

ON-GOING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SSD

The discussion of coming back post-pandemic with SSD as a DESTINATION program is really taking off. In one of the largest square dance areas in the world – Southern California - the club leadership, association leadership, and prominent callers have had quite a few productive meetings. The sentiment, while not yet unanimous, leans strongly to having SSD become THE dance program for all clubs in this region.

This is a huge departure from “the way we've always done things” mentality and all of the leaders involved in this decision are to be congratulated for their open-mindedness. Admittedly, change is difficult. It can be forced on us or embraced and planned for. Planning for SSD as a club program is a big change and requires lots of planning, not only to execute a re-starting of dancing with a new program but also to answer the doubts of those opposed to change.

I have suggested that clubs, Mainstream or Plus, become SSD clubs that offer tips at the Mainstream or Plus level. An evening's program could look like thirty-minutes of pre-rounds followed by ninety-minutes of SSD dancing followed by thirty or forty-minutes of Mainstream/Plus dancing. A comment received from a reader, feels that including Mainstream or Plus tips might be an inducement for SSD dancers to “move on from SSD”. A valid concern. However, it's been my experience that when higher level tips were presented at the end of the evening, after the main event of dancing, that few people stayed on. For example, when Advanced tips are offered at the end of a Plus dance or A-2 tips at the end of an A-1 dance. A few folks stay on to watch and those few that did, were seldom interested in “moving on”. In my opinion, if folks are happy with their dancing and if they think they look good, they will keep coming back every time without looking for something else.

I would further suggest that we need to offer diversity at our dances. By offering SSD as the main course of the evening while also having a place for Mainstream/Plus dancers, we are inclusive and acknowledging those dancers who enjoy Mainstream or Plus. Perhaps at some date in 2022 or 2023, there may be enough dancers interested in learning Mainstream or Plus, in the meanwhile we can dance under one big tent.

If you haven't read my previous articles on SSD, please visit buddyweaver.com and click on the “articles” link. Write to me at buddy@buddyweaver.com and find me on facebook on the following pages: Buddy Weaver, Blue Star Square Dance Music, New Hi Hat Square Dance Music, and Rawhide Square Dance Music.

Singing Calls

SMOKE GETS IN YOUR EYES

Knee Deep Melodies 138 by Chris Froggatt

Tempo: 126 Rhythm: Shuffle

This month we welcome Knee Deep Melodies to the music review. As introduced in the January 2019 review, this label is produced by Chris Froggatt, hailing from Australia. Good dance beat. A familiar tune with leads clearly played by electronic flute, guitar, and piano. The same instruments

play lots of fill notes. Kettle drum rushes add a nice touch. A classic sing-along that is played in a relaxing country style. Key change on middle break offers a nice zing.

Heads Promenade Halfway - Sides Touch a Quarter – Walk & Dodge – Swing Thru – Girls Circulate – Boy Trade – Boy Run – Ferris Wheel – Zoom – Pass Thru – Swing

ROCKET MAN

Knee Deep Melodies 139 by Chris Froggatt
Tempo: 128 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. The tune is easy to follow with clear leads played by keyboard, guitar, and piano. Lots of fill notes from the same instruments. An Elton John classic that many dancers will sing along. Music is played in country/pop style. Middle of the energy chart. May need to adjust speed.

Heads Square Thru – Right Hand Star – Heads Star Left – Do Sa Do – Swing Thru – Boy Trade – Swing

AMARULA SUN

Rhythm Classic 202 by Larry Letson
Tempo: 122 Rhythm: Shuffle

Rhythm Records is offering a sub-label that features some of yesterday and today's great callers. Their first release features retired caller, Larry Letson. Not only good to hear him, but he hasn't lost a thing. Musically, good beat. Tune is easy to follow with clear leads played by steel drum, acoustic and steel guitars. Lots of strong fills from the same instruments. A country song played in country style with a slight Caribbean feel.

Heads Promenade Halfway – Square Thru – Right & Left Thru – Veer Left – Ferris Wheel – Square Thru Three – Swing

MY WALKING SHOES DON'T FIT ME ANYMORE

Rhythm Records 370 by Jet Roberts and Jerry Story
Tempo: 126 Rhythm: Boom-Chuck

Great dance beat. Leads are clearly played by dobro, harmonica, and fiddle. Lots of strong fills from the same instruments plus banjo in the background throughout. Exciting, fast-moving country music to a Bluegrass classic song. Two key changes will send the dancers into orbit.

