

The Call Sheet

Professional Journal of the Gay Callers Association

March 2008

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"I suspect that even Anne Uebelacker and Sandra Bryant made a mistake or two along the way. Note to self: Get them drunk and talking about this during the next convention."

-- Arlene Kaspik

The Call Sheet is the official publication of the Gay Callers Association.

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The **Gay Callers Association** is open to anyone who calls and/or teaches for GLBT square dance clubs.

No assumptions should be made about the sexual orientation of any contributor to this publication.

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All articles are the opinion of the authors and in no way reflect any official position of the GCA.

Editorial: Raising the Bar.

Allan Hurst – newsletter@gaycallers.org

In last issue's editorial, I suggested that many straight callers know of LGBT square dancing, but have had little or no exposure to our community. The only impressions many of these folks possess are created out of thin air--and what “everybody knows” about LGBT dance clubs, which is often inaccurate.

That sword cuts both ways. I believe many people in the LGBT calling community (including myself) don't fully understand the straight dance community.

During a caller school many years ago, one of my instructors said something along the lines of: *Do you want to be known as a caller who happens to be GLBT, or as a caller catering only to GLBT clubs?*

Something about the question rubbed me the wrong way at the time. There seemed to be an assumption of: *Well, you can't call for GLBT clubs and straight clubs. Pick one.*

At the time, I was sufficiently inexperienced and uncertain of myself that I shrugged and told myself, *Well, since I don't know anything about straight square dance clubs, I guess it'll be easier if I just call for GLBT clubs.*

Over the following nine years, I had a couple of not particularly positive experiences with straight square dance clubs.

Painful as it is to admit it now, the problem wasn't with the *clubs*; it was with *me*.

I just didn't understand (a) the cultural differences, and (b) how to call a danceable evening for *all* dancers, straight or LGBT.

I'd fallen into a trap, allowing myself to learn only what I felt was needed for LGBT club calling.

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[Raising the bar, continued]

A summary of what I learned:

- *Keep sequences simple and short*
- *Use music that doesn't conflict with your voice.*
- *Use standard applications whenever possible.*

Recently, I was hired by a straight Advanced club. Given my prior disastrous encounters with straight clubs, I was a bit hesitant after I'd accepted the date, so I went to one of my calling mentors for some advice.

It was suggested – not unkindly - that this was the *perfect* opportunity to review all of my Advanced choreo, revising everything to Standard Applications.

But there are no Advanced-level Standard Applications, I cried piteously.

Nonsense, I was told, *you already know that sashayed anything confuses many dancers.*

And that's how I finally learned that *keeping couples normalized as much as possible is a basic tenet of calling Standard Applications at any level.*

I also ~~stole~~ researched an idea that I'd seen several experienced callers use: *Segregate and direct dancers by gender.*

It's simple and elegant: put the dancers into a formation where the boys have one part of a call, and girls the other. (E.G., “*Walk & Dodge*, girls walk while the boys dodge.”)

This certainly isn't all there is to know about writing (and sighting) successful choreo. Keeping track of handedness (alternating left and right hands) and body flow are a couple of the many other variables to keep in mind.

But what about the straight Advanced club,

you ask? Good question.

Using cards revised according to the above guidelines, the evening went swimmingly well. It wasn't a large turnout due to weather, but the dancers that did show up were interested, active, and willing to try new stuff.

They danced all of my “Standard Apps” A1 & A2 sequences beautifully, and the positive feedback loop between me and the floor was wonderful. The trust level was strong enough that I had them running through asymmetric and “Hard” sequences without a hitch.

The next morning, I received an email from the club offering me a gig for the following year!

As I reviewed what I'd done for the straight Advanced club, I reviewed all of the “special” preparations I'd made: rehearsing of new ways to subtly cue calls, careful selection of music, standardizing of choreo, etc.

It was then I realized, calling professionally isn't about changing how I call for straight vs. gay clubs; *it's about making things easy and fun for the dancers, no matter who they are.*

And it only took me ten years to learn it.

Last issue, I said that one of my goals in editing this publication is for callers who have never been exposed to the GCA to read an issue of the Call Sheet, and walk away understanding that callers are callers, regardless of sexual orientation or gender.

As I said at the start of this column ... *that sword cuts both ways.*

Especially if you're a newer caller, don't fool yourself into thinking that just because you intend to call only to LGBT floors that you needn't take as much care as when you call to straight floors.

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[Raising the bar, continued]

Dancers are dancers, regardless of sexual orientation or gender, and they are always deserving of the best (and consistent) professional standards you can deliver.

As the 25th IAGSDC Convention in Cleveland approaches, so does the next GCA Caller School.

What's the connection here?

Every single lesson I've talked about here was first taught to me by one or both of this year's instructors – Anne Uebelacker and Sandie Bryant.

Whether you're a new or veteran caller, this year's school with Anne and Sandie – which is being coordinated by Ken Ritucci, a CALLERLAB Accredited Caller Coach – is the perfect opportunity to learn (or relearn) what it means to be a “professional” caller. (Just pay a little closer attention than I did, OK?)

Sign up now while there's still space. It's not that long until Cleveland ...



In This Issue

Once again, I'm amused to note an apparent geographic slant to this issue's talented contributors.

This month, our “author map” takes us to the East Coast and Midwest, starting with **Andy Shore** (Ft. Lauderdale) who describes his experiences **Transitioning to Contra**.

Next up, **Ett McAtee** (Baltimore/Washington DC area), profiles our GCA President, **John Oldfied** (Chicago).

You learned plenty of choreo techniques in

caller school, but are you still struggling during performances? If so, **Nick Martellaci** (New York) suggests that you may not be considering **The Total Package**. Nick points out a few big-picture items that callers often overlook.

Despairing because dancer skill levels seem to be dropping in your local club? How do “good” and “bad” dancers differ? **Barry Clasper** (Toronto) very cleverly answers both questions in **How Good Is Good?**

Some Plus calls are more vexing than others for new dancers. **Michael Maltenfort** (Chicago) shares **An Alternate Teach For Follow Your Neighbor** to make your teaching job easier.

There can be a big difference between what we *think* we learn from caller school and what happens in the real world. **Arlene Kaspik** (Chicago) recently called her first solo dance, and her highly practical (and funny) findings are reported in **Caller School Vs. Calling A First Dance**.

Given her enthusiasm discussing the other articles in the “Sussing” series, I *knew* she couldn't stay quiet much longer. **Ett McAtee** talks about aspects of **Sussing Out A Floor** with a spin towards Advanced & Challenge callers.

