

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE...

I would like to welcome everyone to our third OADA e-newsletter and to thank Interim Co-Editors Candy Leung & Paulina Cheng, along with all their volunteers for a job well done on the production of this newsletter.



Please remember that before competing outside of Canada that you need to inform OADA & report all your results to the OADA Membership Director.

At the October, 2007, Ontario Open Championships, some individuals decided to vandalize areas of the

Ramese Shrine, which were out of bounds to them. Because of this, we have been charged an additional clean up fee and have had to hire security personnel. Therefore in future anyone found in prohibited areas vandalizing any areas at the Ramese Shrine, will be immediately escorted out of the premises, as we will have "zero" tolerance for this type of behavior.

Since our current Entertainment Director, Annette Morgan, will be stepping down in June, OADA will be looking for someone to replace her in this position. If you need more information about what the job entails, please contact me. All nominations must be received, by me, before the April 1, 2008 deadline.

Yours in dance,

Gord Brittain
OADA President

The Ontario Closed Championships, February 23, 2008 is fast approaching and I would like to remind all Championship level competitors that they must compete in every level in which they are planning on competing in, at the Canadian Closed Championships in Halifax. For example: Senior 1 & Senior 2 Standard, if you want to compete in both at Canadians, you have to compete in both at the Ontario Closed Championship. Same would apply to Youth & Adult. Deadline for entries is February 9th, after this date late entry fees of \$15.00 will be charged.

Dress Code: There were many dress code infractions at the Niagara Falls Premier Ball. As mentioned in the last issue, all competitors need to check the OADA/CADA dress code, posted on the OADA website & if in doubt, please check with me.

Along with the Ontario Closed Championships, there are also many other OADA sanctioned events taking place, in Ontario, and throughout Canada, during the next coming months. These are all posted on the OADA website. They are either posted under "What's New", please scroll down this complete area, or under "Competitions" area to find the promoters website or contact information.

The Crystal Leaf International Dancesport Championships is hosting for the first time in a number of years, the **Canadian Open Championships** along with the IDSF Adult Latin & Senior 1 Standard events.

From the Interim Editors...



Many thanks to Alan Gilin, Allen Torrenueva & Lori Yip and Geoffrey Dollar, who submitted their articles about their dancing experiences (Page 2-4).

Competitive dancing is a very challenging sport as it involves many different kinds of training and disciplines. While physically and psychological training is primary, softer skills such as artistic, interpretive and interpersonal skills are nevertheless very demanding.

Dancers must bring out their very best to succeed in their goals and dreams. While the dancers are in the foreground of attention, let us also give a big appreciation and recognition to the people behind the scenes giving their 110% support. These unsung heroes are our dance teachers, coaches, parents, families and friends, for without them we would not be reaping rewards of our great dancing success. ** THANK-YOU! BRAVO! **

And in this issue, you may have noticed a change in the layout to different format. Thanks to the E-newsletter team, especially Stephen Kwong, for designing our new layout. Your opinions and comments of our E-newsletter are most welcome. As mentioned at the outset of the E-newsletter, the role of the editors is on an interim basis until the position is filled. If you or anyone knows of anyone who may be interested in filling this position, please contact us.

Thank-you for your support! See you all at the Ontario Closed Championships on February 23rd.

Paulina Cheng & Candy Leung
Interim Co-Editors

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IDSF World Youth Ten Dance Championships

By ALAN GILIN

From all the hard work emotionally and physically, it all seemed to pay off at the end. The trip to Singapore was definitely a trip to remember and yet to learn from. In the past weeks before the World Championships, our coach Mr. Oleg Yedlin trained us night and day to get us to the quality we have today. He pushed and trained us well enough to leave Toronto feeling mentally and physically well confident to perform in Singapore. Anastasia and I both planned well and arranged costumes for the latin program. Anastasia made a new white dress with the same fabric of my shirt. Overall we felt mentally and physically prepared, except we both had not anticipated on what was to happen when we arrived in Singapore.

