

News and Views

The Bi-monthly publication of the **Square Dance Callers Club of Great Britain**
<http://www.geocities.com/sdccgb> email: sdccgb@yahoo.com
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Our Mission -

The aim of the S.D.C.C.G.B. is to further American Square and Round Dancing in the U.K. by educating, training and encouraging Callers and Cuers; providing them with up-to-date information; a library of reference books; a bi-monthly newsletter; and by obtaining all necessary permits, licences and insurance cover.

The President, Secretary and Training Director are all presently serving on the Joint Councils' R.P.M. (Recruit, Promote and Maintain) Committee.

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Opinions expressed in letters or articles are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect that of the S.D.C.C.G.B. or of the Editor. The Editor reserves the right to condense, omit or rewrite all or any part of material sent to News and Views for publication. – The Editor

News & Views can accept articles type-written or on CD*, or email* (*preferred) in most formats including the following: Microsoft Word 2000, Office 97, Word 6.0/95, Works 2000, WordPerfect, Windows Write, Adobe Acrobat, Lotus 1-2-3, ASCII Text, Rich Text Format (RTF)...
Try anything else – it might work!
or just call me and we can talk.

S.D.C.C.G.B. Coming Events

Sunday, 8th March – AGM at [Drayton Village Hall, OX14 4LF](#)

Sunday, 17th May. with WARCA at [St. Peters Church Hall, Bishops Waltham SO32 1EE](#)

Sunday, 13th September with N.A.R.C.A.

Sunday, 22nd November with L.H.R.C.A.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from the S.D.C.C.G.B. to You!

The Deadline for the February News & Views is: 18th January! Please, beat the Rush!

Regional Callers Associations provide a local forum where Callers can meet for mutual support, the exchange of ideas and to participate in further training.

Cuer's Section

Point of Contact – Judi Wakeley ...

Email: judi.wakeley@psych.ox.ac.uk

London and Home Counties RCA

CHARIMAN – Alan Covacic

Email: mail@smcovacic.fsnet.co.uk

Sunday, 25th January – LHRCA meeting at Nash Mills

Sunday, 22nd March – LHRCA AGM at Wendover

Sunday, 24th May – LHRCA meeting at [Bounds Green Road, Wood Green London N22 8DG](#)

Sunday, 26th July – LHRCA meeting

Sunday, 27th September – LHRCA meeting

Sunday, 22nd November – S.D.C.C.G.B. & L.H.R.C.A. meeting

All Meetings are 10:00 to 1:30 followed by a dance 1:30 to 3:00 called by RCA members and open to local dancers.

Northern Area R.C.A. (NARCA)

SECRETARY – Chris Day

Email: chrisday_narca@hotmail.com

Sunday, 8th February – AGM at [Clifford Village Hall, Albion Street, Clifford. LS23 6HY](#) – Confirmed Booking

Sunday, 12th July – [Clifford Village Hall, Albion Street, Clifford. LS23 6HY](#) – Confirmed Booking

Sunday, 13th September – S.D.C.C.G.B. at a Venue to be determined

South East Midlands

(Currently, an informal group)

Contact – Susie Kelly

Email: susie@graybo.co.uk

See the report from this group on page 9 of this issue.

Wessex R.C.A. (WARCA)

SECRETARY – Avis Moore

Email: alamoworkshop@ntlworld.com

Sunday, 1st Feb. AGM at [St. Peters Church Hall, SO32 1EE](#)

Sunday, 17th May, S.D.C.C.G.B. at [St. Peters Church Hall, Waltham SO32 1EE](#)

Sunday, 4th Oct. at [St. Peters Church Hall, SO32 1EE](#)

Sunday, 22nd Nov. at [St. Peters Church Hall, SO32 1EE](#)

West Of England R.C.A. (WERCA)

<http://www.geocities.com/wercalist>

SECRETARY – Dick Taylor

Sunday, 15th February – AGM at Wooton under Edge

Sunday, 15th March – Multi-Caller Event

Sunday, 31st May – at Wooton under Edge

Sunday, 18th October – at Wooton under Edge

GSI Caller & Cuer School & Festival - June 7 - 14

If you would like to place an advertisement in

NEWS AND VIEWS

please send your advertisement and cheque (payable to S.D.C.C.G.B.) to the Editor.

Whole page - £10.00

Half page - £6.00

Quarter page - £4.00

Box - £2.50

As I see it!

By Walt Burr

Christmas is exactly two weeks away as I'm writing this column. Our members are busy calling and cueing at Christmas dances, parties, dinners, and lots of other holiday celebrations. This can be a very busy time of year for callers and cuers.

Add to that, shopping to do, gifts to wrap, cards to mail, decorations to put up, cooking, more shopping. Sound familiar? I'm sure we have all felt that way at times. We get caught up in details and lose sight of the reason why we are doing all that stuff in the first place.

I think the same thing happens in Square Dancing. We get caught up in programs, lists, committees, and lots of other stuff that takes time away from the real reason we got into Square Dancing in the first place, the FUN!

Christmas is a hassle! Too much to do! Too commercial! Too expensive!

Bah! Humbug!!!

Maybe Scrooge was right after all!

The past year has brought lots of changes. Changes in the economy, changes in the currency exchange rates, and changes in Caller's club. Some of these changes have been major ones and some have been smaller but no less significant. Overall I think Caller's Club has had a successful 2008. Our July Callers & Cuers school was a huge success. We had the first ever meeting between the RCA representatives and the council and we were able to resolve the problem of clashing dates between SDCCGB meetings and RCA meetings. A new RCA, *London & Home Counties*, came into being and cooperation with the BAASDC is at an all time high!

