



Scoring “10” in 10-Dance

**The story of
Gherman Mustue &
Iveta Lukosuite -
World Professional
10-Dance
Champions**

**And
More from the
German Open & Come
Dancing, Hong Kong**

Dance Beat World

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The Rumor Mill

As yet unconfirmed rumors are spreading that Timothy Howson & Joanne Bolton, the UK's number two Pro Standard couple, have ended their partnership and that Joanne will now be dancing with Christopher Hawkins who has also ended his partnership with wife, Justyna.

Erminio & Luanna
Together Again?

Another as yet not fully confirmed rumor, is that Erminio Stefano of the USA, is once again partnering his wife, Luana Conte.

The Embassy Ball is Underway!

We're currently at the Embassy Ball in Irvine, California, an event that has both IDSF Grand Slam Championships and WDC World Cup Championships.

Our full reports will begin next week, but for daily updates visit our websites:

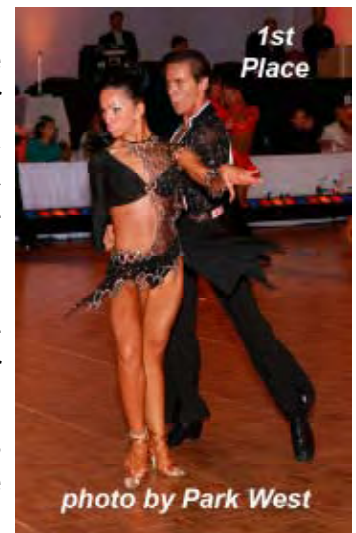
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Day 1 (Thursday) belonged to the Youth as the strongest event was the Youth Latin, danced over 3 rounds and won by Armen Taturyan & Kristina Bepechnova (Russia). Second were Alan Gilin & Anastasia Trutneva (Canada) and third, Stan Fynerman & Daniella Karagach (USA).

The Embassy Ball also features international congresses, one sponsored by the **IDSF** and another by the **BDFI**. Great names were on display in both and we'll have the full reports. Headline news was that Augusto Schiavo was slated to lecture in the

IDSF congress, but following complaints from Mr. Galvagno of Italy, he was "fired" and his place was taken by John Kimmins. We'll be talking to Augusto in the next two days to find out exactly what is happening.



Coming:
Embassy Reports by:
Oliver Wessel-Thierhorn, Diana McDonald & Giampiero Giannico

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GOC Grand Slam Standard

Speed and Volume Versus Elegance and Emotion

By Donna Edelstein

The GOC Grand Slam Standard was a huge event with a 'standing room only' crazed audience. Germans, Benedetto Ferruggia and Claudia Kohler who were second last year were favored to win (and did) and this Stuttgart audience was pulsating with excitement.

The feeling emanating from the spectators was exceptional – they were so involved with the dancing that it was something to behold. It would have been wonderful to be swept away with them – but I was really disturbed by the trend in the amateur standard.

So many of the couples that danced in this eight round event are focused on speed, syncopations (regardless of the character of the dance) and enormous volume, at the expense of elegance, softness, and emotional content. Couples dancing with wild abandon, over shaping, lacking sensitivity towards their partners -- but attracting a lot of attention on the floor -- were being called back over couples showing seamless, high quality movement and lyrical beauty.

It was unfathomable to me that a truly exceptional couple with superb technique and great artistry was not called into the semi. That couple was Dmitry Zharkov and Olga Kulikova. Another superior couple, Ivan Novikov and Margarita Klimenko was not called out of the semi into the final. These two couples (ironically both from Russia) dance what I would consider a combination of the English style (clarity of technique, Rolls Royce smoothness, and a sensitivity between two bodies)

2nd
Place



photo courtesy GOC www.goc-stuttgart.de

1st
Place



photo courtesy GOC www.goc-stuttgart.de

with what might be considered the Italian style (passion, drama, and an operatic flamboyance).

There was a time when top dancers like Augusto and Caterina, and Lucca and Lorraine synthesized both the English and Italian styles and brought out the best in both.

