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HAWAI'I Star E.L.L

Dancing In Paradise

photo by Park West



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Dancing In Paradise

Report by Keith Todd

Photos by Park West

Right before the International Championships in London, some lucky dancers and judges have the chance to participate in a dance competition held in one of the world's most scenic locales - Honolulu, Hawai'i! Now in its eighteenth year, the Hawai'i Star Ball is organized by Mr. Geoffrey Fells and attracts competitors from mainland USA and also from Japan.

The audience, most of them from Honolulu, are always enthusiastic and eager to see the great shows Mr. Fells always provides. Over the years the Hawai'i Star Ball has become famous for providing the very best in entertainment. Recent performers have been Mirko Gozzoli & Alessia Betti, Jukka Haapaleinen & Sirpa Suutari, Max Kozhevnikov & Yulia Zagoruychenko and this year we enjoyed Arunas Bizkokas & Katusha Demidova in Standard and Delyan Terziev & Boriana Deltcheva in Latin.

As well as ballroom style entertainment, Mr. Fells also ensures that we all leave with a taste of the unique Hawaiian Islands. There are always enchanting displays of Hula Dancing and a new tradition is the vocal performances of Hawaiian superstar Melveen Leed each night. Ms. Leed's recording of "Malaguena Salerosa" is well known to Latin dancers and has even been used at the Blackpool conference by Mr. Taliat Tarsinov who was a judge this year and had the chance to meet Melveen.

This year the Hawai'i Star Ball moved to a new venue, the Hilton Hawaiian Village, a beachside resort on world famous Waikiki. The resort offers great restaurants and entertainment as well as the sparkling Pacific Ocean just outside your door. When not watching the dancers, Hawai'i's famous surfers provide entertainment of their own and there's always a chance you'll see a giant turtle swimming along the shore. With all that Hawai'i has to offer it's not surprising that most competitors stay a few extra days either before or after the event.



Though not large, the professional events gave us some interesting finals. Plamen Danailov & Tina Gerova (NY) won the Latin and a local boy, Ikaika Dowsett with his partner Katya Afaneseva won the standard. Several Japanese couples also competed in the professional, amateur and pro-am competitions.

Not surprisingly, I rank the Hawai'i Star Ball as one of my favorite of the year and I think you would too! See you there next year.



Ohio Star Ball

World Pro-Am Championships

The Pearl of Pro-Am



Karen Angell w/ Eddie Ares.
'07 World Pro-Am 10-Dance
Champion.

photo by Park West

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4 Embassy Ball Dance Sport Championships

IDSF Grand Slam Latin Championship

Report by Diana McDonald
Photos by Park West

On Saturday evening, in a packed Embassy Ball, 66 couples took the floor from all over the world to compete for the IDSF Grand Slam title. The event actually commenced with its first round at 3pm which made it a very long day for the dancers. Most of them probably had breakfast then started getting ready. I mention this because endurance is a factor in an event like this.



1st Place

Several couples from the Under 21 Latin at this event made it to the Quarter final. Arthur Adamski & Alexandra Plaza of Canada, Alan Gilin & Anastasia Trutneva also of Canada, Stan Faynerman & Danielle Karagach of New Jersey and of course the, Champions of the Under 21, Armen Tsaturyan & Kirstina Bespechnova of Russia. Congratulations to you all.

The Semi Final was electric! Couples from USA, Canada, Russia, Germany, Italy, Australia, and Denmark took the floor. Timo Kulczak and Mabuse Motshegetsi of Germany stood out among the crowd. They have good quality and awareness of each other but mostly



5th Place

I enjoyed their rhythmical approach and I could have easily seen them in the final. Kamil Studenny and Katya Trubina from Canada also are worthy of mention. I always enjoy watching this couple and to-

night was no exception. They have great personality and showmanship.

Now on to the final. In 6th place was Zufar Zariopv and Anna Ludwig-Tchemodourova from Austria. I felt like this couple was lacking contrast so nothing they did really stood out. Once I was watching them, I saw



4th Place

good control and quality but they didn't stand out nearly as much as the rest of the final.

In 5th place was Valentin Chmerkovskiy & Valeria Kozharinova from the USA. This couple has made a dramatic improvement over the last year. They are still showing all of the fluidity they originally had plus have added a good amount of speed and volume to their program. I do feel that some of their cho-



I prefer jive to have a tick and a strong leg action. I don't dislike the "swing feel" but I think it should be used as contrast moments between the jive segments not the other way around.

reography doesn't quite suit them but I think they are definitely on the right track. I didn't care for the costume Valeria wore, it wasn't "special" enough in this company but all in all a good evening for them.

