

The Avon Valley Strathspey

A strathspey for four couples in a square set

Bars

- 1 - 4 1st and 3rd couples, giving right hands to partners, advance towards the centre.
1st man giving left hand to 3rd lady dances out between 2nd couple, crossing her over in front of him. They finish in a straight line either side of 2nd couple, 3rd lady next to and to the right of 2nd lady and 1st man next to and to the left of 2nd man.
3rd man dances similarly with 1st lady to finish on either side of 4th couple, 1st lady next to and to the right of 4th lady and 3rd man next to and to the left of 4th man.
- 5 - 8 1st lady and 3rd man with 4th couple, 3rd lady and 1st man with 2nd couple, joining hands, advance for two steps and retire for two steps.
- 9 - 16 1st lady and 3rd man with 4th couple, 3rd lady and 1st man with 2nd couple, dance reels of four giving right shoulder to begin.
On bar 14, 1st lady and 3rd man give left hands as they pass each other, 3rd man dancing a polite turn to take promenade hold with 1st lady facing towards the centre of the set in fourth place with 1st lady on his right. 1st man dances similarly with 3rd lady.
On bars 15 and 16, 1st lady and 3rd man pass 1st man and 3rd lady by the left shoulder to finish with 1st lady and 3rd man facing 2nd couple and 1st man and 3rd lady facing 4th couple.
2nd and 4th couples continue the reel of four and on bar 16 they give left hands as they pass their partner. The men dance a polite turn and take promenade hold facing inwards in original positions with the ladies on their right.
- 17 - 24 All dance a reel of four in promenade hold. On bar 24, 1st lady and 3rd man, 1st man and 3rd lady do not pass left shoulder but instead curve round to finish with 1st lady and 3rd man facing 4th couple and 1st man and 3rd lady facing 2nd couple, the ladies on the right of the men.
- 25 - 28 1st lady and 3rd man with 4th couple, 1st man and 3rd lady with 2nd couple, dance right hands across.
- 29 - 32 1st lady and 3rd man, 1st man and 3rd lady dance left hands across in the centre of the set. At the end, the men follow their partners to dance out to original places.
- 33 - 40 All set to partners and turn with both hands once round, flowing into eight hands round to the left half way. All finish opposite original positions.
- 41 - 80 Repeat with 2nd and 4th couples as dancing couples.

The Avon River, which has its source in Wickiepin in Western Australia, is over 260km in length and flows through the towns of York, Northam and Toodyay before becoming the Swan River and flowing through Perth to the Indian Ocean at Fremantle. In 2006, the 31st Australian Scottish Country Dancing Winter School was held at Muresk Agricultural College in Northam.

Please note that in Western Australia the “Av” in Avon is pronounced as in the word “have”.