

BAKMES FRÅN TRANSTRAND

Swedish

- PRONUNCIATION:** BAHK-mehs frohn TRAHN-strahnd
- TRANSLATION:** Reverse dance from Transtrand
- SOURCE:** Dick Oakes learned this dance from Per and Margareta Jennische of Sweden who introduced Bakmes från Transtrand, a freestyle bakmes, to folk dancers at the 1977 Texas Camp.
- BACKGROUND:** Transtrand is a small town in the western part of the Dalarna area of Sweden. The bakmes is one of the oldest forms of the polska and is related to the Rørospols of Norway. Transtrand is a locality situated in Malung-Sälen Municipality, Dalarna County, Sweden. Dalarna is a historical province or "landskap" in central Sweden. It is bounded by Norway in the west. The word "Dalarna" means "the dales" (valleys). The area is a popular vacation destination for Swedes from the south, who often travel there to relax during summer vacations, drawn by good fishing lakes, beautiful campgrounds, and deep forests. Many such Swedes own or rent a second residence in Dalarna, where they are likely to have a vegetable garden and apple trees. In mid-June, summerfest celebrations and dances are held in many of the small villages and, of course, in the larger cities. Dalarna is a region full of historical associations, possessing strong local characteristics in respect to its products, and especially to its people.
- MUSIC:** Viking (LP) SMF 200, side A, band 4 "Vasterdalsk Bakmes"
- FORMATION:** Cpls facing CCW around the dance area with W to M R side, outside arms hanging loosely at sides, inside arms around ptrs waist with W L under M R. This is sometimes referred to as the "peasant pos."
- METER/RHYTHM:** 3/4
- STEPS/STYLE:** OPEN POLSKA: Both M and W step fwd L (ct 1); pause (ct 2); step fwd R (ct 3). The movement is smooth and flowing and resembles an ordinary, natural walking step with the heel making contact first and with the wt rolling fwd onto the ball of the ft.
- REVERSE POLSKA: The entire step takes two meas to complete and is the same for M and W except that M either hold or dance an Open Polska step in place on the first meas, beg the Reverse Polska step one meas after the W. The W, on the first meas, dance across in front of the M into turning pos. Step fwd L turning L toe slightly outward (ct 1); pivot CCW on L (ct 2); step R perpendicularly to the L in front of the toes of the L (ct 3); step L perpendicularly to the R in back of the R heel (ct 1); pivot CCW on L (ct 2); step R in LOD (ct 3). The movement is smooth and flowing with a rocking "lilt."

INTRODUCTION - None.

THE DANCE

The dance starts with an unlimited number of Open Polska steps. When the M determines, the Reverse Polska is begun as the M leads the W across to the M L side and the cpl assumes the Reverse Polska turning pos; W to M L side and facing in the opp (RLOD) dir, R hand around ptrs waist, M L hand on W upper arm, W L hand on M upper back.

When the M determines, he stops the turn and continues in LOD with Open Polska steps.

If the M prefers, he may keep the W at his L side in the closed pos so that the W dances the Open Polska steps bwd in LOD. When this is the case, the M begins the Reverse Polska step on first meas and the W on the next meas.

VARIATIONS

During the Reverse Polska step, the M may slap his R heel with the palm of his R hand on ct 2, or he may make a "dip" on cts 1 or 4 so that his knee touches the floor once per meas for several meas.

During the Open Polska step, the M may separate from the W and perform a cartwheel next to the W, who continues to dance the Open Polska step in LOD. It should be noted that the cartwheel must have been practiced and perfected before dancing on the floor with a ptr and other cpls; it must be entirely vertical with the legs straight to avoid possibly hitting and injuring another dancer (to say nothing of looking totally ridiculous!).