

World Championship 2018 report by Carmen

Ladies and gentlemen

Oh what a day

It is the day of the World Professional Latin American Championships here in Blackpool, in the holy halls of ballroom dancing : the Empress Ballroom in the Winter Gardens . From the very first round the Empress Ballroom is filled with dance enthusiasts from around the United Kingdom and the world alike. Waiting with excitement for a feast of music, rhythm ,glam and glitter. The audience will be treated to just that and more whilst the dancers will be competing for the crown of the world champion title. I would like to extend my congratulations to the British Dance Council for bringing this world championship to England . The BDF for organising it with unparalleled professionalism and attention to detail, whilst celebrating a fantastic 60 years of the BDF themselves this year.

Lorraine Barry representing the generous sponsor And last but not least to each and every single dancer for giving their all and leaving their hearts, sweat and tears on this magnificent dance floor. A truly wonderful day of ballroom dancing at its best!

1. Riccardo & Yulia

Winning all 5 dances with all first places possible!

This just shows that they are in this field outstanding and in no competition. I admire their will , want and spirit. The drive they have is impressive and their professionalism unrivalled. A very polished and professional performance. Congratulations !

2. Stefano & Daria

Stefano is a very charming , handsome and talented performer and thank god he knows it and uses it to their best advantage! I can see that he is maturing and Daria must feel that she is very well taken care of!

3. Dorin & Marina

I just really appreciate and commend Marina in this 'dance age' of effect and energy not to be affected by it and stay straight and clear on her path of what she considers important and of value.

Yes she is not an outgoing and bubbly performer but she is a passionate advocate of Latin principles and to me this is admirable and enough.

Dorin definitely looks like he knows what value he has on the other side of his hand.

4. Troels & Ina

Their strength to me is undoubtedly the focus on portraying the COUPLE ! He for her and her for him!

I like that!

A true partnership.

5. Kirill & Polina

Another undoubtedly handsome , charismatic, charming , energetic and talented male latin competitor. It is quite impressive which sheer determination and effort they both put into their performance.

Being young and fresh clearly has its advantages when it comes to sustaining a performance over 5 rounds ! Polina seems fearless and unaffected by Kirill's showmanship and is therefore a good foil for him to shine!

6. Nino & Andra

To me they seem to find their own formula as a couple which couldn't have been easy considering Andra's previous success. There seems to be more trust in each other and more of a common vision in place.

7. Nikita & Olga

A gentle , sunny boy , filigrane and soft male dancer with a lady who knows what she wants. Which nowadays is quite a rarity! Some 'old fashioned' qualities like subtlety ,finesse , musicality and rhythmicity are being focused on which is commendable. Keep at it !

8. Pawel & Oxana

What a day they had! From the first round I felt a new sense of determination, will power and want but with the most excillerating and exquisite rhythm pooring out of their body's not seen in any of their competitors in front of them. They seemed to have fun with it and had the quarter final been the semi there might have been a surprise!

9. Massimo & Laura

To me they had a great day! From start to finish! Massimo and Laura seem to make the transition from being a skilled competitor to being skilled dancers competing! There is a big difference for me! Their competitive edge not diminishing but adding much more awareness to dancing as a couple ,musically, body actions and timing these to each other and to the music. Massimo seemed to be in control of the couple without loosing himself in the process! Well done.

10. Vladimir & Olga

A very positive and truly excited performance! It is really nice to see that dancers love what they do! And they both really seem to do so! A more masculine and feminine approach then before is visible! Vladimir looks like he is appreciating to have such a beautiful young lady called his partner! They are on the right track.

11. Gunnar & Marika

I felt today Gunnar had a new sense and air about him! Much more aware of his body and body parts and yet completely committed to them as a couple and their performance! Marika has beautifully shaped legs and I feel there has been more attention to USE them then only show them! to me they are on the right path!

11. Sarunas & Victorija

I like their unique , extreme and fearless commitment to what they do! That is wow! They both have 'balls' and I like that. Coupled with Victorijas elegant and pure approach to the 'Rumba walk' it is no wonder that they push forward.

11. Andrey & Asta

They seemed to be more free and engaged with each other then I have seen before. Maybe the open hair gives Asta the feeling of more freedom. Andrey has more elasticity in his body which I like! Overall a sound and good performance. Well done!

Star Ball 2018 Amateur Ballroom report by Tony Dokman

I would like to say Congratulations to all the couples that competed today and delighting us with their wonderful performances. The Star Ball is always a beautiful event that carries a lot of history and the BDF do a superb job in organising this fabulous competition. The beautiful venue looked immaculate, the music was inspirational and the judges were of the highest calibre. This competition is a wonderful chance for couples to come out and show how good they are! An opportunity that really shouldn't be missed!

1st – Igor Reznik & Maria Polishohuk: Young, vibrant, dynamic and very together. What a fabulous competitive package this couple offer. If they can now develop the characterisation of each dance further then this is only the first of many competitions that they will be challenging to win! A great and very well deserved win today. Congratulations!

2nd – Eric Li Sicheng & Anna Zhou Manni: Eric and Annas results and dancing have been steadily improving over the last year. Wonderfully expressive and another great ballroom couple from China. Today was maybe not the most clean in silhouette that I have seen them but still well deserved Runners Up of this wonderful competition today.