Now it seems the scales have tipped and couples are emulating only the most obvious elements of the Italian style -- striving for 'look at me! athleticism', eye catching volume, and over-shaping that impedes rather than aids movement. What about studying the sensitivity, smoothness, and musicality of an Andrew Sinkinson foxtrot? Is that kind of movement now pas-

"Couples dancing with wild abandon, over shaping, lacking sensitivity towards their partners -- but attracting a lot of attention on the floor....."

sé? Do today's amateur couples look at Lucca and Lorraine's amazing technique and artistry on uTube and think it is not big enough -- or showy enough? Do the judges agree?

Are today's up and coming standard dancers focused too much on the 'sport' in DanceSport -- and is it overshadowing the 'dance'?



photo courtesy GOC
www.goc-stuttgart.de

Next Week, Nadia Eftedal reviews the IDSF Grand Slam Latin

- 1st Benedetto Ferruggia and Claudia Kohler - Germany
- 2nd Marat Gimaev and Alina Basyuk - Russia
- 3rd Simone Segatori and Annette Sudol - Germany
- 4th Sergey Konovaltsev and Olga Konovaltsev -Russia
- 5th Wiktor Kiska and Malgorzata Garlicka - Poland
- 6th Federico Di Toro and Genny Favero -Italy

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By
Donna Edelstein

Impressions of the GERMAN of the OPEN

The German Open is the largest competition in the world by number of competitors registered. It attracts more dancers than Blackpool and runs three ballrooms during the daytime and evening sessions. The event is attended predominately by Europeans, and Eastern Europeans with a smattering of North Americans and Asians.

The heats are huge with 5, 6, and 7 rounds very common. Many events are danced with a preliminary round or two on the first day, and remaining rounds on the second day.

The overall dance standard is very, very high. From young children through seniors all the dancers are serious, well prepared, well groomed and for the most part incredibly talented and proficient.

Some young dancers from North America mentioned to me that they find it hard to pace themselves at an event of this size. They are used to dancing all out –but for fewer rounds danced more closely together. At the GOC a competitor can have an hour or more before dancing again. It takes experience with this type of large competition to be able to continuously warm up, dance, rest and repeat.

One American youth dancer seemed pretty astonished at how many other very good dancers there are here to compete against. At home he felt it was relatively easy to rise to the top – but at the GOC he felt he was just one of many, and seemed motivated to practice harder and improve so that he will stand out in the future.

Unlike competitions in North America, the judging panels are not rotated in two hour increments. Judges stay 'on' until a complete round is danced which could be three or four hours – or however long it takes. In the US the NDCA rules determine how long judges can work without a break.

I had heard that the judging here tends to be very favorable towards Russians, but making notes on competitors who caught my eye, many of them were very deserving Russians as they have a remarkable depth of dancers.

It is very common to see dancers coached between dances and between rounds. Coaches are often in the on-deck area and on the edge of

I have never experienced this degree of spectator aggressiveness at any other competition.



the floor giving feedback, encouragement and consolation. One gets the feeling that couples from Eastern Europe are very wedded to their coach and that the coach doesn't let their couples out of their sight. The Federations and clubs also play a strong role. Dancers and spectators sit with their clubs, and cheer for their fellow dancers.

There are a lot of spectators (about 4500 per day throughout the three ballrooms) and they are vocal and very aggressive. Spectators seem used to butting in front of each other and using physical and verbal intimidation to get their way. They are packed into aisles and walkways and will belligerently prevent you from walking to your seat. If they are sitting in your assigned seat, they are reluctant to move, even when presented with a ticket showing that the seat is yours. I have never experienced this degree of spectator aggressiveness at any other competition.

In contrast, the dancers themselves seemed polite to each other and to anyone that they encountered.

There is a huge awareness of who is dancing for what country and how many medals that country has received. Each evening when results for major events were announced the MC would update the medal count, just like the Olympics. When open scoring was used, marks were projected under the flag of the judges' country on a huge screen.

There are more vendors

contd. pg. 15

Come Dancing Cup, Hong Kong

Press Release from Lawrence Chan

16th Come Dancing Cup HK Open DanceSport Championship was concluded on 10/8/08 at the luxurious Convention Hall, Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre, Wanchai. For 13 consecutive years, the invitations of World Class Professional Latin couples to perform in the evening Dinner Party of Come Dancing Cup has been a tradition. Last year, 15th Come Dancing Cup, we made a fresh attempt by inviting the then British Amateur Latin Champions to be our Performing Guests. This year, we made another bold break-through by moving the Open Professional Latin Final into the evening as the highlight of the event to replace the demonstration session we've had for the past 15 years.

