

FALLAWAY RONDE (in SLOW TWO STEP)

by Harold & Meredith Sears

The Fallaway Ronde is not a complete figure. It is a step and an action, and subsequent steps will need to be cued, but this figure is an interesting study in lead and follow. Let's suppose we are in closed position, facing the wall, with trail feet free. In one slow count, we step side right (lady side left) turning to semi-closed position both facing line of dance (LOD). At the same time, ronde the left foot counterclockwise (lady ronde R CW) beginning to cross the lead foot tightly behind the trail foot. The next step will be back, and this will put us in the actual fallaway position. Again, the rest of the measure has to be cued. For instance, we might start with the lead feet free, do a side basic toward LOD (SQQ); and then a fallaway ronde, behind, side (SQQ); moving toward RLOD.

The man's lead for the Fallaway Ronde turns out to be quite busy. His actions all happen at about the same time, but if there is a sequence, it might be the left sway that comes first. This opens the lady's head and causes her to think about opening out or turning a little right-face. At the same time, he begins to turn his hips to the left and bumps her with his right hip. Now, this sounds a little crude. In dancing, we don't push, shove, or bump our partners -- we "lead" them -- but still . . . As I step side, I turn my hips to the left to begin my ronde, and it feels like I'm bumping Meredith with my right hip as I do that, and she tells me that she feels a bump.

She has just taken her side step, so her weight is on her left foot. The part of her body that is free is her right side, so the "bump" causes her right hip and right leg to swing out turning right-face. I am turning my hips left and rondeing my left leg left-face, so we ronde together.

It's interesting to compare a simple Chasse -- side R, close L, side R (SQQ) -- to a Fallaway Ronde, behind, side (SQQ). During the "side close side," there is no sway change and no hip bump. Do them both for yourself, and you can clearly feel these two leads for the Fallaway Ronde. Third, the man can use a little pressure with his right hand on her back to reinforce her ronde. Tighten up a little on the left side of her back, and

that will leave the right side freer, by comparison, to do its ronde and behind step. And fourth, the man uses right-face upper-body rotation to continue to propel her ronde. Don't push with your left hand, but rotate the whole upper-body frame to lead her right leg around in its arc. You will notice that you are turning your upper body to the right but your lower body to the left, in its ronde, producing quite a twist. This is your job, gentlemen, and your pleasure -- to get some of your body to dance your own part of the figure and to get the rest of your body to dance the lead for your partner's part.