Our lone West Coast correspondent this month, **Rich Reel** (SF Bay Area), shares his techniques for increasing student energy in **Tips For Teaching Gay Styling**.

Where are all of the callers with something to say on the West Coast and outside of North America? We're waiting to hear from you!



Member News

Ett McAtee will be calling a "first-nighter" at her 30th reunion for Wilson College in Chambersburg, PA, on Saturday, June 7, 2008.



Congratulations to **Michael Levy** (San Francisco, CA), who recently became the new club caller for Oaktown 8's!



John Ryan (Ventura, CA) reports calling: "a great private party for the Latter Day Saints last weekend. I had 4 squares dancing and did a chair dance so everyone could participate. This was a great group, and had so much fun that they kept dancing as the organizers were putting tables and chairs away!"



Ross Crawshaw-Lopton reports that he and his partner **Justin**, now living in Salt Lake City, are preparing to form an LGBT square dance club! Recruiting kicks off with an event at the Utah Pride Festival June 6-8, 2008. GCA members are invited to participate; contact Ross at rosslopton@yahoo.com.

[Editor's Note: We'll publish a story on Ross and Justin's Utah experiences in a future issue.]



Bill Eyler (Albuquerque, NM) reports: "Both Danny and I have somehow become the Gay C/W and Line Dance Instructors of choice both here and in Santa Fe. We have found that the new pool of dancers is wonderful for recruiting for square dancing!"

Kris Jensen (Albuquerque, NM) is doing a lot of contra cueing/calling these days. As part of our 25th anniversary celebration, she'll be cueing a Gender Free contra dance on Satur-

day 3/22. (Flyer online at <http://www.wildebunch.org/>).

Both **Bill & Kris** are happy to be involved in crossover type dance activities that can help assimilate some of the dance forms together, such as ARTS is working toward.

Also, **Bill's** a panelist at CALLERLAB this year (as are several other GCA members), working with Ed Foote on the Advanced Dance panel.



Pam Clasper (Toronto, ON) reports: "Did you know that two GCA members have recently taken up important positions in CALLERLAB?"

Kris Jensen is now vice-chair of the Challenge Committee, and **Michael Maltenfort** is now vice-chair of the Definitions Committee."



Michael Shagina (Atlanta, GA) called his first dance! Hotlanta Squares had a member appreciation dance on Saturday, Feb 23rd, co-called by Michael and **JR St. Jean**. Michael says it was also his first duet and first caller paycheck!



The big news in **Barry Clasper's** life lately is that he retired from IBM in September, 2007, after 30 years of service.

Barry reports, "**Pam** has no interest in retiring from her job yet, so I'm now living as a 'kept man' ('kept square dance caller?').

I'd like to say I highly recommend retirement, but I need all you young folks to keep working to pay my pension."



Transitioning to Contra

Andy Shore – andyshore@gmail.com

I've gotten into contra dancing in the last few years and, for the last 6 months or so have been calling contras. Some skills easily transfer from being a Modern Western Square Dancing (MWSD) caller while others are new (at least to me).

In a few ways, being a MWSD caller negatively interferes with calling contras:

- Contras are typically done to live music, which is new to me. Learning to work with a band and developing a shared vocabulary about music (a smooth reel, etc) is all new.
- Contras are about timing, which is much tighter and more crucial than in MWSD. Dancers dance on the phrase and you must call that way.
- You can't use the terms "boys" and "girls" to a contra crowd.
- You can't assume they know any moves (calls) you haven't taught yet.
- You have to learn to stop calling (drop out) as they get into the dance and the repetition takes over - you still look for problems on the floor and and prompt them back if they are having trouble.
- Ideas about what is good flow or what is smooth differ between contra and MWSD choreo, so judging difficulty and "niceness" of a figure are different.
- You're constantly dealing with a mixture of experienced dancers and novice or brand new dancers each evening, and the process of programming an evening of dances is new and different.

I haven't really ventured into LGBT contra calling yet, which is done "gender role free" and uses no "men/gents/women/ladies" terminology. That'll be a real challenge for me!



Special Request to GCA Members From the Cleveland 2008 Convention

Brian Keating – brihk@aol.com

Hi! I'm the GCA Liaison for Touch A Quarter Century (TAQC) – the IAGSDC 2008 Convention being held in Cleveland. **We want a picture of you for display & promotional purposes!**

The plan is to create a large poster of all GCA members and place it near the entrance to the hall where members of the GCA will call the Trail End Dance.

Please send an attractive "head shot" photo of your choice, in electronic format. As the photo will end up as part of a photo montage, please make it as clean and clear a picture of you as possible. by May 31, 2008, to gca@taqc.org – with your *Full Name, Club, and Calling Level*.



John Oldfield: The Accidental Caller

Ett McAtee – justetthon@comcast.net

Have you ever wondered about your trusty Gay Callers Association officers? Do you know your new president, John Oldfield? I knew very little about him, so I decided to ask.

Where does he hail from?

John Oldfield was born in upstate New York some time in the middle of the last century. He moved west progressively, from high school to college and finally to graduate school, ending up in Chicago, Illinois in 1981.

What did he study?

In school, John majored in history with an emphasis on the Reformation, and took minors in English literature and philosophy.



Any hidden talents?

In addition to square dancing, John plays the drums, guitar, banjo, mandolin, string bass, and harmonica. He says that “at forty years of age, I realized that I’d wanted to play the drums since I was an adolescent. My partner at the time (at 40, not as an adolescent, silly) looked a little cross-eyed, but didn’t object.”

What does he do for a living?

Now in his third career since graduate school, John works for a large printing company located in Elk Grove Village, a Chicago suburb west of O’Hare Airport.

What does John do for fun?

On a more personal note: John’s favorite movie is *Great Expectations* with John Mills and a “wonderfully teenaged” Alec Guinness. His favorite contemporary movie is *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* with Jack Nicholson. John loves reading Charles Dickens and appreciates Dickens’ ability to draw in and titillate the reader with broadly sketched but finely tuned characters. His favorite composer is Bach; Jane Oliver his favorite singer, and The Proclaimers his favorite musical group. Arnie Duncan wins John’s admiration as “best musician”. John was privileged to work with him and says that “after the initial ‘hero worship’ on my part, he was a perfectly wonderful person to work with to make the Square Dance program come alive.”

How did John start calling?

John is, by his own admission, “The Accidental Caller”. John was accidentally exposed to square dancing in the late 1980’s when he went to Carol’s Speakeasy (a local Chicago bar) to learn to two-step. After learning square dancing through the Advanced level with Lin Jarvis,

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[John Oldfield, continued]

he was accidentally given a live microphone. He began to learn to call square dancing, and eventually to teach.