We were lucky enough to have attracted some top Professional Latin couples from China, Macau, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand & USA to make this event international. One strange phenomenon was that three strong European Professional Latin couples who recently have been based in Hong Kong withdrew after entering either verbally or formally!

23 other categories of competitions were finalized in the afternoon session. The timetable was smooth enough to provide plenty of time for the guests & VIPs to enjoy their dinner dance party in the evening.

Although there were some problems from the political influences of IDSF and WDC, we are proud to announce that the whole championships was a great success with record-breaking number of entries superseding the past 15 years.

The highlight of the evening Party was the Open Professional SuperStar Latin Final. All the way from USA, current British Open Rising Star Professional Latin Champions, Dmitry & Violetta Kurakin took the title easily. They appreciated greatly the invitation from the organizers to compete in this most glamorous event in Hong Kong, that they presented three honour dances to the audience!

1st Runners-Up - He Jun & Zhang Min (China) challenged strongly, continuing their success from their first British Rising Star Latin Final in Blackpool.



Open Professional Latin Prize Presentation by the organizers Lawrence Chan & Gertrude Ko

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Scoring “10” in 10-Dance

The Story of Gherman Mustue & Iveta Lukosuite - World Professional 10-Dance Champions

*From their roots in Moldova and Lithuania,
two young dancers find success and each
other representing the USA.*

Interview by Didio Barrera

DB: You are our new World 10-Dance Champions, but how many times have you won the US 10 Dance Championship?

Iveta: Just once.

Gherman: This was our fourth world championship together representing the USA and this time we danced against the reigning world champions, who are German in Germany, and the reigning European Champions, a Russian couples who won that title two weeks before, so for us there was a lot of pressure. We did not have the support of an American judge and we hope that very soon there will be American judges again, because American couples are very strong in all styles. The first day was ballroom, and after the first dance we saw the placements right away. They used PDA's and the results were broadcast right away on a big screen. I saw first place for us in waltz. Right away I thought we could do it. We won the Standard section and we knew that it would be close.

Iveta: I did not realize that the final position in each dance was displayed on the screen; I thought it was just the judges' individual marks. So I didn't want to look because I didn't want to be distracted. After the tango, couples started to congratulate us and I wondered why – how did they know? After we won the standard, the pressure was greater because we knew we were so close. I knew for the last month or so that we could win if we danced well. We tried not to “compete” but to dance together and stay focused. The audience supported us from the beginning, and that helped.

DB: I remember when you guys got together, when did you both start dancing individually?

Gherman: I started dancing in Moldova, I think I started in 1982. I was part of a formation team that became world champions in 1997. This was the first time that a team from our country had beaten the Germans who were usually first and second. In 2000 I moved to the USA and started dancing with Andrea Hale in Utah. We danced for three and a half years. We were US Amateur 10-Dance Champions and danced three World Championships as amateur. Our best result was seventh place.

Iveta: I started quite young in Lithuania. Almost as soon as I could walk my mother took me to a ballroom school. I wanted to be a ballet dancer, I wasn't sure what ballroom dancing was. I ended up doing ballroom. I also danced with a very strong team in Lithuania, but I moved to the USA when I was seventeen, to Chicago.

DB: Was that to dance?

Iveta: My mother moved two years before me. She wasn't really planning to stay and I wasn't planning to go, that's why there was this two years. Then she stayed longer and longer and I

started to get interested in America and wanted to find out what it was like. So I went to high school and college in Chicago and the first year I didn't dance at all. Then I started and met a partner who was from Lithuania also and moved to the USA about a year later than me. His name is Arturas Narbutas. I'm very thankful to him for where I am today. I learned a lot.

DB: Was your mom a dancer?

Iveta: My mom was a school-teacher and my dad was a boxer. Nobody danced. But my dad also had a very artistic background as an interior designer.