In 4th place was Martino Zanibellato and Michelle Abildtrup from Denmark. I must say as a couple they are strong but I would like to have Michelle absorb Martino's movement in a more supple way. I found that her tightness took away from their sustained movements and restricted their volume.

In 3rd place was Zoran Plohl and Tatsiana Lahvinovich from Croatia. I enjoyed this cou-

ples charisma and characterization of the dances. Although they placed 2nd in the rumba and 3rd in the others, I actually preferred their cha cha and paso.

In 2nd place was Andrey Zaytsev and Anna Kuzminskaya from Russia. I couldn't take my eyes off this couple. Granted they need to work on their communication and character as a couple but the dancing was absolutely beautiful. I hope to see more from this couple in the future, I'm looking forward to it.

Winning this great event in fantastic form was Stefano Di Filippo and Anna Melnikova of Italy.

What can I say? They are aggressive and competitive, while still having the class and the finesse of a champion. If they have one weak point I would say it's their jive. Perhaps it's a matter of preference but I prefer jive to have a tick and a strong leg action. I don't dislike the "swing feel" but I think it should be used as contrast moments between the jive segments not the other way around. This seems



3rd Place



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attended this year**

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6
**IDSF Adjudicators’
 Congress –**

**Great Information in a Politically
 Charged Atmosphere**

By Donna Edelstein

The International DanceSport Federation, (IDSF) in conjunction with USA Dance held an Adjudicators Congress at The Embassy Ball in Irvine California on August 28. Embassy organizer Brian McDonald generously donated the venue.

The purpose of the Congress is to provide continuing education for current and future IDSF judges. Congresses are held around the world – and this is the only IDSF Congress held in the US.

The audience looked like a ‘who’s who’ of ballroom dancing with Marcus Hilton MBE, Hazel Fletcher, Peter Eggelton, Robin and Rita Short, Judy Hatton, Wolfgang Opitz, Augusto Schiavo, Gary McDonald – and many other luminaries of our profession in attendance.



**Heinz
 Spaeker**

This was my first Congress and it was fascinating and extremely helpful to hear these illustrious presenters. The session opened with Heinz Spaeker giving a welcome address and Peter Pover, USA Dance President speaking about ethics and professionalism for judges.

Diana McDonald gave a very candid lecture about what she reacts to when judging. She used Ivailo Tonchev and Irina Bournovskaya to illustrate her points about focus, musicality and convincing portrayal.

John Kimmins substituted for Augusto Schiavo who was embroiled in a political skirmish with the Italian IDSF member organization and was prohibited from speaking. Augusto was in attendance and sat in the front row of the audience for the entire Congress.



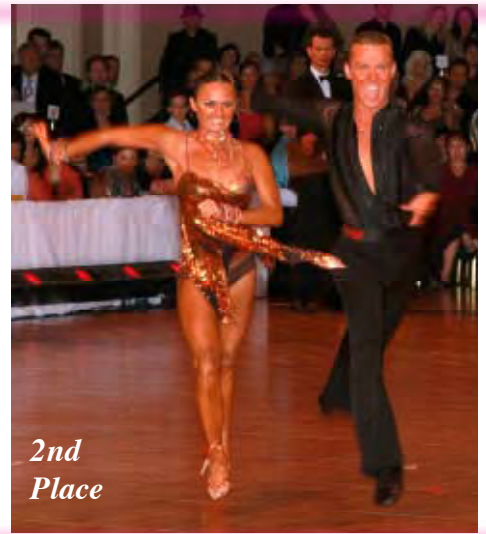
**Alan Fletcher with
 Riccardo Cocchi & Yulia
 Zagoruychenko**

Grand Slam Latin

to be a trend of sorts for many but from the outside it can come across as weaker than those who do mostly “jive.” Having said all of that, I really enjoyed this couples performance and command over the competition. Congratulations!!

This was a great event to watch and I’m sure very difficult to judge. Can’t wait until next year!

Diana McDonald was 10 times US Ten Dance Champion, US Latin Champion, 4 times US South American Showdance Champion, & US Classic Showdance Champion & World Ten Dance Champion



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*Reports on the International Championships by
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IDSF Congress, contd.

John covered quality of movement in foxtrot using US Standard Finalists Urs and Agnes to demonstrate. John's presentation was very self-deprecating – and he referred to many of his own foibles as a student and competitor. He also gave a bit of ballroom dance history as he spoke about the major influences on his foxtrot during his own competitive career.



