

III International Dance Olympiad 2009

Platja D'Aro – Spain

With the dust barely settled from a great Junior Blackpool festival, Geraint & Clara said that the Mums & Dads deserved a nice holiday. Spain was suggested and unanimously agreed as the best destination to relax and get some sun. And guess what? Why not combine the trip with a bit of dancing to continue getting more international experience by taking part in the III International Dance Olympiad 2009 in Platja D'Aro near Barcelona, Spain.



We arrived in Platja D'Aro under a lovely hot sun after a short drive from the airport. While parents did the settling down in the apartments, the kids got to know the pool and games area. A fantastic walk to town through the cost line showed us Platja D'Aro's gorgeous natural beauty. In town, we asked for directions to the Dance Olympiad Conference Centre which we found easily as it was the centre of the town.



The first day of competitions had started and dancers were coming in & out of the Centre; we were allowed to have a quick look from the main door, which was great. So a couple of days later, very early in the morning, it was our turn to take to the floor for the Ballroom. The couples in the final were a mixed of Junior I & II with our main rival the top Spanish Junior II Ballroom couple.



With great dancing displayed and the final over, the nerve racking results announcement came; the stepped podium was placed in the middle of the floor and the countdown to the winners commenced. As second place was called, it came the

realisation that Geraint & Clara were the International Junior Ballroom champions. They took their place at the podium and were given a beautiful glass trophy in a velvety box; it was a magical moment that we will always remember. It was celebration time at the seaside for the rest of the day.



Next day and next competition, the Latin, a real challenge in a country well known for its Latin strength and confirmed by just looking at the couples warming up. The competition started at lunchtime and we learnt by talking to other people that we had all the top Spanish Junior II Latin couples as well as the top 2 Portuguese ones; obviously all aiming for the final. The majority of these couples are specialised in Latin only so it was wonderful to see Geraint and Clara's number in the list of couples being recalled for the semi final.



As the Junior couples waited to dance the semi final, the atmosphere suddenly changed. The lights dimmed in the spectators' area and the floor was illuminated like a centre stage with spotlights. A couple of cameras appeared and we found out that the Spanish TV was filming the Junior event. You could feel the excitement in the air from all 12 couples; they were all more determined than ever to get a place on that final. The dancing was amazing; made even more special by the cameras following these excellent dancers on the huge plasma screen as they danced.

While the results were gathered and published, the flag parade for the IDSF World Senior II Ballroom championship took place. The large floor was filled with the Senior II dancers from all over the World (269 entries); it was a fabulous display. The president of the IDSF, Sr Carlos Freitag, welcomed them and thank everyone taking part in the Olympiad for their support.





As the parade was in full flow, the list of Junior couples being recalled for the International Latin final was posted. What a fantastic moment when we saw Geraint & Clara's number and realised that they would be taking part in such an incredible final.



For the final each couple was called individually by name and country and took centre floor to perform their show dance. It was electrifying to see the kids on the giant screen and to know that their fantastic achievement will also be watched by many millions of Spanish people in their homes. They danced their hearts out and were placed 6th; they were so happy and proud to have made this International Latin final. For all of us it was our best dancing experience ever.

