

Pisek October 7-9, 2011

„ To watch us dance is to hear our hearts speak“(Hopi Indian Saying).

Many hearts were speaking at the Regional Open WCDF Country Line Dance Competition held in the Czech Republic, October 7th through 9th 2011. The competition/dance event was held in the south of Bohemia in the historical town of Pisek in the Czech Republic.

Over the course of the weekend, various workshops were held by renowned choreographers from around the world. Roy Verdonk (The Netherlands) taught the dances: Lazy, Bring me Sunshine, Clinging to You, and Soul Lovin'. Roy was assisted by his lovely wife Nisrine. Cinta Larrotcha (Spain) taught: Super, Pack UP, Just do It, and For Gail. Kelli Haugen (Norway/USA) taught: Something in the Water, Fun Push, Tonight, and Christmas Rock. Heading up the Swedish team were Zuzana Cortova with: Johnny got a Boom Boom, Brazil, and Kuduro poco along with Nicholas Lafferty who taught: Stuttering, Love Bug, Shake it for me, and Hideaway Cha.

The event was held in the House of Culture in downtown Pisek. Master of ceremonies was Tom Dvorak. Tom lives in the town of Pisek and is also an accomplished dancer/choreographer. When Tom addressed the crowd, it didn't matter that he spoke his native Czech, the smile on his face made all nationalities feel a warm welcome.

The Regional Competitions were held on Saturday, the 8th. At the same time, there were constant workshops being offered upstairs. I personally found this to be one of the most organized, and more important, friendly events that I have been to. Everyone was welcomed. There were dances for absolute beginners up to the advanced. Most important - there were always smiling faces to encounter. The Czech people have the manners of a Southern Gentleman, the wild spirit of the Native Americans, and a sense of fun like a cowboy on a Saturday night who just got paid.

The Awards Ceremony for the Regionals, early Saturday evening, was charming. If a female won, she was escorted to the podium by a "Prince Charming". When a male won, he was escorted up by a "Cinderella". The Czech people created the award ceremonies with the firm purpose of a happy-ending. Even after the major awards were announced, all of those who participated ended up winning. Creating winners out of all who took part offers delightful possibilities. After all, aren't we all winners in our own way?!

The official open dance event on Saturday evening was full of well-planned show displays. A local group of young men and women, dressed up like off-shore sailors, danced a "flirt" dance with the sailors trying to impress the beautiful young ladies to get a kiss. Another show moment took us back to medieval times. The female dancers wore beautiful, historically correct dresses of the day and combined these costumes with historical dances of this time period. These magical moments were then combined with a dance free-for-all that went on until the wee hours of the morning.

Sunday continued on in the morning with more workshops and reviews.

I came to this event with a smile on my face, and left with a big smile in my heart. I guess "hearing all the hearts speak- as they danced" was contagious. It is the kind of infection that all of us would like to catch i.e warmth, human kindness, and lot's of fun.

Janice Reithmayer