

Skrupolka (halvrund polka) fra Hadeland

As part of a project to document gammeldans variations in Norway, this way of dancing polka was collected in 2002 from Gunnar Berge and Anne Halvorsen of Hadeland, a region north of Oslo. The main dances done in Hadeland are: vals, polka, reinlender, masurka and springdans.

An ordinary polka in Hadeland is simple turning with polka steps, first one way, then the other. Halvrund polka (literally "half round polka") is a polka with an extra motif consisting of the local masurka turn danced to polka music. This dance has become more and more popular in recent years.

Gunnar's book *Springdans og annen dans fra Hadeland* says that halvrund polka was filmed with dancer Arne Sørli in 1980. Later, it became clear that the dance was well known over a larger area including Grua, Mylla and Harestua.

Recordings: Any Norwegian polka

Meter: 2/4

Documentation: The booklet "Runddansvarianter fra Hadeland", Runddansvariasjoner i Norge, Hefte 3. It contains background interview material, dance descriptions, and a DVD.

Formation: Couples with ballroom position: M holds R arm around W's waist. His L arm is held slightly bent out to side and he grasps over W's R. Her L hand is on his R shoulder. (Closed holds are also used, especially in organized folk dance groups.) M has his back partly to center of the room, but the couple opens a little toward LOD.

Steps: Polka step L: Step fwd on L (ct 1), step on R beside L (ct &), step fwd on L (ct 2). Repeats with opposite footwork. The step has two svikts, i.e. down-up-down.

Style: The style is low, near the ground, and without spectacular ornamentation. There is relatively large, constant movement in LOD.

Meas Movement

I 2-measure CCW turn

- 1 M steps on L to L side (ct 1), step on R in place (ct &); and step on L fwd in LOD (ct 2). W steps on R to R side (ct 1), step on L in place (ct &), and step backward on R in LOD (ct 2).

When Gunnar and Anne dance, the step on the first count of the measure is usually diagonally forward or back. That is, they have not turned so far that the step can be taken directly to the side. This is most pronounced when the measure begins with the L foot, making that the L step diagonally backward.

- 2 Continue to turn. M does what W did in meas 1, while W does what M did.

This motif can also occur "opposite to the music", that is, the whole motif starts on ct 2 of a measure instead of ct 1.

II 2-measure CW turn

The turn is the same technique as motif I, but the couple turns the other way (CW).

- 1 M steps on L to L side (ct 1), step on R in place (ct &); and step on L bkwd in LOD (ct 2). W steps on R to R side (ct 1), step on L in place (ct &), and step fwd on R in LOD (ct 2).
- 2 Continue to turn. M does what W did in meas 1, while W does what M did.

This motif can also occur "opposite to the music", that is, the whole motif starts on ct 2 of a measure instead of ct 1.

III "Skrú" (1.5 meas per turn)

The turn is the same technique as motif I, but the couple turns the other way (CW).

- 1.5 "Skrú"-step: M takes a large step around W on L (ct 1), place R on floor so that feet are approximately shoulder width (weight on both) with a strong downward svikt (ct 2), turn on R heel while shifting weight to R (ct 3). W stands on L and places R toe on floor beside L (ct 1), step on R toward M (ct 2), step on L around M (ct 3).

There are only 2 svikts in each "skru"-step. The downward movement in ct 1 continues into ct 2. The W follows the M's svikt, but the svikt is more subdued.

It takes 1.5 measures to make one turn. In this way the turn does not "fit the music". The basic pulse in the music is followed, and the turn is danced with 3 cts (1.5 meas), even though each meas consists of 2 cts. When the turn repeats, the next turn starts with the 2nd beat of a measure, the next with the 1st, and so on.

Transitions

From motif I (2-measure CCW turn) to motif II (2-measure CW turn)

The transition from CCW to CW turn is as short as possible. The M dances one meas fwd in LOD (R polka step) to stop and change directions (replacing meas 2, motif I).

From motif I (2-measure CW turn) to motif II (2-measure CCW turn)

The transition from CW to CCW turn is special and consists of a step backward on the R for the M. On a L-footed polka step (meas 1 in the description above), he turns a little less than usual, so that he has his back to LOD at the end of the polka step. He then steps backward on his R as he changes direction. The W follows the M by taking a step forward on her L. Afterward, he starts on the CCW turn by "swinging" the W around in front of him on a L polka step.

In this way, the dance alternates between being "on the music" (polka steps start on ct 1) and "opposite the music" (polka steps start on ct 2) every time there is a transition from CW to CCW turn. This dancing "opposite to the music" is no problem for Gunnar and Anne – they danced just as easily "opposite" as "with" the music.

From motif III (skru CW) to motif I (2-measure CCW turn)

The "skru"-turn is followed by the 2-measure CCW turn. It is possible to start the CCW turn immediately without any transition. But the most highly regarded transition is to step backward in LOD – first step L around the W as if starting another turn, then backward on R in LOD.