John told me that he considers himself rather anonymous. He gets a lot of love and adoration from dancers on a small scale, from his local dancers in Chicago. He's been calling for Chi-Town Squares for a couple of decades now and some dancers commented recently on how he has come out of his shell. John agrees.

In private, he is "in his head" when playing music, painting, drawing, cooking, or making a new beer. When he is up in front of people, he has knowledge, experience, and gives himself permission to convey a persona needed to get the dancers to have a good time.

He attended the caller's school sponsored by the GCA at the 1992 IAGSDC convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and has returned to GCA Caller School for tune-ups on an occasional basis.

What kinds of calling does John do?

Currently, John teaches the Beginning class for the Chi-Town Squares, although he's taught Chi-Town every level from Basic through C-1 over the years. John is a member of both CALLERLAB and the GCA. He's a Past Vice-President of the GCA and our current President.



John focuses on teaching people how to enjoy square dancing, and more recently, on teaching people how to enjoy calling. He says something's changed for him the past few years. He knows that he's "been around the block" now it's time for him to give something back. He says "An anonymous donation is not much of a contribution," and realizes he must go out and stand up in front of people and lead. Good for John!

How did John get started with Chi-Town Squares?

Michael Maltenfort, the GCA's current Treasurer, also hails from Chicago. Michael recently reminisced with me, telling me that John started out at Chi-Town Squares as its first, and for a long time, only gay caller.

In 2002, John was forced to develop his skills faster than he'd bargained for, when the club's long-time primary teaching caller, Lin Jarvis, passed away suddenly. John stepped up to take on Lin's classes and club nights. That year, John was already scheduled to call a C1 class, and suddenly found himself thrown from the frying pan into the fire, as he was asked to call his very first beginner (Basic/Mainstream/Plus) class.

He stepped right up to the challenge, and helped Chi-Town Squares move through a very difficult time. *[Editor's Note: I was privileged to attend the graduation of John's first BMP class that year ... and the students obviously had a wonderful time.]*

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[John Oldfield, continued]

John is always kind and pleasant, says Michael, "You know, some callers get mad at dancers from the microphone or at a dance, but I've heard others say, and I agree, that John would never do that."

John is especially well-liked by many dancers who've learned to dance and call from him. "He helped me to learn how to call. He'd look over my sequences and give me pointers. He encourages everyone who picks up a microphone," says Michael.

Does John dance?

As a dancer, John hails from both Chi-Town Squares and Grand Rapid Squares. He dances a self-described "shaky" C2 and calls Basic through C1.

John likes having fun as a dancer. He recognizes that a weak dancer in a strong square can make significant progress if they're not pushed, pulled and shoved, but given a reasonable amount of time to figure it out. He knows the value of directing in a quiet, non-forceful manner.

What kind of calling setup does he use?

John runs his music from a laptop, and carries an MP3 player running on a Handspring Visor PDA as his backup. He also carries a USB microdrive that carries 50% of his music library, and a trunk full of vinyl 45's as well. This is one prepared caller. John tends to order music as CDs so he has the original recording, and likes the ability to get hard copies of the vocals, harmonies and key change versions.

John's greatest achievement as a caller?

He says he is still waiting to call that perfect dance.

His greatest achievement: John choreographed the opening scene, an old time square dance, of the opera *Susannah* for Western Michigan University's music department and for the College of DuPage in Illinois.

He also performed the part of the Square Dance Caller in George Balanchine's ballet *Square Dance* with the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago. *Square Dance* was written in 1958, and performed for the Joffrey's Spring program at the Auditorium Theatre in Chicago in March, 2000. The Joffrey Ballet (and John) were given a special invitation to reprise the performance at the Balanchine Festival at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC in September, 2000. The Joffrey would not, however, allow him to dance (must have been the snakeskin boots...)

What does John want to do in his time as GCA President?

His aspirations include several things. He wants the GCA to be in contact with all the convention committees and clubs bidding for future conventions, contacting them early to provide additional information that will help the bidding and planning processes. He was part

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[John Oldfield, continued]

of revising and circulating the “GCA and Convention” document to all of the existing convention committees as well as the two clubs bidding for the next unawarded convention. He's working to bring to the forefront the role that GCA has at convention and be there to offer help in any way that will enhance the convention experience for the dancers.

John stressed that he didn't do (and isn't doing) all of this by himself. He says that his “stuff was accomplished by members of the board and other interested association members. I simply asked some specific questions from the people who had the experience and expertise and wrote it all down and sent it out. Our members are more than willing to get involved.”

What are John's future aspirations?

I'll let John speak for himself:

“I'm going to ask the membership what they feel we should be doing as an association. I'm interested in issues that affect local clubs. I'm going to ask people to get involved. This is your Association. I'm going to ask you. So far, I'm really encouraged by the current response. However, I'm going to keep on asking, because with direction and effort there is no limit. One of the big beefs I have is that we aren't recognized as a professional organization. We have to be professional to be recognized as professional. Let's get beyond the 'amateur label' and work toward a professional organization that trains callers of high quality.”



Warning on 2008 GCA Caller School in Cleveland

GCA Caller School Staff

As of press time, while we still have space in the 2008 GCA Caller School, it's going fast *and* the pre-convention hotel rooms blocked out are also going fast.

If you want to attend this year's GCA Caller School, *now* would be a good time to register!

Thank you!

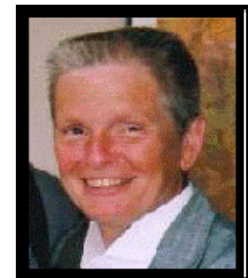




2008 GCA Caller School

Featuring.....

The Evil Twins:
Sandie Bryant
Anne Uebelacker



June 30-July 2, 2008

Renaissance Cleveland Hotel, Cleveland Ohio

\$75.00 per student

2008 GCA Caller School Registration

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

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TELEPHONE: _____

SCHOOL LEVEL: Beginner Intermediate Advanced

Please make all checks payable to: GCA and mail to:
Michael Maltenfort, 6348-1 N. Magnolia Avenue, Chicago IL 60660



“The Caller Coaches’ and Teaching Assistants’ expenses are paid by donations, tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law, to All Join Hands Foundation. For more information about All Join Hands Foundation or how you can make a donation or add a standard codicil to your will, please visit their website at www.alljoinhands.org”

The Total Package

Nick Martellaci - nmcaller@aol.com

Some years ago, Kris Jensen and I attended a caller school together. The school was run by Ken Ritucci (who was on staff at San Francisco's GCA Callers School, and is running the 2008 GCA Caller School in Cleveland) and Randy Page.

