

SSD FOR THE DANCERS AND CALLER

This series has often covered the topic of SSD – Social Square Dancing. The program is made up of only fifty calls so that it can be taught in twelve to fourteen weeks. It is not a new idea, in fact it is as close to the Modern Western Square Dancing that was enjoyed by tens of thousands of dancers up to the early seventies. A program of fifty calls taught in a matter of weeks was the hallmark of MWSD for the dozens of years that saw square dancing not only grow, but spread worldwide. As square dance clubs start to reopen in the States, many are embracing SSD as the new destination program, but can SSD work in your club?

The answer will be found by asking the question, why won't SSD work in your club? Lets explore the latter question. First, there are the naysayers, some of these folks don't understand the new program, some don't want change, some will just be opposed to everything. There are some of these folks who have stated that “dancers will never give up (Mainstream or Plus or whatever the old level)”. Well, respectfully, that has been proven wrong on many occasions. One only needs to look at yesterday's most popular square dance calls that are no longer in active use. Do you remember “Arch In The Middle, Ends Turn In”, “Dixie Chain”, “Cross Trail”? Most don't, because they've faded from active use or were not part of the CALLERLAB programs when they first came into being in the late seventies. Few callers and no dancers remember these old calls and even if they were used, no-one would know what to do with them.

In my opinion, callers are in love with square dance calls; dancers love the experience. It is often the caller who wants to hold on to his or her favorite call. For example, I remember when “Curlique” was dropped from use by CALLERLAB, one caller in my area refuse to stop using it. For a while, the dancers still did the call but after a year of not hearing it used by other callers, when they danced to this fellow and he called “Curlique”, the dancers stopped and gave him a puzzled look. That caller soon gave up “Curlique”. Bottom-line, dancers love the experience; not counting calls.

Second, there are some who are not prepared to change. In my area, some Plus clubs have declared they will not give up Plus. Frankly, no-one is forcing change on anyone, but the question I have is this – if your Plus club restarts, post-pandemic with 50% of the dancers you had pre-pandemic, how do you make ends meet? Do you double dues and door fees? The only way to get new members is through a class that runs for one year, so can your club hold out that long? What if you make it a year and don't graduate enough dancers? Change is hard and it will be forced on each of us like in the case of not having enough dancers to keep the doors open. We can deny change is upon us, we can resist change or we can accept it and even embrace it. There are many Plus and many Mainstream club in the America that have chosen to embrace change by adopting SSD, not only to survive but to thrive.

There are some club leaders who have said they will wait for dancing to resume post-pandemic, see how many dancers come back, then make a decision about what to do. If this is you, I encourage you to not wait. A failure to plan is the same as planning to fail. Ask yourself, would you drive out to the middle of nowhere, running your tank of gas to empty, with the thought that you'll wait until you get there to find out if there is any gas at all? Of course not. You would probably have a primary plan and a contingency plan. As a professional, it is hard to see club leaders seemingly give up, to let the tide either get their boats to rise or drift into the rocks. Sad.

Music Review July 2021 by Buddy Weaver

Lets end on a positive note. We are about to experience extraordinary opportunities for growth. We will all face change; some will embrace it and plan for existing dancers to return comfortably while making a great nest for new dancers to come in and find a home. We have a great resource in the SSD program. It is a home club builder. It has a proven track record with some of the most brilliant minds in square dancing, mentoring and teaching how to implement SSD in your home area. We are about to see a new square dancing world where the biggest problem will be finding a hall big enough for your club dances. SSD is for your club.

One of the markers of a return to dance life is the square dance music producer who had gone into hibernation for a year, start to release music again. This month, lets welcome back some of our great square dance labels by purchasing their music. Please visit buddyweaver.com for previous articles/reviews. On facebook through the following pages: Buddy Weaver, Blue Star Square Dance Music, New Hi Hat Square Dance Music, and Rawhide Square Dance Music. Send me an email: buddy@buddyweaver.com

Singing Calls (** indicates the figure is used in SSD program)

IF YOU COULD READ MY MIND **

Arrowhead Productions 1150 by Johnny Preston
Tempo: 128 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. The familiar tune is easy to follow with clear leads played by piano, guitar, and harmonica. Plenty of fill notes from the same instruments. This Gordon Lightfoot classic is played in a relaxing country style. Callers may croon this. Tracks include music with and without background vocals. May need to slow tempo.

Heads Square Thru – Do Sa Do to a wave – Ladies Trade – Recycle – Star Thru – Right & Left Thru – Square Thru Three – Swing

PILOT OF THE AIRWAVES **

Gold Wing Records 196 by Brian Freed
Tempo: 126 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. First twenty-one seconds are drum beat only then music kicks in. Clear leads played by keyboard make the tune easy to follow. Guitar work in the background throughout. A late-seventies pop song that is done in a laid-back pop style. Tracks include music with and without melody/background vocals.