After traveling an excruciating 28 hours through transfers on planes, we arrived in Singapore and found that all luggages come out for Oleg and my partner, except mine. I did not see my luggage anywhere in sight. I tried not to panic at first by waiting patiently for a long period of time, but I felt something went wrong. After a good 30 minutes and the luggage not showing up, Oleg and I went to the lost and found office to report my lost luggage. Thankfully they found my luggage except it was stuck in California. Anastasia and I were supposed to dance the World Championships the next morning. They said that the luggage will come the next day at around the same time we arrived which would be around two o'clock in the afternoon.

At that point, there was nothing for us to do at the airport, and so we went to our hotel and checked in. At that time, my face had gone white. All I thought about was how I would attend this World Championships without my costumes. We arrived to the hotel and were informed that the event will start at 10 a.m. the next morning. After that news, I started feeling worse and worse, but there was nothing I could do. Oleg brought me back together and helped me calm down to bring me back into the mental state to dance the World Championships and stop paying attention on the costumes. That afternoon we got unpacked at the hotel and went shopping for clothes for me to dance in. Not only my costumes but my shoes were also missing. Therefore we had to contact the organizers to find a nearby dance store.

Thankfully they had my size of shoes, and I purchased the shoes right away.

After purchasing all the clothes for the competition, we returned to the hotel and there I was thinking to myself, that I would have to dance the competition without my proper costumes. This was the matter: how I will show the judges not what I was wearing but the quality of my dancing. I had to be extremely focused and to mentally stop thinking about my clothes.

The day of the competition arrived and to be honest, I slept real well after the flights and the shopping had tired me out. I woke up feeling like it was all a dream but it really wasn't. I

had gotten ready extra early to really get prepared for what was in stored for me later on. We arrived at the competition and at that moment I had forgotten everything else and concentrated on my dancing fully. I was so fully prepared and trained that I had nothing to worry about at that time.

The first heat had started and the pressure began to build. In a way, I felt to be the one that all the attention was drawn to due to my attire. But that didn't concern me. I realized that everything that we worked on before, all that time and sweat wasn't going to ruin this moment that I had desired for a long time. I went on the floor and showed the world what I was capable of and how much it

meant to me. After the first round had ended, I felt relieved. I had nothing to worry about anymore. Now it was just the clean dancing that I had to show to everyone.

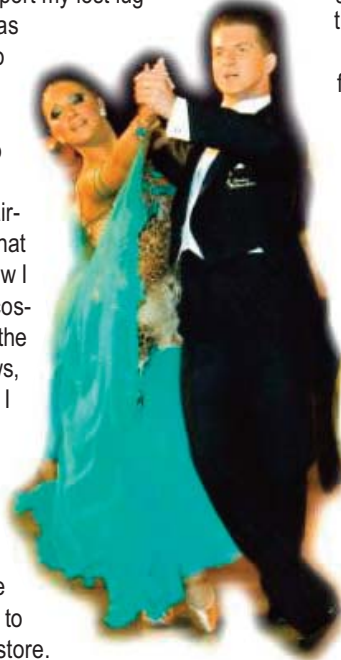
After the next round, they posted the results for the semi-finalists who were to come back in the evening to dance. We had made it, and I felt completely overwhelmed after Oleg had told me that the hotel had called and informed that the luggage made it. We went back to the hotel to suit up and get prepared for the semi-final.

The moment of truth had come, arriving at the competition with my costumes and all my accessories in place. I felt like I was extra prepared and that now I will be able to show what I was really capable of. We danced the semi-final as best as we could, and it was most definitely the most finest we had shown ourselves compared to previous rounds. We waited with all the other dancers to see the final results, expect it was no where to be in sight. I was walking to the washroom at that time and there I saw a lady standing with the paper in her hands, and there my number was with the other 5 finalists. I quickly turned around from heading to the washroom and ran to Oleg from the excitement. The feeling was remarkable, the most unforgettable moment that I will not forget. All the hard work and the sweat laid on a number on the sheet.

