**ASH CALLER TRAINING SERIES**

**UNDERSTANDING THE SIGHT RESOLUTION PROCESS**

Title Slide

The Resolution Process – Solving the Puzzle

Slide 2 Resolution math is daunting

If you consider 8 dancers, dancing on a grid floor using all the possible formations and asymmetrical calling, it means that you can theoretically have 706,480,718,267,000,000,000,000 different set ups to resolve from. There, that is for the challenge callers amongst us so that they are satisfied. Still, it is real, and it is a scary thought.

Realistically however, if we use common sense and the 2X4 formations that are the most common that really narrows it down to only 40,320 places for the dancers to stand and only 65,536 unique asymmetric T-bone formations. That means that for the advanced callers that use asymmetric choreography it is only 20,320 x 65,536 or 2, 642, 411, 520 combinations – a much more “tongue in cheek” figure to manage.

Fortunately, most of those positions are just transition and most calls deal with a little thing called symmetry. On a 2x4 grid it means that any one dancer facing a spot will have a mirror opposite who must stand in that opposite corner of the formation and face in the opposite direction. That applies to each of these dancers starting with 8 which reduces by 2 each time or 8x6x4x2 – 384 dancer positions states and 4 x 4 x 4 x 4 unique T-bone formations and only 2 orientations – 384 x 256 x 2 – 196,000 combinations.

Now let’s even be more realistic in our calling and bring it down to the mainstream and plus levels.

We have a single formation on a 2x4 grid which means there are

* 6 arrangements
* 4 sequences
* 4 relationships
* 4 orientations

6x4x4x4 – 384 dancer positions state. – believe it or not, you only really have to know this kind of stuff if you are worried about resolving to home exactly on the last call. Most of the time you end in a promenade, or an allemande left which means you do not really need to check if the formation is off by 90 degrees or 180 degrees, and if you do, you have tools to set that up. – What this means is we can take the 4 orientations out of the equations and at Mainstream there are only in any formation,

* 6 arrangements,
  + BGGB, GBBG, GBGB, BGBG, BBGG,GGBB
* 4 sequences –
  + Boys and girls in, Boys and girls out, boys in girls out, girls in boys out
* 4 relationships
  + Partner, corner, opposite, right hand

Or 6x4x4 – 96 combinations possible and these are expressed in terms of FASR

Slide 3 – lets make it simple – 3 parts

**There are really 3 parts to Sight resolutions**

1. Preparation – i.e., memorising your key couples so you have the information necessary to resolve the square using a resolutions technique or module
2. Movement Mechanics – Being able to move the dancers around the square so that you can pair up key couples and put them where you want them to be
3. Using a technique or modules get out to resolve the square

**For newer and journeyman callers that do not know and understand the 2 billion plus dancer positions, but you must know the basics of formation management and movement mechanics**

**Slide 4 – The resolution process**

**We rely heavily on a simple process to resolve the square. Let’s summarise that 6-step process.**

1. **Get dancers symmetric** (optional - advanced calling skill required)
   * Most of the time this is already there if you are calling symmetrically
2. **Get to a familiar formation with Standard Arrangement**
   * Boy on left Girl on right standard couples
3. **Pair one key couple (primary couple**)
   * This is why we memorise key couples
4. **Determine where the other key couple is** (secondary couple) in relation to the first paired couple and choose a get-out strategy
   * Look and see where the others are, paired not paired etc
5. **Translate the Formation, Arrangement or Sequence** to what you need for your get-out
   * You already know the formation because you put them there
   * You already know the arrangement (standard) because you put them there
   * Sequence is simplified as in or out
6. **Call your memorized get-out** (this can be a technique or a module)

Slide 5 – Step 1 - Symmetry

**Step 1 - Symmetry**

When it comes time to resolve, if you have a choice of squares to use, choose a square that is still symmetric

If they are not **AND you can do it *quickly***, you might try to correct any asymmetry you notice. Otherwise, simply accept that the occasional dancer errors will cause squares to be asymmetric in ways that make it impossible to get the usual patterns needed for resolving.

Here is a secret - Dancers at Basic through A1 really don't care that much if callers don't correctly resolve every time. Just get them close, call your "best guess" get-out, laugh at yourself, and quickly move on. The dancers will be more relaxed and have more fun if they know they can make mistakes along with you.