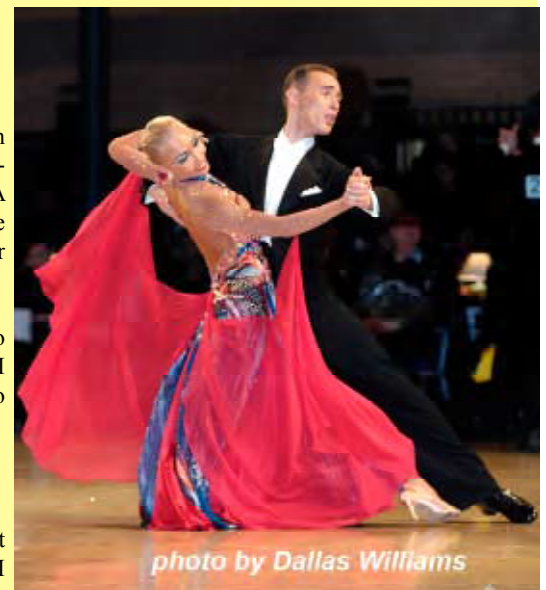


photo by Dallas Williams

DB: How did the two of you get together?

Gherman: I think it was destiny. We competed against each other and I looked at Iveta as a good girl, nothing more. After I split with Andrea in April 2003, I rested for two months. Then I decided I wanted to continue. I found out that Iveta had also split with her partner and I sent her an email and we tried out. Personally I would like to thank Jonathan Wilkins and Katusha Demidova because they helped us get together and when we first moved to New York when times ere tough for us.

DB: When did you also become a couple off the floor?

Iveta: Let me go back a little first. When we competed against each other, Arturas and Gherman were quite friendly but I didn't really like Gherman that much. When I first split with Arturas, I wrote an email to Corky Ballas asking him if her knew of any partners. He wrote back saying there was a very good 10-dancer, Gherman Mustuc. I replied, "Is there anyone else?" Gherman was very upset about this when he found out. But that was my impressions from before. After we spoke on the phone Gherman seemed very nice and I realized my first impressions might have been wrong. He seemed like a nice guy. About the personal relationship, I thought that I wanted to keep business and personal life separate. We decided to move to New York one week after our try-out, because that's where all the dancers were. August 22nd we moved to New York. We had nowhere to stay and I knew no one. Jonathan & Katusha let us stay in their flat and they made us believe we could be good. After we rented one apartment

and after a while living together, practicing, working it evolved into something more – a relationship. He was so perfect!

DB: Why did you decide on 10-Dance, it's so much easier to dance one style.

Gherman: It's not easy. In our first Blackpool we were 17th in one style Rising Star and 18th in the other. Last year (2007) we were 3rd in the Rising Star Standard and 7th in the Latin. Our results were always close so it was very hard to



Winning the World 10-Dance

choose. We like to dance and it's more fun to dance more dances.

Iveta: I have always been interested in other styles of dancing besides just ballroomdancing. AS a teenager I became involved in other

styles of dance. In the USA I started taking ballet and jazz as well as ballroom. For me, dancing is dancing and I think a good dancer can do anything and it's not necessary to choose. Often dancers pick for physical reasons one style or the





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Olga Tsykaliuk
Aleksandra Gisher

other and I never felt this need. I enjoy both styles, the freedom and expression of Latin and the partnership of ballroom. I think each style helps the other.

DB: How do you divide your practice time?

Iveta: We plan it in advance. We try to practice twice a day, each style once. If we have a coach coming in then maybe we work only one style that day, but pretty much it's even. You cannot ignore one style.

DB: What happens if you go to a competition and have a bad result in one style yet still have to compete the next day in the other style? How do you cope with that?

Gherman: It is difficult, but we've been many years in this business. If you have a bad result, probably it's because you did something wrong and there is a way to fix it.

DB: When couples dance one style, if they have a bad result then it's over, but for you, you have to come back and dance again.

Iveta: When we started together we also danced in Rising Star divisions, so we would dance in four events at most competitions often two a night. One style could be really good and the other bad. Sometimes it was Latin sometimes ballroom, and vice-versa. We accepted this and we were ready at every competition. We decided that we would always compete in both, never just one style to prove that we could be good in both. Eventually we stopped Rising Star competitions because we had achieved everything we wanted at that level. Life is not even. You have storms and sunny days. If we have a bad result then I know something good is coming up. I'm very positive. I always think of my future and who I want to become, so I try not to get distracted by today's results. In our first World Championship together we were sixth. The next year we were seventh. We had beaten many of the couples that finished ahead of us that year. We were expecting a place in the top three. Of course at first you feel hurt and want to blame someone, but I was thinking at the time if I have to live through this to become a world champion, then I will.