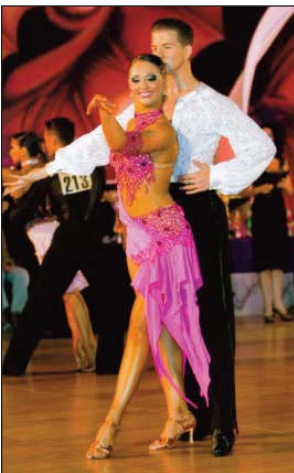
I realized even though I've made the final, I now have to focus twice harder for the final round. I calmed down and put myself together. At that moment I just had to show the judges what I came there for, and I believe I showed them.

After we danced the final, the feeling was great. Nothing could have upset me then. We received our awards and there we stood on the podium, representing our country proud. Then I realized that everything happens for a reason, and that your passion for whatever you desire, you will find your path as long as you are loyal to those that put the work into you and that you are fully committed into what you have chosen.

P.S – If you travel outside of your country to different performances, remember always take your costumes as a carry-on, with you onto the plane, to avoid emotionally breakdowns.



Alan Gilin & Anastasia Trutneva



IDSF World Senior II Standard Championship in Belgium

By ALLEN TORRENUUEVA & LORI YIP

On October 20, 2007, Lori and I competed in the IDSF World Senior II (45+) Standard Championship in Leige, Belgium. There were 224 couples who qualified, divided into 15 heats. Other competitors came from Japan, US, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, and many other European countries. Some couples were sponsored by their national dancesport organizations. Hence, we were competing with some of the best senior couples in the world under a panel of international judges from Australia, US, and many other countries.

The purpose of this article is to share with members of Ontario Dancesport our experiences, observations, and interesting features of the competition. This was our first competition in Europe, not to mention competing in the World Senior II Standard!

Registration for competitors started at 7:30 in the morning. Competition started at 9 am and the final was scheduled at about midnight, with other events (e.g. Senior III) scheduled in between. After registration, we looked for the change rooms. To our surprise, there were no separate change rooms for men and women. We found this out quickly when everyone started changing in the same room. This is apparently true for most competitions in Europe because of the large number of competitors. Many couples also brought their own portable coat racks, as there were not enough places to hang clothes.

The second surprise was the huge dance floor which may be close to twice the size of competition floors in Ontario. The first thing we did was mapping out the floor during the one hour practice allowed before the competition. It was a challenge covering the corners with our routines!

Announcements were mostly in French (the language of the host country – Belgium), and sometimes in German, but rarely in English. So, we needed to be attentive all the time and be alert at checking the results posted on the wall. Occasionally, we had to ask local competitors to translate.

The sheer size of the competition was, of course, overwhelming as we have never competed in an event this big. With so many heats, it was a challenge keeping warm and avoiding cramps. Thus, we found staying in a hotel very close to the competition hall useful and convenient, especially when there is a long break between heats or events.... if only to rest, have a snack, or get refreshed.

The time difference between Canada and Europe had affected our sleeping pattern. Because we were also sight-seeing in Brussels, Amsterdam and Luxembourg, we were a bit tired and there was no place to practice. In retrospect, we should have done the sight-seeing after the competition.

The highlight of the competition was when all World Senior II Standard competitors were asked to march on the floor to receive a “medal of appreciation” from the Mayor of the City of Leige. I believe we made our presence known as a Canadian competitor by proudly wearing our OADA jackets.

Prior to Leige, we competed in the Holland Dance Masters in Arnheim, Netherlands. This was a smaller competition but nevertheless Senior III still had

15 couples. The format was a bit different. In the morning, they had competitions for physically challenged couples. This was followed by the wheelchair competitions -- one person on wheelchair, and then both persons on wheelchairs. This was something new and interesting to watch. The competition for Senior III started in the afternoon at 4 pm, and the final after 10 pm. The long waiting time and needing to be ready to dance when called created a major challenge for us. The language barrier we faced didn't help as results were announced rather than posted.

