

1965 SANTA BARBARA FOLK DANCE CONFERENCE

Presented by Gordon E. Tracie

SNOA
(Pivot Dance) - Swedish Oldtime Couple Dance

Pronunciation: SNOO-a

SOURCE: The pivot -- a turning of partner with a simple alternation of the feet -- is a popular dance step among traditional dancers in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and is akin to the Dreher of Germany and Austria. The Norwegians have a form called Rull or Rudl, the Danes have their Svejtrit, while the Swedes dance the pivot to the name of Snoa and Slunga (the former term used in the north, the latter common to the south), and even Klubba.

In Stockholm the Snoa is an alternate dance to the Polkett. At oldtime dance gatherings it is the usual practice for the orchestra to play two selections for each tip of rhythms. In the case of the polka, a simple dancing of very small polka steps in Baltic posn (as in Suomalainen polkka, Finnish Polka) is danced during the first selection, and as a contrast a walk and pivot is done to the second selection.

Though there is no pattern to remember nor complex step to master, the Snoa should not be automatically relegated to the "simple elementary" category. A good smooth pivot takes practice. Styles vary with the individual dancer or couple of course, and eventually each finds his own favorite mode. Generally speaking it is well to have the music on the slow side rather than too fast, in order to capture the proper "lilt" of the dance.

TRANSLATION: Pivot (dance). **CATEGORY:** Oldtime couple dance

REGION: Rather general.

SKILL LEVEL: Elementary-intermediate.

MUSIC: 2/4.

RECORD: Aqua VIKING V 820 b. *

TUNE TITLE: Bergslags polka.

INTRO: None.

FORMATION: Any nr of cpls in circle, LOD CCW.

POSITIONS: Open shldr-wst; either closed shldr-wst or Swedish folkdance hold (Polska posn): as in common closed (Waltz) posn except that W's R arm is straight, her R hand holding M's L upper-arm, and M's L arm is bent at R angle, his L hand holding her R upper-arm. ** Free hand either on hip (fingers fwd, thumb back) or loose at sides.

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FOOTWORK: Opp thruout: light walking steps, pivot.

CHARACTER: Light, not plodding.

The following are not figures in the regular sense, but merely two dance posns which are alternated at will, with no fixed number of meas for either:

A. Open steps fwd:

In open shldr-wst posn, bgng on outside ft, cpl moves fwd in LOD with light and springy semi-walking steps, one step to ea beat of the music (M cnt 1-2 for L,R), for any number of meas.

B. Closed pivot turn:

Transition: Whenever desired (preferably on an even 4-meas phrase) M takes a short jump with stamp on both feet, on the 1st beat of the 1st meas of a phrase (this in lieu of his otherwise stepping L), following it with a step R on the 2nd beat, as usual, during which time he takes closed posn with ptr. Simultaneously, W steps R, L as usual, while taking closed posn. (Cnt 1-2).

Cpl then turns CW with 1-2 pivot steps, 1 full revolution per 2 cnts, progressing fwd in LOD, for as long as desired.

Cpl may revert to the open "rest" steps at any time by merely breaking out into open posn again. Similarly, the stamp transition to closed turn may follow at will as before, and so on. In any case, the same alternation of feet is maintained thruout without interruption, whether walking or pivoting.

- * While the suggested record of a typical Swedish polka is especially suitable for Snoa, any moderately tempoed Scandinavian polka may be used -- providing of course that it is played in authentic style by native musicians. Even phrasing is not necessary for this dance.
- ** The national folkdance organization of Sweden encourages "Swedish folkdance hold" (Polska posn) as described above and as used in Hambopolska, for this dance. American dancers generally find regular shoulder-waist posn considerably easier however. Ordinary waltz posn is not used.

Description by Gordon E. Tracie

last two lines at bottom of page:

Sentence on "Free hand..." should go after "Open shldr-wst" at very beginning of paragraph.