

1965 SANTA BARBARA FOLK DANCE CONFERENCE

Presented by Gordon E. Tracie

SVENSK MAZURKA
(Swedish Mazurka) - Swedish Oldtime Couple Dance

Pronunciation: svensk ma-SOOR-ka

SOURCE: This is one of the several "folk-type" couple dances still found in living tradition in Sweden which go under the designation of "gammaldans" (oldtime dance). The Mazurka is by far the least common of the five rhythms in this category however, the other more popular dances being (in order of frequency): Vals (waltz), Hambo, Schottische, and Polka. In fact it is almost solely in Stockholm that this dance is seen.

At Swedish oldtime dance gatherings the orchestra usually plays two selections for each tip of dances, e.g., a pair of waltzes, a pair of hambos, etc. In the case of the Masurka, it is common to see two versions done: a simple one during the first selection and a more complex one during the second. Both forms are given here, designated Mazurka I and Mazurka II. They may be used interchangeably to the same music.

American dancers will soon discover that simplicity in figure pattern (as in Mazurka I) in no way implies simplicity in step execution, for the "simple" version seems to demand more skill and agility than the more spectacular "fancy" version (Mazurka II). It is heartily recommended that dancers learn "the first one first" so as to really get the feel of the Swedish Mazurka rhythm and step "in their bones".

TRANSLATION: Swedish Mazurka. **CATEGORY:** Oldtime couple dance

REGION: Mainly around Stockholm.

SKILL LEVEL: Advanced.

MUSIC: 3/4

RECORD: Aqua VIKING 813 a.

TUNE TITLE: Polka-mazurka potpurri.

INTRO: Pickup note only.

FORMATION: Any nr of cpls in circle, LOD CCW.

POSITIONS: In Mazurka I: closed Baltic posn (described below). In Mazurka II: simple hand hold, open shldr-wst posn. Free hand on hip at all times, fingers fwd, thumb back.

FOOTWORK: Opp thruout: Swedish polka-mazurka step (described below), step-swing, kick-mazurka (described below).

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CHARACTER: Very light and "bouncy".

MAZURKA I

This little dance is in character closely akin to the Polkett, a Swedish form of polka virtually identical to Suomalainen polkka, the Finnish Polka. The dance posn is the same, and even the step is essentially the same except for the fact that it is in $3/4$ rather than $2/4$ time. And it is freestyle, turning in either direction at will.

In Stockholm this dance is simply called Mazurka, but it is known by other names as well, such as Polketta and even (though rare) Hambopolkett!

There is no "pattern" to this dance; it consists solely of dancing Swedish polka-masurka steps (as described below) in Baltic dance posn (also described below). The turn is both CW and CCW. M always begins on L ft, W on R ft.

As a transition from one turning direction to the other, it is customary for the M to stamp on both feet on the 1st beat of the 1st meas of a new phrase. This stamp is in lieu of his otherwise L-lead step, and is followed by cl R, st L, as usual.

MAZURKA II

This "pattern" version of the Swedish Mazurka is known variously in Sweden as Sprättmazurka ("fancy" or "showoff" mazurka), or Skånsk mazurka (Scanian Mazurka, erroneously ascribed to the southern province of Skåne, Scania). It is today danced mostly in the Stockholm area, and then only by the most "eager" of the folk and oldtime dancers. Properly performed, with all the movements sprightly and graceful and with the pattern flowing from part to part, it can be a very impressive little dance.

A. Step-swings:

1-2 Inside hands joined at shldr level, free hand on hip, bgng on outside ft, 2 step-swings away from and toward ptrn.

B. Indiv turns:

3-4 With both hands on hips, again bgng on outside ft, 2 complete individual turns away from ptrn, M CCW dancing L,R,R, and W CW dancing R,L,L on ea turn.

C. Kick-mazurka fwd:

5-6 In open shldr-wst posn, free hand firmly on hip, bgng on outside ft, 2 kick-masurka steps (as described below) fwd in LOD.

D. Cpl turn in place:

7-8 Still in open shldr-wst posn, and bgng with stamp on both feet on 1st beat of 1st meas, 2 polka-masurka steps (as described below) to make one turn arnd in place, either CW or CCW.*

Entire pattern repeated as many times as desired.

5th line from bottom of page -

delete "... and bgng with stamp...", and substitute: "...bgng on
outside ft, M stamping..."

add at end:

CLOSED BALTIC POSN AS IN SVENSK MAZURKA: As in Common Closed
(Waltz) posn except that M holds W's R hand in his L hand, which
is placed on his own L hip, back of her hand against his hip