Another change that took place recently is the new RPM leader. Linda Gill has graciously agreed to accept the chair of the RPM committee, she has the

full support of the SDCCGB council and we wish her well in her work with this very important committee. A big part of the future of square dancing in the UK is dependent on the work done by RPM.

Just as we can get caught up in the Christmas "rush" so can we get trapped in square dancing's details. The results are the same, stress, worry, and loss of enjoyment. Whatever you are doing this holiday season, calling, cueing, travelling, or staying home with family, why not step back for a little while and just enjoy the music, enjoy your dancers, and most of all enjoy the smiles? Trust me, the details will still be there when you are ready for them. Time enough to sort them out then.

Even after all the years I've been involved with square dancing I still find great joy in this wonderful

activity of ours, both as a caller and a dancer. I'll confess I'm still enjoying being president of Caller's Club (most of the time ☺).

Last year I asked one favor from all of you. This year I'll ask again. Many of our folks in uniform are still away from home during the holidays and a lot of them are in some very unpleasant places. Please keep them and their families in your thoughts and prayers this Christmas.

From my family to yours,
Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and don't forget to say.... Allemande Left!

Walt

Patter from the Editor

by Gene Turner

Please take note of some new dates/corrections which appear in the 'Coming Events' for S.D.C.C.G.B. and also for the R.C.A.'s, as I had some incorrect information in the previous issue. Please accept my apologies for those.

This month I've asked Jeff Garbutt (The editor of CallerLink, The official Newsletter for the Australian Callers' Federation) if I could reprint his most recent editorial, as I found it stimulating and hope that you will as well. Check it out on Page 4.

On Page 5, Tone Howard has provided us with some really useful and interesting ideas for teaching on the Fast-Track... or just some very good hints for teaching some of the moves that we teach. Thanks, Tone.

In Paul Bristow's 'Caller Training – Teaching part 3' (Pages 8 & 9), he makes some very good points. Paying particular attention to the sub-topic, "3) After

Each Session". I cannot stress, enough, how good this advice is. Be sure to read and digest this entire article in order to assure retention of new students and dancers.

Susie Kelly seems to have had a success with a dance for a healthier heart with some Brownies and their Mums. She is also willing to share some of this specialized choreography that she developed for this event. See the article on Page 13.

I am reprinting the CALLERLAB 'Lost Squares' Procedure/Recommendation for those who may have missed it the first time (Page 12).

Last, but not least, I hope that each and every one of you has a very Happy and Joyous Holiday Season. May 2009 be Prosperous for you in every way.

Gene

Letters from Readers:

The most interesting letter this month

The General public have no idea what American Square Dancing is. I believe that when we call our "One Nite Stands" "Square Dance Parties" it's crazy.

It sounds so childish, why do we always shoot ourselves in the foot?

Some of the names of our clubs are the same. What do they really mean to 'Joe Public'? When I joined Wolverhampton Set Squares, I could have thought I was joining a Technical Drawing Class.

I will always call any 'One Nite Stand' I do, a "Hoedown" (American Style Barn Dance), the public identify "Barn Dance" and will know what they are

going to. During the evening you can start the indoctrination and maybe the public will start to learn more about American Square Dance.

Just a thought... Is anyone teaching the Newer Callers how to call a 'Hoedown'?

Regards and "Happy Christmas" to everyone,
Brian Summerfield

*Editor's Note: An interesting Viewpoint regarding the One nite Stands... I would really like to hear more viewpoints on this topic. Does anyone else have any ideas on this? Or What should we be teaching newer callers to call, regarding a 'Hoedown'? **I'm requesting input from all!***

Editor's Ramblings — Guest Editorial from [Jeff Garbutt](#), 'Down Under'

There are sure some confusing times around. It wasn't that long ago when we were bracing ourselves for more petrol price rises but now they are heading back down. It wasn't that long ago when interest rates looked like increasing – now they are on the way down. It wasn't that long ago when we were asked to slow down on spending due to inflation – now we are being asked to get the economy moving again by spending more. Are you confused? Well you needn't be! The fact is that everything has a natural rate with short term trends superimposed on the background. When variation from that natural rate goes too wide we need an adjustment period, (generally recession), to settle back. After a period of deflation back to the natural background rate we start another uphill rate. There are opportunities that can result from depression. Such as relearning the fundamentals of good money management and getting in low with good investment opportunities that will soon be heading up.

So it is with square dancing. And for those who have endured the hard times of a depressed dancer market they just need to look for the opportunities coming up. We have had to relearn the fundamentals of what makes square dancing so good. We have learnt from mistakes of the past and can be smarter about riding the next wave.

Now looking at potential past mistakes and future opportunities:

- Have we been spending too much time on dancer precision and not enough time having fun?
- Have we been concentrating on the interests of clubs only and not supporting the general health of the movement?
- Have we been concentrating too much on doing more intricate figures and less time on good flowing dancing?
- Have we been targeting specific age groups and missing other opportunities?

I'm not saying I've got all the questions about what we could have done better or all the answers about how we can do better. But I wanted to seed some ideas to get you started. Agree with me – that's nice, but what else can you think of? Disagree with me – that's great, I want you to disagree – but what are your ideas? Whatever you think – we all need to contribute!

