

## CALLERS CORNER

A forum for the exchange of information  
between Callers & Dancers

Written by : Geoff Clarke



March/April 2005

Spring isn't far now! As I write this, the snow is falling, wind blowing... a typical March day, but still a prelude for warmer things to come!

And a reminder that the end of the Square Dance season is fast approaching which, for our newest dancers, is the end of their very first year! Wow, all that newfound knowledge whirling around inside their heads as they continue to sort out Wheel & Deals from Ferris Wheels! And then they stop for the summer & come back in the fall hoping they remember any of it? Four months without dancing? NO, you don't have to stop dancing, especially the newest dancers. Started in early May, BASIC dances will be held every Wednesday evening for 12 weeks! Sponsored by the Ottawa & Area Callers Association, you will be able to dance 'just Basics' until the middle of July! Check for the flyer in this edition of Square Time for further information, or speak to your Club Caller.

This is the 13<sup>th</sup> edition of Caller's Corner and may well be the last. When I wrote the very first column, I was answering a perceived 'need' for something different and decided that the future of the column rested on my original premise in the first column that "the true form and nature of the contents of this column will evolve over time driven primarily by what YOU the Dancers would like to see in it..." I anticipated feedback, or comment, perhaps a deluge of questions that would keep me busy answering YOUR needs. But alas, that has not been the case. I can count the dancer questions received (in 3 years) on one hand, certainly not a deluge! So folks, if you find this column interesting & informative, then you need to tell me; you need to ask questions; YOU need to have an interest!

So I'll leave the future of this column up to you, the readers. If you want it to continue, then let me know! If not, then it's been fun & I hope you've enjoyed reading it. Questions, comments, etc. can be sent directly to me, either by email at: [askthecaller@squaresandrounds.com](mailto:askthecaller@squaresandrounds.com) or by "snail mail" to the Square Time Editor, who'll pass it along.

Until then..... Geoff



## ASK THE CALLER

Here's a couple of items that came from two of our local Callers, John & Paul.

**Q:-'How do I stop the man from twirling me?'**

**Answer from John Charman:-** A way to stop being twirled at the end of a Promenade is for the lady to keep her hands down low. Then the gent will not be able to spin her around. I've also noticed that some men like to keep the twirl a surprise. This is very dangerous as the lady is caught off guard; thus her back can be twisted, arm or joints hurt.

\*\*\*\*\*

**A Dancer asked Paul:** If I start out in a square as a HEAD, how long am I a HEAD for? To clarify, if I start out as # 1 man and the Caller put everyone back to a static square but the original HEADS are now at the SIDES, whereupon the next call is HEADS (do something) - Who executes the call, the new HEADS or the original HEADS?

**Paul Adams' Answer:** You are a HEAD until the end of the tip. You are also #1 man till the end of the tip including the singing call, unless the caller has purposely stirred the bucket and informed the dancers he/she has done so, ie." and you've stirred the bucket for a singing call". If the caller puts you at the sides position and wishes to use the call "HEADS (xxx)" the proper call is "THOSE AT THE HEADS(xxx)", or "NEW HEADS (xxx)"

WHAT THE  
CALLER  
SEES !!



## OUCH! - Phase II

There is a myriad of places that one can read about the 'do's & don'ts' of Square Dancing. Go onto any website out there & you'll find some sort of list, the contents varying depending on who wrote it. These 'lists' have probably evolved over the years and my guess is that they are a collection of things that DANCERS have complained about, sometimes many times over, with the fervent 'hope' that all dancers will 'take note' and thus make this activity the FUN that it should be. Have you seen the list? Have you read it and taken note of the contents? It makes for some good reading or review.

As mentioned, these are DANCER 'complaints', not CALLER complaints, edicts, or teachings etc. However from a Caller's perspective, and my personal observations from 'behind the mike,' there is one (don't) in particular that disturbs me greatly, and thus the reason for the heading above.... "*Ouch II*"

*Here it is and I invite comments from both Dancers & Callers out there on the points being made in this specific selection from "the list"....*

-----  
**BE A CONSIDERATE DANCER - an 'ANGEL' not a devil !!** - There is **no acceptable excuse** for rough handling of fellow dancers...period! No one steps into a square to make a fool of themselves, so figure that mistakes really are *just* that – mistakes – and not intentional attempts to break down a square. You experienced dancers out there: remember your first dance and how scared you were that someone would yell at you? ***Allow others the space to make the same kind of goofs you did.*** Not every square has to be step-for-step perfect to be fun. **Grabbing** people to put them in the correct position **is unacceptable** and it's an unusual dancer who likes to be pushed around! If a dancer appears not to know where he or she

should be going, then point to the correct position or whisper in their ear (***NO yelling, pushing, pulling, grabbing!***). And if they don't get there & if the square breaks down, have a laugh about it! Remember that the next mistake may be ***your own***, so do **NOT** be critical of others. This can ruin everyone's fun and we **ALL** make mistakes... right ?

*If more help is required then talk to your Caller !!*

-----

OK, now having highlighted that particular "*don't*" I also want to draw your attention back to the contents of last month's column regarding 'moving up'. If dancers decide to move up before they are **READY**, then they themselves contribute to the type of problems detailed above & thus causing it to more likely happen. Why? Because 'experienced' dancers do get frustrated with others that continually make the same mistakes, time & time again and appear not able to 'learn' the 'new moves'. Why? well, because they're over their heads – they don't have the proper grounding – they moved "up" before they were ready! **NO**, I'm **not** condoning the actions of the 'grabbers', ***that must stop***, but I do understand the temptation to do so and recognize that we all have a role to play in ensuring that all are dancing at a level that they can handle, are successful and enjoying themselves. After all that is why we dance in the first place.. to have a good time !! So do **your** part to make it happen!

**Remember to SMILE  
it's CONTAGEOUS!**



*Until next time..... Geoff*

**Email: [askthecaller@squaresandrounds.com](mailto:askthecaller@squaresandrounds.com)**