DB: Each dance is judged separately in 10-Dance.

Gherman: In the professional category, yes.

DB: It is hard to predict the results in the 10-Dance, it can be exciting.

Iveta: for me it's fun to see the result after each dance and it's a good opportunity for the couples to make a final in one or two dances.

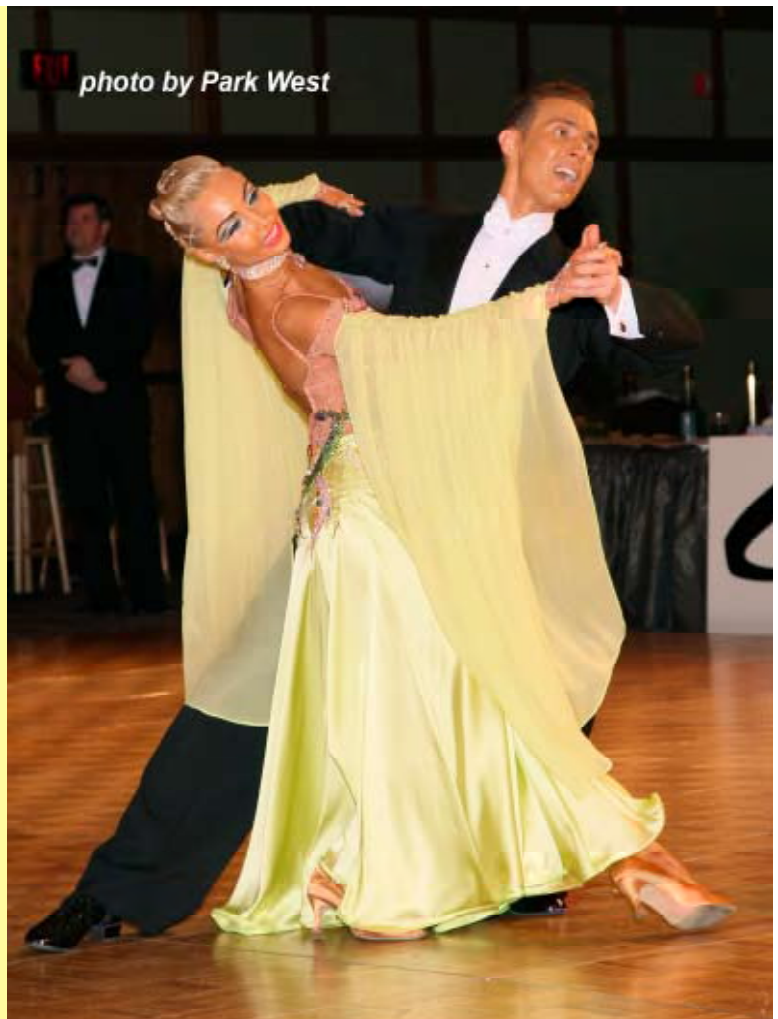
DB: You have won the World Title. How many more years are you planning to tackle this?

Gherman: We feel we can still improve our dancing. Next year, 2009, the 10-Dance Championship is in October in Canada. Our next goal is to get a good result in the Classical Showdance division. Two years ago we were fourth in this. Last year we couldn't dance because of our schedule.

Iveta: Winning the 10-Dance was something we had in our heads after coming second last year. Our whole lives were structured around this. Every morning we had the thought that we wanted to win it. So we had the pleasure of accomplishment. Our real goal is to become as good dancers as we can be, so our ultimate goal is to become medalists in national championships and in the biggest competitions in the World in both styles. We also want to achieve the best results that we can in Europe in both styles. I will want to retire when I feel I've done the best that I can do, it will not be a result or age that tells me when to retire, but a feeling inside that I want to start a new chapter. I don't want to miss it! Right now we make short-term goals and right now that is the Classic Showdance. WE also want to make the National finals and make the finals in Ohio and have the chance to dance on TV.

DB: That is a lot of dancing. Do you have a life outside of the dancing?

