in the Latin section. For the Final Grand Slam only twelve couples in the Standard and Latin sections, who had been ranked best at Grand Slam competitions during the year, were invited to join the final competition in Salou.

Here are some more specifics at this tournament. The final rounds of the Grand Slam have to be completed with five solo dances by each finalist. The adjudicators don't have to rank the couples into places by the well-known skating system, but they have to evaluate the performance of each dance of the finalists by a new system.

Instead of comparing the couples for the purpose of ranking them to a place from 1 to 6, it is the task of the adjudicators to give an absolute evaluation of the quality of dancing. Five components have to be evaluated during the five solo dances of each couple.

- * PB Posture, balance and coordination
- * QM Quality of movement
- * MM Movement to music
- * PS Partnering skill
- * CP Choreography and presentation

Each criteria is appraised with points from 1 (very poor) – 10 (outstanding). So the adjudicator gives five reviews per dance and couple instead of one. The couple gets 25 assessments for the round. And the couple can see the result of each dance immediately after finishing the dance. The audience also knows. The adjudicators are the only people in the room who don't know the results of their scores. They have to sit face to the floor and they are not allowed to look around to see the scores when they are shown to the couples and to the public.

I interviewed several couples before the competition. They said they liked the new system of evaluation because they get more information due to the five criteria. And they know they are the only couple the adjudicators are looking at. But the couples also miss the situation of competing directly against the other couples dancing together in one round.

I asked Marco Sietas, Sports Director of WDSF, for his comment on this issue. He explained that the difference to the skating system, which basically compares the couples directly (relative assessments as better/worse), is that the new evaluation system needs absolute assessments (poor/good/excellent/outstanding) due to the five criteria. For this reason it is necessary to see one couple at a time to assess the performance of the five criteria during each dance. Dancing altogether would not fit with the characteristic of this new system.

Back to the floor we saw two rounds of standard dancing at its best. All the couples gave their very best from the beginning. At the end six couples had been qualified for the finals of the Final Grand Slam. Asis Khadjeh-Nouri, a well-known professional, was at the location. As he was not on duty as a WDSF adjudicator in Salou, he gave a couples' critique from the final. Thank you so much, Asis!

Begins page 8!



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Commentary on the Performance of the Finalists by *Asis Khadjeh-Nouri* DTV Confederation Trainer and WDSF International Adjudicator



1st Place: Emanuel Valeri – Tania Kehlet, Denmark

The new World Champions in the Standard section now are also winners of the Final Grand Slam. They had prepared themselves for a duel but didn't need to be worried about it.

They demonstrated all the skills of dancesport with confidence and superiority. The couple won all five dances in this final dancing musically, softly, flexible but solid and in any circumstances always corresponding within the couple. You actually can look at them for hours and you won't be bored by some curious "tricks", because both control their bodies notably and they turn out dancing trivia ever and anon which you don't expect.



The choreography is reviewed to every nut, bolt and screw and they never appear rehearsed to any one mode.

Emanuel & Tania are very congenial world champions and they give an excellent example. Congratulations!

2nd Place: Simone Segatori – Annette Sudol, Germany



Also presenting a really masterly achievement with equally filled choreography and appropriate dancing interpretation. Simone and Annette, musical and light-footed, celebrate all characteristics of the Standard dances.

Currently they have to bow to the convincing world champions, but they are closer to them as the evaluations expressed at the time. For the future we surely can expect fascinating duels.

One year ago you could perhaps have the feeling that some details were not finished yet, but today Simone & Annette persuaded with an authentic appearance as champions, which they kept up excellently and constantly during the whole tournament. "Bravo"!



3rd Place: Dmitry Zharkov – Olga Kulikova, Russian Federation

From the first moment you had the impression that Dima & Olga would not miss the chance to stand on the winners' rostrum. Both danced a very special competition, resolutely yet notwithstanding, pliantly and musically. They asserted themselves well against their competitors, especially in tango and quickstep. Perhaps sometimes the strain was a little bit too strong, but emotions sometimes can't be controlled ... and this is ok. This characterizes genuine performers.

