

# OBEREK OGOLNOPOLSKI

General Polish oberek, arranged and taught by Ada Dziewanowska.

Record: Muza XL-0203 "Pożegnanie Ojczyzny" (Farewell to My Country), side B, band 5 "Z Janowa" (From Janów), 3/8 time.



Oberek [oh-beh-rehk] which has its origin in Mazowsze, in central Poland, is one of the five Polish national couple dances. It is lively, spectacular, and almost acrobatic. From Mazowsze it spread all over the country and with slight variations was danced by peasant folk in every region. It contains steps and figures from all Polish dances. In olden times it was called the obertas. The name oberek derives from the verb obracać się (to turn, to spin), and truly so, as it is composed mainly of spinning and twirling around the room. Although done in a group, each couple may dance it in their own way. The leader might only call a change of direction. The woman's role seems less important, as the man has harder feats to accomplish, but he cannot do them without her help. The men try to outdo each other, and often the whole group stops to admire a "show-off." It is a very wild and noisy dance, with stamps, and swishes, and shouts, the most popular of which are "oj, dziś, dziś" [oy jeeesh, jeeesh] or "uha" [oo-hah]. The arranger, as a child, participated in various harvest festivals, during which the oberek was danced by everybody present, the young as well as the old.

Starting position: Couples around the room facing LOD, L hands joined pointing forward, Man's R hand around Woman's waist; Woman's R hand outstretched forward.



## Measures

1-4 Introductory music: stamp & hold as partners move away and toward each other with 1/4 turns.

Variations of steps and figures will be given in square brackets

PART I (Melody A: 8 meas. played twice)

- 1-7 7 running smooth, not bouncy oberek steps (three to a meas., done with bent knees with a stamp on the first count).
- 8 Two stamps [or: ct 1: jump onto inside ft; ct 2: scuff with outside heel; ct 3: hold].
- 9-15 Repeat pattern of meas. 1-7.
- 16 With two stamps take shoulder-waist position, Man facing LOD.

PART II (Melody B: 8 meas. played twice)

- 1-7 Man starting with Rft, Woman with Lft turn CW with 7 bouncy oberek steps, moving in LOD.
- 8 Two stamps.
- BOUNCY OBEREK STEP: Ct 1: leap on Rft; ct 2: land on both ft, with both knees bent; ct 3: push upwards on Lft, flicking Lft up in back in the air. Alternate ft. Woman does the same on opposite ft.
- 9-16 Repeat meas. 1-8 [or: turn CCW, moving in RLOD].



(cont.)

**PART III** (Melody A: 8 meas. played once)

- 1-8 Repeat pattern of Part I [or: keeping the shoulder-waist position Man starting Lft, Woman Rft, couple turns CW moving in LOD; at meas. 7-8 (or also 3-4) Man picks up Woman (she helps by jumping up) and turns her in the air (as she kicks up her bent legs in the back, holding them together) and deposits her on the floor in a new spot].



**PART IV** (Melody C: 8 meas. played twice)

- 1-4 In open shoulder-waist position, outside fist on own hip, Man starting Lft, Woman Rft, couple turns CW with 4 modified bouncy oberek steps, moving in LOD.  
5-7 Man does 3 kneels around Woman (alternating knees, RLR), Woman is backing around and supports Man by his R arm.  
8 Two stamps.  
9-16 Repeat pattern of meas. 1-8.



**PART V** (Melody D: 8 meas. played twice)

Couple keeps the same position of hands, or as on → picture, and continues turning CW moving in LOD; Woman starting Lft keeps doing the modified oberek step and supporting the Man, while he:

- 1 Ct 1: step Rft; ct 2: hold; ct 3: click heels (hołubiec - hoh-woo-byets) not too high in the air.  
2 Modified oberek step, starting with Lft.  
3-7 Repeat pattern of meas. 1-2 three-and-a-half more times.  
8 Both do 2 stamps.  
9-10 Man starting Rft, Woman Lft, couple continues turning CW with 2 oberek steps, moving in LOD.  
11 Crossing with Rft in front of the Woman, Man leaps as high as he can, klicking his heels in the air and extending his L arm up; Woman supports the Man without moving much herself.  
12 Man lands on both feet, knees deeply bent, in front of Woman [or: lands on Lft only, R leg bent in a kneel]; Woman repeats pattern of meas. 11.  
13-16 Repeat pattern of meas. 9-12.



In Part V, couple can dance only either the pattern of meas. 1-8, or of meas. 9-16, repeating them more times.

**PART VI** (Melody C: 8 meas. played once)

- 1-8 Repeat once pattern of Part IV (4 turns and 3 kneels); or of Part III (picking up of the Woman) [or: in shoulder-waist position couple turns CW moving in LOD; meas. 1, 3, 5, 7: ct 1: step, Man Lft, Woman Rft; bending body toward it; ct 2: lift to side other straight leg; ct 3: jump on, Man Lft, Woman Rft; meas. 2, 4, 6: reverse foot-work and body movement; meas. 8: two stamps].

Repeat the dance twice more; the second time it ends on Part III. In Part I, the following variation can be done, using small running steps (3/meas.): meas. 1-3: in shoulder-waist position, moving in LOD, Man, starting Lft, runs forward, while Woman, starting Rft, moves backward; meas. 4: with half a CW turn change direction; meas. 5-7: repeat pattern of meas. 1-3 in opposite direction; meas. 8: change direction, and so on.