Gherman: I think dancers have a



great life. We travel a lot. We've seen half of the world probably. We try to stay extra time if we go to a new place to see the sites. Sometimes we'll go to a nightclub.

Iveta: I agree that dancers have a wonderful life. Our dancing circle is quite small compared to the world, but the dancers know a lot of people within that circle. Our lives are amazing. We always try to stay a few extra days and be real tourists. Go to museums. I can tell people where to go and what to see. When we do go out in New York, we really have a good time because it is special we don't do it all the time.

DB: What did your families think when you won?

Gherman: My mother is not really involved in ballroom dancing, although she was the one who brought me to dancing in the first place. I didn't really want to go, but at the dance school I saw about thirty girls in short, white skirts and I decided it as a place to stay. So

she is not really involved, but she was so happy and wrote me many emails about how proud she was. She still lives in Moldova.

Iveta: My parents are divorced. My dad still lives in Lithuania and my mom is in Chicago. I didn't want to talk to anyone until this competition was over. I didn't want people asking how I felt, was I nervous, or anything like that. Once it was over I couldn't wait to get the phone and call her. She was very relieved because she hadn't heard from me. The day after, a Lithuanian newspaper called me and the week after in England they did a big story on me, so my dad was very proud showing this article to everybody at home. I'm happy that they felt this way and especially for my mom because she was the one who pushed me when I was young. If not for her, I probably would have quit when I was a kid. My parents sold their car to buy me a dance dress, that's how much they were willing to do for me. I'm very thankful to them. Back then the dresses were fifteen hundred dollars and as a

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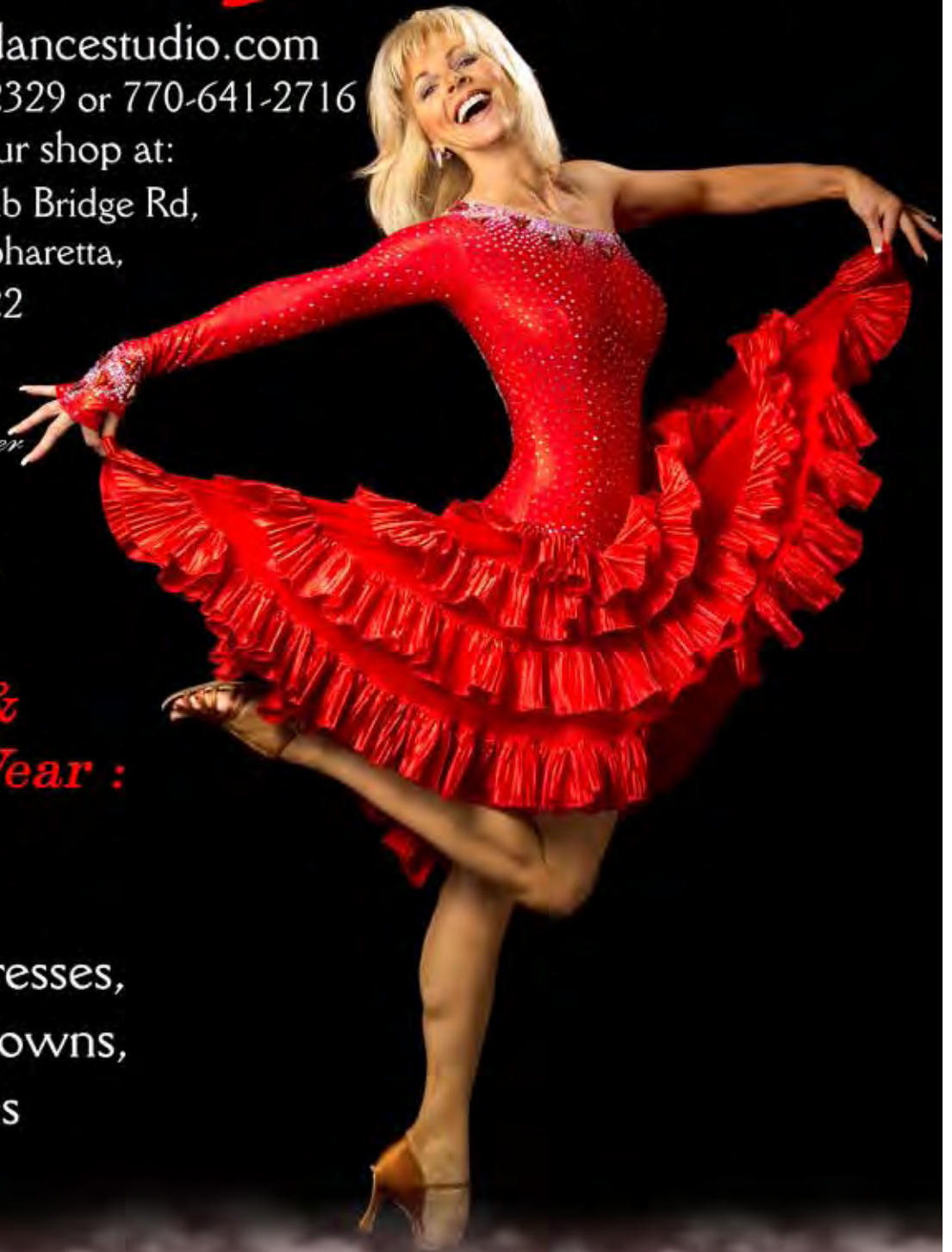
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German Open