During the first two weeks of November 2007, we went back to compete in Bologna, Italy, and to the Austrian Open in Vienna, Austria. In Bologna, we competed in Senior III Standard as well as in the IDSF Adult Standard. This competition had the liveliest audience with spectators from babies in strollers to grandparents supporting their favorite competitors. One row of spectator even had pompons just like in a football game! Although the announcements were in Italian, they had a big screen which showed the events, heat numbers, and the numbers of the competitors. One Italian word we learned quickly was “batteria” which means “heat number”, not “battery” in English.

Vienna had the biggest competition with about 1800 couples registered. They had two huge dance floors with competitions taking place simultaneously. The confusing part was that they kept switching floors for the next rounds. We almost missed the 2nd round of Senior II Standard because when we did not see our name on the next list we quickly changed clothes. Lori was so upset when she saw the re-dance couples (and felt that we were better than them) that she went on a shopping spree. Luckily, an Austrian couple we met earlier looked for us and explained that the list was for the re-dance couples, and we were automatically in the 2nd round. We had 15 minutes to change, and when we came back Heat 1 was already dancing. Fortunately, we were in Heat 4! The highlight of our second trip to Europe was watching the WDC World Professional Championship in Blackpool, UK, as well as trying the dance floor during general dancing. Now we understand why Blackpool is like the Mecca of ballroom dancing!

Overall, the European senior competitors are more experienced and physically fit. They cover the huge dance floor with ease and have excellent floor

craft. The long wait times between rounds did not seem to bother them. They are definitely used to big competitions and huge dance floors. It is likely that some of them may have started dancing at a younger age. The spectators are generally warm and friendly, some cheering for us. We must be quite visible on the dance floor since we were the only “oriental” competitor. In Vienna, a group of young competitors was cheering each time we passed their corner.

Overall, this was a very rewarding experience. We hope that we can incorporate some of our experiences and observations into our dancing. Watching the performance of the European senior competitors gave us hope that as seniors we are not yet “over the hill”. We have met many interesting competitors and dance professionals, such as Mirko Gozzoli who was coaching the Italian couples in the World Senior II Standard Championship.

We wish to thank OADA, especially Paulina Cheng and Gord Brittain, CADA, and Sandy Brittain for their encouragement. We also like to thank our dance teachers for their patience and for rejuvenating our “senior body” and making them feel young again. We also discovered that we can continue to see the world through our dance shoes!

Editors' note - Allen & Lori placed 148 out of over 224 couples. Eugene Pirko & Zuzana Vajcenfeld, who also competed at the World Senior II Standard Championship, placed 72. Congratulation to both couples! We thank Allen and Lori for sharing this interesting experience with us.



Allen Torrenueva & Lori Yip

My First Competition

By GEOFFREY DOLLAR

I started dancing at the age of 8. My mother introduced me to ballroom/latin dancing in Ottawa about 5 years ago. I started off with social and I stuck to it for 3 years. I was dancing with my mother in Ottawa at the time and didn't know very much about technique or the world of dance. I was then introduced to the international style after my mother changed dance teachers. I got better and better and eventually I got to the bronze level. The reason why it took so long is because I was only learning steps and nothing else and I didn't compete. I stayed at the bronze level for about a year. My father moved to Kitchener Ontario about two years ago. I decided to live with my dad but I wanted to keep dancing. I moved to Kitchener in August of 2006. My dad looked all over the place for a good ballroom/latin dance school in Kitchener but he had no success.

