

SNURRBOCKEN  
(Sweden)

Snurrbocken (snoor-book-en Not: schner-bocken), a whirling-bowing dance is a traditional couple dance from Sweden. It is likely from Uppland or Hälsingland, now general throughout Sweden. One of the most lively Swedish Polska couple dances, and one with an added touch of humor, is Snurrbocken, or Snurrbottjen, even Snurrebocken, depending on dialect. The name is a play on words. "Snurr" refers to a whirling or gyrating motion, but "bock" has two different meanings: either "a he-goat" or "a bow or bend"; thus, the name can be translated: 1. "the whirling billy-goat," or 2. "the whirl (and) bow," the latter, of course, precisely describing the action of the two figures. Inasmuch as the dance is fundamentally a couple Polska, it properly begins with the partner turn (not with the bowing, as in some American versions). The second part is a bit of rustic satire, in which the farm folk burlesque the gentry and their pompous, affected mannerisms. Traditionally it was at just this point that the fiddler could have his fun with the dancers, by setting the tempo of the bow--sometimes with long delays, sometimes without any pause at all; it was up to the dancing couples to follow him! Hälsingland fiddler Eric Öst, in a play of musical buffoonery for which he is famous, imparts to his recording the original jesting temperament of this lighthearted dance.

Source: As first learned in Sweden in 1948 by Gordon E. Tracie, and taught at Skandia Folkdance Club, Seattle; described in "Svenska Folkdanser and Sällskapsdanser," Stockholm, 1952.

Record: Aqua Viking V200A

Formation: For any number of cpls, LOD, CCW. Closed shoulder-waist, open shoulder-waist. Lively, light, and with humor.

Steps: Swedish Polska Step, Running Step  
Swedish Polska Step (used in Snurrbocken): Though related to the Polska step as found in the Swedish Hambo, the Polska used in this dance is different, going under the name of "Delsbo-polska" (after district pronounced Dales-boo, in province of Hälsingland), or simply L ft Polska, inasmuch as M begins on his L ft instead of R as in the Hambo-polska step. The step pattern is as follows:

M Step:

ct 1 - pivot on L

ct 2 - continue pivot on L, while placing R along side without shift of wt (both)

ct 3 - step R

W Step:

ct 1 - step on both ft

ct 2 - pivot on R

ct 3 - pivot on L

## SNURRBOCKEN (CONT.)

Steps: As in the Hambo turning step, one full revolution is  
(cont) made for each meas of music. However, no Hambo "dip"  
is used, but instead an even "bounce" is maintained, with  
equal emphasis on each beat of the meas. The steps should  
be short and close to, but off, the floor. Since the turn  
is very fast, good ft control and careful balance must  
be exercised.

Measures  
(3/4)

Pattern

- I. Polska Turn  
1 - 8 In closed shoulder-waist pos, cpl turns CW with 8 Polska  
steps, progressing fwd in LOD.
- II. Run Fwd  
9 - 16 Taking open shoulder-waist pos, free hands on hips  
Swedish style (fingers fwd, thumb back), beg on outside  
ft, cpl runs fwd in LOD with small, light running steps  
(not kicks), one step to each beat of the music.
- III. Exchange of Bows  
17 M and W turn slowly twd one another, M on inside of  
circle, W on outside, both hands on own hips, and ---  
18 With feigned dignity, very slowly bow deeply to each  
other, then ---  
19 M and W each turn half about CCW, so they are back to  
back, and ---  
20 Bow away from one another, in same manner as above, then ---  
21 M and W each complete turn around CCW so as to face  
ptrs once more, whereupon they take closed shoulder-waist  
pos, and ---  
Repeat entire dance from beg, as in Fig I (Polska Turn)  
and following same sequence to end of music.

Presented by: Gordon E. Tracie