Slide 6 – Step 2 – Formation and Arrangement

**Step 2 – Get to a Known Formation and Standard Arrangement**

Before looking for partners to pair, get the dancers into **Normal / Standard Arrangement** in one of these five standard formations:

1. Facing Lines
2. Beginning Double Pass Thru Formation
3. Eight Chain Thru Formation or "Box" Formation
4. R-H Two Face Lines – Girls on inside boys on outside
5. Parallel R-H Waves - Boys on outside girls on inside

This will give you, as well as the dancers, a comfortable starting position and will reduce the number of patterns you will need to recognize quickly under pressure.

A simple guideline on success with this is to always try and know the arrangement and **keep them normal**. If your call changes the arrangement, then normalise quickly until you are comfortable with moving the dancers that way.

Movement Mechanics - If you are not sure what the ending arrangement will be after a particular call, don't call it. If you are going to take the dancers into “other arrangements” then do it in a controlled ways for variety and then get them back to normal.

Today, at Plus and below, and even at Advanced, it is difficult for many dancers to execute certain calls when they are not in the usual arrangement for that call. As a caller it is your job to control the difficulty of material you present and thus it is essential that you know the arrangement and choose calls appropriate to dancer capability.

Knowing the arrangement and managing it always is very useful when you need to fix dancer mistakes, especially in a teaching situation.

For new callers, if you wish to extend beyond standard applications and call into non-standard arrangements, “use memorized modules” that take the dancers in, through and back out to a standard arrangement. This is what the dancers are used to and what I recommend when you are first starting out.

Slide 7 – Step 3 - Pairing

**Step 3 - Pairing**

When we speak of a "paired couple" or a "partner pairing", we speak of having a set of original squared set partners standing next to each other as a standard couple (boy on the left, girl on the right). If the dancers are symmetric and one of the key couples is paired, that means that one other couple must be paired - the paired key couple's opposites. In other words, if we have one of the two key couples paired, we really have two of the four couples in the square paired.

We will want to call **a small number of calls** to "pair a couple". In any one of those 5 basic formations. Once paired, keep these dancers together and get them into that familiar formation where you will evaluate the square to determine your get-out.

Slide 8 – Step 4 – Finding the Secondary Couple

**Step 4 – Find the other key couple**

With practice you can find both key couples and determine if either one of them is already paired and work from there. However newer callers may have trouble looking for so many people and may want to concentrate on pairing only one specific couple.

To pair one couple, you'll need to see both partners at once and call to bring them together. Keep them together and put them where you want. There are only 4 are only 4 possible places the other key dancer can be in any one formation. This means also that there are only 4 places where that dancer's partner could be.

Because of Symmetry, the easy way is to choose the first couple facing your paired couple and see if they are matched. Or in your group of 4 (example wave).there are only 4 options.

* Key couple paired,
* Not key couple,
* Key boy only,
* key girl only

**Remember this we will get back to it in step 5**

Slide 9 – Pairing trick

**Occasional non paired to paired trick**

If you find you get the situation where you want to resolve and you follow step 1 and 2 and unfortunately no one is paired, do not panic,

you should know that there are few calls that are more powerful than others when it comes to getting two partners closer together. Here are four useful modules...

* **Pass Thru, Trade By, Star Thru**  from an 8-Chain formation
* **All 8 Circulate** from waves
* **Double Pass thru, Cloverleaf** from DPT formation – centres facing partner
* **Star Thru, Pass Thru, Trade By, Star Thru –** From Lines

This is not a complete list - there are many other calls that do this. What is important is that these calls change the relationship, moving every dancer to a new temporary partner.

These may not work for every occasion but what is important is that you can use them to move dancers and relax while you look to see what pairings are. If they do not work, you and make a dancer change and repeat. – the dancers are moving and dancing, but you are cleverly just swapping pieces until they fit for you.

Slide 10 – Step 5 – Evaluating the FASR

**Step 5 – Evaluating the FASR**

Now that you have one couple paired in a symmetric formation with standard arrangement, **there are only 4 ways the remaining dancers can be scrambled** among the remaining 4 spots.

(The 4 spots remaining are those not occupied by the first paired couple and their opposites.) You can now evaluate the square for your final resolve by answering only two yes-no questions...

1. Is the other couple (secondary couple) paired?
2. Are the dancers "in sequence" or "out of sequence"?

To answer these questions, you will need to use Standard Formations that are familiar to you and that will allow you to recognize the 4 possible patterns. Here are formations that many callers use and a word or two about each one...

