

Galopp fra Værnes

In recent years in Norway, folk dance groups have begun to dance gammeldans variations that they have picked up from the Saturday night dances in the country. Usually these dances involve considerable improvisation. Galopp from Værnes is such a dance, but it has been broken down into figures for teaching.

Figure I can be done as a separate dance (Gå-gå-byttomfot-byttomfot). This figure is found all over Norway in various forms. Figure II, the three count turn, is also quite popular. I have previously taught it in several other dances including Skrupolka from Hadeland and Vassdragspolka from the Gudbrandsdal area.

Music: Any polka

Meter: 2/4

Formation: Couples in ballroom post, M facing RLOD. Alternate couple positions are also acceptable.

Ct Pattern

Figure I (gå-gå-byttomfot-byttomfot)

- 1-2 Two walking steps, M L-R and W R-L. Man starts backward in LOD and starts to turn toward LOD. The second walking step is roughly bkwd toward the ctr. He can make a big dip on the second step, swinging his L hip out to his L side.
- 3-4 Continue to swing around to face LOD with a polka step, M L and W R.
- 5-6 M dance one polka step R, W L. Start fwd in LOD and swing around toward RLOD. It is OK if you don't make it all the way to RLOD – a 3/8 turn is fine.

Figure II (gå-byttomfot)

- 1 One walking step, M L and W R. M steps around W with his L, she steps twd him with R ft between his ft.
- 2-3 Turn CW with one polka step, M R and W L. Couple turns once CW in each repeat of this 3-count figure. The turns are smooth and continuous.

Figure III (polka CCW)

- 1-2 M dance one L polka step fwd in LOD, W R and bkwd. The steps on ct 1 will later be used to turn, while ct 2 is fwd/bkwd in LOD:
- 3-4 Turn CCW. M dances one R polka step, W L. In 4 cts (2 meas) they make one CCW turn. Keep slightly to L of partner with R ft "between" ptrs ft – do not move over to the other side.

To make the transition back to the first figure, it is easiest to change directions after ct 1-2 and turn slightly CW in cts 3-4.

Sequence

You can dance each part as long as you like. It is pleasing to dance parts 1-2-3 in order, dancing each part for 1 or 2 phrases of music. You can also mix the parts in any order, such as 1-2-1-3. You can make the transitions in any way that seems comfortable.

Notice that the figures are of unequal length. In particular the second figure is a 3-count pattern. If you repeat an odd number of times, the next part of the dance will be "backward" to the music – that is, the first ct of the figure will be on ct 2 of a musical meas. This does not bother (most) Norwegians in the least. However, this way of dancing is most common in areas where the polkas are not strongly accented on the first ct.

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