Good spatial movements of the couple with nice actions in the outer circle create a permanent high volume in all parts of the movements. There is a chance for progress in the characteristic of the dances, but you have to give time for a good qualitative development to them as to all other couples.

Dima & Olga are excellently established in the finals and they staked a claim for more in future.



4th Place: Evgeny Moshenin – Genny Favero, Italy

Evgeny and Genny are a very good and markedly personable couple. They meet the characteristic of the dances very well and without "gimmicks". However, you frequently have the feeling that various movements, especially during the dances with momentum,

are generated by a supine position. In tango Evgeny's left arm is isolated too much. This is the reason why their dancing looks a little bit physical. This should be suppressed soon.

This couple hasn't danced together for a long time, so one should give them some more time to grow. Anyhow you will have to count on this attractive couple if they mature. They couple is a benefit for the international dancing scene in any case.



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5th Place: Nikolay Darin – Natalia Seredina, Russian Federation

There is another new couple in the Final of the Grand Slam, who achieved a ticket to the final rounds due to their dynamics and energy. They started very strongly with a fourth place in slow waltz but then reduced performance a little bit.



At the moment their dancing looks too much “deemed”. The arms and hands of both partners work too much and don't have a real connection to the body. At the end of the dances both implode a little bit.

Anyhow you have to appreciate the good and solid performance of the couple. This legitimates starting in the finals. If the physical skills can be developed we can expect more from this couple.



6th Place: Bjoern Bitsch – Ashli Williamson, Denmark

The World Champions in Ten Dance completed this very keen final of the Final Grand Slam competition. Following the couple in the semifinal rounds I did not expect them in the final, because to my opinion there is sometimes a lack of profoundness of quality. This surely sticks close to the double impact of dancing in both sections. Only two weeks ago they had won the title of World Champions Ten Dance for the second time.

Sometimes Bjoern and Ashli appear a little bit rehearsed, alternatively stereotyped. Perhaps the exertion to reach the final was very



high. During the final rounds Bjoern & Ashli performed considerably better and more expressively. Especially in the tango it has to be pointed out that the characteristic of this dance was met very well.

Concluding I would like to bring up that there are two more very talented couples at 7th and 8th places – Alexey Glukov & Anastasia Glazunova and Andrey Philippov & Evgenia Kuligina – , who with good cause also could have been selected for the final.

Final Rounds Standard Section

1. Emanuel Valeri – Tania Kehlet (239.07)
Denmark
2. Simone Segatori – Annette Sudol (231.71)
Germany
3. Dmitry Zharkov – Olga Kulikova (217.43)
Russian Federation
4. Evgeny Moshenin - Genny Favero (215.22)
Italy
5. Nikolay Darin – Natalia Seredina (208.35)
Russian Federation
6. Bjoern Bitsch – Ashli Williamson (203.57)
Denmark

Adjudicators

- | | | |
|---|------------------|--------------------|
| A | Karina Rubio | Spain |
| B | Ralf Müller | Germany |
| C | Giordano Vanone | Italy |
| D | Peep Vardja | Estonia |
| E | Irina Solomatina | Russian Federation |
| F | Peter Stokkebroe | Denmark |
| G | Robert Wota | Poland |
| H | Geir Bakke | Norway |
| I | George Tan | Malaysia |

Final Rounds Latin Section

1. Andrey Zaytsev – Anna Kuzminkaya
(237.14) Russian Federation
2. Aniello Langella – Khrystyna Moshenska
(232.58) Italy
3. Martino Zanibellato – Michelle Abildtrup
(227.35) Denmark
4. Timur Imametdinov – Ekaterina Nikolaeva
(214.43) Russian Federation
5. Vladimir Karpov – Mariya Tzaptashvilli
(208.93) Russian Federation
6. Andrey Gusev – Elizaveta Cherevichnaya
(208.14) Russian Federation

Andrey & Anna Win WDSF Final Grand Slam Latin

XIII Spanish Open continued on December 4th 2011 with several interesting competitions during the day. Highlight of the evening was the WDSF Final Grand Slam Latin competition, which again was held under the chairmanship of Marco Sietas. Twelve couples had been qualified for the tournament. Six of them come from the Russian Federation, two couples are from Germany, one couple each come from Austria, Denmark, Italy and Spain.

We saw two rounds of fascination Latin dancing of the top couples of the world. The Pavelló Muncicipal d'Esports in Salou was completely filled again by an enthusiastic audience.

It was late on Sunday evening when the six couples we nominated to show their solo dances of the final rounds. It was late after midnight when the award ceremony took place. Here are the results:



Winner are Andrey Zaytsev – Anna Kuzminskaya from Russian Federation. Andrey and Anna knew they had a really good chance today. Last year they had achieved



Langella/Moshenska



Zaytsev/Kuzminskaya

3rd place behind Zoran Plohl / Tatiana Lahvinovich and Alexey Silde / Anna Firstova. In September, Andrey and Anna attained 2nd place at WDSF World Championship Latin in Singapore. Now it was the time to win a major tournament. They won all five solo dances with a score between 47.00 – 48.00 points out of a maximum of 50.00 points. This totals to 237,14 points. Congratulations!

The couple from Italy, Aniello Langella – Krystyna Moshenska, achieved 2nd place with a total of 232.58 points. At the WDSF World Championship Latin in Singapore they had been set in 3rd place. The couple made good progress in 2011. We wonder about their development in 2012.

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The top three couples were completed by Martino Zanibellato – Michelle Abildtrup. The couple from Denmark achieved 3rd place with 227.35 points. There was only a very small difference of 0.22 – 0.93 points to 2nd place in Samba, Cha Cha, Rumba and Paso Doble. Only in Jive the difference was 2.79 points.

Timur Imametdinov – Ekaterina Nikolaeva from Russian Federation came up to 4th place (last year 6th place) with 214.93 points. So this year the couple changed the place at the Final Grand Slam with countrymen, Vladimir Karpov – Mariya Tzaptashvilli who achieved 5th place with 208.93 points. With a slight difference of 0.79 points fellow countryman Andrey Gusev – Elizabeta Cherevichnaya were set in 6th place with 208.14 points.

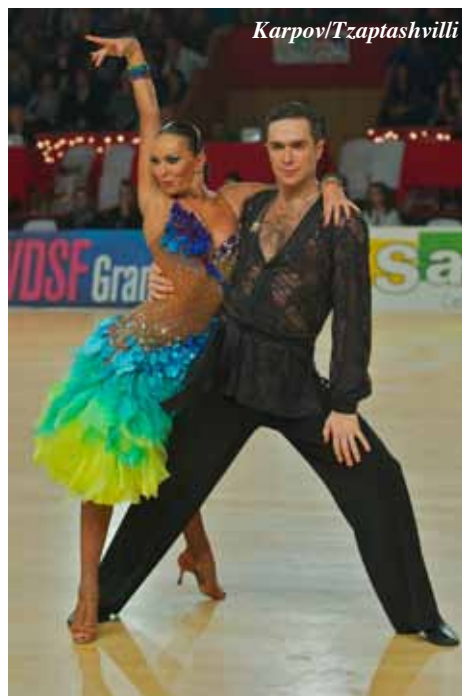
Congratulations to all couples for their excellent performance in this tournament. The new evaluation system shows that there is almost no difference between several couples. We hope to see all couples evolving next year.



Zanibellato/Abildtrup



Imametdinov/Nikolaeva



Karpov/Tzaptashvilli



Gusev/Cherevichnaya

WDSF President Carlos Freitag thanked all couples for coming to Salou. He congratulated the winners and the finalist couples.

See more pictures of the Final Grand Slam Standard and Latin at www.sportevent-photography.de

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