Heads Promenade Halfway – Pass the Ocean – Extend – Swing Thru – Boy Trade – Boy Run – Bend the Line – Square Thru Three – Swing

NO BAD NEWS **

HappyTrax Music by Deborah Carroll-Jone, Vernon Jones, and Jon Jones
Tempo: 124 Rhythm: Shuffle

Danceable beat. Strong lead played by keyboard throughout. Added percussion from hand-clapping and tambourine come in and out. The tune is from the seventies pop musical and makes

a lively pop singing call. This is a re-release of Desert Gold 23.

Heads Promenade Three-Quarters – Sides Right & Left Thru Full Turn – Circle to a Line – Pass the Ocean – Swing Thru – Girls Circulate – Boy Trade – Swing

THE MORE I SEE YOU **

Knee Deep Melodies 144 by Glenn Wilson

Tempo: 128 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. A familiar tune clearly played by keyboard, guitar, and piano. The same instruments provide lots of fill notes. The song goes back to the forties and here it is played in a relaxing pop style. Key change on close adds energy. May need to slow tempo.

Heads Promenade Halfway – Square Thru – Swing Thru – Boy Run – Couple Circulate – Half Tag – Scoot Back – Swing

(TAKE ME HOME) COUNTRY ROADS **

Rawhide Music 1241 by Buddy Weaver

Tempo: 128 Rhythm: Boom-Chuck

Good dance beat. The very familiar tune is clearly played by mandolin, guitar, and keyboard marimba. Lots of fill notes from the same instruments. Castanets come in on the end of every stanza for a cool feel. A lively country rendition of a John Denver classic with a key change on the close for boost. Tracks include music with regular and strong leads. Taken from studio master of Rawhide Records.

Heads Square Thru – Do Sa Do to a wave – Girl Trade – Swing Thru – Boy Run – Couples Circulate – Tag the Line – Girl U Turn Back – Swing

OKIE FROM MUSKOGEEES COMING HOME **

Rhythm Classics 201 by Elmer Sheffield

Tempo: 122 Rhythm: Boom-Chuck

Good dance beat. Clear leads played by piano, fiddle, and dobro bring make the tune easy to follow. Lots of fill notes from the same musicians. A Merle Haggard song that is done in an exciting country style with a key change on the close for more energy.

Heads Promenade Halfway – Square Thru – Right & Left Thru – Veer Left – Couples Circulate – Half Tag – Scoot Back – Swing

BABY'S GOT HER BLUEJEANS ON **

Rhythm Records 380 by Jet Roberts

Tempo: 124 Rhythm: Boom-Chuck

Good dance beat. The tune is easy to follow with clear leads played by keyboard, acoustic and steel guitars. Lots of fill notes from the same plus banjo in the background for a full sound. A contemporary/classic country song (Mel McDaniel) that is played in a lively country style.

Music Review July 2021 by Buddy Weaver

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

LITTLE LIZA JANE

Rhythm Records 381 by Adam Christman
Tempo: 124 Rhythm: Boom-Chuck

Good dance beat. Clear leads played by dobro, mandolin, and steel make the tune easy to find. The same instruments play lots of fills. Another contemporary/classic country song (Vince Gill) played in a lively country style. Two winners from Rhythm Records this month. Tracks include music with and without harmony.

Heads Square Thru – Right & Left Thru – Swing Thru – Spin the Top – Slide Thru – Square Thru
Three – Left Allemande – Promenade

DEEP PURPLE **

Rhythm/Chic 1002 by Wade Driver and Shauna Kaaria
Tempo: 126 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. Strong leads played by guitar and keyboard throughout. Light keyboard and guitar work in the background. A pop classic duet song that is done in a laid-back pop style. Lots of additional tracks for male and female callers using background singers or just straight music. Wade and Shauna sound good together.

Heads Promenade Halfway – Square Thru – Swing Thru – Boy Run – Ferris Wheel – Square Thru
Three – Swing

LONG LIVE ROCK AND ROLL

Royal Records 741 by Betsy Gotta, Tony Oxendine
Tempo: 126 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. Leads are laid-back into the chords so caller will have to know the tune. Lots of fill notes. Music from guitar, keyboard, and saxophone. Banjo in the background throughout. A seventies pop song that gets a country/rock feel. Mid-way up the energy chart with key change on close for a boost.

Two figures

I'LL COME RUNNING **

Royal Records 740 by Curt Braffett
Tempo: 128 Rhythm: Boom-Chuck

Good dance beat. A familiar tune clearly played by steel, fiddle, and harmonica. Lots of fills from harmonica, guitar, and fiddle. A classic country song (Connie Smith) that is done in a lively country style. Fast-moving music.

Music Review July 2021 by Buddy Weaver

Heads Square Thru – Right & Left Thru – Veer Left – Couples Circulate – Chain Down the Line – Star Thru – Pass Thru – Trade By – Swing

YOU CAN'T BE A BEACON

Solid Gold Music 1039 by Ted Kennedy
Tempo: 124 Rhythm: Boom-Chuck

Good dance beat. Strong leads bring the tune out front. Lots of fill notes around the caller. Music from piano, steel and acoustic guitars. The second half of every stanza gets light hand-clapping added to the percussion. A country classic played in a lively country style. Key change on close adds the finishing touch. The figure may rush the dancers; may need to eliminate the second Scoot Back.

