

Telemark, Feather, and Three Step
Third of a Three Part Series
By Jim and Barbara German

Thanks for staying with us. In the last two issues of your DRDC newsletter, we have taken a more detailed look at a popular figure combination in Foxtrot - Telemark, Feather and Three Step. As discussed in the first two parts, the Telemark and Feather combination has moved the couple from DLC to DLW or 3/4 of a left face turn. We have one figure and 1/8 of a turn remaining - the Three Step to end facing line of dance. Easy to do and all down hill now.

As we have indicated, the combination of figures (Telemark, Feather, Three Step) represents many body positions and movements that you will encounter in dance. When these positions and movements are placed back-to-back in a series, they are not easy to execute. But, as you know, increased understanding and some practice will make a difference. You will feel it in your dancing and others will see it in your dancing.

Some time and practice is necessary to achieve a greater understanding and feel.

Now for the Three Step. Our dance couple is in contra (Banjo) position facing diagonal wall. The man's right foot is forward and outside of the lady. Both have a lead foot free. On the last beat of the Feather, our couple had collected their lead foot under their hip and the lady also released her right leg pointing her foot back in anticipation of the man's forward movement. Conceptually, the man wants to lead the lady from contra position to closed position and complete 1/8 of a left face turn over the next three steps.

The first step for the man will start by moving his left foot forward toward DW staying in contra position. Once he has started his movement, the man will bring or turn his right shoulder and hip toward DW "losing" the contra position and leading the lady to closed dance position. The lady will step back with her right foot and due to the man's shoulder/hip movement will take her step slightly more to her right moving from contra to closed dance position. [This step is more back than sideways for the lady.] **The couple is still moving diagonal wall.** If the man also attempted to turn left face on this step (toward line of dance), he would keep turning his left hip away from the lady keeping her behind him on his right hand side. The lady could not achieve the desired closed dance position.

Step 2 for the man will be right foot forward with right shoulder/hip leading. Step 2 will turn 1/8 to the left to end facing toward LOD. Notice, the man's right shoulder/hip has moved from trailing the body at the beginning of step 1 to a neutral position (even with the left side) at the end of step 1 and continues to move forward to a right side leading position on step 2. The first action will lead the lady in front of the man and the second action will facilitate the 1/8 left face turn. The lady, by moving in front of the man, arrived at closed dance position at the end of step 1. Step 2, for the lady, will be left foot back with left side leading in response to the man's lead. This action will allow the lady to turn with the man. **Please note, the left turn part of the Three Step occurred on step 2.** You will probably feel the turn late in step 2.

The man's step 3 is left foot forward toward LOD bringing his left shoulder/hip forward to a neutral position returning the couple to a normal closed dance position. The man's shoulder/hip forward resolves the right shoulder/hip lead on step 2. The lady's third step is right foot back, responding to the man's shoulder lead. We have now completed the Telemark, Feather and Three Step -three measures of music - nine steps - seven of which were NOT in closed dance position. Quite an accomplishment!

For those who would like to add a couple of measures to have a short sequence, you can take the Three Step toward DW, rather than LOD. (This change requires that the left shoulder would continue to lead through step 3 of the Three Step). Now add the Half Natural Turn and Hesitation Change to end in closed dance position facing DC and you are ready to repeat the Telemark, Feather, Three Step combination.

The first action many dancers incorporate into their dancing is the shoulder/hip alignment in relationship to

the lady. The man's hip and shoulder alignment will lead the lady from closed position to contra; contra to closed position; or to facilitate a left turning figure or action. Contra position has become very normal in our dancing and keeping a "partner aware" hip and shoulder position is most important to the feel, look, and enjoyment of the figure. The second action many incorporate, depending on their priorities, is the more backward movement on step 3 of the Telemark-To-Semi (See part one of this series). The Telemark is a very popular figure in dance and each degree of improvement will be seen and felt many times during the dance evening.

The Telemark, Feather, and Three Step combination has taken only nine weight changes over three measures of music. Not a lot of musical time, but a lot to think about in refining a couple's appearance on the dance floor. We have looked at a lot of material with this combination. We have tried to address the "how" and "why" in the movement and show where increased understanding and some practice can provide a big payoff with your dancing pleasure. Enjoy.