

Presented by Dick Crum

ŠUSTER POLKA  
(Slovenia)

Background: Like most of the truly popular old-time Slovenian dances, Šuster polka (SHOO'-ster polka, from the German "Schusterpolka"--- "Shoemaker's Polka") is a localized version of a late-19th century couple dance "imported" from Central Europe. The version given here was learned by Dick Crum at the old Slovenian National Hall in Cleveland, Ohio, in the 1950's. (In Slovenia itself he learned a more complicated version, "Bohinjska šušarska", which has been recorded by Michael Herman on the Folk Dancer label.)

RECORD: 33-EP-SD-601-1, Bd 2, "Šuster polka"

FORMATION: Couples randomly scattered about the dancing area. See below for positioning.

2/4

PATTERN

Meas

PART I: KNEELING

Partners kneel (either knee) facing each other and sing the following, as they do the imitative movements described below:

(Slovenian): Vleci, vleci dreto, touci, touci KLIN.

(Phonetic) : VLEH-tsee DRAY-to, TO-tsee KLIN.

(English) : Stretch the thread, pound the peg.

Movements:

1-4 VLECI: Thumb and index finger together and both hands held up in front (about face level), bring both hands down and apart to sides, as if stretching or straightening out two strands of thread. Repeat this movement 2 more times (vleci, dreto).

TOUCI: Form fists; place one on own knee; strike that fist with the other one 3 times, as if pounding shoemaker's peg, OR pound own fist twice, then reach over and pound partner's fist the 3rd time (on the word "klin"). NOTE: Among old-time Slovenians, all these imitative mov'ts were done in a spirit of playful fun, partners sometimes clashing fists in the air, playing at boxing ears, etc.

5-8 Repeat movements of meas 1-4.

PART II: POLKA

1-32 Partners rise, take ballroom or shoulder-waist pos and polka freely about the floor. The Slovenian polka style here is without a hop, more like a two-step.