



STEPPING OUT

This month, **Marianka Swain** reports on London's Pink Jukebox Trophy

The 15th annual Pink Jukebox Trophy (PJT), one of the world's leading same-sex competitions, featured rising stars and bravura performances from returning champions. The contest, which took place in London's spectacular Rivoli Ballroom on February 18, welcomed dancers from all over the world, "including a wonderful French contingent of competitors and flag-waving spectators", notes one of the PJT organisers, Vernon Kemp. "The new Paris contest has definitely boosted their competitive dance scene."

However, Hungary's Csaba Csetneki and Balazs Gati held off strong competition from France's Axel Zischka and Julien Poli to retain their title in the men's A ballroom with another assured performance, and the Hungarian contingent also trailed this summer's exciting Budapest EuroGames. In the men's A Latin, the home crowd was delighted to cheer on the UK's Sergio Brillhante and Jonathan Morrison to a second consecutive win, although second-place Spaniards Santiago Granizal and Antonio Castillo put on a fiery display, which bodes well for future contests.

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Runners-up Vincent de Keijzer and Patrick Masereel competing in the men's C Latin final

Two Danish couples fought it out for the women's A Latin, with Charlotte Lange and Kirsten Steinmetz-Möller narrowly defeating Nete Jorgensen and Camilla Jonsson, while in the women's A ballroom, it was an extraordinary tenth consecutive win for the unstoppable Germans Caroline Privou and Petra Zimmermann, who were rewarded with champagne and a standing ovation for their quickstep honour dance.

"They're a trailblazing couple – lots of people are dancing because of them," explains DJ and competitor Jacky Logan. "They perform at such a high standard, but they're also incredibly generous – after competing at the intense German Open, they still came

to Paris the following week to support the new competition."

Vernon was pleased to see young couples and dancers from outside London doing so well – "a sign, hopefully, that the UK Same Sex Dance Council's outreach work is starting to pay off, and that the next generation is coming through strongly".

Bournemouth's Martin Arthur and Nigel Bradshaw won the men's B ballroom and Norwich-based students Katie Lord and Natalie Crowe were stunned to win the women's D Latin, their first-ever title. "We weren't expecting it at all!" says Katie. "We just went with the aim of doing better than last year. We

were also thrilled to be moved up to the C ballroom class – it's great when all the hard work pays off."

New judges Monica Needham and Richard Rose, from the UK, Pauline Ladiges, from Holland, and Ute Streicher, from Germany, were impressed by the supportive atmosphere, with Monica "commenting on what a caring international family it is", recalls Vernon. "We're hoping that the brand-new same-sex competition in Blackpool in October will carry on this fine tradition." ●



Winners of the women's A ballroom for the tenth consecutive time Caroline Privou and Petra Zimmermann