

STEGVALS
(Sweden)

A traditional oldtime dance, Stegvals, has been researched in Sweden from 1951 on by Gordon E. Tracie. It is found primarily in western and northern parts of Sweden and is also found in Norway. It means "stride, walk, or step waltz".

Pronunciation: STAYG-vahls

Record: 3/4 meter.

Formation: Cpls in R sidecar polska hold ready to move in LOD.

The following parts are not figures in the regular sense, but merely non-turning and turning segments which can be alternated at will, with no fixed number of measures for either.

R-FT OPEN POLSKA FORWARD ("försteg")

Cpl in R sidecar polska hold, M facing fwd, W bkwd: 2 (or more if felt needed) R open polska steps fwd in LOD, M stepping fwd, W bkwd, on ct 1 of each meas.

TRANSITION AND HALFTURN POLSKA ("stegvals")

Whenever desired, cpl beg turning with R halfturn polska steps, completing 1 full revolution CW in 2 meas, thus:

- ct 1: M steps diag R on R ft to initiate CW turn, while W steps on her R ft somewhat behind her L ft;
- ct 2: hold (no wt change), allowing body to "float" around CW;
- ct 3: M and W close L ft up to R ft and take wt on it;
- ct 4: M steps R ft behind (into LOD), while W steps R ft fwd into LOD;
- ct 5: knees bent slightly as CW pivot continues (no wt change);
- ct 6: M and W close L ft up to R ft, taking wt on it.

Cpl may continue this turn, with M stepping fwd while W steps bkwd, and vice versa (in order to make a full revolution CW in each 2 meas), as long as desired, after which they may revert to initial R-ft open polska fwd, OR L-ft open polska fwd, as follows:

TRANSITION TO L-FT OPEN POLSKA FWD

At a given point (preferably the last meas of a 4-meas phrase), M and W can each step R,L,R while shifting pos so that ptr is on opp side, thus assuming reverse-sidecar polska hold, M facing fwd, W bkwd; they may then take 2 or more L-ft open polska steps fwd in LOD.

TRANSITION AND REVERSE-HALFTURN POLSKA ("bakmes")

Whenever desired, cpl beg turning CCW with reverse-halfturn polska steps (as described for Västerdalsk bakmes), in same manner as with "stegvals", above, but always beg on L ft on ct 1 of each meas.

Note: If preferred, the R,L,R transition step may be used to change directly from a CW "stegvals" turn to a CCW "bakmes" turn. Just remember that M should beg the turn facing LOD: R ft diag fwd to R on CW turn, L ft diag fwd to L on CCW turn.

STEGVALS (continued)

Historical information: Although this dance can be (and not infrequently is) done to most any Scandinavian waltz tune, the historically correct music is that of pre-polska (and therefore pre-waltz) "långdans" (long-dance) rhythm, which appropriately lends itself to the "stegvals" and "bakmes" steps, since they are essentially identical to the basic polska step itself. It is known, for example, that both Stegvals and Bakmes were danced in Scandinavia before the "real" waltz made its appearance in the first decade or two of the 19th century.

Presented by Gordon E. Tracie