My challenge to you as we end this year and go into the next is this: "What were we doing wrong before? What are about to do during the upswing? How can we help to make Square Dancing grow? Who can we encourage to join the growing movement?"

And I leave you with a Christmas Present! We already have dancers out there! They are former dancers from years ago. They didn't actually leave us permanently! They actually got distracted by other more pressing demands such as career and family. There are many dancers out there that can enjoy how much fun they had when they were younger. There are many people out there who used to dance when they were teenagers and are now at a loose end. Their kids have grown up and moving out of home for lives of their own. Do they want to stay at home at become babysitters to their children's children? I think not. We have just the right product for them! I know – I'm starting to get them at my own dances, Not a flood yet – but they have started! So get out there and let them know what you can offer. Let them know that Square Dancing is just as much fun now as it was when we were all kids!

Happy Christmas everyone! And all the best for the New Year.

[Jeff Garbutt](#),

Editor of CallerLink – The Official Newsletter of the Australian Callers' Federation

Editor's Note: I want to thank Jeff for allowing us to reprint this Editorial and for sharing his views with us. Over the years that I've known Jeff, the publication that he edits (CallerLink) has inspired many of the articles that I've published in News & Views. The Australian Callers are quite active in their participation and sharing of both their experiences in calling and their experience of calling, in their publication.

If you should ever get "Down Under" you will certainly want to look up the local clubs and spend some time chatting with the dancers and callers who have made such an impact on the Square Dance Activity in Australia.

*During the time that I spent in Australia in 2001, I visited clubs in Western Australia, South Australia, New South Wales, and Victoria. I was privileged to be asked to call at every club that I visited... some even invited me back <big Grin>. I was able to attend and honoured to be asked to call at two State Conventions, South Australia and Western Australia. I met super people and some of the most talented callers that I have ever known. **What an Experience!***

If any members wish to receive "News And Views" via Email, would they Email the editor, using the account that you wish to receive it to. "News And Views" will then be distributed as an Adobe Acrobat ® attachment to an Email sent to that account, rather than posted to them.

HOW TO TEACH BASIC 50 THE FIRST NIGHT OF CLASS

Some interesting ideas and views on teaching Square Dancing
by Tone Howard

Notice I did not say how to teach the Basic 50 first night of class! I might be fast but not that fast. So here comes some more "I want to hold your hand" (a previous article) this again meets all the criteria; "teaching from lines and in this case two faced lines" as well. "Holding hands in this case with the partner" "NO three-quarter turns" "Instruction in everyday ENGLISH".

On night one of class you have taught "Partner, corner, circle left/right, swing partner, forward n back, heads, sides, circle right go single file, boys move up inside, promenade by twos, wheel around promenade the other way round (boys on outside etc) you might also have taught do sa do, allemande left, turn partner right etc but they are not essential.

Now I am going to teach the whole sequence in ONE hit! I know it works, I have been calling it for the past 3 years, on a trial basis. You might feel not quite so brave, so after the sequence I will give lesser sequences to enable you to build up more slowly to the full dance pattern. I have also called it with non square dancers, at one night stands so no pressure! But new dancers do need to understand you first time, words coming out quickly, no long pauses!

Head couples take partner by "handy hand" (boy right girl left) and walk out to the couple on your right. **Lead to Right** (18) Face those two, **As Couples Veer Left** (47) a little footwork here, both couples side on left, close right to left, side on left and one step forward on right "you have a two faced line!" (2 faces one way and two faces the other!). **As Couples Trade** (40) That's all hold hands including girls in middle, all walking forward in an arc, to each others places **As Couples Circulate** (50) couples move on to next couples spot! In-facers walk across, out-facers go around end to next spot, feels like the trade to you but only out-facers do it! **As Couples Circulate** again, facing in, walk across, facing out, trade around to face in! Now **Bend line** (23) hold partner by hand, (middles back up; ends walk forward, face the two in your line) **Forward and Back** with great big yell!. (1p 2p line) **Swing partner**, all join hands, **Forward and Back**, all **Circle Right**, drop hands go single file one behind each other. Boys move up on the inside, **Promenade** by twos. Then do it all again with the sides leading right etc.

So it's that easy; Basic number 50, first night! Alright they hold their partners hand all the way thru, that was to give security! **Do not** split couples up, they are adults not children! They could well have

been married 30/40 years, they came to do something "**together**", this we do far too little of! The ladies worked hard to bring hubby along, they did not come to have some bimbo drag her husband off while she gets some old duffer. The elation when they get it right with their own partner that is something to celebrate! They are hooked!! The words as couples are taken from the A1 **As Couples Concept**, they really do help; keep using it with every couples move over the first 10 weeks then slowly decrease.

So now let me give you some shorter, easy sequences which are also useful to keep their minds active and give more successes to celebrate!

Heads/sides **Lead to Right, Veer to Left, Bend Line, Forward and Back, All Pass Thru, Swing Partner, Promenade Home.**

Heads/sides **Lead to Right, Veer to Left, Bend Line, Forward and Back, All Pass Thru** Hold one hand with Partner and **Bend Line** again – (1p 2p line), **Circle Left to Home.**

Heads/sides **Lead Right, Veer to Left, As Couples Trade, Bend Line** (1p 2p line), **Circle Left** to home, Now teach couples promenade halfway.

Heads/Sides **Promenade Halfway** around, Heads/Sides **Lead to Right, Veer Left** (2 face line), **Couples Circulate, Couples Circulate again, Bend line** (1p 2p line), **Swing Partner, Promenade** home.

