



Edinburgh University Swing Dance
Society notes on:



Balboa: 5) Lolly kicks

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Lolly kicks are part of Bal-Swing, and take their name from Lawrence ("Lolly") Wise, who can be seen in this 1937 newspaper clipping which was unearthed by "jitterbuzz" (thanks!). Paradoxically, in this picture Maxie seems to be the one doing Lolly kicks (maybe) and Lolly is doing something else.



Source: The one and only (DANCING TOPICS) November 30, 1937, No. 24.

Getting into Lolly kicks from a come-around.

There are lots of ways into Lolly kicks but the one we teach in beginners' classes comes from a come-around (these notes assume that you are completely comfortable with a come-around).

Beats 1-4 are exactly like a normal closed come-around (the kind that is heading back into the basic).

On the step-step on beats 5-6, leaders relax their right arm and take off their own rotation, so that the lady continues to rotate and therefore the couple open out almost into a side-by-side position. Lindy Hoppers will recognize this feeling as being similar to that at the end of a Lindy Circle, except that you do not open out quite so much in Bal. The connected arms (man's left, lady's right) also 'relax' to cross the body, so that the connected hands lie in front of the space between the man's right and lady's left side, hands at about tummy height (unlike the end of Lindy circle). The man's R hand ends up on the lady's nearest shoulder blade, near her spine. It is tempting to reach further round, but this will cause problems with variations later so you might as well learn to control the Lolly motion in the correct position from the beginning.

On 7, open out more (this is still the momentum of the original come-around) and kick your inside legs diagonally across you, as Maxie is doing in the photo above.

On 8, put that foot down, turn back towards each other (main lead from man's R arm) and...

On 1, point the knee of your outer leg towards your partner and 'tap' the toes of your outer leg on the floor, heel high and knee bent. There is a feeling of compression in your connected hands now, but you must not "push and pull" your hands to and fro – they stay pretty much on the mid-line.

On 2, put that foot down on the outside again and start leading outwards again

On 3 do another kick as at 7.

(and continue the sequence *ad. lib.*)

So the basic rhythm is 'kick – tap – kick – tap –'

Direction on the floor.

Lolly kicks can be done in two basic ways.

- 1) On crowded floors and when not trying to go anywhere, the lady is the centre of a circle and the man orbits round her as both do the Lolly kicks
- 2) If you want to cover the floor, for example when entering a jam session circle, you can progress in a straight line "forwards" with respect to the direction you face at about beat 6 of the come-around that took you to the Lolly kicks

Getting back out again

Again, there are lots of ways, but the easiest, given what you already know, is to exit as you would from a spike. As you finish a 'tap' with the outside leg, let's say on beat 6 for simplicity, step a little away from your partner as you put your foot down. Still lead the kick on beat 7. Leaders, you are not in exactly the type of position you would be in on beat 7 of a spike. Followers, so are you, except that you are kicking rather than holding (and some people do this in a spike anyway – we just prefer the understated elegance of the hold). So, leaders, lead the lady to come past your R side and top turn exactly as you would from a spike, and gather her up in a come-around.

Being flashy

Obviously, the come-around that gets you in to Lolly kicks need not be one that comes from the basic; it could be one that started at the exit from a spike (say), so you can go;

Spike -> come around -> Lolly kicks -> come-around -> spike

without ever using the basic. This can be fun, but do not do it too much – remember that the heart and soul of Balboa is in the basic, which is why our next session will be on more things that you can do without ever leaving the pure Balboa hold.

To make suggestions or to request up-to-date copies, e-mail Balboa@swingdoctors.org.uk

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