Although Kris and I had gone there specifically to study Advanced Choreography with Mike Jacobs, during the general sessions Randy and Ken said something that intrigued us both:

Choreography is just one aspect of being a caller. You have to consider your "total package".

For years, Randy Page had been telling me this, and for years I'd resisted listening. Quite simply, I love choreography. I love writing it. I love dancing to good choreography. At a festival I'll follow a good caller from the Challenge Hall to the Mainstream Hall rather than dance to a caller who really can't call the program well.

But as I found out, it's not all about choreography.

Randy and Ken certainly aren't against choreography. Rather they are for being a "total package" caller. What is that?

A "total package" caller has not just solid choreo, but also good timing, programming skills, the ability to develop a good rapport with the dancers, and is able to sound like a caller.

Let's talk a bit about that last point - *sounding like a caller*.

The phrase "sounding like a caller" does *not* mean putting a nasal twang into your voice in an attempt to make yourself sound like you've just clomped out of the Ozarks. (Yee haw!)

- "Sounding like a caller" means working *with* the music (instead of against or in spite of it), and singing and/or chanting rather than just talking through your patter.
- It means practicing your patter records just as vigorously as you'd practice singing calls, if not more so.
- It involves picking the right record for the right kind of tip (i.e. if you're going to do heavy positional or workshop material, don't use 76 Trombones; save that record for your easy opening or closing tip).

I finally decided to try some of the techniques that Randy and Ken were teaching. Change is never easy. I wonder what my neighbors thought when they walked past my apartment and heard me singing up and down the CALLERLAB Program Lists!

That exercise led me to remove from my calling bag all of the patter records I couldn't "sing". (Why fight against a record? Make it easy on yourself.)

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[Total Package, continued]

The remaining records went with me to my dances. The difference in audience reaction to the “before” Nick and the “after” Nick was incredible. They were having more fun dancing to my calling and I was having more fun calling.

Now think about some of the callers whom *you* follow from hall to hall.

- How many of them chant or sing their patter material rather than just talking it?
- How many really “get into” their music - working with it to excite the crowd?
- And how about the callers who are always hired back - the ones whose choreo is only moderately interesting to you, but who always seem able to *pack* the room and have the dancers bouncing off the walls by the end of the hour?

These are examples of callers who are interested not only in moving dancers around (choreography) but in refining their “Total Package” so that they sound like a professional caller!

Happy Dancing! Happy Calling!



How Good is Good?

Barry Clasper – barry@clasper.ca

In a previous article, Bill Heimann did an excellent job of delineating the difference between “high quality” and “high level” dancing. I'm taking the liberty of summarizing the main points of Bill's article (or at least what I perceived as the main points), to use them as a springboard for my own remarks:

1. *Good dancers are usually recognized as such by other dancers*, and most dancers aspire to be in the group that is so recognized.
2. Bill discussed the criteria he uses in evaluating how well or how poorly a dancer performs. In point form, they were:
 - Number of mistakes - *better dancers make fewer mistakes*.
 - Command of fundamentals - *better dancers have a superior grip on certain fundamental elements* that form the basis of a large number of calls and concepts - examples are Circulate, Rotate, Trade, Hinge, Roll, etc.
 - Ability to help - *better dancers can assist others*.
 - Adaptability – *better dancers can adapt* to a situation that represents a logical extrapolation of known material without having to be taught or walked through.

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[How Good Is Good?, continued]

- Ability to handle distortions - *better dancers can handle distorted setups* that are legal at the level being danced.
 - Precision - *better dancers make precise formations* and adopt precise facing directions.
 - Ability To Recognize The "Unright" - *better dancers realize when something does not make sense* and therefore a mistake has been made.
 - Ability to Recover - *better dancers tend to recover from their own mistakes* without assistance.
 - Confidence - *better dancers display confidence* that they know what they're about.
3. The above characteristics are *level-independent*. They transcend the material associated with any given CALLERLAB program.
 4. Thus, it does *not* follow that any given C4 dancer is necessarily a better dancer than any given A2 dancer, simply by virtue of habitual dance level. It is entirely possible for an A2 dancer to be better than a C4 dancer, despite the C4 dancer probably knowing more calls.
 5. Because the square dance movement has not done a good job of articulating the characteristics that contribute to good dancing, a great many *people mistakenly assume that there is a direct correlation between the level somebody dances and how well they dance*.
 6. Since we all wish to be well-regarded by our peers, *this mistaken idea that dance level is synonymous with dancing ability fosters an inappropriate compulsion to advance through the levels*.
 7. The equation between dance-level and prestige has resulted in an unfortunate decline in the average dancing skills exhibited at the Advanced and Challenge levels.

But why are some dancers better?

The first thing in Bill's article that struck me was that his list of "good dancer" criteria consists of a single point, with a number of supporting elements.

I believe better dancers make fewer mistakes because they: have a good grasp of the fundamentals; are adaptable; can deal with distorted setups; are precise; recognize errors; and know how to recover.

Moreover, dancers who make fewer mistakes tend to be more confident and more liable to help others. Therefore, I think Bill's list actually boils down to a single point: *"better" dancers make fewer mistakes*.

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[How Good Is Good?, continued]

While I don't wish to argue that a low error rate represents the *only* virtue a good dancer need possess, it seems clear that it is far and away the most important. This being so, I think it might be instructive to examine dancer performance from this point of view.

How many mistakes is it reasonable for a competent dancer to make in the course of an evening? How many sequences out of a tip is it reasonable to expect a square to execute successfully?

How can dancers make fewer mistakes?

First, we need to define "mistake". I'm referring to those "killer" mistakes that cause squares to crumble - the fatal errors. I define a "fatal error" as an incorrect action (or inaction) which:

1. if left uncorrected, would result in the square breaking down or resolving incorrectly, and
2. is not recovered by the perpetrator before it damages the square.

So my question really is, "How many such [fatal] errors is it acceptable for a competent dancer to make?"

Broken Squares = Decreased Dancing Time

Underlying this concern is the fact that such mistakes contribute directly to broken squares which, in turn, cause dancers to be transformed into spectators who stand and watch while other squares dance.

So another aspect of this problem is that I consider the proportion of time spent spectating to be growing to unacceptable levels. This line of thought splits my original questions into two:

- For what portion of the total dance time is spectating acceptable?
- How do mistakes influence spectator time?

The first question is a matter of personal judgment, but the second is open to analysis.

How can we quantify these terms in a way that makes analysis possible?

I think the most useful way to quantify mistakes is to express them numerically, at a rate based on the number of sequences danced.