*Oliver Wessel
Therhorn*

Alan Fletcher gave a fabulous lecture on Rumba covering posture, timing, action, technique and connection – and the importance of fundamentals in dancing.

Yulia and Riccardo were his demonstrators and their performance was riveting. Alan joked that he had instructions from his wife Hazel that he was not to dance during his lecture. At one point he began talking about connection and began to lead Yulia. Hazel piped up from the audience, "You're dancing!" Alan countered, "I am not! There is no music on!"

The final presentation of the day was by Oliver Wessel-Therhorn on the topic of Quickstep. Originally he planned to use Arunas and Katusha (now our current US Standard Champions) as demonstrators – but due to legal issues with Arunas and the IDSF only Katusha was able to dance.

Oliver gave an incredible presentation sharing his depth of knowledge about the origin of the dance and explaining which of the elements make quickstep look like quickstep.

Although Oliver had never taken up hold with Katusha before this lecture he was able to give a clear and exciting demonstration with her – and she seemed to be enjoying the experience immensely. The quality of his footwork and clarity of his timing was a pleasure to see. Katusha is such a remarkable dancer it was great fun to see her react to whatever Oliver chose to lead. He joked, "You know how to make an old man look good".

At the end of the day, all of the presenters agreed that the fundamentals (or basics) of each dance are the elements that provide its character and allow competitors to showcase their mastery of technique. The comment was made that the higher up a competitor goes, the more they become interested in fundamentals.

For me personally it was wonderful to be exposed to each of these lecturers and their valuable points of view. I'd like to thank USA Dance and the IDSF for offering this free Adjudicators Congress.

FRUSTRATION

Deportation and police visits! What's going on in Thailand and Hong Kong?

In Bangkok!

By Lawrence Chan

Coming all the way from Hong Kong to organize the ISTD Cup at Summer Mansion, Bangkok for two consecutive years has been really challenging and at the same time frustrating! Over the two years of organizing the 4th and 5th ISTD Cup in Thailand, I have exhausted my resources without any remorse as this was like my dream come true. Unprecedented, I experienced more obstacles for this year as follows:

(i) Same as last year, the Thailand IDSF banned all adjudicators and competitors from joining the ISTD Cup. The person in charge of IDSF Thailand and the Thailand Coordinator of Dance Sport Faculty, ISTD England HQ is the same person (Ironic!);

(ii) Shenzhen held a big championships on the same weekend - shifted two judges and a few Professional couples from Thailand to China, which in a way saved me some costs (Self-comfort!);

(iii) The stirring political environment in Thailand prior to the ISTD Cup seemed to do no harm to the whole event (Lucky!);

(iv) Hong Kong representative Lilian Li who was to compete in the Professional Latin event, received an urgent notice on 19/9/08 after she arrived at Bangkok that she had to report to the Hong Kong Immigration Department before noon of 20/9/08. She flew back to HK after mid-night.

If this matter had been brought to me early enough, I might have been able to find a solution for her (Self-promote!);

(v) Police received a report of Come Dancing Studio Academy running an illegal Tour to Thailand, which sounded unbelievable to me and



Pro-Am Latin

also to the bewildered police office who recorded a statement from me (Heart-breaking)!

I do not feel frustrated about the first four incidents but I did feel totally upset & depressed in relation to (v), leaving me the thought that I

from Hong Kong - Alexandra Yang & Liza Lau and Mathew Kwok & Amy Zhou entered the Pro-Am Latin event challenging for the title but the Australian Professional Latin Champion David Karla & his Singapore student Patricia Quah had the edge. Alex & Liza and Mathew & Amy had to be content with 2nd and 3rd Place.

The Dinner Party was from 1930 hrs with 6-person Orchestra playing wonderful music to the dancing guests. At 2200 hrs, the four top events progressed with the following results :

Professional Standard

1st Worapong Chariyat-hammarat & Sulak chariyat-hammarat

2nd Yod Sukarasamit & Suppakarn Sukarasamit

3rd Kong Lung & Candy Tsui (Hong Kong)

Amateur Standard

1st Ekarat Suakrong & Bus-sacha Srivit

2nd Krish Wongkattiyo & Pusdee Muntarbhorn

3rd Kong Neung Tim & Yu Suk Fong (Hong Kong)

Amateur Latin

1st Worapoj Jariyathamrat & Ramon Wattanavikorn

2nd Patara Thongaram & Melissa Phanjaya

3rd Youn Hyuk Jin & Yoon Jung-A (Korea)

Professional Latin

1st Alonggod Nutsati & Wanchaya Kumaoook

2nd Panupong Somjai & Sasima Takulanon

3rd Lee Jae sang & Min Sun-Young (Korea)

would never want to organize overseas competitions again! It cost me a fortune to fly to Thailand organizing this specific competition with a view to promoting DanceSport. Eventually, I was rewarded with being suspected as a criminal! Last but not least, the only thing of comfort to me was that the turn-out of competitors and guests were not worse than last year.

