

## CALLERS CORNER

A forum for the exchange of information  
between Callers & Dancers

Written by : Geoff Clarke

### Happy New Year!

Well, I'm still awaiting my first 'question' directly to this column, but then it's early in the season yet, so please don't be shy! If it's something that's been bugging you (but you didn't want to comment); something you've always wondered about (but didn't want to ask); or something you really don't know about (but were afraid to ask) then this is the place to get the answers! Really...just ask!!

As mentioned in the last issue, the best person you should address your question to is your own Club Caller, but if you haven't had the time or opportunity, then you can send your questions directly by email to me at the following address: [askthecaller@squaresandrounds.com](mailto:askthecaller@squaresandrounds.com) or by "snail mail" to the Square Times Editor, who'll pass it along. All questions will be answered and those that would be of interest to all will be published in this column, with anonymity ensured unless you request otherwise.

Ok, over to you!

**Geoff**



## ASK THE CALLER

A New Dancer asked me this question one night not so long ago:-

**“ How come I seem to be always rushing through the Singing Call? I don't seem to have enough time to complete everything ?”**

After giving it some thought, I came up with a number of points that not only answers a very good question, but also provides some insight into what a new dancer needs to consider :-

1. Square Dancing is a **LEARNED SKILL** that does require practise! Try & get out and dance **MORE THAN ONCE PER WEEK!** You will learn faster & become more 'comfortable' if you dance more than one night per week. Why not visit one of the other clubs in the area – you won't regret it!
2. Dance **IN TIME with the MUSIC !** That means move your feet 'in time' with the music & execute the moves 'in time' with the music. You'll be amazed how much easier it is !
3. **ASK THE CALLER** if you're not sure about something. That's what he/she is there for !!
4. **RESPOND to the CALL** when you hear it !! **BE LISTENING AT ALL TIMES** and if you're not hearing the calls properly, then get into a square at the FRONT of the hall !

5. **PROPER EXECUTION** of the moves means that you're "ON TIME" (in the right place at the right time) for the next call given. ON TIME, means executing the move with the correct number of beats of music. For example:-
- PROMENADES – keep them "tight" (Full Promenade is 16 beats)
  - SQUARE THRU's – CRISP turns are necessary (Square Thru 4 = 10 beats)
  - DOSADO – keep it 'tight' – (Dosado = 6-8 beats max)
  - SWING – swing ONCE unless told otherwise (Swing = 6 beats)
  - KEEP SQUARES "tight" – don't let them "breathe" too much !
  - KEEP LINES 'close' together – 6 steps apart (3 fwd-touch-3 back = 8 beats)
6. **FINISH THE MOVE** you're doing before trying to execute the next ! Caller will "stack" the calls, so don't 'stop' what you're doing now to do the 'next'.
7. If Square **BREAKS DOWN?** – **DO SOMETHING** other than standing around wondering 'what happened' & 'who caused it'. (see the first issue of *Callers Corner* for more on this)
8. **HELP YOURSELF** by your *reviewing all the moves you've learned by going over them in your Basic/Mainstream book*, especially after you've just learned a 'new' one! Looking them over 'in advance' is ok, but it may be confusing to you.

## WHAT THE CALLER SEES!



### **GRAND SQUARE – "shortcuts" taken by 'experienced' dancers !**

Do you take the full 32 beats to do a Grand Square ?? or... do you cut corners ?? ... slide sideways going into the middle??.. swing 1/2way through??.

New Dancers are taught to take a full 32 beats, to turn smartly on each 4<sup>th</sup> beat and to 'reverse' at the 16<sup>th</sup> beat point in the pattern. So, no wonder they're somewhat 'confused' when some of these 'other' moves are introduced into their squares by experienced dancers! Is it part of the move? Did I miss something? Did my caller not teach it? ... they do ask!

Hey there 'experienced' dancers...help our new dancers learn the move 'correctly' *first* before exposing them to "the extras" !!

*Never Forget that "you were once a beginner too !"*

**Until next issue....**

**Email:**

**askthecaller@squaresandrounds.com**