For instance, if a dancer makes fatal errors at the rate of 1 error every 5 sequences, it follows that he or she dances faultlessly 4 out of 5 sequences.

In other words, you could say that the "4 out of 5" dancer executes without error 80% of the sequences called. This value can also serve to express the probability of that dancer executing any given sequence successfully.

[continued next page]

[How Good Is Good?, continued]

Henceforth, I will refer to such a dancer as an “80% dancer”. (Or whatever the appropriate percentage is in each case.)

Let's examine how well dancers with various probabilities for dancing error-free might be expected to do. Suppose that each of the dancers in the square dances 90% of the sequences without fatal error.

In school, a mark of 90% is usually considered pretty good. In dancing terms, that means that you blow only one sequence in ten.

We want to know the probability of 8 dancers, each with a 90% probability of dancing error-free, making it through a sequence without any one of them making an error.

Statistics tells us that the formula for this calculation is to take the product of all the probabilities. Therefore, a square composed entirely of 90% dancers could expect to make:

$$.9 \times .9 \times .9 \times .9 \times .9 \times .9 \times .9 \times .9 = 43\%$$

In plain English, they'd be able to dance *less than half* of the sequences! (Or you could say they'd be standing idle more than half of the time.)

I don't think many people would consider spectating (instead of dancing) for more than half of the time to be a satisfactory experience. Let's look at this from another angle.

How well must individual dancers perform in order for the square as a whole to make 90% of the sequences?

We need a number, N, such that:

$$N \times N \times N \times N \times N \times N \times N \times N = 0.9$$

If you work it out, it turns out that N = 0.987 or 98.7%.

This seems very high. After all, in school only genius-level students get 98.7%.

Considering that the average 2½ hour dance comprises 7 or 8 tips, each containing 10 or 12 sequences, then 98.7% represents at most *one mistake a night*.

Perhaps attempting a 90% level of success for the entire square is shooting a bit too high.

Table 1 (next page) shows the dancer performance levels necessary to achieve several different success ratings for the square.

How much spectating time are you willing to accept?

[continued next page]

[How Good Is Good?, continued]

Square Success ¹	Dancer Error Rate ²	# of Dancer Errors Per Dance (80 sequences) ³
50%	91.70%	7
60%	93.80%	5
70%	96.60%	4
80%	97.2%	2
90%	98.70%	1

¹ % of called sequences successfully completed by the square

² % of called sequences danced without error by each dancer

³ Number of errors per 2½-hour dance implied by dancer error rate

But I've danced in plenty of squares with totally incompetent dancers and we still got most of the sequences. These numbers can't be right!

And, of course, they aren't.

What the above calculations overlook is the fact that many mistakes are corrected *before* the square dissolves. In fact, when dancers know one another well, mistakes may even be anticipated and prevented before being made.

What we're saying is, there are dancers in the square who not only dance their *own* parts flawlessly, *they also correct at least some of the mistakes of others.*

Another way of looking at this is to say that dancers who correct others are, in effect, dancing higher than 100%. They are dancing 100% of their own parts, plus some parts that should have been executed by other dancers.

For instance, a dancer performing at 120% theoretically could compensate for another dancer at 80% (i.e., 100% of their own part plus the 20% that the 80% dancer is missing). Therefore, the square could average out to 100% success, even though not all dancers are contributing to that success in equal measure.

This phenomenon is an integral part of the dancing process.

More often than not, when one dancer makes a mistake, another dancer is able to correct it and avoid damage to the square. This process is essential to a healthy square and is a normal part of good dancing. We all make mistakes and require steering upon occasion.

In a balanced square, the individual dancers participate both as providers and receivers of

[continued next page]

[How Good Is Good?, continued]

help. The dancer who fixes somebody else's mistake during one sequence receives help for their own mistake during a later sequence - perhaps from the same dancer they had previously aided.

So this is a good thing, yes?

Not always. The square-self-correction process becomes pathological when the help always flows in a single direction. That is, when one person *always provides* help and another *always receives* help.

Applying this view of square dynamics to the more general square dancing scene, some interesting observations emerge.

Were we to survey the dancer population at any given level, the skills of the dancers could be grouped into three categories:

Phase 1: Dancers who are not fully competent at the level. They would successfully complete few sequences were it not for the presence of other dancers who correct errors.

Phase 2: Dancers who can dance their own level competently. They can dance their own part without assistance, provided other dancers in the square do likewise. A square of such dancers consistently should be able to attain success levels in excess of 90%.

Phase 3: Dancers who are not only capable of dancing their own parts at the 100% level but also are capable of helping others. These are the people who make it possible for the dancers in the first category to survive on the floor.

So why not dump the Phase 1 dancers?

It's important to understand that this mix of competence levels is not only unavoidable, *it is necessary*.

If we dispensed with the dancers in the first category, our problems would not be solved.

To see why, look back at the three categories, but this time *view them as three phases of growth* that a dancer goes through as he or she gradually masters a dance level.

"Phase 1" people are novices at the level. While they may know all the calls and concepts on the list, we can't reasonably expect novices to flawlessly execute all possible contortions of the material.

An example for higher-level dancers who might be a bit unsympathetic at this point: Even after you intellectually understood *Magic Diamonds*, how many times did you have to work in them before you could dance such material with any confidence and/or panache?

So we can't just dump these "Phase 1" dancers - *they are literally our future*.

[continued next page]

[How Good Is Good?, continued]

Since the "Phase 1" people still require help, they must be balanced by (hopefully) a corresponding number of "Phase 3" dancers.

In an ideal world, any given level would always be populated with dancers from all three levels in balanced proportions - for instance, 20% in Phase 1, 60% in Phase 2, and 20% in Phase 3.

But the world is not ideal. Therein lies the crux of our problem.

The real reason for declining dance levels.

Because of peer pressure to advance levels, many dancers short-cut the three phases.

They progress from Phase 1 to Phase 2 ... and then move up to the next level (where they revert to Phase 1). They never manage to make it to Phase 3.

As this phenomenon becomes more common, the proportion of Phase 3 dancers at all levels erodes, thereby diminishing the help that is available to new dancers.

With less help available, Phase 1 dancers mature to Phase 2 less rapidly - or not at all.

Now comes the most insidious part of the process.

Eventually, new dancers arriving at a level find that there are no Phase 3 dancers available to help them become competent. "Nobody at this level seems to know what they're doing".

The new dancers all believe that the better dancers must dance at some level higher than they do, so the obvious answer is to read through the calls on the list for the next level and move on up.