In the film material, Gunnar sometimes does this transition by taking an extra count where he taps his L toe on the floor. It appears that he does this to get "with the music" after the turn. Other times the turn is "opposite the music" in that he starts with a backward R step on the 1st ct of a measure.

Dance sequence

The length and order of the motifs are formed by the M each time he dances. The dance always starts "with the music", M L and W R.

The M turns first one way, then the other. Most of the time Gunnar starts with a CCW turn, but sometimes he starts CW. He does short turns (1, 2 or 3 whole turns) before changing direction. Notice the absence of a "promenade" motif (a motif without turning).

He usually starts by turning CCW, then CW, then skru (motif I, II, III). When he repeats the dance, he often does two whole sequences of two-measure turns, i.e. motif I, II, I, II, III. Sometimes he leaves out the first CW turn, dancing two CCW turns with only two transition measures in between.

The skru-turn is usually dances for at least one whole phrase.

Exact sequence in two film clips

There is considerable variation in the way Gunnar forms the dance sequence. Because the way the dance fits the music is unusual, and because the transitions vary, it might be instructive to look at two complete sequences (the descriptions are for the M).

Clip 14 Polka on DVD

<i>Meas (ct)</i>	<i>No of meas</i>	<i>Motif</i>
1–4	4	I: 2-meas CCW turn – 3 meas plus transition
5–8	4	II: 2-meas CW turn
9–16	8	III: Skru-turn – 5 turns plus a step on L
17(1)	0,5	Transition with step on R backward
17(2)–21(1)	4	I: 2-meas CCW turn – 3 meas plus transition (<i>opposite the music</i>)
21(2)–23(1)	2	II: 2-meas CW turn (<i>opposite the music</i>)
23(2)–32(1)	9	III: Skru-turn – 6 turns
32(2)	0,5	Place L toe on floor without taking weight
33–38	6	I: 2-meas CCW turn– 5 meas plus transition
39	1	II: 2-meas CW turn (just one half turn)
40(1)	0,5	Transition with step backward on R
40(2)–44(1)	4	I: 2-meas CCW turn – 3 meas plus transition (<i>opposite the music</i>)
44(2)–46(1)	2	II: 2-meas CW turn (<i>opposite the music</i>)
46(2)–61(1)	15	III: Skru-turn – 10 turns

61(2)–65(1)	4	I: 2-meas CCW turn – 3 meas plus transition (<i>opposite the music</i>)
65(2)–68(1)	3	II: 2-meas CW turn
68(2)	0,5	Transition with step backward on R
69–72	4	I: 2-meas CCW turn – 3 meas plus transition
73–80	8	Straight to III: Skru-turn – 5 turns plus stamp on L on last ct of music

Clip 16 Polka on DVD

<i>Meas (ct)</i>	<i>No of meas</i>	<i>Motif</i>
1–2	2	I: 2-meas CCW turn – 1 meas (swing W in front of M) plus transition (dance fwd in LOD)
3–5	3	II: 2-meas CW turn
6(1)	0.5	Transition with step backward on R
6(2)–10(1)	4	I: 2-meas CCW turn – 3 meas plus transition (<i>opposite the music</i>)
10(2)–12(1)	2	II: 2-meas CW turn (<i>opposite the music</i>)
12(2)–31	19.5	III: Skru-turn – 13 turns
32	1	Transition by stepping on L around W (ct 1), step on R backward in LOD (ct 2)
33–36	6	I: 2-meas CCW turn – 5 meas plus transition
37–39	1	II: 2-meas CW turn
40(1)	0.5	Transition with step backward on R
40(2)–44(1)	4	I: 2-meas CCW turn – 3 meas plus transition (<i>opposite the music</i>)
44(2)–46(1)	2	II: 2-meas CW turn (<i>opposite the music</i>)
46(2)–56	10.5	III: Skru-turn – 7 turns
57	1	Transition by stepping on L around W (ct 1), step on R backward in LOD (ct 2)
58–61	4	I: 2-meas CCW turn – 3 meas plus transition
62–63	2	II: 2-meas CW turn– 3 meas plus stamp on R with weight
64	1	End by stepping on L around W (ct 1) and stamping R beside L without weight (ct 2)

Practice sequence

Here is a practice sequence made by Alix to help you learn the dance.

<i>Meas (ct)</i>	<i>No of meas</i>	<i>Motif</i>
1–4	4	I: 2-meas CCW turn – 3 meas plus transition
5–9	5	II: 2-meas CW turn
10(1)	0.5	Transition with step on R backward
10(2)-131)	4	I: 2-meas CCW turn – 3 meas plus transition(<i>opposite the music</i>)
13(2)-17(1)	4	II: 2-meas CW turn (<i>opposite the music</i>)
17(2)-31	13.5	III: Skru-turn – 9 turns
32(1)	0.5	Step around W on L (as if to start another skru-turn)
32(2)	0.5	Transition with step on R backward in LOD