3rd – Michal Le & Sandra Jablonska: Always immaculately groomed and well presented I always enjoy watching this very individual couple. They are lovely dancers and the top was calmer and sharper today than in previous outings. I am sure their results will keep improving if they continue in this way.

4th – Artem Kuklin & Aliko Dima: Artem & Aliko bring a great quality and elegance to the dance floor. They have matured a lot and are now bringing a complete package to the dance floor. They need to pay attention to the height of their arms which can on occasion as be carried too high but I am sure they are aware of this. When they get this right they can challenge very high.

5th – Marko Ilich & Yulia Koutunova: The third of the Ukrainian couples in this fabulous final tonight. A sharp competitive silhouette and on this occasion a much softer approach which gave them breathe and warmth. Interestingly the softness actually made them more competitive and they could have finished higher as 3rd, 4th and 5th place were in my opinion very close! The future promises some interesting battles between all these beautiful couples!

6th – Maciej Kadlubowski & Maja Kopacz: This lovely couple concluded this wonderful final. Great line and powerful dancers with lovely weight release, they offer a lot and are very eye catching. They now need more refinement in my opinion as it becomes too strong and too held in the frame, therefore actions that Maciej starts can't always be finished by Maja. There are certainly opportunities for improvement by finding the right tone in arms and body. This will open the door to be able to challenge the couples above.

Semi Finalists:

Jamie Cutler & Virginie Primeau: Must have been considered for the final but on this occasion their top line became a little thin and without volume which stopped them from fulfilling their full potential.

Ivan Iacobbe & Ylenia Dalla Bona: They need to pay attention to creating a smoother transition from foot to foot, especially when lowering as their action is not always full enough.

Markus Hirvonen & Lisa Setala: Markus is such a lovely expressive dancer but the delivery is not always clean enough for the competitive field of dancing as it is today. Focus is needed on the upper body.

Damiano Soldati & Laura Fox: Damiano and Laura have made big improvements in their dancing over the last couple of years and must have been very happy to make this semi final. Lovely to see.

Kun Wang & Wan Xu: William and Ivy are lovely neat and tidy dancers but they lack the dynamics and power shown by the couples above them at this moment.

Dima Dakhnovskiy & Anna Dakhnovska: They showed flashes of being certain finalists but now need more consistency to ensure their inclusion into this type of final. I am sure they will get there as they are improving steadily.

Star Ball Pro & Amateur Latin report by David Douglas

The 2018 Star Ball was held at the Elegant & Sophisticated Oaks Hall in the Duchess stand Epsom
We were treated to an evening of very competitive & high class Dancing

The Result of the Professional Latin is as follows after several hard fought rounds

1st Nino Langella & Andra (Italy) Control-Balance-Light & shade shown in all dances this young lady oozes class only possible by the performance of her partner.

2nd Gunnar Gunnarsson / Marika Doshoris (Eng) a strong & dynamic performance thro-out all dances giving a well deserved position perhaps a little less attack in some areas would allow more body rhyam to be shown.

3rd Anton Sboev / Patrizia Ranis (Russia) another sound & easy to watch performance a very rhythmic & musical couple I felt on this occasion their body actions did not always connect with each other.

4th Stefano moriando / Daria (Italy) Very together in all aspects of each dance for me could have been one place higher their body actions & rhyams in total harmony.

5th Zlong wang / Celine Li Yang (China) A little quiet in this company tonight for me did not exploit the room they had on this floor promising but need to look at their choreography.

6th Min je Kim / Hye Bib Ham (Korea) very much the same as the Chinese couple promising but a lot more work needed on programming.

Semi Final I noted 3 couples in this round that could & perhaps should have been in this final namely Alexey Karaulov / vlada Karaulov Andrey Gorbunov / Karla Gerbes & Sasha Altukhov / Cheyenne Murillo.

Amateur

1st Petar Daskalov / Zia James (Eng) Very good winners tonight Their tremendous leg & foot speed allowed their body rhythams to control & express their different characterizations in each dance a very mature performance.

2nd Darren Hammond / Mila (S /Africa) A strong performance in all dances they have a very nice floor appearance perhaps a little more light & shade will improve further.

3rd Tal Livshitz / Ilana Keselman (USA) Very simula to the couple placed 2nd but for me had more variety & could easily have been 2nd.

4th Joel Lopez / kristina Bespechnova (Spain) A very good lady oozed latin character thro-out all dances her partner was to still in his body for me.

5th Tagir Mansurov / Alexandra Kondrashova (USA) Neat & Tidy did nothing wrong but you need more than that at this level.

6th Lloyd Perry / Rebecca Scot (Eng) Not one of their best performances tonight very quiet thro-out all dances not like them at all.

7th Mardy Zhang / Alissia Jia (?) Did well to make this final They needed a new or stronger battery today.

Semi Final two couples stood out for me & in my opinion should have made this final namely Sergey Maksyuta / Elisaveta (Russia) & Tang Yi Ming / Huang Xin Yi (China) their strong rhythmic actions should have been rewarded.

This was a great day & evening of dancing and a special mention must go to the recorded music by Kelvin Bridle excellent all day in both ballroom & latin The Len Phillips Big Band the first time i have heard them excellent in both styles of music I hope to hear & see more of them in future events

This festival of dance has been a great success it was held together beautifully by the two excellent Masters of Ceremonies namely Graham Oswick & David Sycamore.