This is why we have dancers who have yet to master C1 showing up on C3 floors. Or Plus dancers who haven't mastered Mainstream. This applies at all levels of square dancing.

What can we do about it?

As Bill Heimann said towards the end of his article, *it's time to clean up our act.*

We must acknowledge the fact that when we join other dancers in a square, we incur an obligation. That obligation is to dance our fair share of the material. To the extent that we cannot dance our fair share, we represent a burden on the other dancers, one which we impose upon them unilaterally by arriving in their square.

What is our fair share? I believe that it varies according to our experience at the level:

Phase 1: When we first attempt a level, our fair share will be relatively low, perhaps 75% to 80%. Our mistakes, however, should not be due to ignorance of the documented list material. They should result only from a lack of experience in executing the material at dance speed - experience which can be gained only on the dance floor.

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[How Good Is Good?, continued]

Phase 2: With experience, our fair share increases to 100%. Other dancers have a right to expect us to dance our own part virtually error-free.

Phase 3: With a great deal of experience at the level, our fair share again increases to something beyond 100%. It is now our responsibility to help those who are novices at the level and compensate for their inexperience.

It is important to recognize that during Phase 1, we're imposing on the strength of others. The justification for doing so lies in the premise that in time we will progress from Phase 1 all the way to Phase 3 and, in effect, "pay back" the help we were previously given by others.

When dancers move on without "repaying" the help they've been accorded, they're short-changing everyone following them at that level in future classes.

If dancers move on before becoming competent at their current level, then they're short-changing both the level they're leaving *and* the level to which they want to move.

But most important of all, *dancers who move up prematurely short-change themselves*. There is no feeling for a dancer quite like the spontaneous rush of exhilaration that comes with the dawning realization "Hey - I can actually dance this stuff!".

[Editor's Note: Although originally targeted at dancers, it's easy to see how some of this material could be taught to new dancers starting with their first Basic class, to explain what angels are and why they're important.

Brian Jarvis of our Editorial Review Board believes Phases 1/2/3 extend to callers, since Phase 1 callers need mentoring from Phase 3 callers, who are paying back the mentoring help they received during their Phase 1.]



Alternate Teach for *Follow Your Neighbor*

Michael Maltenfort – maltenfort@yahoo.com

The call *Follow Your Neighbor* seems to confuse many new Plus dancers. The actual CALLERLAB definition is as follows:

FOLLOW YOUR NEIGHBOR - Starting formation - Box Circulate. TIMING - 6

Dancers facing in release hands with the person next to them (their "neighbor") and step straight forward, join adjacent forearms with the one they meet, and turn three-quarters (270 degrees) to become centers of a new wave. At the same time, the dancers facing out follow their "neighbors" by moving forward in a three-quarter looping turn (270 degrees), turning towards their "neighbor" to finish adjacent to their "neighbor" as the ends of the new ocean wave.

When done from right-hand boxes, the dancers facing in turn by the right hand and the dancers facing out loop around right-face, to finish in a left-hand ocean wave. When done from left-hand boxes, the dancers facing in turn by the left-hand and the dancers facing out loop around left-face, to finish in a right-hand ocean wave.

When I taught Plus a few months ago, I had great success using my own, somewhat different definition of *Follow Your Neighbor*:

[continued next page]

[Follow Your Neighbor, continued]

FOLLOW YOUR NEIGHBOR - Starting formation - Box Circulate. TIMING - 6

Everyone 1/2 Box Circulate (or 1/2 Split Circulate). Then the Centers Cast Off 3/4 and the Ends U-turn Back.

Note: In this definition, "1/2 Box Circulate" is proper for a box of four dancers. If all eight dancers are doing *Follow Your Neighbor*, it should always be called as "1/2 Split Circulate."

I believe my definition has several advantages over the standard CALLERLAB definition, the most important of which is, it's far simpler. How much time does it take for a dancer to wade through the standard definition vs. my simplified version?

While I'm certainly not advocating a change in the CALLERLAB definition, I've found my version is easier to teach.

For example, when dancing *1/2 Split Circulate*, the Trailers won't automatically reach out to each other with right hands--they know to walk straight ahead. Suddenly, *Follow Your Neighbor* is nearly as easy for the dancers from a Left-Hand box as a Right-Hand box – and you've just taught them an APD call.

This definition is also easier for the Leaders, who don't go wandering because they're uncertain of how far to walk and where to end the call. This definition gets them to exactly the right position on the floor, which isn't such an easy task when you try to follow the CALLERLAB definition. (Besides, the angels may not be much help if they're only used to dancing *Follow Your Neighbor And Spread*.)

This definition also breaks up the call into two parts. While teaching, it helps me to pause after *1/2 Split Circulate*. This gives the dancers some certainty about where they're going. (Of course, after dancers get the hang of the call, tell them they should "dance the whole call in one smooth motion.")

To make teaching even easier, I suggest working in *1/2 Split Circulate* (also *Split Circulate 1-1/2*) early in the Plus teaching order. Once the dancers already know *1/2 Split Circulate*, it's a (comparative) breeze to teach them *Follow Your Neighbor*. (Keep in mind that *1/2 Split Circulate* is also a worthwhile Mainstream call in itself -- and a fun way to create Diamonds at Plus and higher levels.)

There is one rare problem with this new definition: Leaders may be uncertain of which way to *U-Turn Back*. The phrase "*U-turn Back* towards partner," may seem ambiguous here.

In these cases, just remind the Leaders that *U-Turn Back* is defined in flow direction (as if it was "...and *Roll Twice*"), so they just keep turning, in place, the same direction as the *1/2 Split Circulate*.

C1 and higher dancers: this is also a great definition to use when dancing with phantoms.

In upcoming issues, I'll talk about alternate teaching definitions for several other calls.



Caller School vs. Calling My First Dance

Arlene Kaspik - amkaspik@sbcglobal.net

A year ago January the dance coordinator from Arlington Squares approached me after a dance, and asked if I'd be ready to call a full dance by December of 2007. I had nearly a full year to prepare, so I said "yes" without batting an eye. I negotiated a fee, reviewed and signed a contract and settled down for a year's worth of preparation. (My first note to other callers: It's never too early to have a response ready for questions regarding your "usual fee.")

December 27, 2007 – my last waking thoughts:

- Please, dear God, help me to get over this cold by tomorrow.
- How did it get to be December 27th already?
- This sounded like a great idea a year ago.
- Every caller has to have a first dance at some point in time. This is yours.
- I wonder if there's ANY chance of a blizzard?

