

Springdans fra Hadeland (Norway)

Springdans is the bygdedans from the Hadeland area, north of Oslo. Gunnar Berge and Anne Halvorsen of Hadeland are my main sources for this dance. In the 1980s and 1990s, Gunnar and Anne held many springdans courses, both in Hadeland and in Oslo. Also, as part of a dance documentation project in Norway, we filmed them doing their springdans. This description is based on extensive notes from a course held in 1998, from the collection weekend in 2002, as well as dancing with Gunnar on numerous occasions.

In Hadeland, the springdans and masurka are not clearly separate dances. They both have similar structure, and the two turns are used in both dances. However, the springdans contains some figures not used in masurka. Also, the melodies have a slightly different character from masurka tunes, and are played more slowly.

Recordings: A springdans from Hadeland. Can also be danced to a masurka. There are several melodies on the CD "Springdans og annen dans på Hadeland", Hadeland Spellemannslag, 1997 (not currently available).

Meter: 3/4

Formation: Couples facing LOD, holding nearer hands at chest height.

Steps: Three-step L. Step fwd on L (ct 1), step on R slightly fwd or beside L (ct 2), step fwd on L (ct 3). Repeats with opposite footwork. Most of the time, the step on ct. 2 is nearly beside the supporting ft, although the W may dance straight fwd in order to cover more space.

W turn: Start facing center. Turning to face LOD, step fwd on R (ct 2), turning CW, step backward on L in LOD (ct 2), continuing to turn, place R toe on floor next to L (ct 3). Do one full turn per meas.

Two meas turn. Dance two three-steps to turn once with ptr CCW or CW. Facing away from center of circle, step on L to L (ct 1), step in place on R (ct 2), and then turn to step fwd or back in LOD (ct 3). Continue around to step on R to R facing in (ct 1), step on L beside R (ct 2), and step fwd or back in LOD (ct 3). This step has a bounce on every count (step), and usually no "pivoting" on the floor is involved.

One meas turn. One meas is used to turn once CW. M step is L-both-R, while W does both-R-L. See more details under fig 5 below.

Style: Movement in LOD is constant, but not necessarily at the same speed. The style is low, near the ground, and with only small ornaments.

Meas Movement

Fig 1 Forward side-by-side

1-2 Dance two three-steps fwd in LOD, M starting L and W R. Cpl may face each other slightly on meas 1, turn slightly away ptr on meas 2.

Dance this opening figure for 2, 4, 6, 8 (or even more) measures. Most common is 4 meas.

Fig 2 W turns under joined hands ("try out" the W)

Transition: On the very last meas of Fig 1, change direction on the last ct to almost face ptr (or at least stop so W is facing LOD). M lifts R arm, and starts to turn W to her R.

- 1 Moving in LOD. M raises R hand, which is joined with W L. He turns her under their joined hands with the W turning step. M follows W diagonally behind her. He can dance fwd with three-steps (see other alternative steps below).

This can be done for 2, 4, 6, or 8 meas, with the most common being 4.

Fig 3 2-measure CCW turn

- 1-2 Start with M facing out from center (the first time he is facing LOD). Take ballroom pos. Dance the 2 meas turn as described above, M starting on L and W starting on R. On the first meas, M steps fwd on L on ct 3, while W steps bkwd on R. On the second meas, M steps bkwd on R on ct 3, while W steps fwd on L.

This is commonly done for a whole phrase, 8 meas, but other lengths are also possible – especially 4 meas.

Fig 4 2-measure CW turn

This turn is the same technique as figure 3, but the turn goes in the opposite direction.

Transition: End the previous CCW turn with the M facing LOD after a L three-step, i.e. do not make the last 1/4 turn. M dance a R three-step fwd: step fwd in LOD on R (ct 1), step on L beside R (ct 2), step fwd on R while turning 1/4 toward outside. W does a L three-step moving bkwd and then turning to face inside of circle.

- 1-2 Start with M facing out from center. Do the 2 meas turn as described above, M starting on L and W starting on R. On the first meas, M steps fwd on L on ct 3, while W steps back on R.

This CW turn is typically done for a shorter time, usually 2-4 measures. It may even be left out altogether, doing just the transition.

Fig 5 1-measure CW turn

The couple makes one complete CW turn in each meas.