Eventually he found a place called Viva Dance in Toronto. This school was filled with young dancers and so my dad signed me up. My dad has been driving me to North York three times per week for about a year now. I found the perfect dance partner. Her name is Shelly Futerman. Being a much better dancer than me, I had work extra hard to keep her as my dance partner. We took many classes together and decided that we wanted to compete together at the Ontario Open Championships in the fall of 2007. This would be my first competition, ever. When we first met, I was at the bronze level. Shelly was at the beginning of her silver. So as time went by

and Shelly and I got better, we both advanced to the silver level and we were better dancers than ever before.

The competition got closer and closer and we trained harder and harder, and finally it arrived. Looking at all the other dancers in the practice room of the competition, we were somewhat intimidated and at the same time were a little nervous thinking that we might lose this competition. But the time came when we had to go on to the dance floor and show to at least three hundred people what we were made of! We finished the first round and made it to the finals. Unfortunately some of our friends weren't so lucky had to go home. But the show had to go on, and so we finished the final dance of the last round and waited impatiently for the results. And then our number was called as were all the other dancers who made it to the finals. We walked up onto the dance floor all wanting to be the best Silver Latin Dancer in the province. But only one could win and so the places were given one by one. 6th place, 5th place and 4th place were all given out and none of them were our number. At that point Shelly and I knew that we were in the top three. Then 3rd and 2nd place were given still our names were not mentioned.

Joy filled our hearts as the announcer said these exact words. "And the winner of this year's Junior Silver Latin competition is number 140, Geoffrey and Shelly of Toronto!"

A great big trophy was given to us as the whole room was filled with applause.

It made me so happy on the inside for you see, in December of 2006, I was diagnosed with a rare and dreadful eye disease known as Uveitis. This is the same disease that blinded Ray Charles when he was just a boy. By the time I got to Sick Kids Hospital, I was almost totally blind too. Within about two months, my vision started to improve. This interfered a lot in my dancing career because I had trouble seeing



Geoffrey Dollar & Shelly Futerman

the floor let alone seeing Shelly or the other dancers around me. So that put a pause on my dancing and therefore I had a lot of catching up to do. My vision is still not 100% but it is a lot better than it was. All in all my partner and I had about 9 months of training. So there you have it, it just goes to show that when your heart is set on something you can accomplish anything.

Editors' Note – Geoffrey has moved back to Ottawa under his mother's care. He is taking a break from competing until his eye condition improves. We wish him well and hope to see him back on the dance floor very soon. Thank-You Geoffrey, for sharing your compelling story with us.

2007/2008 New OADA Members - 2nd Quarter Welcome aboard !!

Bajovic, Doonia	Fafara, Jessica	Markman, Natalia	Rocher, Daniele
Biro, Jeremy	Fraiman, Batel	Mazour, Julia	Rogers, Erika
Blake, Adam	Franche, Julien	Neufeld, Thomas	Rossi, Dylan
Blyuss, Eli	Friz, Pavlo	Ostrovski, Maxim	Roussel, Tyler
Chan, Raymond Y.C.	Fulton, Aaron J.	Oussoltsev, Konstantin	Santelli, Franco (Pino)
DeMaria Catenaccio, Melina	Gourevitch, Tamara	Pechenik, Samantha	Shubat, Gaby
Deschenes, Leanne	Katabchi, Kassandra	Prikhodko, Yakov	Snape, Terra-Lynn
Dollar, Geoffrey	Lau, Alison Kit Ling	Rakevich, Irina	Tiper, Yekaterina (Katy)
Ellis, David	Leshchynska, Yelyzaveta	Rees, Aya	Yoffe, Aleonora
Ellis, Patricia	Logasov, Mishel	Rees, Timothy	
Ellis, Sharon	Lynnyk, Maksym	Reynolds, Olivia	

Up Coming Issue :

- ▶ Anton Belyayev & Karolina Paliwoda will share their excellent result with us on placing 5th in the 2007 IDSF World Ten Dance Championships in Tokyo, Japan.
- ▶ An interview with Anna Borchsh and Anton Lebedev.
- ▶ An interview with a Professional Coach.
- ▶ CCC reporting from Halifax