1. **Facing Lines**

* Easy formation to get into
* Many choices when proceeding to the get-out
* Use **Forward and Back** to give yourself extra time
* Resolve with early class-level Basic calls

1. **Double Pass Thru Formation**

* Resolve quickly using very few calls
* Easiest method to learn quickly with no experience
* Pair one couple before calling into Double pass thru formation

1. **2-Faced Lines**

* Use **Circulates** and **Trades** to pair couples
* Proceeds nicely to Facing Lines or Double Pass thru to use popular get-outs
* Ideal for resolving 'at home'

1. **Parallel Ocean Waves**

* Pair couples without it being obvious to the dancers
* Greater variety of calls at higher levels
* Easy to convert to any desired FASR state
* Resolve with optimal flow and timing

Comment: New Callers – start small and build from what you know. - You'll be doing yourself a big favour if you choose only one formation to use as your method for pairing your key couples. Each has advantages and disadvantages. Whichever formation you choose to work from, you should get very comfortable with it before learning another. The reason for this is that the patterns for different formations look very similar but require different strategies to achieve the pairings. Learning several at once can be confusing

Slide 11 – Answering those FASR questions

Since it can be difficult to answer both evaluation questions (paired and sequence) quickly enough that dancers will not notice a delay, try to answer at least one of the questions on the way to the formation you'll be using to make the evaluation, i.e. while the dancers are executing the call that you called to get them into the formation needed to answer the question.

IN order to facilitate flow for the dancers leading to your resolution, there are two things to be aware of in your caller toolbox:

* **Use Conversion Module**

Conversion Modules are a memorized series of calls that you know ahead of time will convert from one setup to another. Box to line, Line to box, chicken plucker, invert and rotate module – These all work as flow modules that will allow you to see who is with whom. It then allows you to set up for a resolution technique or module from a known FASR

* **Modify FASR state**

This seems difficult but really it is not. When you know how to change the FASR state, you'll be fully in charge of your get-outs rather than simply reacting to whatever situation you happen to discover at the evaluation step. What it boils down to however is simply, “**If don't see what you want - change it”!**

**There are two groups of calls that you should know that affect partner pairing changes.** You should know that certain calls are a little more powerful when trying to affect the FASR state. Look at the two lists of calls below and study how these calls change the pairing patterns.

Slide12 – Pairing and sequence Group 1

**First Group**

This group of calls either changes the either the girl’s or the boy’s sequence but not both.

* **2 Ladies Chain**
* **Chain Down the Line**
* **Flutterwheel**
* **Reverse Flutterwheel**
* **Centres (or Ends) Trade** (Standard "0" or sashayed - 2-face lines or waves)

And also, the following flow modules...

* **Swing Thru + Boys Run + Bend the Line**
* **Touch 1/4 + Split Circulate + Boys Run**
* **Touch 1/4 + Walk and Dodge + Partner Trade**

Slide 13 – Pairing and Sequence Group 2

**Second Group**

This group of calls moves only one dancer across to the other side of the square. If you divide the square into two groups of 4 dancers each (boxes, lines, or waves etc.), then call any call or series of calls that accomplishes the effect where only one dancer in each group of four changes groups.

* **Ends Circulate** (from waves or 2-faced lines)
* **Centres Circulate** (from waves or 2-faced lines)
* **Column Circulate**
* **Very Centres** Any call from the first group called to the centres only

These calls tend to change the pairing pattern (go from one to the other or back again):

This is of course a general sense of the patterns. You may have to "circulate" the dancers to discover the nature of the more mixed-up patterns using calls like these...

* Waves: **All 8 Circulate –** changes pairings
* Eight Chain: **Pass Thru; Trade By –** changes pairings
* Lines: **Star Thru; Pass Thru; Trade By, Star Thru –** Changes pairings and sequence

Slide 14 – Step 6 – The get out.

**Step 6 - Calling the Memorized Get-out or resolution technique**

This is an area that you will be working on throughout your entire career. It is an area that really separates more experienced callers from newer callers. As you grow in experience you will develop a repertoire of memorised get outs from known fixed points.

For New and Newer Callers, my recommendation is that you start with a limited number of Get out modules from Fixed FARS Points that you recognise (PL, CB and RBO) and learn one sight technique. (Friends and enemies or box resolution technique – already covered)

From there you can build on what you know – Always remember the general rule that applies to all aspects of learning to call – Start with what you know and build on it.

If you try to learn too much at once, you will only confuse yourself.