If at all possible on Week One teach the following sequence. It is absolutely essential to Fast Track Teaching, **but** the first move is **not** even on the List! If you have "angels" or you are teaching on a club night, you will get comments, ask them to reserve judgment until they have seen the results over 10 weeks.

Heads/sides take your partner by the hand and walk out to couple on your **Left Left** Face those two. (**Lead to the Left**). Starting with right foot **Veer Right**, side close side, forward (two face line) **As Couples Trade, Bend line**, face same two (1p 2p line) **Forward and Back, Circle Right** 2 steps, Home! You could also put in Couples Circulate once or twice or more, finish with **Couples, Promenade** home! They are in the correct position to do so! I only put the emphasis on lead left and veer right for your club dances, if you have no experienced dancers it will seem quite natural to new dancers!

You can now, if you have time, teach 1 or 2 moves you would usually do on a first night BUT DO try

and run over all the moves they have done in the last tip in standard short sequences including lead left! Then finish with a lively, easy, non progressive singing call for that feel good factor to bring them back next week.

On week two start with a quick recap of the five moves plus circle left/right and start teaching Tip 2 nice and early, helps the move forward Mr Motivator! Lets start with an easy but different sequence like:

Heads/sides **Promenade Halfway, Lead to Left, Veer to Right** (2 face line), **Promenade** home or you can put in some **Couples Circulate**. If you wish. But do remember Not to call Circle 8, its too like Circulate.

NOW commence with some **single** dancers trade/circulate.

Heads/sides **Lead Right, Veer Left, Couples Trade, Just the girls Trade, As Couples Circulate** (new partner), **As Couples Circulate** again, **Just the girls Trade** (get partner back), **Bend Line, Swing Partner, Promenade Home**. Or you could be devious and after "**Bend the Line**" have all the Couples **Wheel Around** to face the other way and **Promenade** home! Use it like a Courtesy Turn "Boys back up, girls go forward" which will be invaluable for Ladies Chain/Right and Left Thru later.

Now back to why we used lead to the left last week:

Heads/sides **Lead to Left, Veer to Right, Just the boys Trade**, (centres) **As Couples Circulate** (new partner), **As Couples Circulate** again, **Bend the Line** (face same two), **girls walk across, Swing** partner, **Promenade** Home. Do it again but this time have the ladies touch right hands as they pass and give a left hand to the partner and "As Couples Wheel Around to face the same two." That teaches **Two Ladies Chain** on the hoof. You are more likely to have new dancers get the ladies chain first time if you chain them to their partners, than away from partner and Wheel Around is more descriptive than Courtesy Turn.

Let's try it again. Heads/sides **Lead Right, Veer Left, As Couples Trade**, then **Just the Ladies Trade** (centres), **Bend the Line, 2 Ladies Chain across** (to partner) with a Wheel Around **Forward and Back**, all join hands **Circle Right** go **Single File, Just the girls You Turn Back**, Shake right hand with partner, pull by, left to next pull by, right to next pull by, left to next pull by (**Right and Left Grand**) **Swing** your partner! You should be home! Now teach four ladies chain, if you want to teach it with the four ladies across from home I would also

teach rollaway, all circle left, roll the girl from your right hand side to your left hand side; (**rollaway**) **circle left, rollaway** again **circle left** till the boys get back home, then ladies step forward make right hand star, **4 Ladies chain back** home, boys give her a left hand and Wheel Around – Home!

Now try it again **4 Ladies Chain across** (away from partner) then Head/side men (with new girl) **Lead Right, all Veer Left** (2 face line), **Couples Trade. Just the boys Circulate** (outside), **Just the boys Circulate** again **As Couples Bend line, Swing** partner (original), **Promenade** Home. So now put it all together:

4 Ladies Chain across (away from partner), **Just the Head Ladies Chain** back (to partner), Heads **Lead to Left/Veer Right, Just the boys Trade, Just the girls Circulate**, all **Promenade** two steps home.

Just the Head Ladies Chain across (away), **Side Couples Lead Left, Veer Right, boys Trade, girls Circulate** (outside), **Promenade Home** There you have it Acey Duecy in all but name on week 2. I did not trade the dancers end to end or have the centres circulate inside. The latter I leave until I want to teach box circulate, a good time for both, is when they start mumbling about learning Plus, a few good sessions of A.P.D. can work wonders! Save our squares **S.O.S. Mainstream**.

I did not come up with all these ideas alone there are other callers around who believe we need to sharpen up our act to get away from our very "Square" image. I must thank the South Texas Callers Co-operative. Watching and joining in their classes over many years has to show, their professional teaching methods, which has been very enlightening!

I haven't used whole sequences, sometimes just a well placed word has sparked a series of thoughts, one leading on to another and some word pictures solve the problems, but not all travel well, you just have to try them!

I was discussing the use of couples circulate on Week 1 or 2 with Jerry at Peppermint Palace, he said it was easy; he uses the couples approach with the word picture of golf carts (Buggies) following each other around a golf course each with a couple in, following around to each green! We don't use many carts here, most golfers walk round, but it does give a clear picture for par 2 holes, just don't 'play thru' Please!

Finally on Week 2 we still have time to teach "circle to a line" as danced USA style. You have already taught all the bits! Here's how:

Heads/sides **Lead Right** – done that! (All the rest is **Circle to a Line**), **Veer Left** (done that), **Heads** (out-facers) do your part of **Couples Trade** (done that) while **Sides Veer Right** (done that) 1p 2p lines **Forward and Back**. Repeat for sides. Not the way we did it, but move with the times! I am sure you can think of many more ways to use these moves with a limited number of basics, next week you can move on to swing thru at least Alamo style if not a lot more.

