

Presented by Ingvar Sodal

GAMMAL SCHOTTIS
(Sweden)

Gahm-mahl SHOTT-ees (Translated "Old Schottische")

This dance is from the province of Dalarna, district of Bingsjo, Sweden.

SOURCE: As learned in Sweden by Gordon E. Tracie, Seattle, from Swedish ethnic dance authority Johan Larsson. It is a traditional regional dance.

This old schottische variant is one of the many "bygde-dansar" (regional ethnic dances) researched within the past decade by retired schoolteacher Johan Larsson of Dalarna, Sweden. Like the others, it was collected on field trips to various "folklore pockets" of the land, and annotated from living tradition-bearers, elderly rural folk who had actually danced it in years past. As in all regional ethnic dances, the importance of proper music cannot be overstressed. It must reflect a relaxed playing style, very "legato". The Dalarna fiddle music with which this particular dance grew up is thus essential to providing the appropriate esthetic atmosphere for the dance to "live and breathe" in.

CHARACTER: Assertive yet smooth, with light springiness. In contrast to the common "phys-ed" or "int'l folkdancer's" Schottisch, with its "1-2-3-hop" flamboyance, this is a rather elegant dance--reserved, perhaps even dignified, but not without a sense of real power on the partner turn. And it should have "svikt", a springy lilt throughout.

MUSIC: Duple meter, schottische rhythm; legato style, fairly slow tempo.

RECORDS: EMI SCLP 1021, Side B, Band 1 (Schottish i bystugan)
RCA (Swedish)YSJL 1-504, Side A, Band 6 (Schottis fran Bingsjo)
ODEON E-54-34342, Side A, Band 3 (Schottish efter Timas Hans)

FORMATION: Individual couple dance and/or mixer; semi-freestyle. Couples in a circle around the floor, facing LOD (CCW):
For individual couple version--any number of couples;
for mixer version--any number of sets of 2 couples each.

STEPS: Alternating; M & W opposite feet, beginning each 2-measure phrase on outside foot.
Open: soft schottische; closed: soft hopsa
Dance holds: Open--single handhold, free hand loose at side. Closed--Swedish polska hold.

SOFT SCHOTTISCHE: Structurally same as ordinary "phys-ed" schottische but with a step and lift instead of a run and hop. There is no sharp knee bend, and the feet are raised only enough to get off the floor (rather than sliding them.)

Movements are smooth and natural, with a definite "springyness". Count "1-2-3-4" per step; call step-close-step-and."

SOFT HOPS: Kinesthetically rather than structurally akin to the regular Danish hopsa (which is a waltz step in duple time). The torque of the turn comes on the FIRST count of the music, allowing the balance of the step to follow naturally. Count "1-&-2-&, 3-&-4-&" per revolution; call "turn-and-hold-and, turn-and-hold-and."

HAND HOLDS:

SINGLE HANDHOLD: Partners face fwd LOD; hands held at waist level, M R hand grasping W L hand from above so both palms face down. Free hand is loose at side.

SWEDISH POLSKA HOLD: Partners stand just slightly to left of each other, facing obliquely, R foot somewhat between partner's feet; M R arm around W waist, M L hand on W R arm just below shoulder, W L hand over M R arm, W R arm under M arm, W hands holding M shoulders on side rather than top.

Phrasing

(in measures)

DANCE PATTERN

NOTE: The following figures are traditionally not looked upon as set routines in a sequence dance, but may be used either selectively or freely alternated at will.

BASIC FORM:

- 1-2 Open hold, 2 soft schottische steps fwd LOD
- 3-4 Closed hold, 4 soft hopsa steps turning CW 2 rev, progressing fwd LOD.

ALTERNATE FORM:

- 1-4 As above, but on meas 3-4 turning CCW instead of CW

VARIATION WITH W TWIRL:

- 1-2 Open hold, M dances 2 small soft schottische steps fwd LOD, while W dances 2 soft schottische steps turning CCW 2 rev under M raised R arm.
- 3-4 Closed hold, turning as in either Basic or Alternate form above.

"MINI-MIXER" FORM

- 2 couples line up, one in front of the other, each facing LOD.
- 1 Open hold, outside foot lead, 1 soft schottische step, both W, plus M in # 2 pos, moving fwd LOD, and M in # 1 pos moving obliquely fwd and outward..

Continued...

- 2 Joined hands dropped, inside ft lead, 1 soft schottische step both W dancing in place, but M trading places as follows: M in #1 pos moves bwd to allow M in #2 pos to dance fwd and in between, up to #1 W as his new partner, while former #1 M takes #2 W as his new partner.
- 3-4 Closed hold with new partner, 4 soft hopsa steps turning CW 2 rev., progressing fwd LOD.
- 5-6 Repeat action of meas 1-2 to get back to original partner
- 7-8 Repeat action of meas 3-4 with original partner.
- Repeat entire 8- measure pattern at will.

GAMMAL SCHOTTISCHE

Page 60 Single handhold, line 1, should read:.... hands held "fwd" at.....
Dance Pattern, insert to R of "(in measures)": Meter 2/4

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