The format of competitions were similar to last year's but we only had nine adjudicators in total this year, namely Mr Lee Man Ho (Korea), Mr Jojo Carino (Philippines), Ms Alice Teo (Singapore), four Thai, my wife and myself.

Unexpectedly, there were six judges from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea who had accepted the invitations to judge in Bangkok then reversed their decision. I was generous enough to book a much better restaurant for this year's Welcome Dinner on 19/9/08 for all Hong Kong & overseas judges and competitors (so my purse became).

Thai couples swept the first two places in all four events. Hong Kong couples kept the same 3rd Place in Amateur Standard and Professional Standard as last year. Whereas, Fergus Chu & Cat Ng and Gary Cheung & Doris Li were placed 6th in Amateur Latin and 4th in Professional Latin respectively, superseding last year's Hong Kong Latin team!

Pro-Am Standard & Pro-Am Latin Champions were run in the afternoon session on 20/9/08 from 1300 hrs to 1800 hrs. Two very strong couples



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Ancona 2008!

Continued Coverage. Last week we brought you the IDSF Latin, this week the Standard.

Report by Francesca Pietramale ;
Photos by Andrew Miller
www.dancefotoman.co.uk

IDSF Open Standard (20th September 2008)

The adjudicators for the IDSF adult standard competition were: Ankica Janjic (Croatia), Jordan Pavlidis (Greece), PaterHoráček (Slovakia), Sven Traut (Germany), Hans Laxholm (Denmark), Sirpa Suutari-Jaasko (Finland), Per Palmgren (Sweden), Frank Venables (England), Susan Walker (England), Davide Cacciari (Italy), Gianni D'Oria (Italy), Alessandra Bucciarelli (Italy).

1st Emanuel Valeri and Tania Kehlet from Denmark were the easy winners of the competition. They showed very impressive and quality dancing, especially in the final round. This couple used to be great in tango and quickstep, but tonight I really liked the beautiful body flight they have developed in the slow foxtrot as well. Congratulations!

2nd place went to Giuseppe Longarini and Valentina Basili from Italy. They have grown up a lot in the last year. In my opinion their best dance tonight was slow waltz in which the pure and classic action and modern and effective choreog-



raphy were well combined.

3rd place Luca Rossignoli and Veronika Haller from Italy. Always a great and accurate look from this couple that has a lot of experience and ability to show elegance and good confidence on the floor.

4th place Francesco Galuppo and Debora Pacini from Italy. They were the youngest couple in this final, they danced with a lot of energy constantly displayed from the first to the last round.

5th Lorenzo Tarabelli and Federica Agostinelli from Italy. As one of the taller ballroom couples, I really appreciate their approach to the sharp and quick tango actions, that are normally better served by smaller couples. Nice basic amalgamation at the beginning of the slow waltz.

6th Francesco Andreani and Francesca Longarini from Italy. Another powerful, talented and beautiful looking couple with a fine understanding of rhythm.



In the semifinal:

7th Ishihara Masayuki and Kubo Ayami from Japan. They have matured immensely over recent months. A very positive and rhythmic approach in all 5 dance.

8th Simone Carabellese and Lucia Cafagna from Italy. A visible couple that shows a lot of freedom and movement around the floor. Nice competitive approach.



9th Sergio D'Avino and Romina Molinari from Italy. Shining pink and silver dress that underlined the sharp dancing of this couple well.

10th Salvatore Caruso and Concetta Cultrera from Italy. They showed nice partnership and togetherness during all of the competition.

11th Domenico Marcheggiani and Gioia Marinelli from Italy. A nice and shining red dress in fabulous harmony with the hall. This couple's floorcraft was really good.

12th Ivo Lodesani and Stephanie Warwick from England. A really new partnership in their first competition together. They showed a nice look and big movement across the floor. I am looking forward to following their progress in the years to come.



Don't Miss Internationals' Coverage! Starting next week!

Photos by Andrew Miller www.dancefotoman.co.uk



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