Mechanics of Choreography

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MECHANICS
OF CHOREOGRAPHY
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Keys elements to understanding the structure and flow of square dance choreography

1. Knowing the difference between SYMMETRIC and ASYMMETRIC choreography

2. Ability to recognize the state or condition of the set in terms of the four basic choreographic elements (FASR)

3. Knowing what each call does in relationship to moving dancers and changing the FASR.
Symmetric - A line drawn from any dancer through the flagpole center of the set will also intersect that dancer’s diagonal opposite (mirror image).
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F.A.S.R.

FORMATION

ARRANGEMENT

SEQUENCE

RELATIONSHIP
FORMATION - Two distinct characteristics…..

GEOMETRY: The shape or design of the set as it is formed by the physical location of the dancers.
  • The geometry of the square is clear – it’s square.
  • A 2 by 4 rectangular shape is formed by several popular formations such as facing lines, 8 chain thru, parallel waves and columns.
  • Diamonds and 1/4 tag formations have similar geometry.

FACING DIRECTION: Critical. For example, many formations are created from a 2 by 4 rectangle by simply changing the direction the dancers are facing. From facing lines simple facing commands can establish: Waves, 8 Chain Thru, Two Faced Lines, Columns, Trade By, Double Pass Thru, etc.
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CALLERLAB has named over 75 different formations.
**Arrangement**

This term defines the six different Boy-Girl placements that are possible in any symmetric formation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BGGB</th>
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</table>
# ARRANGEMENT

## NAMES & PICTOGRAMS OF SELECTED FORMATION ARRANGEMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why</th>
<th>Eight Chain Thru</th>
<th>Trade By</th>
<th>Double Pass Thru</th>
<th>Completed Double Pass Thru</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal Couples</td>
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<tr>
<td>0 Half Sashayed Couples</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Boys Outside</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Girls Outside</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Normal Couple Outside</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Half Sashayed Couple Outside</td>
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Approved April, 2006
It’s imperative to understand what the next call does to the FASR. And if it can even be called from the current formation and arrangement.

Example:
Call: Star Thru
Formation – 8 Chain Thru
Can it be done from Arrangement…….

0
½
1
2
3
4
**SEQUENCE**

Sequence is the basic order of the dancers being aligned in a 1-2-3-4 or 4-3-2-1 rotation, either clockwise (CW) or counter-clockwise (CCW) around the set.

- Most difficult of the four elements to identify.
- Callers determine sequence by checking the relative position of a key (sometimes called primary) man and his corner.
- Sequence is pretty much only important at the time of resolving.
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## Sequence Four Possible States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>In sequence (CCW)</td>
<td>In sequence (CCW)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Out of sequence (CW)</td>
<td>Out of sequence (CW)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>In sequence (CCW)</td>
<td>Out of sequence (CW)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Out of sequence (CW)</td>
<td>In sequence (CCW)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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**RELATIONSHIP**

- Relationship is becoming more difficult to recognize. Many callers identify partner relationships by recognizing matching clothing, badges, etc. Not so easy these days as we get more casual.

- Four relationships - Partner, Corner, Opposite, Right Hand

- Recognizing relationships is critical to many of the get-out rules.

- Most callers can quickly see a relationship limited to the dancer being either with partner or not with partner. For example, “right ends of facing lines paired with partners, left ends not paired with partner. Now I know I can quickly resolve using a sight get out rule.
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NEW FASR NAMING

P = Partner
C = Corner
O = Opposite
R = Right Hand Lady
PL = Partner Line
CL = Corner Line
OL = Opposite Line
RL = Right Hand Lady Line
PLO = Partner Line Out of Sequence
CLO = Corner Lady Line Out of Sequence
OLO = Opposite Lady Line Out of Sequence
RLO = Right Hand Lady Out of Sequence
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NEW FASR NAMING

Change Zero Line (ZL) to Partner Line (PL)
Change Zero Box (ZB) to Corner Box (CB)
Change Zero Box Out of Sequence (ZBOS) to Corner Box Out (CBO)
Change Across the Street Box (XB) to Right hand Lady Box Out (RBO)
Establish Across the Street Box + Right & Left Thru as “Right Hand Lady Box (RB)”
Change Lead To The Right Box (LRB) to “Lead Right Box” which would match the acronym
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BASIC TRAFFIC PATTERNS

The “Chicken Plucker” is considered to be the basis of the Basic Traffic Pattern. It’s the most effective way to use the techniques of modular choreography. Commit it to memory. From a Corner Box:

Right & Left Thru – Pass Thru – Trade By (1/2)
Right & Left Thru – Pass Thru – Trade By (Done)
BASIC TRAFFIC PATTERNS

Magic Module - Partner Line to a Corner Box
Touch ¼ - All Eight Circulate – Boys Run

Magic Module - Corner Box to a Partner Line
Swing Thru – Girls Circulate – Boys Trade – Boys
Run – Bend the Line

Invert and Rotate Module - Starts from a Corner Box.
Star Thru – Pass Thru – Bend the Line – Star Thru

Learn these by heart. They are invaluable tools.
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SUMMARY

We discussed symmetric and asymmetric choreography.

Emphasized being familiar with the four basic elements (FASR) will improve our choreographic understanding.

Knowing the FASR tools enhances our ability to classify, use, and even create get-out routines.

Understanding FASR basics is important for the lecture on Methods of Choreographic Management.

Basic Traffic Patterns
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS