

**So many talented couples from all
over the world, elegant, stylish fit
and healthy**

photo by Andrew Miller

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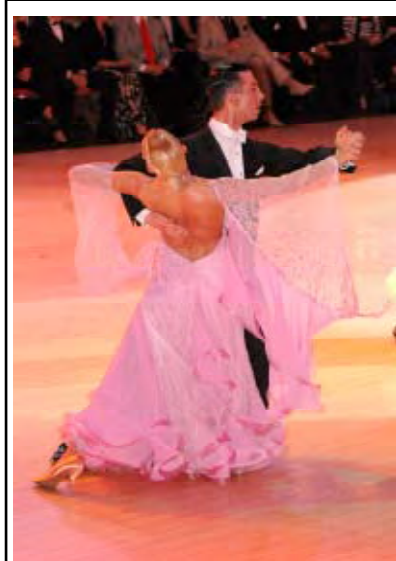
The British Amateur Ballroom Championship

Report by *Lindsey Hillier-Tate*
Photos by *Andrew Miller*
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261 couples competed for this prestigious title, commencing the event on the Wednesday with qualifying heats, and further heats on the Thursday afternoon, before the first round proper as we call it, Thursday evening.

So many talented couples from all over the world, elegant, stylish fit and healthy, what a wonderful world, we, in the dance business live in.

The Final is now announced, and Marcus Hilton the Chairman causes a stir with the news that we have an 8 couple final. What a nightmare for the judges a 7-couple final. So many great couples to place and so little time.



Andrea Ghigiarelli and Sara Andracchio

floor, so delighted and of course relieved to finally get their hands on this so wonderful trophy.

I regret I did notice quite a lot of collisions, however, Paolo did have the decency to say sorry.

2nd Andrea Ghigiarelli and Sara Andracchio, (Italy) 2222 all dances. For me the outstanding couple of the night, from the first round they showed supreme commitment, they were in control of everything, floor craft was delightful, they changed direction at whim, with Sara able to read Andrea's

thoughts...or so it seemed. All my notes read softer arm styling, slower elegant, more compact. Andrea seems to be within himself and not trying to over impress, this comes with experience. There were a lot of emotional scenes around this couple tonight, and so it should be, they work with a small reliable group of people, and is it paying off.

3rd Benedetto Ferruggia and Claudia Koehler (Germany) 4334. Another steady charismatic couple,

their performance does not fluctuate between events. That is good as it shows a clear understanding of the principles. Tango was very impressive with speed and control, so many couples have the speed but unfortunately cannot stop when necessary.

4th Emanuel Valeri and Tania Kehlet (Denmark) such an elegant couple, no frills or tricks just good dancing. They have a softness of action, and great use of the standing leg, they always seem to be over the foot on the beat not behind it. Therefore looking light and buoyant.



Benedetto Ferruggia and Claudia Koehler

contd.

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Blackpool Amateur Ballroom

5th Marat Gimaev and Alina Basyuk (Russia) One of the most improved couples - so improved in body position, gone is the arched back and high ribs. Very talented couple, who could be a big threat to the couples above them. They have a musicality that attracts attention, each time you see them you notice a commitment and something different. They draw you into their performance.

6th Federico Di Toro and Genny Favero, (Italy) fantastic to see this couple back in the final, and very well deserved. Both very strong dancers, elegant and stylish - it's quality

all the way. Perhaps for the IDSF competitions they would be too conservative in their style, but one has to notice the quality this couple have. The structure of the frame and the improved leg actions really show. I hope this couple continue to climb in the final they deserve it.

7th Chao Yang and Tan Yi Ling (China). The first Chinese couple to make the British Amateur final. Whilst a free moving couple they are still lacking in some of the finer qualities of a top amateur. Floor craft does not always come easily. Tango looks rather stiff and fixed in hold and body position for my liking. When sitting on the front row it is amazing some of the footwork that comes to your notice, perhaps footwork i.e. heels and toes is not correct to say, but foot usage how the foot is place and used at this level is very important..

Of special note in the semifinal:

Sergei Konovaltsev-Olga Konovaltseva (Russia) Powerful driving dancers, still too hard in their approach for my liking. More is not always better. Sometimes the legs seem outside the body which can make for a heavy look. On the positive side they have a wide hold and are blessed with a good shape and looks, and lots of

potential for improvement.

One of the main disappointments for me was the exclusion in the final of Valerio Colanstoni – Sarah Di Vaira when 7 couples were announced for the final for me it was a certainty that they would be included. What do this couple need to do. They are great quality dancers, tall elegant with a great understanding of the excellence required to reach the top. They never offend with their style or body positioning. They are controlled and able to change

direction at whim. They are not as aggressive as some dancers, and perhaps this is the problem, they don't throw themselves around, or have racing choreography that never shows slows. They have good choreography well balanced. It was sad the judges did not recognise these qualities. Perhaps next time they will be appreciated

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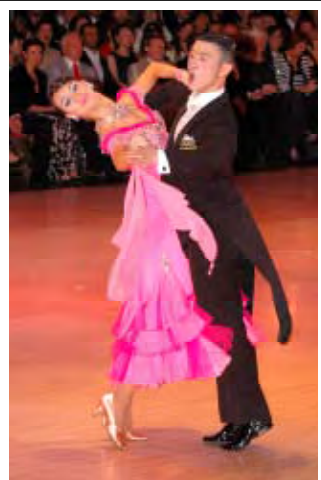
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The World Professional Ten Dance Championship.

Title goes to the USA .

An on the Spot Report from Peter & Rosalyn Smith.

