

Mr. Chopin's Waltz

In Sicilian Formation

Rich Jackson, a caller in the Boston area, has made a brilliant suggestion for changing the formation of this dance to make it easier to teach and easier for dancers to understand without taking anything away from what the dance has to offer. The dance, as I published it in *Even Odder Calculated Figures*, is a longways dance. It has quirky end conditions that take awhile to explain and require concentration to remember. Rich's idea is to do it as a Sicilian circle. Like magic, the end conditions disappear. I now teach the dance this way exclusively, and it's great.

Here are a few thoughts about teaching the dance in this formation:

1. It helps to distinguish between an inner circle and an outer circle of dancers and designate "Couple 1" to be the one with the man in the outer circle and "Couple 2" to be the one with the man in the insider circle.

2. At the end of A1, everyone is facing back the other way around the circle; and at the end of A2, everyone is home.

3. Going into B1 3-4, both members of Cu.1 are facing out of the circle, and both members of Cu. 2 are facing into the circle, ready to cast left (W following Ptrs) back to meet original "other couple."

4. At the end of B1 3-4, everyone is facing back the other way and has changed circle membership.

5. B1 5-8 then repeats everything in the other direction, but Cu.1 is facing in before they cast left and Cu. 2 is facing out. Everyone ends at home.

I am grateful to Rich for helping me move "Mr. Chopin's Waltz" from being a dance for only very experienced dancers to a dance for pretty experienced dancers.