December 28, 2007 – my first thoughts of the day:

- I hope Kate left me some coffee!
- Your goal for the day is to call your 1st dance without throwing up.
- You did a lot of homework – trust your preparation.
- I still have 12 hours to make final adjustments.
- Cheer up. If you do a good job tonight you'll go to sleep a happy woman. If you do a lousy job on your first dance ANY improvement you make over time will be noticeable!

December 28, 2007 – my thoughts after looking out the window:

- Oh my gosh...It's snowing – *seriously* snowing!
- We have 3 inches already and it doesn't show signs of stopping.
- Will anybody actually come out in this weather?
- If the dance isn't canceled, allow *lots* of extra travel time.
- Remember to add in time for cleaning off the car. A lot of time.

My Final Preparation Game Plan:

- Make time today for a review of your caller school notes on calling a dance.
- Build in redundancy – paper printouts in case you have computer trouble

My last lucid thought before beginning the dance:

- Good heavens - there are over 100 people here tonight! I can't tell where one square ends and another one begins ...

In Which My Caller School Notes Hit The Reality Wall. Hard.

Mostly, the dance went very well. There were a few things I hadn't expected.

Music: My instincts were pretty good here. I included some holiday music but didn't exclusively use holiday music. I used country, rock n roll, jazz, blues, show tunes and some standards.

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[Caller School vs. Calling My First Dance, continued]

The novelty number (*Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy*, by the Canadian Brass) went well enough but the low range of some of the instrumentation was difficult for some of the dancers to hear. I wrote choreography specifically for this piece of music. Maybe it was sheer dumb luck, but my added timing for some calls and accompanying sound effects (like Double Pass Thru) really worked well. Singing is one of my strengths. I must remember to build on it.

If the dancers start singing along, it means they're having a good time. *Keep singing.*

Starting With A Rousing First Tip: "Rousing" is strictly a relative term. If the floor is composed of young, high energy dancers, by all means "let it rip." On the other hand, when the majority of the floor is older or physically challenged, I need to slow things down. Nobody wants to see dancers carried off the floor.

I must get more comfortable making minor tempo changes "on the fly." At the very least, I should review my settings for singing calls using "call a dance" the day of the dance to allow for allergies, colds, software glitches or other surprises.

Floor Communication: The dancers needed time to get accustomed to my voice, so I need to remember to choose music that doesn't obstruct my directions to the dancers.

I must enunciate more clearly. I said, "*Send Her Dixie style to an Ocean Wave*," but some dancers heard me say "*Centers Dixie Style to an Ocean Wave*."

[Editor's Note: "*Send those girls Dixie Style...*" is one of several ways I've heard others avoid the "send her/centers" trap. Also, be aware of "Ends Run" vs. "And Run".]

Until I learn more about balancing your microphone and music equipment settings, I must ask someone whose judgment I trust to listen and advise me on any adjustments needed. Calling to a crowded hall of 100 is different than calling to a hall with only a couple of squares.

Choreography: I learned to dance by definition from multiple positions. That's *not* necessarily the case for all clubs and/or dancers. If I'm not careful, it's easy for me to unconsciously write DBD/APD choreography that's more difficult for others than I realize.

I still have more to learn about dancer flow. I'm going to try taping my calling and put it aside for a few weeks, then pulling out the tape and dancing to myself to see how it feels.

I tend to forget the specifics about the problems the floor had with my choreography by the time the tip is over. Next time, I'll try asking a friend to take notes for me. I'll review those notes as soon as possible after the dance, so I can make corrections while they're fresh in my mind.

More On Choreography: When I tested the novelty holiday number at a Chi-Town Squares dance, Michael Maltenfort graciously pointed out that I used a non-standard set up for "Relay

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[Caller School vs. Calling My First Dance, continued]

the Deucey,” with the boys starting as centers. He suggested that I might want to review this sequence if I plan on using it at a dance for another club.

And you know, I was *certain* I'd fixed this sequence the day after Chi-Town's dance but...

I must review all choreography that I think I've already fixed for non-standard applications.

Being Social: Although I'm reasonably good at this there is always room for improvement – especially when I'm tired or nervous or not feeling well.

If working with other callers, remember to introduce the next caller and/or cuer.

It's *never* too early to have business cards ready.

Ego: When something goes wrong, I need to get past any ego wounds ASAP and bring my authentic cheerful self to the forefront. I have a great sense of humor, and can be gracious and charming and I *will* use those strengths to my advantage in a bad situation.

I suspect that even Anne Uebelacker and Sandra Bryant made a mistake or two along the way. Note to self: get them drunk and talking after the next convention.

The only real mistake is to not learn from my successes and failures.

Notes Added By An Unidentified Spouse: Be sure to thank and do something nice for your spouse afterwards. She (or he) put up with you during all of the prep time, gave you encouragement and emotional support throughout the preparation process and the dance, and gave you constructive criticism afterwards. AND your spouse knows that this will, most likely, happen again. Continue to be appreciative of her efforts!

Other Advice? What advice would you give to new callers or to someone preparing to call their first dance? Email your responses to amkaspik@sbcglobal.net by June 15th, 2008, and I'll compile the results and bring a report to this year's GCA Caller School!



Sussing Out a Floor

Ett McAtee – justetthon@comcast.net

I've been thinking quite a bit on this theme of “sussing” out the floor when calling a dance. Recently, I called an A2 dance in Northern Virginia, and I found myself paying attention to what I do as I get set to make it through the evening. This idea of sussing out the floor is important to callers as we face a new group of dancers who are unknown to us in both name and typical habits.

[continued next page]

[Sussing Out a Floor, continued]

One interesting thing that came to mind is how I, as a female caller, test out the floor in a way that male callers may not think about. I not only check out my sound (voice, music) by saying something like “say Hi to your corner, you may never see them again!” but in doing that, I also “suss out” the men on the floor to see if they will listen to me as a female caller. This applies to straight clubs, not the gay boys in the IAGSDC clubs. I actually had one man tell me one time that he wasn’t really listening to me call because he was so used to ignoring his wife! Imagine that! So, I suss them out right away with a little verbal banter.

In addition, three other things strike me as important: Awareness, Body Position, and Clues.

AWARENESS: At Mainstream and Plus, I find that I look first for eye contact between the dancers, showing awareness of each other. This happens as they hear the call and make contact with those with whom they will work to complete the call. If there is no eye contact present, it generally might mean a lack of understanding of the call. While this could also mean lack of interest in the activity, illness, or other reasons, but if the dancers are there to dance, I assume somehow that they want to be there in the present time.

