

2008 IDSF World Ten Dance Championship

The German capital Berlin was host to the 2008 World Championship in the discipline for DanceSport's best all-rounder. From the preliminary round, five dances in Latin plus five in Standard doubled the challenge technically as well as athletically for the 33 couples, the National Ten Dance Champions from as many countries. The six finalists had to perform 42 dances before the winner was declared in the early morning hours of 30 November.



Photos by DTV and Heidi Estler



IOC Vice President Dr Thomas, right, Bach with Carlos Freitag and DTV officials

Christoph Kies and Blanca Ribas Turón, GER, were able to defend the title once more. The couple was crowned IDSF World Ten Dance Champions for the third consecutive time. Silver medallists Misa Cigoj – Alexandra Malai, SLO, and bronze medallists Andrey Zaytsev – Anna Kuzminskaya, RUS, merely changed their respective positions on the podium from 2007.

The excellent performances by all couples were commented upon by the President of the German Olympic Sports Confederation, Dr. Thomas Bach, who was the guest of honour. "A magnificent sport," was how he started his remarks – words spoken with the authority of an Olympic Champion in fencing and Vice President of the International Olympic Committee. The sports leader thanked the athletes and the hosts for their respective parts in making the World Championship an absolute hit with all who had come to watch.

7,000 spectators – between afternoon and evening sessions – were recorded at the Max-Schmeling-Hall. Named after the German boxing legend, the venue had served for memorable DanceSport events in the past: World Championships in Formations and in Youth Ten Dance were the most recent. Berlin and DanceSport: a perfect match on the parquet and in the seats.

The enthusiastic crowd of 5,000 attending the evening's semi-finals and finals cheered all the couples on – as these passed through the replica of the Brandenburg Gate on their way to the floor. "To be able to dance in front of so many people is an overwhelming experience, thank you Berlin", said Christoph Kies, the old and new IDSF World Champion, during an interview right after the final.

Spectator turn-out and impact in the media exceeded all expectations. RBB, the Berlin affiliate of the German public broadcasting network ARD produced the coverage and aired 45-minute highlights on 30 November and 1 December. The television partner of IDSF, Stockholm-based IEC in Sports, used the RBB coverage to produce yet another 52-minute highlight as part of its series "Best of DanceSport 2008". In its third year by now, the series is distributed to a steadily increasing number of countries around the world.

Pre-event interviews with the favourites and other programmes on RBB's InfoRadio made Ten Dance the talk of the capital. The media partnership with the Berlin daily "Der Tagesspiegel" upped the profile of the event in print. And a dedicated website, world-10dance.org, provided enough technical background on DanceSport for the spectators to do their own adjudicating.

The formidable organiser of the 2008 World Championship was again the DanceSport Federation of Berlin. It was commissioned by the German DanceSport Federation and assisted by more than 200 volunteers from local clubs.