Now the Health Warning, these innovations **will** speed up the teaching programme if you leave out the “dross” (non essential moves), it can **halve** the teach programme. As I mentioned earlier Wheel Around will speed up teaching Right and Left Thru and 2/4 Ladies Chain and the Trade and Circulate will help speed up Wheel and Deal, and First couple Left, next

Right; Flutter Wheel feels like Couples Trade to the men and Reverse the Flutter feels like Couples Trade to girls along with Sweep ¼ and Ferris Wheel. Why not try Centres In and “As Couples Cloverleaf” instead of Cast Off ¾, you can use Couples Hinge before teaching Single Hinge. I still think that teaching Ends Hesitate, Centres, do a U-Turn Back (away from centre) and As Couples Wheel and Deal is a far better way to teach Recycle, but that’s just a personal view.

So why not give some “teaching time” a new look what have you got to lose ?

**JOIN the “CAN DO CALLERS” saying
“CHANGE, YES, WE, CAN”!!!**

GSI-UK 2009 Update

The GSI-UK team keeps going from strength to strength. After two sold out “launch” dances we are well on the way with plans for the 2009 GSI-UK Festival. Our website has been up and running for some time now, so information about the Festival, calling and cueing staff, registration, accommodations, and the program for the weekend can all be found at www.GSI-england.co.uk

The October issue of “Lets Square Dance” has a 2009 Festival registration form in the center fold, all you need to do is pull it out, fill it out and send it in! Don’t wait because the early bird price is only good until 31 January 2009; **register now and save £14 per couple off the full weekend price.**

Next year we have the same terrific calling and cueing staff with one exception. Deborah Carroll-Jones will be joining us for 2009. Deborah has one of the most amazing voices in calling and you don’t want to miss her.

The 2009 program has a few changes from 2007. We have removed C1 and added more of everything else, more Mainstream, more Plus, more Advanced, and a lot more Rounds. We are planning after parties on Friday & Saturday night again, (those of you who were at the 2007 festival might remember Tony Oxendine in a wig and skirt)! ☺

The venue for 2009 is the same one we used in 2007, the St Ivo Leisure Centre, St Ives, Cambridgeshire. This is one of the best venues in the UK, three halls, lots of room to dance, and the main hall is air conditioned. Food is available on site. The venue has plenty of parking and is close to the center of St Ives. Campgrounds are also only a few minutes drive away.

We have two shops arranged for 2009. Phil & Zoe will be back with us again and Katie & Willem Koster will be returning with their shop “Tulip Country” Western Wear. Just about anything you can imagine for Square Dancing is available from these two shops.

For all you Callers and Cuers; This year for the very first time GSI is sponsoring a Cuers school as well as our international Callers school. Both schools will take place 7 -11 June 2009 in the same venue as the festival. We have five of the top caller coaches in the world and an internationally known Cuer instructor. Both schools will feature sessions for experienced as well as new callers and cuers. This is a full week of top notch training and it is FREE! That’s right, absolutely free, no tuition cost what so ever. All you pay are your own expenses. The Callers school is already over 50% full so don’t wait to register if you want to attend. Registration will open up for callers outside the UK very shortly and we fully expect the school to be completely booked. Cuers, space is very limited as we only have one Cuer instructor. Priority at any GSI school is given to those who have never attended any previous GSI school.

For information on either of the schools or the festival contact: Susie Kelly

Susie@graybo.co.uk

Join us for the GSI-UK 2009 Festival on 12 through 14 June 2009

Caller Training

– a series of articles by Paul Bristow
(Training Director SDCCGB)

TEACHING (3) – Programming and using a “Lesson Plan”

TEACHING SITUATIONS – There are several situations that might arise where teaching will be necessary, these each need a slightly different approach but are subject to a general set of rules that a caller will need to follow. The individual types of teaching situation comprise the following:

Full Courses: A complete course of instruction to introduce a programme (list of calls) to a group of dancers: e.g. Beginner or Plus or Advanced Programme course. These can be taught over several weeks or during a shorter but more intense session – e.g. over a few weekends or a whole week.

Workshops: An “in-depth” look at a call or a number of calls in a shorter timescale – e.g. a one or two hour session, where the intention is to extend the knowledge of a group of dancers.

Emphasis Calls: This is more likely to be a part of the programme for a club night, or a dance, where the caller has chosen to look at and develop the use of a particular call. It would be less “intensive” than a workshop but might include some abstract uses; the emphasis would be to derive enjoyment by virtue of the choreography, rather than to closely analyse and completely cover a call.

Extended Application: Again this would be part of a club-night or dance but this would involve analysis of a particular unusual application of a call – e.g. Circulate from facing lines, this is most likely to occur when the caller – as a result of his or her regular research into choreographic applications (perhaps by attending a another caller’s dance), discovers a new way to do something

PROGRAMMING – Although programming is an essential topic in it’s own right, the subject of teaching must include programming, in part. When you are providing a full course, you obviously require a Lesson Plan and a record of the movements used, together with some comments about Dancer success etc. on a session-by-session basis. It is just as important to pre-plan a “workshop” or an “emphasis call”, even just a simple “extended application” would benefit from preparation.