At Advanced and Challenge, this is no different. Dancers still have to have that connection with their teammates. Timing also plays into awareness. Dancers who stand around too long trying to analyze the call, or recall the definitions, indicate a level of square awareness that is no different from Mainstream all the way through Challenge. If I think there is a bunch of “over-thinkers” out there on the floor, it might indicate a level of strength that can still impede the feeling of “just dancing” at all levels.

BODY POSITION: In particular, right/left hand issues. If I call anything “left” I look quickly to try to see if the dancers automatically stick out their right hands. If they do, I know immediately that it might be a long night of not knowing the difference between right and left hands. I also notice “rotational” issues, such as when dancers over-rotate a cast off $\frac{3}{4}$. If this happens, I know there may be a problem.

Sometimes combinations of calls can indicate the strength of the floor and help me suss out that level. For instance, calling “vertical $\frac{1}{2}$ tag” from columns at C1 might give some dancers pause, as will “scoot chain through” from $\frac{1}{4}$ tag starting formations at A2. “Counter rotate” at C1 will always test a floor’s strength, and I use this call to ascertain the strength of an unfamiliar C1 floor. At the higher challenge level, calling a few T-bone things that require a precise recall of definition will help suss out an unfamiliar floor of challenge dancers with whom I am not familiar.

CLUES: Finally, in a group of totally unknown dancers to me, I look for the subtle clues that dancers sometimes manage to pass along to their square-mates. Gentle handholds, directional arrows, and hand passes between dancers make a difference between success and failure in the square. This information tells me where the stronger components of the square are, and who might need help (my verbal cues, help from fellow dancers) in getting sequences.

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[Sussing Out a Floor, continued]

The art of “sussing out a floor” varies among all of us, as we call to dancers unknown to us. If a caller is completely oblivious to this process, the night may be very long indeed.

What do you do? Think about it next time you call, and write in to the Call Sheet and share your thoughts on “sussing out the floor.”



Tips for Teaching Gay Styling

Rich Reel – gcar@all8.com

I'd like to share some easy ways I've found to help make learning gay styling more successful and more fun. For the past couple of years, my classes have had enormous fun with this.

At about week #4 or #5 of class, I don't teach any new calls. That night, I teach *only* styling and the "concept" of styling (that it's optional, regional, etc.).

In particular, I teach *Do Sa Do* and *Weave The Ring*.

That may not sound like much, but learning both of those stylings in a single night is a lot.

I've found this figure works like magic to teach gay styling:

Heads Promenade 1/2
Right And Left Thru
Sides Promenade 1/2
Right And Left Thru
Face Your (new) Corner
Do Sa Do
"keep her" Promenade

(Exchange heads and sides for 3 & 4)

To callers, it's a totally boring figure, but when you add gay styling, especially totally-new-just-learned styling, it feels amazing for the dancers!

This figure times beautifully with just enough extra beats for new folks to struggle and get it yet stay with the music. If the *Sides Do Sa Do* in the middle while the *Heads Promenade 1/2* (and vice-versa), the result has a wonderful, balanced flow and it feels as if bodies are flying everywhere! This looks good to spectators, too, making it great for demos.

While tempting, I personally avoid the the usual sequence *Allemande Left - Do Sa Do - Allemande Left*, for several reasons:

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[Teaching Gay Styling, continued]

1. It breaks the rule of “turn a quarter or less to find your corner”
2. It adds to the complexity of having a *Do Sa Do* end crisply where folks started
3. The timing is too tight to have new folks in position for the “5-6-7-8” of *Weave The Ring*, and they need that extra timing and positioning for all that complicated hand jive.

Once the dancers have mastered *Weave The Ring's* styling, *then* I teach them the usual *Allemande Left - Do Sa Do - Allemande Left* sequence.

For Opener/Closer/Break, I recommend:

4 Ladies Chain [across that ring]
4 Ladies Chain [back home]
Allemande Left
Weave The Ring
Do Sa Do
Promenade

It takes practice but I try to call the *Allemande Left* one or two beats sooner than usual, so the dancers will be in position by the time they get to “5-6-7-8!”.

For two weeks leading up to this night, and for the first tip of this night, I call lots of plain (no styling) *Do Sa Do* and *Weave The Ring* (“don’t touch a thing!”), so folks get used to hearing the calls and knowing what they do.

On *Do Sa Do*, once they learn the styling it forever becomes the single most difficult call on the Mainstream program. Getting everyone - even long-time angels - to precisely turn 360 degrees and end with a recognizable formation can be an evening-long struggle.

Once our club learns styling, the energy of every night from then on jumps 100% by comparison. I’m sure other callers have experienced this, too.

I try to do the styling night (again, teaching no new calls) as early as possible so those few folks that seem to drop after a couple weeks at least experience the fun of gay styling. As do other callers, I talk up styling weeks ahead, to give folks something to look forward to.

Also, I believe doing all the styling on one night makes it easier for the angels who would otherwise have to remember which styling is OK and which is not from week to week.

From that point on, I more-or-less give the angels free rein to teach the students all of the various minutiae of styling. This keeps the angels and class members engaged on class nights, especially between tips.

One more tidbit to keep class energy high and frustration low: If your dancers have had a rough evening, tell them about halfway through that they’ve learned everything for the evening and the rest is “extra credit”- they don’t need to remember any of it.

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[Teaching Gay Styling, continued]

Since you'll probably review everything the next week anyway, neither you nor the dancers have to remember what was "extra credit" (assuming nothing substantial). This takes some pressure off the dancers, and lets folks enjoy being "overwhelmed" by gay styling.



Next Issue

Allan Hurst - newsletter@gaycallers.org

John Oldfield returns with another "Prez Sez" column, **Michael Maltenfort** has promised a teaching alternative for another call, **Nick Martellaci** weighs in on **The Four "R"s of Calling**, and **JP Slater** talks about **Attending Caller School ... outside** of the safe confines of the GCA. Plus a very special article by **Ross Crawshaw-Lopton** on **Starting an LGBT Square Dance Club in Salt Lake City!**

Some of the types of articles I'm *always* looking for people to submit:

- Teaching and/or In-depth analysis of a specific call.
- Choreographic techniques.
- Working with other callers.
- Microphone techniques.
- The business side of Calling.
- How to teach a class.
- Professional ethics and behaviors in Calling.
- Cultural differences in calling to straight and LGBT clubs.
- How callers "suss out" a floor to figure out how strong the dancers are.
- Digital music techniques and "how-to"s.



Colophon

Primary body text for the *Call Sheet* is set in 12-point Arial.

A sarcastic but reasonably complete history of Arial may be found at <http://www.ms-studio.com/articles.html>

A less comprehensive but more neutral history of Arial may be found at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arial>

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