

STEPPING OUT

THE SAME-SEX
DANCE SCENE



Robin Windsor and friends at Wilton's Music Hall at his debut Same Sex Ballroom for Beginners class



Marianka Swain talks European Championships and a *Strictly* special

“**E**uroGames is generally the biggest competition on the same-sex calendar,” explains Hadass Armon, female co-president of ESSDA. For this year’s event, which hits Stockholm in August, “we’re expecting more than 5,000 participants in 29 different sports, making this the largest LGBTQ sports event in 2015. The organisers are trying their best to give good Games!”

Hadass is excited about bringing same-sex dancers to a nation with “very open politics – there’s little tolerance of homophobia”.

Competition director Micke Forslin commented: “EuroGames Stockholm will be a huge manifestation of human rights and everybody’s right to practise sport, whatever their gender, sexuality, gender expression or ethnicity.” It’s a

welcome change from some challenging past European Champions, notably Budapest in 2012, which required added security to ensure participants’ safety.

Hadass hopes to see high numbers of participants in the dance competition, which has the usual A-E levels in standard, Latin, senior and ten dance, plus the always entertaining individual and team showdance, with – for the first time – a senior showdance event. “The judges’ panel is about 50 per cent newcomers to same-sex competition – I always find that interesting. It was a

pleasure creating the panel, with plenty of great responses.

“European same-sex dancing is constantly growing and improving. More and more dancers take lessons with leading figures in the ballroom and Latin world, which is wonderful to see.

We now get couples from Russia, who are so brave, and it’s competitions like this that make the difference – bringing everyone together and encouraging a supportive international community.” ●

Find out more at www.eurogamesstockholm.com

STRICTLY SAME-SEX

On April 13, *Strictly*’s Robin Windsor held his debut Same Sex Ballroom for Beginners class at the historic Wilton’s Music Hall in east London, teaching ballroom and Latin basics to an enthusiastic crowd. The popular pro had support from fellow *Strictly* pro Janette Manrara and musical performers Marcus Collins and Ricky Rojas, plus *People’s Strictly* partner Anna Kennedy joined him for an encore of their perfect-scoring Charleston.

For more information about Robin’s upcoming classes, visit www.robinwindsor.com