So take your time to prepare for any (and every) teaching occasion; you will feel better (more confident and a greater sense of achievement) and the dancers will enjoy themselves to a greater degree. If you decide to just “wing it” and do what you can based upon what you can remember, there is a good chance that the instruction will be less than it could be and – consequently – less than it should be, in which case the real “loser” in that situation will be the dancer!

Things to Consider When Planning to Teach – The following are some ideas of things that you might consider when teaching. These are more relevant to certain situations than to others and – it is most probable that – you will wish to add your own items; either from your own experiences (if you have been calling for some time) or – as time goes by (if you are a new caller) – from the situations that you encounter as your experience grows.

1) **PREPARATION** - Before you begin teaching a full course, create a check list of the calls. That will allow you to keep a written record of when each call was first taught, reviewed and learnt. This will allow you to monitor the dancers’ progress and could be useful for both the present class as well as for future ones. Also prepare copies of any class information that you intend to provide – definitions, list of calls, dates of meetings etc. to keep announcements from the stage to a minimum.

If you are using a new venue, pay a visit and check to see how suitable it is and where the facilities are (toilets, kitchen etc.); don’t forget to check the acoustic qualities and the floor type (slippery / sticky etc.). Also – if you are working with a team of dancers who will be there as angels or to perform administrative duties, take the time to ensure that they all know what is expected of them.

Caller Training

– a series of articles by Paul Bristow
(Training Director SDCCGB)

2) DURING THE COURSE – There are four sub-categories to consider:

- a) **The Caller (and Angels):** It is important that you as the caller/teacher does not lose control, no matter how many times they do it wrong, remain positive. Sometimes things that have happened to you personally may leave you feeling less than happy – you must leave these sort of problems outside. Also you must set a good example for the students, dress appropriately, arrive on time. Don't allow Angels to introduce bad habits (try and anticipate where this might happen and speak with the Angels before it does). At all times encourage smooth and gentle dancing and pay close attention to correct handholds and styling.
- b) **Whilst Teaching:** Reward dancers with sincere praise (when they get it right), never berate them or tell them off! Encourage a friendly, relaxed, jovial atmosphere. If you identify a problem student, take action; if it is someone who is disrupting the class by “fooling around” or if it is just someone who needs a little one-on-one tuition, to understand a call, make time to talk with that person, away from the group teaching situation.
- c) **The Content:** Maximise dancing time, use short breaks, make sure tips are not too long and that no single sequence of calls (before a resolution) is too long, if necessary create Normal Lines to pick up lost dancers. Watch out for overload; i.e. too much new stuff in a session!
- d) **Monitor The Students:** For every session, after the course starts in earnest, begin with a review to identify how well the students have learnt and identify any problems. You may be able to “pick-up” any students who were absent the previous week – but be careful not to slow down the teaching schedule to accommodate students with a poor attendance record.

3) **AFTER EACH SESSION** – You might be inclined to leave the hall believing that you did a first class job – and maybe you did – but take the time to ensure that everybody is happy. Talk with the Angels, club administrators, your partner and see if any of the students had a problem, with any aspect of that session that you had not noticed. Try to objectively analyse your performance and look for ways that you might improve e.g. if you found a new and better way to teach a call, whilst in the “heat of battle”, make a note of it – if you don't, you might soon forget it!

Take a moment to work out if any student(s) was (were) absent and ensure that someone will make contact and find out why. Are there any individual problems? I always tell student dancers that on at least one occasion during the course there is a good chance that they might leave at the end of a session with the intention of not returning the following week, I always suggest that – when this happens, do me a favour, come back one more time; chances are that you will be glad that you did!

Student dancers are often too embarrassed to say when they encounter problems learning. It could be that a different explanation will work for an individual. I recall the dancer who could not turn three-quarters, I tried everything I could think of – I told him to “count the walls” and – when that didn't work – to turn halfway and a little bit more but still no success. Finally, after a discussion with him I discovered that he was an aviation engineer, so I suggested that the turn should be 270 degrees – he got it straight away, with the question “why didn't you say that in the first case”?

The last question that you must ask, is the most difficult to answer but must be asked – will every student dancer be back next week? Who left early (and why) – could there have been a problem, left unresolved that will cost you a student dancer? Most difficult of all – did you upset anyone? Sometimes people take exception to the strangest things, over time you will develop a good feel for this but even then, someone will be “hurt” by the most innocent of comments; it goes without saying that you should avoid this situation and to do that you will need to keep an “ear to the ground”.

BAASDC & SDCCGB



JOINT COUNCILS ' RPM COMMITTEE

A joint committee set up by the Square Dance Callers Club of Great Britain and the British Association of American Square Dance Clubs to help clubs recruit new dancers, promote Square Dancing to the public and maintain the numbers recruited.

Funded By The National Lottery Through Awards For All ■ recruit ■ promote ■ maintain ■

RPM MEMBERS: Tony Metcalfe (President BAASDC), Walt Burr (President SDCCGB), Linda Gill (Chairman) Maggie Palmer, Susie Kelly, Patricia Connett-Woodcock, Chris Gill, Irene Dimmer, Paul Bristow, Zoe Bremer

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A Typical N.A.R.C.A. Meeting

by Gene Turner

For those who have never been to a local R.C.A. meeting or for those who have and are curious if all R.C.A.'s do pretty much of the same thing at their meetings, I offer this little insight into the activity at, what I consider to be, a 'typical' Northern Area Regional Callers Association meeting. The meeting described took place on 16 November of this year and though the meeting was a little shorter than usual due to a dancer association meeting preceding it, the meeting contained all of the elements of a 'typical' N.A.R.C.A. meeting.