Slide 15 – Handy Fixed Point Get out Modules

Here are some simple easy and short get-outs compliments of the late Tim Marriner to add to your repertoire from those three formations. I won’t dwell on them, but they are here, and they will be in the handout and on the slides for you to copy which you can download both from the OC Caller’s website.

**Partner Line Get-outs:**

* Centres Square Thru 4, Outsides Allemande Left, All Right and Left Grand…
* Reverse Flutter Wheel, Slide Thru, Pass the Ocean, Spin the Top, Right and Left Grand…
* Right and Left Thru, Slide Thru, Eight Chain Five, Allemande Left…
* Pass Thru, Tag the Line, Leads Cloverleaf, Allemande Left…

**Corner Box Get-outs:**

* Touch ¼, Split Circulate, Single Hinge, Boys Cross Run, Allemande Left…
* Swing Thru, Boys Run, Tag the Line, Face Out, Wheel and Deal, Zoom, Right and Left Grand…
* Slide Thru, Box the Gnat, Square Thru 2, Right and Left Grand…
* Right and Left Thru, Half Sashay, Pass Thru, Right and Left Grand…
* Left Touch ¼, Walk and Dodge, Wheel Around, Dixie Style to a Wave, Allemande Left…
* Touch ¼, Circulate, Trade, Face In, Pass Thru, Tag the Line, Leads Separate, All Right and Left Grand…

**Right hand Lady Box (OS) Get-outs:**

* Swing Thru, Swing Thru, Spin Chain Thru, Right and Left Grand…
* Touch ¼, Centres Trade, Split Circulate, Centres Trade, Square Thru 3, Trade By, Allemande Left…
* Touch ¼, Split Circulate, Boys Run, Pass Thru, Wheel and Deal, Centres Wheel Around, Allemande Left…
* Pass Thru, Trade By, Pass to the Centre, Square Thru 3, Allemande Left…
* Box the Gnat, Pass Thru, Trade By, Left Square Thru 3, Right and Left Grand…

Slide 16 – How often should I resolve

**How Often Should I Resolve?**

This is a big question for new callers. New callers tend to write long and complex strings of choreography and then graduate to long and convoluted modules. In truth, neither really works that well for very long. The essence of modules is to keep them short and easy to remember or refresh at a glance. That principle carries through to sight calling for newer sight caller. Do it often

Resolving the square is a lot of work for the newer sight caller. It also takes you away from the "interesting" choreography you may have planned. It is a lot of stress that you just do not need. Start with what you know and build on it.

**Remember this** - When you are calling, you want the dancers to feel successful. When they are successful, they trust you and they like you. If they or you make a mistake, standing around waiting while you take 20 calls to resolve the other squares before they can start dancing again is no fun.

At the beginning of every tip, **it is very important** that you call a few opening sequences that 100% of your squares will get.

* 1. Open with a memorized ring figure that is very short and has no surprises.
  2. Follow it with an easy and **short (10-12 moves max) memorised** sequence (featuring your focus call if possible) d very short (certainly less than 10 calls) - Doing this allows the dancers to hear and interpret your voice, identify your calling style, gain confidence in your abilities, and enjoy smooth dancing to start the tip. It starts them and you on a positive. More importantly, as a sight caller, it gives you the ability to see which square or squares you can trust.
  3. The third sequence is self-confirmation of your key couples and your resolution confidence. You get to make sure you have the key couples memorized and I can confidently resolve. It also gives you breathing space if you are not as confident in that pilot square as you initially thought. It gives you a quick opportunity to call and adjust and refresh your key couple memory.

Slide 17 – Calling Tips

**Calling Tips.**

If you are calling and a square breaks, Resolve right away. Especially when teaching.

If your resolution is taking too long, forget it – just get everyone home.

Remember Fail is First Attempt in Learning

Square up, star promenade, four ladies muddle and swing partner promenade to original home whatever way you want. The dancers will know you made a mistake or were having trouble **BUT -** If you do this quickly, it is more professional and will help put the dancers "on your side". It shows you are honest and that you respect their time.

Study your key couples and do not begin calling until you are 100% sure you have them memorized.

Finally – Start with what you know

* Definitions
* Movement Mechanics
* Formation management – moving from one formation to the next
* 6 Foundation Modules
* Fix point get out modules
* One resolution technique
* Etc……

And build on it one step at a time. Do not be afraid to make mistakes. It is how you improve. The fastest way to slow down your progress is to rush. It makes it unenjoyable for you and even more so for the dancers.

Slide 18 – Questions and Discussion