

# Tango Flick

by Harold & Meredith Sears

Both of these actions are done in semi-closed position (SCP). There is no weight change; these are "picture actions." To do a **Head Flick**, the man quickly rotates his hips right (CW) and then left (CCW) to cause the woman to snap her head left and then right. She sharply closes her head -- we are ever so briefly in closed position -- and then she opens it again to SCP. The man's head turns little if at all.



For this action to work, we must be in *tight* SCP with lower torsos, from the bottom of the rib cage down, in contact. This is not an unreasonable expectation -- it is simply a good tango SCP -- but we mustn't relax and drift apart. He can't turn her if he isn't touching her. It's like two gears oriented horizontally and next to each other. If the gears are together and the cogs enmeshed, then the one gear can turn right and the other will turn left. If the cogs are not enmeshed, the one gear can turn, but the other won't feel it.

It is always important for the woman to wait for the man's lead before dancing a figure. This is what allows you to dance together, as one. But in the Head Flick, it is especially important to let the man "flick" the woman's head. If she passively allows herself to respond to his movement, it is surprisingly comfortable for her, and it looks classy. If she flicks her own head in response to the cue, the sharp movement is an uncomfortable strain on tiny muscles in the neck, and on top of that, it looks odd -- a spasm -- a tic instead of a flick. Again, the *man* is responsible for the Head Flick. If he doesn't do it, she should not move.



To do a **Foot Flick**, in *tight* SCP, the man does a tiny brush/tap with his lead foot. In the process, he pushes with his left knee on the outside of her right knee, and she flicks her right foot back and replaces it to tap position. Notice that the man does not flick his foot. There is no lead for the woman if he does.\*\*

The Foot Flick itself is a sharp bending of the knee and straightening it again. If she were to do it by herself, it is as though she has a pebble trapped under the toes of her right foot and she wants to propel that pebble back behind her. She shoots it back with a sharp flip. Of course, she can do a Foot Flick by herself, and it doesn't seem to look as odd as an independent Head Flick does, but dancing together still looks better. For good lead and follow here, we must again be in tight SCP with hips together *and* lead legs in



contact. If you're apart from each other, and he bangs his knee into her leg from a distance, it won't feel good. The lead is the slightest nudge from a knee already touching.

It's interesting to compare these two flicks. For a Head Flick, he nudges her with his left hip; for a Foot Flick, he nudges her with his left knee. Do both, and I suppose she would flick both?

### **\*\*Exchange of mails with Harold concerning the foot flick:**

Annette: Although I read this 3 times, I can't get the picture in my head... in semi Frank pushes with his left knee on the outside of my right knee? How do we get our inside legs out of the way? Who knows, we have never tried it! :-)

Harold: We're in SCP LOD, tap position, so trail legs are back. Lead legs are in contact (*tight* SCP). So the "brush tap" moves his knee DRW. Her flick is DRW. Our trail feet are RLOD relative to lead feet, so the actions of the lead feet don't run into the trail feet. The man's action moves his knee just 1-2 inches, the slightest nudge. However, Meredith tells me that I do actually move her foot. I mean, she says I do more than signal the movement -- I actually power the movement. I don't know. She also said it's like a doctor tapping your knee to test your reflexes and you kick -- that more implies that I'm triggering or signaling and she is *doing* the flick. Right now, all I know is that it happens. I have better control over her foot flick than I do over her head flick, although that seems to work sometimes, too. Anyway, try it. It really feels like you're doing something together.

Annette: The first stumbling block is "lead legs in contact". No matter how "tight" SCP may be, no, our lead legs are not in contact. Not ours, and not, I am convinced, the lead legs of most round dancers. In CP, our lead knees are not in front of each other - my right knee is opposite the space between his knees. If, from there, we turn our heads and feet towards Line of Progression (and if they are the only parts that we turn, we couldn't be in a tighter SCP), his left knee is ahead of mine (not touching) - what is touching is my left knee in the back of his right knee. When we step forward, we step to the left side of the body with our left foot and to the right side of the body with our right foot (Richard Lamberty) and not "in front of the other foot" or "behind and on the same line of the other foot" which is apparently a thing of the past, even (and especially) in picture figures like the contra check. What I

consider as the outside of my knee is towards the Wall if we are facing LOD. The **inside** of my knee is towards partner. How he manages to nudge the outside of my knee is still a mystery to me, I really need a picture. Can you give me an example of a preceding and following figure ? I'll ask Richard to show me the next time I see him.

Harold: We did it in our *El Choclo IV: Serpiente* ;; Slo Thru to tight SCP ; Foot Flick ; Walk PU ; So, I think anything that ends with a slow "tap" would be a good precede for this: a five step; a natural twist turn; a whisk, thru tap, to a foot flick. Any choreography that calls for a head flick (fairly common) could have a foot flick substituted. A little more on my dance position: Meredith's upper body is into my right arm, but her lower body is not far right. Our thighs are together. Her right knee is tight between my left and right so it touches both the left side of my right knee and the right side of my left knee. We are lowered to make this contact. Our knees are turned in; our feet turned out. So the "front" of our knees (kneecap) face partner (wall & COH); our toes point almost LOD. My left knee is on the right side of her right knee. Somehow, my brush tap triggers her to bend that knee and do the flick. I don't push her *knee* any distance, but her foot moves quite a distance and then snaps back. Well, needless to say, I'd love to hear what Richard might say about all this, if you talk to him.

