

SAILOR'S MAZURKA

(Sjömans mäsúrka)

Couple dance from Scandinavia

Source: One of several versions of mazurka and pols dances employing a "heel-click" mazurka step, danced in various parts of Norway, Sweden, and Finland. Taught at Scandia Folkdance Club, Seattle.

Recording: Musica A-8545, "Topsy masurka" (import);
Musica A-8544, "Li pols" (import).

Formation: For any number of couples. LOD CCW.

Dance Posns: Open: couple facing fwd, W on M's R, inside hands joined at shoulder height; Closed: Scandinavian waltz position ← similar to Viennese waltz position, but arms (M's L, W's R) held straight out from shoulder.

Steps: "Heel-click" mazurka, as described below; Running step; Pols step, as described below.

Measures

A. Foregoing pattern steps:

(i) "Heel-click" mazurka steps:

1-2 In open position, inside hands joined, beginning on outside foot, 2 "heel-click" mazurka steps (as described below; M's L, W's R) fwd in LOD.

(ii) Running open turn:

3-4 With 6 small running steps, couple makes one turn CW in place. Open position (inside hands joined) is held until the last (6th) beat, at which time closed Scandinavian waltz position is taken.

B. Pols closed partner turn:

5-8 In closed position, 4 turns CW with 4 pols steps, (as described below), progressing fwd in LOD.

Resume position as in A and repeat entire sequence as many times as desired.

THE "HEEL-CLICK" MAZURKA STEP used in the above dance is done as follows (1 "heel-click" mazurka step):

1st beat: step diagonally fwd L; } these 2 steps are taken more-or-less as running steps;
2nd beat: close R
3rd beat: hop off floor with R and "click" heels of both feet together in air, to dancer's L, replacing R on floor immediately after.

A R "heel-click" mazurka step is just the opposite of the above.

This step is done with vigor and exuberance. Oftimes the M stamps with L foot on the 1st beat of the 1st measure, to give added zest to the dance.

THE POLS STEP as used in the Sailor's Mazurka is danced as follows:

M's step: 1st beat: step L, beginning pivot CW;

2nd beat: hop L, continuing pivot, keeping R foot close to floor;

3rd beat: leap onto R (kicking up L behind), completing one full turn CW.

W's step: 1st beat: step R, beginning pivot CW;

2nd beat: hop R, continuing pivot, keeping L foot close to floor;

3rd beat: leap lightly onto L, completing one full turn CW.

The first two beats of each measure are danced relatively smoothly, while the third beat is emphasized by a slight dip on the dancing foot, simultaneously "flicking" other foot in air, behind.

Step pattern chart:

POLS STEP

as danced in the

SAILOR'S MAZURKA

Music:	Beats	1	2	3	1	2	3
Step:	Man	L	L	R	L	L	R
	Woman	R	R	L	R	R	L

(continued on following page)

FDC-54-112

BACKGROUND NOTES: The Sailor's Mazurka may be described as somewhat of a "novelty dance". It appears thruout the Scandinavian countries with varying details in the basic steps and figures. The name also varies, from place to place: In Norway, Sjømansmasurka (Sailor's Mazurka) or Sjømanspols (Sailor's Polska); in Sweden, Norsk sjömanshambo (Norwegian Sailor's Hambo), or even Rysk mazurka (Russian Mazurka). It seems most likely that the dance is an adaptation of certain "imported" steps brought in by seafarers, to basic Scandinavian polska-pols dance forms. The music is 3/4-time mazurka, polka, polska, or hambo rhythm.

A turning step very similar to the above-described Pols is found in many other Scandinavian dances, most notably certain versions of the Norwegian Springar and Springpols, and in the final figure of the lively Røros-pols. In this step the M dances L-R-R, and the W dances R-L-L (which as can easily be seen is a change only in the middle step). Folkdance books in Norway refer to this step as Springar step Nr. 2, but it also called Rundpols (Round-polska) or simply Pols. In the Swedish districts of Finland essentially the same step is used in the Finländsk hambo (Finnish Hambo) and called Hambosteg (Hambo step). A close relation can also be seen to the Delsbopolska step used in the Swedish dance Snurrbocken.

The Norwegian Pols as a distinct dance has upon occasion, in US folkdance circles, been referred to as the "Norwegian Hambo". While this is perhaps misleading, it is true that one version of the Springpols does in fact closely parallel the Hambo, both in pattern and turn. The particular turning step used in that variant is known in Norway as Springar step No. 1. Characteristic of this Norwegian dance (as with the Sailor's Mazurka) is that emphasis is given on the third beat of each measure of the turn, rather than on the first beat as is the case with the dip in the Swedish Hambo.

---Description prepared by C.E.T.