

# HOPAK

(Ukraine)

Hopak is the Ukrainian folk dance performed by men. It is often used in ballets as a solo or ensemble dance. When danced in ensemble there are two parts: the couple dance and the men's solo. The solo displays the man's agility and dance talent and is danced to please the ladies. As the men dance these various difficult feats of skill they may exclaim "hup, hup".

This pattern of Hopak was arranged by Henry "Buzz" Glass and consists of typical Ukrainian patterns for group participation.

**MUSIC:** Records: Kismet A 106, Columbia 20346F, Victor V-21123 A, Kismet LP  
Kismet record as the description is written is preferred.

**FORMATION:** Cpls in circle formation, Varsouvienne pos\*.

**STEPS AND STYLING:** Pas de Basque\*, touch-extend, Russian polka step\*, buzz step\*, lunge-step, push-away\*, toe-heel-touch-kick step, prysiadkas.

**NOTE:** Fists on hips unless otherwise stated in description.

MUSIC 2/4

PATTERN

Measures

**INTRODUCTION:** Kismet A 106 and Kismet LP - No Introduction.

**I. PAS DE BASQUE**

1-16 In Varsouvienne pos, move fwd (LOD) with alternate pas de basque steps, L, R. Posture erect, chest lifted, leaning slightly bkwd with wt over heels. M accentuates leap of pas de basque, W is reserved.

**II. TOUCH-EXTEND**

1-2 Varsouvienne pos. Hop on R and touch L toe beside R (ct 1); hop again on R and extend L fwd, straightening knee sharply (ct 2). Move fwd with 3 light running steps L, R, L (cts 1, &, 2).

3-16 Repeat action of meas 1-2 (Fig II) alternating ftwork, 7 times (8 times in all).

**III. RUSSIAN POLKA**

1-16 Varsouvienne pos. Begin L. Move fwd (LOD) with 16 Russian polka steps: 1 light leap, close to the floor, 2 running steps. The step is smooth with ft close to floor. The first step of each polka is accented, long, smooth, and a reaching step danced on the balls of the ft. Cpls sway slightly from side to side as they move fwd.

**IV. BUZZ STEP TURN**

1-16 Release hands and turn individually to own R (CW). R arm is

extended with gaze twd palm of hand. L fist on hip. Dance 15 buzz steps turning R (CW). Stamp L with R fist returning to hip on ct 16. Change hands and reverse turn and stamp, turning L (CCW).

#### V. LUNGE-CUT

- 1-16 In Varsouvienne pos lunge fwd L, knee slightly bent, L shoulder leading (ct 1); cut R to L, straightening L knee and extending L very close to floor (ct 2). Move fwd with 3 running steps L, R, L (cts 1, &, 2). Change shoulder lead on 1st step, repeat lunge-cut step, alternating ftwork 7 times.

#### VI. BUZZ STEP TURN WITH PTR

- 1-16 On preliminary (ct &), last meas of Fig V, step L in order to turn CW. Ptrs begin with R hip adjacent, R arms around ptrs waist, L arms extended outward from shoulder, about 45° from head. Begin R. Turn with 15 buzz steps and stamp R. Change pos to L hips adjacent and beginning L, repeat buzz-turn and stamp CCW. Finish in single circle facing ptr, MR - WL shoulder twd ctr of circle.

#### VII. PUSH AWAY

- 1-16 R arms extended overhead, about 45° from the head, palm turned inward, L fist on hip, head turned away from extended arm (focus on ptr). Move away from ptr with 14 push steps and 3 stamps (LRL). On the 3 stamps the fists are on hips.
- Repeat push steps and 3 stamps moving L and back to ptr.
- Push steps: R: Step R flat sdwd (ct 1); push down and sdwd L with ball of L as L is flicked outward, heel lifted and L knee bent (ct &). Repeat action for ct 2 &, etc. The action is down-up.

#### VIII. TOE-HEEL-TOUCH-KICK

- 1-16 Ptrs face, M inside, W outside of circle. Touch R toe in inverted pos, at the same time hop on L and turn R hips twd ptr (ct 1); hop again on L, turning L hips twd ptr, and replace R toe with R heel (ct &); hop L and touch R toe in front of L (ct 2); hop L and extend R leg fwd sharply, straightening R knee (ct &). Small leap onto R touching L toe in inverted pos to repeat action of meas 1 & 2 & (Fig VIII) 7 times, alternating ftwork.