The meeting started on time at 1:00pm at the Old People's Welfare Hall, 78 Nottingham Road, Arnold, Nottingham NG56LF, as stated on the notice of meeting, that was sent out by post and Email to members of NARCA on the 9th of November to remind them to attend. There were about eight or nine members attending including some partners. It was, as often, a disappointing turnout considering that there are so many talented callers in the catchments area of N.A.R.C.A. We tend to move the meeting locations around so that all callers in the area have an opportunity to attend a meeting near to

them, but most often it is the same loyal callers who attend. The location doesn't seem to be a factor.

Editor's Note: If any callers have ideas on why this phenomenon exists or how to improve attendance at R.C.A. or S.D.C.C.G.B. meetings please send them to the editor and if you prefer to remain anonymous, you may do so, but please let us know what we can change to improve attendance.

As per the Agenda, Dave Woolerton led the lineup and presented information to us on "The Windmill system for patter calling" that Stan Burdick introduced to British callers when he published a fourteen-page booklet a number of years ago. I had a look through the booklet which Dave brought along and decided that for me, Dave's presentation was a very well explained synopsis of Stan's 'Windmill System'. Dave explained the system and made it easily understandable (which I'm not sure the book did). Dave had obviously studied the system well and was able to pass along to us the most attractive feature of this method of patter calling... that of only having to keep track of ONE man as he moves

through the patterns of the square. When it is time to resolve the square, it is only a matter of getting that ONE key man into one of four locations (I think, or was it eight?) on the dance floor, and facing his corner where the caller could simply call Allemande Left and the square would be resolved. This was all news to me and I found it amazing. A really good job of presenting an intricate, supposedly simple method of patter calling, from Dave Woolerton.

After Dave's presentation, most of us had a browse through the record shop which Trevor Day brings to almost any function he attends. Thanks Trevor and Chris for all of your efforts in maintaining and traveling to all the R.C.A. and S.D.C.C.G.B. meetings with this massive collection of previously-owned records for sale. Many of these records represent out-of-print, no longer produced square dance and Round Dance records.

About 2:15, Dave Woolerton gave us a short talk on a system of notation that is called PROC-4 (say it, don't spell it) and was originally presented in a "Sets in Order" American Square Dance Society Magazine. This could be very useful for callers still working with the old teacups and coffee mugs system on the kitchen table. This system of notation assumes that the caller is dancing the number one man's position and labels the ladies according to their relationship to him... **P** (partner), **R** (right-hand lady), **O** (opposite), **C** (corner), and the gents are labeled 1,2,3 or 4... hence the name PROC-4. This was a interesting, though short presentation.

At 2:30 it was time to present our homework to the group. In the notice that came out on the 9th November, Trevor had asked that we each prepare some Zero modules to move dancers around the square (that sounds like a contradiction in terms... a zero surely takes you back where you started). But sly Trevor had asked that we prepare a:

- 1) Geographical Zero from a line or a box (that brings the dancers to exactly the same footprints they started from) using the Basic program.
- 2) Non-Geographical Zero from a line or a box (as above but the square rotated through 90, 180 or 270 degrees) using the Basic program.
- 3) Geographical Zero using Mainstream program
- 4) Non-Geographical Zero using Mainstream Program
- 5) Geographical Zero using Plus program
- 6) Non-Geographical Zero using Plus program

Hey, now this sounded like an interesting exercise to try. So a couple of days before the meeting I prepared a few of each... but so did some of the other attendees. I will provide a sampling of them

here for your perusal... but before you read further, maybe you would like to work out some of your own... it's really good training and maybe your thought process will not be tainted by the Zeros that I offer to you in the following paragraphs. I tried to keep mine short, because my memory is short and longer sequences can be forgotten too easily.

My Geographic Zero using BASIC (1):
[ZB] Right & Left Thru... Dive Thru... Square Thru 3/4... [ZB]

[ZL] Right & Left Thru... Flutterwheel... Reverse Flutterwheel... [ZL]

My Non-Geographic Zero using BASIC (2):
[ZB] Dive Thru... Double Pass Thru... Leaders Trade... [ZB]

[ZL] Bend The Line... [ZL] (Short but effective)

My Geographic Zero using Mainstream (3):
[ZB] Spin The Top, Twice! Recycle... Spin The Top, Twice! Recycle... [ZB] (Mainstream Only... No BASIC- <Grin>)

[ZL] Spin The Top, Twice! Recycle... Spin The Top, Twice! Recycle... [ZL] (Why have to remember more than I can, when it works from lines or boxes)

My Non-Geographic Zero using Mainstream (4):
[ZB] Eight-Chain-4 [ZB] (Mainstream Only... No BASIC- <Grin>)

[ZL] Cast Off 3/4... [ZL] (Short but effective and Mainstream Only <Grin>)

Admittedly, some of my answers are tongue-in-cheek, but I really like this one from Richard Munday:

Richard's Non-Geographic Zero using Plus (6):
[ZB] Relay The Deucey... Linear Cycle... Slide Thru... [ZB]

There were several callers who did their homework and presented it to our little group of dancers. I don't feel that I should publish their answers without their consent. Richard Munday has allowed me access to publish his and they were a little longer than mine and generally were proper modules that contained between six and eight calls. His modules were a bit more intricate and danced very well. But if you wanted to dance to and hear the good modules, such as his, you need to attend the meetings. Maybe next time?