Heads Square Thru – Swing Thru – Spin the Top – Right & Left Thru – Pass the Ocean – Girls Trade – Scoot Back – Boys Trade – Scoot Back – Swing

WITH OR WITHOUT YOU **

SharpShooter 1068 by Christian Sorge
Tempo: 126 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. The tune is easy to find with clear leads played by keyboard throughout. Electric guitar in the background. A contemporary/classic pop song (U2) that is played in a relaxing pop style. Tracks include music with and without leads.

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

BOOM BOOM GOES MY HEART **

Sting Productions 21903 by Ingvar Pettersson
Tempo: 128 Rhythm: Shuffle

Cute intro with whistling and a little percussion opening up a beat on every other step (not always comfortable dancing) by mid-stanza generating a good dance beat. The tune is clearly played by piano, sax, fiddle, and clarinet. Lots of fill notes from the same musicians. The tune is cute pop entry that gets a great country treatment. Lively with a key change on close for more energy. May need to slow tempo.

Heads Square Thru – Do Sa Do – Swing Thru – Boys Trade – Boys Run – Bend the Line – Right & Left Thru – Pass the Ocean – Swing Thru – Boys Trade - Turn Thru – Allemande Left – Promenade

CANDLE IN THE WIND

Sting Productions 21904 by Paul Bristow
Tempo: 126 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. Clear leads played by guitar, piano, mandolin, and synth make the tune easy to find. The same instruments provide lots of fill notes. An Elton John classic played in country style.

Middle of the energy chart with a key change on close for a boost. The figure will have dancers rushing.

Heads Lead Right – Swing Thru – Boy Run – Acey Ducey – Half Tag – Follow Your Neighbor and Spread – Girl Trade – Boy Cross Fold – Star Thru – Slide Thru – Swing

I DON'T CARE (IF YOU LOVE ME ANYMORE) **

Sting Productions 21909 by Wil Stans

Tempo: 128 Rhythm: Boom-Chuck

Good dance beat. Tune is easy to follow with clear leads played by harmonica, piano, fiddle, and steel. Lots of fill notes from the same musicians. A contemporary country song (The Mavericks) played in a fast-moving country style.

Heads Square Thru – Do Sa Do – Swing Thru – Boy Run – Ferris Wheel – Pass Thru – Touch a Quarter – Scoot Back – Swing

HOW LONG **

Throw Back Tunes 122 by Ted Lizzotte

Tempo: 124 Rhythm: Shuffle

A different sound for Throw Back Tunes with music from Circle Left Studios. Good dance beat. Clear leads played by guitar, piano, and synth. A seventies pop tune that gets a pop singing call treatment. Middle of the energy scale. Tracks include music with and without leads.

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

RASPBERRY BERET **

Throw Back Tunes 123 by Ted Lizzotte

Tempo: 124 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. Leads are clearly played by keyboard throughout except for one stanza with saxophone. The Prince classic is played in pop style. Mid-way up the energy chart. Tracks include music with and without lead.

Heads Promenade Halfway – Pass the Ocean – Extend – Swing Thru – Boy Run – Ferris Wheel – Cntrs Pass Thru – Touch a Quarter – Scoot Back – Swing

Hoedowns

TECHNICOLOR HOEDOWN, Blue Star Music 590

Tempo: 128 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat with extra percussive elements. A contemporary sound with music from keyboard, piano, and guitar. Music is chords with fills played. Excellent hoedown. May need to slow tempo.

HOLDIN' ME BACK, Throw Back Tunes 915

Tempo: 126 Rhythm: Shuffle

Again, a new musical sound for Throw Back Tunes. Good dance beat. Another contemporary sounding hoedown with music from keyboard. Chords with lots of fills, drum rushes, and musical pauses. Easy to use.

THE GROOVE LINE, Throw Back Tunes 916

Tempo: 126 Rhythm: Shuffle

Good dance beat. A hoedown with a contemporary pop feel adding a little disco to the mix. Music is chords and fills from keyboard and electric guitar. Musical drops add to the effect.

AS Records (dealer) - asrecordshop.com
DoSaDo Music(dealer) – dosadomusic.com
Arrowhead Recordings - arrowheadrecording.com
Blue Star Music – buddyweavermusic.com
Chic Recordings – chicrecordings.com
Gold Wing Records – finetunegoldwingmusic.com
HappyTrax Music - happytraxmusic.finetunegoldwingmusic.com
Knee Deep Melodies - kneedeepmelodies.com
Rawhide Music – buddyweavermusic.com
Rhythm Records – rhythmrecords.biz
Royal Records - royal-records.com
SharpShooter – finetunegoldwingmusic.com
Solid Gold Records - solidgoldrecords.net
Sting Productions – stingproductions.co.uk
Throw Back Tunes - throwbacktunes.com