#### IX. IMPROVISED STEPS

While W improvises with pas de basque steps, back skipping steps, or toe-heel-touch-kick steps, M demonstrates his masculine vigor with prysiadkas. (See "Prysiadkas" on page 19). As M begins his final prysiadka, the W may turn in place with a buzz turn.

NOTE: The improvised pattern may be cut in half by substituting the Buzz-turn with ptr pattern (Fig VI) for the last 8 meas. Or the entire improvised pattern may be eliminated and the Buzz-turn with ptr (Fig VI) substituted. This turn may also be danced with the back of the R shoulder adjacent pos.

## PRYSIADKAS

Ukrainian and Russian dances with their squats, spins and leaping steps contain a unique quality of execution demanding the utmost of the individual in speed, balance, agility, and precision. The Ukrainian terminology for the squatting steps, "prysiadkas" signifies the physically challenging steps performed by the man only. "Prysiadkas" allow the man to flaunt his physical strength much as the Spanish gitano amazes with his flurries of intricate footwork. Contrasted with the open exuberance of the man, the woman's part is more reserved and restrained. It is only the man who "stoops to conquer". While there are many variations of "prysiadkas" in both Russian and Ukrainian dances, those listed below are popularly used. (HG)

### GENERAL ASPECTS OF PRYSIADKAS

1. A straight, erect back in squatting position.
2. A seeming ease in execution.
3. Proper styling and precision in execution.

### STEPS

#### 1. *HEEL SQUAT*

- a. From a standing position assume a squatting position - sit over heels and turn knees out. Hands cross in front of knees, palms turned in.
- b. Spring to astride position, landing on the heels with toes turned up. At the same time fling arms to an extended position at shoulder height. Continue (a) then (b).

#### 2. *SIDE KICK*

- a. From a standing position (heels together, toes turned out, R hand in back of neck, L fist on hip) assume squat position. Assume standing position by rising on R foot and kicking L foot directly to the L simultaneously. Continue 3 times, moving to the R and end with stamp L,R,L.
- b. Repeat in opposite direction, shifting position of the hands.

#### 3. *PIGEON TOE*

- a. From a standing position, assume a squatting position.
- b. Recover to astride position, landing on inverted toes - pigeon-toed. The hands cross in front on the squat position with palms turned in. In the astride position, the hands are extended to the side opposite the hips with palms turned out.

#### 4. *SQUAT WITH SINGLE PIGEON TOE*

- a. From standing position, squat to heels - hands crossed between knees with palms turned in.
- b. Assume astride position, turning L toe to inverted position, while R foot remains in normal position. The R hand remains to the side with the palm turned in, while the palm of the L hand is turned out.
- c. Squat and repeat with R foot pigeon-toed and change in hand position.

## 5. SQUAT AND SPIN

- a. From standing position, assume squatting position, sitting on heels with hands crossed, palms turned in.
- b. Land in astride position on heels, hands extended s<sup>wd</sup> shoulder height.
- c. Land in squatting position, L hand between knees, R hand extended in back. In this position (prepare) swing arms to the L, giving the body momentum to spin to the L and rise on the L foot. In spinning once the R foot remains close to the L slightly off the ground. Continue alternating *squat astride* and *squat spin*.

## 6. SQUAT TOE HEEL

- a. From standing position, squat over heels.
- b. Recover from squat to standing position with L toe inverted, place L heel in same place. Repeat sequence with the R foot.

## 7. "SCHUPAK" HEEL THRUST

- a. From a squatting position, knees almost together, arms folded over chest, thrust the R foot fwd at the same time sitting over the L heel. Reverse and continue alternate thrusting. A more difficult version of the above is to assume the same squatting position, body balanced over the L heel while the R foot is thrust fwd off the floor. Continue the above with alternate thrusts of R and L.

## 8. LEG CIRCLING

- a. From squatting position, hands flat on floor in front, swing R extended leg s<sup>wd</sup> and fwd, cutting out R arm which is immediately replaced, then similarly the L arm and L leg, and assume original squatting position. R leg makes a complete circle.