

Ryan Danz and Abbie Ginsberg Tell Us How They Bonded on 'The Amazing Race'

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By

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Viewers of 'The Amazing Race' can relax now that the suspense of the CBS show's 21st season has dissipated. The competition is over, and fans can reflect on the brave globe-trotting adventurers they cheered to take the one million dollar prize at the finish line.

While we all rooted for our favorites, it's hard not to feel at least a little disappointed that couple Ryan Danz and Abbie Ginsberg were eliminated in Amsterdam with only three episodes left. The "dating divorcees" team had the first opportunity in the game's history to score double: by winning the first leg of the competition, Danz and Ginsberg became eligible to win two million dollars should they be victorious overall. If that wasn't enough to gain favor with the audience, the trials of this type-A twosome told a riveting love story.

"Because we lasted as long as we did, it bonded us in some very unique ways that most couples didn't get to experience," says Danz, referring to the three romantic pairs previously eliminated. Despite having a better average placement than any of their competitors in their ninth and final leg, Danz and Ginsberg were hit by multiple flight delays and a U-Turn penalization that forced them to take an extra detour.

The ensuing elimination did not leave any bitterness or regret in the relationship of these fierce competitors. Instead, they revel in their triumph as a couple. Rather than dwelling on the loss of a two million dollar prize, Danz and Ginsberg focus on how they learned new ways to communicate and support each other. "We ran the race really well," Ginsberg says. "And that's something that makes both of us very proud."

While still in the throws of a young relationship, Danz and Ginsberg faced five other couple teams among the total roster of eleven. The other competitors had been together much longer than this twosome, who had each ended a first marriage when they connected roughly a year ago. Besides the thrill of adventure and the lure of treasure, both teammates were looking for insight into their budding romance when they signed up.

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"We took a lot from that race," Ginsberg shares. The intensity

of the competition kept them mindful of their partner's needs. "Like any couple," she points out, "it takes constant checks and balances."

"The whole process has been very positive for our relationship," Ginsberg says but admits that it could have been the opposite. "A lot of people warned us that it would probably tear us apart and make us resent each other." Juggling the double role of teammate and girlfriend, she describes it as "a lot of managing."

Likewise, Danz thought it was important to be supportive and encouraging as a partner outside of dating. "Going into the race, the most important thing was how I treated Abbie as a teammate."

As viewers saw, the couple faced obstacles both on and off the race course but always did their best to overcome them. "One team can be very lucky; another can get unlucky," Danz says. "As far as racing, we wouldn't do anything differently."

The pair identify specific relationship challenges they had to face during the competition. As two competitive spirits, they had an early issue sharing leadership, Ginsberg says. Danz explains this problem led to a fight at their hotel. With fresh wounds from his divorce, Danz didn't want to engage in conflicts with Ginsberg. "She'd say, 'Why are you pulling away?'"

The couple was able to work on their relationship by communicating during down time. "We were really mature about it," Ginsberg says. "We got more unified and closer each race." Ginsberg was glad to have a partner who could take the lead when needed but also share the responsibilities. "It was successful as long as we were able to be open and honest with each other."

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Danz recalls the time when he was most amazed by his partner. The couple arrived at the Roadblock challenge in Bangladesh, and they spotted a balance scale demonstration. He describes how Ginsberg had to build a balance scale out of bamboo and rope and then figure out how much wood would balance four stones. "I was so blown away by how resolved she was to complete the task. She didn't give up. She didn't break down. I am still so impressed by that moment."

Expanding on Danz's recollection, Ginsberg shares, "Ryan was really encouraging and supportive during solo experiences." When the atmosphere got tense, she says they still focused on the race instead of "little petty things." As a member of the "dating divorcees" team, she describes how communicating with a new partner is like "learning a whole new language."

For Danz, he describes the experience as extending much further than the "compressed" TV show." He says the moments of reflection during their travels as a couple were really important and very empowering. "I'm really proud of her," Danz shares, "really proud of how we ran the race together."

For more information about Ryan, check out www.RyanDanz.com. You can also follow him on Facebook and Twitter at @RyanDanz. You can follow Abbie on Facebook and Twitter as well at @AbbieGinsberg.