

## Dance Technique – An essential part of modern Round Dance

Round Dancing was exposed to deep changes during the past 30 years. The two big “revolutions” truly were the introduction of Roundalab Figure Standards and the more recent introduction of technical details like bodyposture, footwork, headposition etc.. The introduction of both have caused some commotion among traditionalists, cause they feared the approach of RD towards classic Ballroom Dancing. But we all have to face the fact that those good old days when Stepcues played an important role are gone as well as the belief that the mere execution of steps leads to dancing a phase VI Waltz. The question is: Were the old days really the only good ones; or were they just different?

The blessings of Figure Standards are known to every cuer and several generations of cuers – I’m one of them – know **Thru , Side, Close, Side to BJO;** only as **Chasse to BJO;**. But is it really necessary to introduce technical terms like bodyposture and foot position to RD? Would I say no, we all had to admit that RD is not only a circular movement but it doesn’t move at all and I could close the file.

As members of a danceclub we take the opportunity of a good technical education in ballroom dancing to support our RD activities. Many other cuer couples, here in Europe and all over the world, have done this already for several years. We probably have one thing in common: The realization that the basic rules of moving together with a partner apply to both ballroom and round dancers. Hence, there is no doubt that teaching dance technique, which is based on these rules should be a fundamental part of every partner dance education.

“How do I have to place my foot and adjust my upper body to avoid that my partner becomes my opponent?”

“Which head position helps most to execute a certain turn?”

The answers to these questions have not much in common with the slight snobbish and old-fashioned term named „Styling“. And the answers should not contribute to look nicer on the floor but to create a partner relationship which makes partner dancing and its learning easier.

One can’t stop the progress, but one can determine its direction. And the direction progress should take is to shift the emphasis from higher level dancing to higher quality dancing in all levels. Students should face the terms and contents of technique earlier then with beginning of Phase V. The danger of overtaxing students especially beginners is certainly given. Teachers should be aware how much to demand at a certain point of education and still keep the students happy. Our strive to present knowledge should not undermine the big advantages RD certainly has – to learn a lot of beautiful dance figures in a nice atmosphere, short time and in an unbeatable easy way.

The introduction of dance technique should be considered as a natural progression of modern RD. Carefully placed it neither leads to a destruction of RD’s virtues nor will it spread RD apart from the other dance forms under the roof of EAASDC. A good technique should be the goal of every dancer in every state of education, from clogging beginner to C2 square dancer. And every dancer should have the opportunity to develop with his personal skills. This requires a good education of all dance leaders in ECTA. The “Education Program” which is on its way will contribute a lot especially in respect of handling this second “revolution” in RD.