

North Houston Swing Dance Club

Saturday November 8, 2008

[\(Please read my 'Attention Dancers' note at the end of the class notes\)](#)

Club News

What an introduction! Bobby introduced Ben Hooten to the club, then graciously let Ben teach the combined class so folks could get to know how Ben teaches and what he'll be doing in his classes. Bobby stepped in and covered some of the things he wanted to see us improve on, like connection, lead and follow techniques, and the basic walking footwork methods of West Coast Swing. It was an awesome class and everyone was excited to be a part of the historic expansion and growth of our club. The old adage seems to apply: Build it, and they will come. As a result, we had a full house again, and some of Houston's best dancers were in the house! Rock On, North Houston! We're havin' a blast!



Thanks Sara, for helping out!

Class Notes

Our **Basic** class covered the right and left side passes, along with a review of the Basic Step. It looks like Lil and Lee are ready to move on to Ann's Intermediate class next time. We had some new folks joins us too. Glad to have you!

The **Intermediate** class is really getting challenged lately. Ann and her assistants Charles and Jeni, are helping the group move through all the moves that make up the foundation of The Whip

and/or West Coast Swing. This week, Ann's class did a Right Side Pass, a Left Side Pass, a Spinning Left Side Pass, a Fold (left side pass, tucking the lady's hand into the small of her back as she passes) followed by a new move, the Hook Step.

First the Fold: The Fold gives the gals a chance to do their 'walk around anchor'. After count FOUR with your hand tucked into the small of your back, you ladies can walk that anchor around with your three steps and really strut yo' stuff as you go!! Here's your chance to really pour it on and get that spotlight on YOU! Its easy to do, and helps get you comfortable with some of the flashy moves to come as you advance.

The Hook Step: Start the Hook step with a 2 hand hold. The fella starts this move by hooking his left foot behind his right foot on count ONE. Lead the lady down the man's left side by holding the man's left hand up, and the right hand moves to the man's left hip. This invites the lady to walk around the back of the man. Release the handhold at the man's waist, and the fella continues to lead the lady around his back to his right side with his left hand over his head. The man steps left and back into the slot of count FOUR. As the lady moves past the man's right side, she turns, finishes her walk, and does her anchor. The Hook Step gets its name because of how the fella hooks that left foot behind his right, which starts the motion of circling the lady around him.

The Hook Step ends with a funky handhold with the man's hand on top of the lady's. To fix it back to a normal handhold, finish this move with a right side pass, and... 'Ta Da' !!! Back to what feels good again. Ann had a real nice thought in mind with these series of moves. Us guys have a real tough time thinking ahead, planning what moves to do that will match the music and add variety to our dance. What Ann has done by doing these moves in repetition over and over again, is that she's made a drill for the fellas to link about 6 moves together so you DON'T HAVE TO THINK SO HARD!!!! Us guys love it!! We know once we start this pattern, we've got about 48 beats of music covered without having to think!! Just do the move! Thank you Ann!!!

Our **Advanced** Class was introduced not only to Ben, but to a new Whip Step as well. Ben taught the whip step we know up to step FOUR when you step in front of the lady and square up. However, in this case, the fella's bring their left hand up to their shoulder, and turn to their right - not in closed, but rather, in an open turn to the right. Invite the lady to continue down her slot in a normal whip patter, while the fella turns right on counts FIVE and SIX. Now take your time, and complete the man's 'walk around' anchor' ending on count EIGHT. Got it? You had a chance to video tape that if you wanted. Be sure to bring your video cameras next week so you can capture the lesson and review it.

Attention Dancers!!!!

Next week, Ben will be teaching his own Advanced class. Bobby will be teaching Styling, Footwork and Pattern Variations designed for the top level dancers. Dancers in Bobby's class should be proficient at all Whip and West Coast moves and ready for some real challenges. Please be respectful of all dancers at this level. If you have difficulty with the moves and styling Bobby is teaching, be sure to work with Ben before moving up. Ben will be teaching Advanced Patterns.

We're going to be laying a lot on our top dancers in Bobby's class, so we shouldn't have to stop and cover moves you are expected to know already. Syncopations, spins, musicology and pattern variations are a MUST to be in Bobby's class. If you're not sure which class you should be in, check with Bobby, or one of the other instructors for their recommendation. Remember, we're all here to have a good time and to develop good dancers. We want you in the right class at the right level of instruction. We're offering the best we've got....just for you!!

Do you like Mexican Food???

Did you know a bunch of us meet at La Cabana Mexican Restaurant each Thursday before class? Why not plan to join us? La Cabana is across the street from the Studio, and not more than a 1/4 mile east of it. You can see it from our parking lot. Its actually right next to Taco Bell, if you can believe that! We meet at 6:00PM, then head to the studio to dance at 7:00PM. La Cabana has a great menu and lots of room, so come join us!

Here's a few more photos.

See you next Thursday!

Wayne