Heads Square Thru – Do Sa Do – Swing Thru – Spin the Top – Right & Left Thru – Half Sashay – Box the Gnat – Slide Thru – Swing

BABYS' GOT HER BLUE JEANS ON

Rhythm Records 380 by Jet Roberts
Tempo: 124 Rhythm: Boom-Chuck

Music Review January 2021 by Buddy Weaver

Good dance beat. A familiar tune clearly played by keyboard, acoustic and steel guitars. Lots of strong fills from the same musicians plus banjo in the background throughout. A country song (Mel McDaniel) played in an exciting country style. Should be a winner.

Heads Star Thru – Pass Thru – Swing Thru – Boy Run – Couples Circulates – Chain Down the Line – Half Sashay – Box the Gnat – Slide Thru – Swing

GONNA BUILD A MOUNTAIN

Sting Productions 21807 by Paul Bristow

Tempo: 128 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. Clear leads played by piano, saxophone, and guitar. Lots of fills notes from the same instruments. A classic sing-along is done in a lively swing style. Two key changes boost the energy. Tracks include music with and without harmony.

Heads Lead Right – Touch a Quarter – Scoot Back – Boy Run – Pass the Ocean – Boys Circulate – Girl Trade – Swing Thru – Boy Run – Girl Trade – Tag the Line – Face Left – Promenade

HEARTBEAT

Sting Productions 21808 by Tommy P. Larsen

Tempo: 128 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good beat. The melody is easy to follow with clear leads played by piano, guitar, and organ. The same instruments provide lots of fills. A Buddy Holly tune played in a laid-back country style. Tracks include music and without harmony. May need to adjust speed.

Two figures

PAPERBACK WRITER

Sting Productions 21812 by Paul Bristow

Tempo: 127 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. The is easy to follow with clear leads played by electric guitar, organ, and keyboard. The end of every stanza adds tambourine followed by a change in rhythm that goes from every step to every other step. Interesting sound. A Beatles tune played in an exciting pop style.

Heads Lead Right – Touch a Quarter – Acey Ducey – Boy Run – Load the Boat – Single Circle – Boy Trade – Girl Fold – Peel the Top – Slide Thru – Swing

SUMMER IN THE CITY

Sting Productions 21814 by Bronc Wise

Tempo: 127 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. A familiar tune out front with strong leads played by organ, electric guitar, and keyboard. The instrumental elicits a feel for the sixties and era from which this song originated. Exciting music that moves along at a quick pace.

Heads Square Thru – Right & Left Thru – Veer Left – Chain Down the Line – Dixie Style – Boy Cross Run – Boy Fold – Girl Turn Back – Swing

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES

Sting Productions 21817 by Jack Borgstrom
Tempo: 128 Rhythm: Shuffle

Lots of Sting releases this month due to some missed months of reviews. My apologies to Paul. This should get us caught up. Good dance beat. The familiar tune is easy to follow with clear leads played by keyboard, mandolin, saxophone, piano, and electric guitar. Lots of fill notes from all the instruments. Really, a great sound with lots of musical variety. The tune is a sing-along. May need to adjust speed.

Heads Promenade Halfway – Square Thru – Right & Left Thru – Veer Left – Ferris Wheel – Cntrs Veer Left – Crossfire – Walk & Dodge - Swing

HOEDOWNS

CINDY, ESP Recordings 472

Tempo: 126 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. A contemporary sounding hoedown with music and fills from keyboard, guitar, and piano. A musical drop to feature percussion is a nice touch. The tune is not “Cindy” but rather “Little Red Riding Hood” by Sam the Sham is clearly played. Tracks include called patter by Bill Harrison.

THE BAND PLAYED THE BOOGIE HOEDOWN, Knee Deep Melodies 138

Tempo: 126 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. Another contemporary sounding hoedown with music from keyboard, guitar, piano, and horns. This really captures the musical feel of the original seventies song (same name). Great piece of music. Tracks include called patter by Glenn Wilson.

BUSTLE

Tempo: 128 Rhythm: Shuffle

HUSTLE, Sting Productions 21852

Tempo: 129 Rhythm: Boom-Chuck

Two hoedowns for the price of one. “Bustle” is a contemporary sounding piece with chords played by keyboard and guitar. Strong beat is offered. “Hustle” is a country piece with chords played. Music from guitar, banjo, harmonica, fiddle, dobro, and piano. Musical drops add a nice touch. Two very good hoedowns offering variety for your program. May need to adjust speed.

AS Records (dealer)	asrecordshop.com
DoSaDo Music(dealer)	dosadomusic.com
Blue Star Music	buddyweavermusic.com
ESP Recordings	esprecordings.com
Knee Deep Melodies	kneedeepmelodies.com
Rhythm Records	rhythmrecords.biz
Sting Productions	stingproductions.co.uk