1 Start with M facing outside. M does L-both-R: he takes a large L step around W (ct 1), places R on the floor with feet about shoulder width, weight on both and a strong downward motion (ct 2), turns on his R heel and changes his weight to his R ft, moving fwd in LOD toward the W (ct 3).

W does both-R-L: she has wt on L and places R toe on the floor beside her L (ct 1), steps on R toward the M in LOD (ct 2), and steps on L around the M (ct 3).

There are only 2 svikts in this meas. The downward motion of the first ct continues into the second ct. The deeper the 2, the more "manly" the dancer. Also, turning on the R heel on ct 3 was regarded as manly.

This one meas turn is an important part of the dance and is often done for a whole phrase if the couple can do it (less if they can't).

Dance sequence

The basic sequence is danced the figures in order, as described above. The dance begins with dancing fwd (fig 1) for a few meas. Then turn W under joined hands (fig 2) for several meas.

Next turn slowly CCW (fig 3), then slowly CW (fig 4). The slow CW turn is usually regarded as a short transitional motif. The dance ends with the fast turn CW (fig 5).

Sequence Variations

You can leave out the CCW turn (fig 3) and go directly to the CW turn (fig 4 or 5). You can also leave out the CW turn (this is fairly common). You can turn one way, then the other, even changing directions more than once.

Before or after any of the slow turns (or even instead of them) M can dance straight fwd while W dances bkwd.

You can leave out the fast turn (fig 5), substituting a long, slow CW turn instead (fig 4). This would be typical for those who are unable to do the fast turn (haven't learned it yet, too old).

In earlier times, the turning of the W under the arm (fig 2) was only done once at the beginning of the dance. When repeating, M might open into an open shoulder-waist position, dance fwd for a few meas, and then dance a slow turn (CCW, CW, or both) followed by a new fast CW turn.

Since this dance is a bygdedans, many other variations are possible. The dance is regarded as quite personal, and there is a fair amount of freedom to form the dance as the M wishes.

A simplified sequence without either the W solo turn or the two measure CCW turn is: Dance fwd side by side for a few meas (fig 1). M brings W in front of him into ballroom pos – then he dances fwd in LOD, while she dances bkwd. Turn slowly 1-2 turns (fig 3). Then, do the fast turn (fig 4).

Step variations

During fig 2, W turning, M has a choice of steps as he follows behind W. The simplest is to continue fwd with the three-steps as described above. A fancier step is to dance beside W facing the outside: step on L to L (ct 1), step on R beside L (ct 2), step on L toe to L (ct &), step on R beside L (ct 3). (The “inverted” rhythm 1-&-2-3 is also possible.) An alternate step is: step on L to L (ct 1), step on R beside L (ct 2), lift on R while kicking L low to the side (ct 3). When M uses one of these alternate steps, he can turn the W any number of times – the correct foot is always free for both ptrs.

When Gunnar and Anne dance the slow CCW turn (fig 3), the step on the first ct is often diagonally fwd or back (in relation to one’s own body). That is, they have not turned far enough for the step on ct 1 to be taken directly to the side. This is most pronounced on the L side, so that the L ft is placed diagonally bkwd (except on the first, introductory meas).

In the fast CW turn (fig 4), some W in Hadeland use another step, probably newer and probably borrowed from the masurka: step on R twd M (ct 1), step on L toe behind R (ct &), step on R twd M (ct 2), and step on L around M (ct 3). Our source Gunnar felt strongly that W should not use this step, they should instead do both-R-L as described above.

M can add ornaments during the fast turn (fig 4). He can slap his L ft with his L hand on ct 3 during the turn – or he can simply kick up his L foot (without a slap). This would not be done on every turn, but performed once in a while.

Notes

The springdans differs from the masurka mainly in the opening figure – that is, in the way the cpl dances fwd in fig 1. Also, the second fig, turning the W under the arm, is not used in masurka.

The W does not have as much svikt (bounce) as the M. Also, she usually dances fwd on all three steps in fig 1 – while the M steps almost in place on ct 2 of each meas.

Occasionally in competitions, you will see the partners separate into a “lausdans”. There is no documented basis for this in the tradition, says Gunnar.

Gunnar’s sources said that the M could lift the W 3-4 times during the dance!

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