



# BRITISH OPEN 2026 The 100th Anniversary

The year is 2026 the place is Blackpool the home of Ballroom Dancing and this is the time the Dance World celebrates a truly wonderful milestone in Dance history

## The 100th anniversary of the Blackpool Dance Festival.

It is organised under the management skills of Mrs Natalie Hayes together with a team of dedicated experts who brought it all together for a fortnight of amazing competitions and great performances.

For those who have been witness to this great Festival over many years and lucky enough to be in attendance must have once again sat in awe in the fabulous Empress Ballroom the place where every great dancer has performed and still it flourishes with new and exciting champions.

The Blackpool Festival has evolved and changed with the times over the years and yet one can still feel and breathe the tradition that has gone before.

Many Orchestras have graced the wonderful stage over the years and this great position is currently in the capable hands of the Empress Orchestra under the direction of Ashley Frohlick

As people left the Festival to return to the four corners of the earth I'm sure the Organisers could take a moment and say "we made it and with it the history of this great event lives on"

One final thought...

If King Charles was in a position to award a 100th anniversary medal to a great and historic event then the Blackpool Dance Festival would be up there with the best.

Happy Anniversary Blackpool Dance Festival,

Here's to the next 100 years!

## THE 2026

# DPA SUMMER FESTIVAL

## ENTRIES CLOSE 22<sup>ND</sup> JUNE

**DPA SUMMER FESTIVAL**  
*Pre Festival Training Day*

**DPA** SATURDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2026

- BALLROOM WORKSHOPS
- LATIN WORKSHOPS
- COUPLES & SOLO
- DPA MEMBERS F&O
- NEW DPA MEMBERS F&O
- LIVE MUSIC
- DPA INVITATIONAL COMPETITIONS ON SELECTED NATIONAL LEAGUE CATEGORIES
- JUVENILES, JUNIORS & ADULTS
- LIMITED SPACES
- BOOK ONLINE
- FOUR GUEST LECTURERS

 <b>FABIO D'ANGELO</b> BALLROOM	 <b>DUNCAN TREVOR</b> BALLROOM
 <b>GREG MCDONOUGH</b> LATIN	 <b>KSENIA ZSIKHOTSKA</b> LATIN

**PAUL BARRY**  
DIRECTOR OF THE PAUL BARRY BIG BAND

**Live Music**

[www.dpaonline.co.uk](http://www.dpaonline.co.uk)

Quick Quick Slow Dance Studio, Brythe Business Park, Chesswell Lane, Chesswell, Stockton-on-Trent, ST11 1RD



## **British OPEN 2026 The 100th Anniversary Cont'd...**

The Centenary Blackpool Pro-Am & Teacher/Student Dance Festival

On this centenary year of the Blackpool Dance Festival, the Pro-Am/Teacher-Student section of the Blackpool Dance Festival witnessed its largest entry and participation ever, throughout four action packed days.

The events started early each morning and lasted till late into the evening, with adjudicators and competitors back in the impressive Empress Ballroom ready for another day full of inspiring dancing the very next morning!

Dancers from multiple countries throughout the world travelled to the iconic Winter Gardens to display their dancing prowess and to celebrate and be a part of a true milestone in our dance industry.

There were dancers in every style, from Ballroom to Latin, Smooth to Rhythm, and in all categories and ages, from 16-35 all the way up to 71+ categories.

Dancers were giving it their all and fighting for the chance to be crowned a Blackpool Pro-Am and Teacher-Student Champion.

There were many events that had so many entries that there had to be numerous rounds, culminating in a total of five rounds for some events.

This surely was an impressive sight to behold as an adjudicator and as a spectator, to see so many Pro-Am dancers competing in this beautiful Ballroom and all together to celebrate the 100 Year Anniversary of the Blackpool Dance Festival. This is a testament to the growing popularity of the Pro-Am field and there doesn't seem to be anything stopping this explosion!

Of particular note, is the growing participation of the Smooth division. Dancers displayed beautiful artistry and skills as they graced the Empress Ballroom dance floor, with the flow and elegance of the four Smooth dances. In some divisions, there were Quarter Final rounds being contested which is a remarkable achievement.

In 2025 it was stated that it would be good to see one hundred smooth competitors attend in the future. This number was achieved one year later in 2026. What will be the next milestone be?

The Blackpool Dance Festival on a dancer's calendar every year is an absolute must!

Special congratulations to Mrs. Natalie Hayes the Dance Festival Organiser for the planning and staging of this spectacular and mammoth centenary event, whilst keeping the schedule on time and on track throughout the four days. Also, special congratulations to the organizing team lead by Mr Nicholas Miles.

The Pro-Am Dance Festival saw a new judging system being introduced which worked seamlessly and helped to keep everything running smoothly and on many occasions even earlier than the published schedule.

Also, special thanks to the compères Mr. Nigel Horrocks, Mrs. Hannah Trever, and Mr. Duncan Trever for piloting the event so smoothly and seamlessly.

Finally another thank you to Mrs. Natalie Hayes and the organizing team for having me adjudicate this wonderful Blackpool Pro-Am/Teacher-Student Dance Festival. It was an honour and privilege to witness such growth and development in the Pro-Am field and only the very best wishes for continued success of the entire Blackpool Dance Festival.  
Very best wishes.

Victor Fung