I hope that you might find this little review of our NARCA meeting useful or entertaining or maybe it will encourage you to attend your local Callers Association meeting next time, instead of sitting at home and watching the football game.



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(January 2005)

***** START *****

'LOST SQUARES PROCEDURE'
(REV A - Approved November 19, 2004)



PRESS RELEASE

In 1986 CALLERLAB introduced a procedure for 'LOST SQUARES'. It was approved with some small changes in 1987 and has now been revised. CALLERLAB recommends that dancers use the following Patter and Singing Call Procedures to help lost squares quickly resume dancing. Callers should teach these procedures to their dancers and be alert for sets waiting to re-enter the action and for sets struggling with singing calls.

PATTER PROCEDURE - Make Normal Lines, Wait for Entry, and Sort during Promenade

The following procedure is intended for use during Patter or Hoedown calling when longer sequences are likely and at least half the square is confused. If only one or two dancers are lost then they should look for a helpful hand and attempt to fill the vacant spots within the still functioning square.

DANCER'S RESPONSIBILITY

1. If dancers in a confused but partially functioning square hear "Make Normal Lines", then lost dancers should quickly adjust to Normal Couples (Boy left, Girl right) ready to join the forming Normal (Boy-Girl-Boy-Girl) Facing Lines.
2. In the case of total breakdown each dancer should return to home position as soon as possible. Then the head ladies join hands with their corner and the head couples back out to form normal lines at the sides of the square.
3. On the caller's command, "Normal Lines, Go Forward and Back", all lost squares enter into the dance pattern. If a resolution is heard first, then dancers in lost squares should simply readjust to a squared set.
4. Dancers in a lost square must remember that re-entering from normal lines does not guarantee a correct resolution. Full recovery will probably require rapid sorting to home during the Promenade (move counter-clockwise but step out at your home).

CALLER'S RESPONSIBILITY

1. Recognize that a number of sets have broken down and have formed lines.
2. Place the dancing squares into facing lines that are in a normal BGBG arrangement (#0L).
3. Give the command "NORMAL LINES, Go Forward and Back" in a bold voice, which is the command for the lost squares to enter into the dance pattern.
4. Allow enough time during the Promenade for squares that were lost to complete their Promenade and sort as necessary to get home. If an "at home" resolution is used, make sure all the sets are squared up.

=====

SINGING CALL PROCEDURE - Swing, and Men Sort during Promenade

The following procedure is intended for use during a Singing Call where the sequences are short and closely timed to the music. The minimum needed to avoid more confusion and resume dancing at the next sequence is each man at home with some lady for a partner.

DANCER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Since partners probably should be changing, dancers in a lost square should be ready for a quick Swing with their corner or nearest opposite sex and then expect to make adjustments during the Promenade so that the men end at home. If still lost during the Promenade, men should quickly head for home while ladies should join the closest un-partnered man.

CALLER'S RESPONSIBILITY

In the case of significant breakdown on the floor, adjust the choreography or provide more clues and cues to improve the success rate on the next figure.

***** END *****

Maids Morton Brownies And Mums Square Dance For A Healthier Heart

Recently the Leader of the Buckinghamshire troupe of Brownies, Hilary Jones, from Maids Morton, invited Susie Kelly to put her girls through their paces for their Healthy Heart Badge. They had also been studying the various food groups and learned how to take their own pulses.

For 90 minutes, more than 40 Brownies (7 - 11 year olds) and their mothers (a bit older) swung to the lively Square Dance Music, negotiating the dances specially written for the occasion.

It was most commendable that each Brownie had an adult to dance with and for most people there, it was the

first time they had experienced Square Dancing. Pulses were taken at the beginning and at the end of the 90 minute session to see how their hearts responded to the exercise.

A photo and short article will be sent to the British Heart Foundation magazine as a follow up for the Tudor Squares write up.

Susie will be happy to share the dances with anyone who needs very, very easy material for children.

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james@jameswyatt.net

Happy Holidays To You & Yours!

It is again time for you to nominate the
S.D.C.C.G.B. COUNCIL 2009/2010
(Voting will take place at the AGM on March 8th 2009)

It is time for you to decide if you will plan on re-electing the officers of the Council or if you believe that you know of someone who could do a better job and who is willing to take on the task, for you to nominate them for the office that you believe they should be elected to.

Some of the Council members might welcome a little break from the duties of the council. So, if you feel that you know of someone who would be willing to stand for a particular office, you could contact the existing officer in that office (contact information is on the first page/cover of each issue) and find out if they would like to be replaced by someone else who is willing to do the job.

Clip the Nomination Form (or send the whole page, if you wish), fill it out with as many willing nominees as you wish and send it to Susie Kelly. Be sure that you send it in plenty of time to reach her for the 18th of January deadline. Thanks!

Gene

S.D.C.C.G.B. Council Nomination Form

Council Position	Nominee	Nominated by
President		
Vice President		
Secretary		
Treasurer		
Membership Officer		
Cuer's Rep.		
P.R.O.		
Ordinary Member		

Please ensure that anyone that you may nominate is **WILLING** to stand for the office/position and is a **Full, Active and paid-up, member of the S.D.C.C.G.B.**

Nomination Forms are to be returned to: Susie Kelly
2 Crossbridge Cottages,
Thornborough Road,
Thornton,
Milton Keynes, MK17 0HE

By **18th January 2009 !!!**

If you have questions or comments contact: Susie Kelly (graybo@freenet.co.uk)