The picturesque city of Siegen in Germany was the location of the 2008 World Professional Ten Dance Championships, hosted by Tanzschule Tuppeck with support from the City of Siegen itself via the Siegerlandhalle, venue for this championship.

A panel of very experienced adjudicators comprising Margaret Cowan (Scotland), Jurate Norvaisene (Lithuania), Rudi Trautz (Germany), Linda Venables (Great Britain),

Geir Bakke (Norway), Tsukasa Futatsumori (Japan); Roger Picard (Canada), Leonid Pletnev (Russia), Stuart Saunders (Scotland), Peter Smith (New Zealand), and Manfred Zehender (Austria) were engaged to assess the twenty one couples who took the floor for the first round of this prestigious event. The adjudicating process was carried out by all the adjudicators using hand held palm p.c.s. All selections were made using the stylus provided and these were transmitted directly via modem to the scrutineers' laptops and the scrutineering process carried out simultaneously, a first for many of the adjudicators.

In the final rounds of both styles all the marks were displayed on two large screens each side of the stage after each dance, a very modern version of visual marking.

The World Dance Council method of presenting Ten Dance events means that each dance is a separate event and the championship proper is run using the Standard dances first and the Latin counterpart second. With this in mind the promoters of this event decided to run the Standard section to its conclusion on Friday 16th May and then the Latin section on Saturday the 17th then collating the marks to produce the overall winner to a capacity audience on the Saturday night. In between the rounds of the championship nearly all the members of this very enthusiastic audience were up dancing themselves to the excellent live music produced by Feedback Dancing Band, a ten piece orchestra who with vocal backup not only produced entertaining and excellent music for social dancing but also produced top class music for the competitors to dance to, their tempos and rhythmic interpretations of the various dances was excellent.

The Master of Ceremonies Matthias Fronhoff kept the audience well informed and entertained throughout any breaks in proceedings and carried out the introduction of all the adjudicators and competitors with confidence and clarity despite all the different nationalities involved.

The results were as follows:-

1st: Gherman Mustuc & Iveta Lukosiute (USA)
This tall elegant couple danced with supreme confidence from start to finish. Were very consistent overall the ten dances, which is why they were the new World Champions. Their natural personalities and appeal on the floor match their excellent dancing. Perhaps pushed the power barrow a little too much in the Standard section, but in the Latin the excellent use of legs and feet especially from Iveta were a joy to watch.



2nd: Alexander Berezin & Victoria Rudkovskaya (Russia)

Just a short time earlier these two had won the European Ten Dance Championship and got very close to making it a big double. Another very consistent and strong couple over all the ten dances, second in Tango was their best Standard result and they won all the Latin dances. Victoria came out in

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the Latin final in a black unitard, a brave decision but one that won us over as this black cat-like outfit really showed off her magnificently strong leg action and precise technique.

3rd: Sergej Diemke & Katerina Timofeeva (Germany)

The defending champions who were quite obviously very disappointed at losing this prestigious title at the end of the championship. Having suffered in the Standard section they came out in the Latin knowing that they had to dance for their lives to retain their title. However the strength of the two couples who finished ahead of them in the Latin meant that they were destined to be stranded in their quest to once again be World Champions.

4th: Anton & Alena Koukarenko (USA)

This couple was considerably stronger in the Standard section, their ease of movement and excellent lower and swing action was a pleasure to watch. Interpreted all the Standard dances with great musicality, they won Slow Foxtrot but quite frankly could have won all the Standard dances with perhaps the exception of Tango where they were a little soft in their approach. Their Latin lacked the power and drive of some of the other couples.

5th: Boris Rohne & Madeline Epler (Germany)

This couple was diminutive in stature compared to all of those who finished in front of them, but nevertheless they were a couple who impressed us. Were considerably unlucky to miss the Standard final but in the Latin final were in there with a chance as their interpretation of all the Latin rhythms was excellent and gave each dance the character it deserved.

6th: Toshiharu Naritake & Sayuri Nobemoto (Japan)

These two only made the Standard final, however they did make it in all dances and missed the Latin final. A bright bubbly couple who moved across the floor with ease and did very little to offend. Were obviously enjoying themselves and danced with lots of feeling and expression.

Other couples who impressed were:

Francis Lafreniere & Claudia Primeau (Canada) Made the Latin final in Cha Cha, Rumba, Paso Doble & Jive. They are a strong expressive couple who always produce good lines and shapes

and certainly made an impression in this event.

Fabrizio & Lorena Cravero (Italy)

Another couple who were very consistent over the ten dances. They made the final in Waltz, Tango and Quickstep and then Paso Doble in the Latin

section. They too are strong expressive dancers who obviously enjoy plying their craft.

Jernej Brenholc & Daniela Pekic (Slovenia)

Although only making the final in Waltz and Viennese Waltz they are a couple with a lot of potential over the entire ten dances. It was notable as to how they had great connection with one another and presented each dance on its merit and with a lot of feeling and expression. They also had a personality on the floor that was very natural and appealing.

Glyn Lin & Tracy Ji (Taiwan)

Only in the final in Tango & Slow Foxtrot, they too have a pleasant appeal on the floor. All their Standard dances have an excellent free flowing movement and where required there is a good lower and swing action happening. To make a further impression in this event they will need to develop a stronger approach to the Latin style.

Kiril Pantov & Sandra Gavala (Greece)

The final couple to make an appearance in Samba and Paso Doble. Were perhaps not as consistent as the other couples hence they found themselves missing the final in the other eight dances.



Gherman Mustuc & Iveta Lukosuite. File photos by Andrew Miller www.dancefotoman.co.uk



Alexander Berezin & Victoria Rudkovskaya. File photos by Andrew Miller www.dancefotoman.co.uk

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