here than I have ever seen under one roof. Everything is sold here from ballgowns to bobby pins, dance shoes to designer bags, men's suits to stuffed animals.

The food vendors offer lattes, pasta, ½ roasted chickens, sausages and the wonderful German pretzel lined with butter. The quality of the food and of the hotels is impressive. Care is taken with everything down to the delicious bread and butter. The coffee is excellent. The quantity of food is American sized (giant) – but the people are thinner, most likely because they walk a lot. Waiters will even apologize or warn you up front if the portion size will be small.

The German people that I encountered were incredibly friendly and attentive. Many, many people here speak or at least understand English.

There was a press center provided for those covering the event open from early morning

though the last session of the day. Computers and Internet hookups were provided. Each day we received a print out of the winners by event– along with a copy of the marks for the final. By the time we'd leave the ballroom and get to the press center, the warm marks (right off



the copy machine) were ready for us. Coffee, juice, mineral water, sandwiches and pretzels were also provided free to the press each day.

All in all, the German Open is an exceptionally well-run Festival, partially because the Germans pride themselves on being well organized – and partially be-

cause the organizer has 'heart'. It was an honor to be able to attend this outstanding event.,

Gherman & Iveta

schoolteacher my mother was making about one hundred per week.

Db: What is it like now living in the USA and representing this country?

Gherman: I think the USA is one of the best countries in the world because it gives you many opportunities. The people around you think differently and they work hard. If you do this you can achieve a great result. Where I come from it is more about politics. You have to know the right people and say the right things, but in America if you work hard you will get the result you want.

Iveta: I could never represent another country than America. In my

country I couldn't go to Europe to take lessons because I had no money. I did not see a big future for myself as a dancer in Lithuania. In the USA everything is possible. Here I had the opportunity to make money and invest in my own career. I still love Lithuania because that's where I was born, but I was very proud that the USA gave me the opportunity to stand in the first place position.

Gherman: Iveta is a U.S. Citizen.

DB: Do you have any advice for your friends?

Iveta: I want to say to everyone that if you want something very much and you get rejected once, twice or even three times, don't give up, because if you do give up, that means

you don't want it enough. No matter the results, make yourself a goal, don't worry about today's results. A bad result can just be a signal to you. I would also suggest everyone is to be a little more open to other forms of dance. Take classes in ballet or yoga. These will all give you different ways to move your body.

Gherman: Iveta is a multi-talented girl. She takes modern, dance and ballet and I like yoga. She likes to draw and make graphic designs on the computer. She studied photography. She designs our costumes. She likes music. We do all this too. On our refrigerator we have a magnet that says, "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their own dreams." Every day you see those words. If you believe

that, you will succeed.

Iveta: I think you have to stay inspired. The older we get, the less we believe in our dreams. We have to be constantly inspired and develop ourselves as people. The mind is much quicker than our bodies.

Gherman & Iveta: We both would like to say thank you to all the people, starting from family, our dance teachers, fellow competitors and friends, who were and are involved in our lives, because every one of them is part of our success and the reason for us becoming World Champions! Thank you all!

DB: Thank you for your time and congratulations on your World Championship.

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