

The 1991 McDonald's International Mixed Pairs competition was held in Atlanta, Ga. This competition was the first major international event Atlanta has hosted since the city was named the site of the 1996 Olympic Games.

A record-crowd, for this event, turned out to show their support and enthusiasm for the U.S. and the sport of gymnastics. The Atlanta crowd and accommodations were outstanding. From the luncheon featuring Billy Payne and the Atlanta Sports Council to the fine host hotel, Hyatt Regency Atlanta, to the Alexander Memorial Coliseum—everything was first-rate!

This competition combines one male and one female gymnast together to form a pair. The female competes first on the event of her choice and the male follows on the event of his choice (vault was eliminated due to the size of the facility). The pair's scores are then added together and the highest scoring pair after round three is declared the winner.

Fifteen pairs began the competition in round one. The top eight pairs after round one were as follows: U.S.'s Betty Okino and Trent Dimas with 19.70; U.S.'s Kim Zmeskal and Chris Waller with 19.675; USSR's Liudmila Stobvtchataia and Andrei Kan with 19.55; China's Zhang Xia and Qiao Liang with 19.55; Australia's Kylie Shadbolt and Peter Hogan with 19.35; U.S.'s Dominique Dawes and Switzerland's Daniel Giubellini also with 19.35; Italy's Chiara Ferrazzi and Alessandro Viligiardi with 19.325; and Spain's Sonia Fraguas and Miguel Rubio with 19.05.

The U.S.'s Shannon Miller and Patrick Kirksey were in fifth place after round one, but only two U.S. pairs could advance to the finals. Sandy Woolsey and Lance Ringnald were in seventh and Chelle Stack and Jay Thornton were in eighth.

After round two, Zmeskal and Waller took the lead over their U.S. counterparts with a score of 39.425. Zmeskal scored a 9.90 on her impressive beam routine while Waller nailed his high bar routine, including the double double dis-

MCDONALD'S INTERNATIONAL

MIXED PAIRS



Bill Rubin-Vision Quest

ZMESKAL & WALLER WIN

MIXED PAIRS RESULTS

Kim Zmeskal/Chris Waller	USA	59.025
Zhang Xia/Qiao Liang	CHN	58.325
Liudmila Stobvtchataia/Andrei Kan	URS	58.175

mount, for a 9.85. This paired edged out Okino's 9.90 beam and Dimas' 9.80 rings routine. Only one couple from the U.S. was allowed to advance to the third and final round, therefore, Zmeskal and Waller moved on to round three.

The gymnasts from China and the Soviet Union were tied for second with a 19.55. Zhang's beam routine scored a 9.625 and Liang's parallel bars routine scored a 9.80. Stobvtchataia did a unique full pirouette on high bar to a Tkatchev and scored a 9.80 on bars. Kan earned a 9.55 on his rings routine.

These three pairs from the U.S., China and the Soviet Union advanced to round three.

The pair from China went first in round three. Zhang did floor (9.60) complete with a full-in, back-out for her first pass, whip to double back for her middle pass and dismounted with a double back. Qiao did pommel horse for a score of 9.75. China's three round total was 58.325.

Next up was Stobvtchataia on beam. She did a round off, flip flop, flip flop swing down mount, a flip flop, full twist swing down and dismounted with a full-in, back-out. She nearly fell on her dismount but saved it, scoring a 9.675. Her partner performed on parallel bars and used a unique double twist dismount, scoring 9.60. Total score for the Soviets—58.175.

The U.S. went last with Zmeskal on bars. "She hit the best routine of her life," commented coach Bela Karolyi. Zmeskal scored 9.90. It was all up to her partner and the pressure was intense. Waller did a superb rings routine for a 9.70 and clinched the U.S. all-around victory with a total of 59.025.

When asked what he was thinking before mounting the rings, Waller said, "Rings is an easy event for me. I didn't feel pressure." He added, "I love winning, this is fun."

Zmeskal, winner of last year's McDonald's International Mixed Pairs with partner Lance Ringnald, said, "It was a lot harder this year, especially after Betty and Trent did awesome routines."

Thanks to Atlanta for hosting such a great competition!