

# Asymmetric Sight Calling 101

By Hal Barnes

Normal square dance choreography always has the same genders diagonally across the square at all times. This person is called your image dancer. Asymmetric Choreography puts the square in arrangements where at least some of the dancers have the opposite gender as image dancers. In other words, have couple #1 half sashay and then begin calling just as you normally do. Suddenly the arrangements of men and women are very unusual. This can add variety to a dance while still using simple calls.

However, our normal sight calling techniques don't work for these situations, so we either avoid them or memorize a few "gimmick" asymmetric calls. This short paper will introduce a simple technique for sight calling asymmetric arrangements with minimal extra work for the caller. Although some limitations are required, this approach has a huge "bang for the buck" in extending the range of your sight calling choreography. This paper introduces the technique in the simplest form. Once you have the basic idea, then progress to the more advanced topics to expand the usability and remove some of the limitations.

## A Bit of Jargon

From a static square we can become asymmetric quickly by having any one couple half sashay or by having two adjacent couples half sashay. Each of the choices results in different possible arrangements of men and women so it is important to recognize and identify which of these apply to the square. We will use the

term "region" to describe the number of couples which are half sashayed:

- Region 0 is the normal symmetric square with no couples half sashayed,
- Region 1 has one couple half sashayed,
- Region 2 has two adjacent couples half sashayed.

Region 2 is much more interesting than region 1 because only region 2 allows any number of men and women in half the square (ie same line or same wave). In addition region 2 has a particular magical property: as long as you call symmetric calls in region 2 you are guaranteed of getting the same partner back when you leave region 2 that you had when you first entered the region. The huge implication of this is that you don't have to follow the women in your sight calling while in region 2. This concept is hard to explain in words so we will show an example to demonstrate the concept. The next page shows how to use Callarama software to practice asymmetric calling.

## Callarama Animation Program

Although this material can be learned with square dance "dolls," the Callarama square dance animation program is capable of supporting asymmetric calling. It is a very convenient tool because the arrangements in asymmetric regions are very unusual, requiring some practice time to prevent the embarrassment of being surprised by your own calling. Therefore, we will devote some time to the use of the Callarama tool. If you are using lifeless dolls, then skip over those sections. The next section gives a brief overview of how to use Callarama specifically for asymmetric calling.

# CALLARAMA SCREEN OVERVIEW IN ASYMMETRIC MODE

**Initial Setup**

**Asymmetric Active Dancers**

**Split Square Active Dancers**

**Symmetric Active Dancers**

**Symmetric Extensions**

**Symmetric Calls**

**Asymmetric Call List**

**CALLARAMA -DANCE FLOOR**

File Display Tools Options License Help About Choreo Exit

**FORMATION**

NORMAL SQUARE

ASYM ? ▲ ACT

0 1 1 ALL 1/2 SASH  
BRIDGE #1 #2 1+3 >LINES  
149 101 89 #3 #4 TWIN SASH  
86 169 106 CT.  
154 166 END  
165 105 90 INF.  
150 OUTF.  
< 165 > 0 X

**ACTIVES**

ALL

HD. SD.  
CT. END  
CT.2 END 2  
INF. OUTF.  
AS CPL All 8  
TWC

**SPECIAL**

FACE R L PT.  
IN OUT U-TURN  
+SWP +ROLL  
GET-OUTS  
SQUARE HOME  
Reset < >

**MS CALLS PLUS CUST A**

CL CR FB PR WW PR ?

DSD FACE CRN R/ARM L  
RLG 2 3 WW WEA 3  
RH STAR 1/2 LH 1/2  
TURN 1/4 STAR PR BACK  
PT SPLIT SEP 1/2 SASH  
ROLLAWAY GS IN BS IN  
COURT LC 3/4 1/4 CH LINE  
RLT 1/1 LR LL GSQ DPS  
ST CL 4 BL ALL AR SEE  
SQT L/SQT CTW DIVE  
ALTH WW WHEEL AR REV  
SHOOT SLIP 1/1 BOX  
PSOC TO OW LH BAL ALAMO  
SWT 1/2 L/SWT 1/2 EXT  
RUN L XRUN TRD PT  
WD DPT CPL/R R/L  
FLW REV TBY ZOOM 1/2  
TCH L VEER/L R SWP/L R  
CIRC 1/2 1 1/2 CPL BOX  
SF 1 1/2 SPLIT 1 1/2  
Fw CLOV TT L/TT 8 CH  
TOP PSCT CT IN OUT COFF  
SLT WLK FLD XFLD  
DIX REV TAG SCT  
HGE R L PT REC

**EXTRA**

BS BACK  
DSD 3/4  
GD CANYON  
GD PARADE  
GD SWEEP  
GS BACK  
GSQ +CLOV

XTRAIL 3 TRD 3 SCT  
GD FOLLOW 1/4 THRU L 3/4 L  
WHEEL THRU L T+DEAL  
PASS IN OUT CH REACT MIX  
LOCK R/ROLL L SHADOW  
6-2 ACD 1 1/2 1/4 IN OUT  
X/CLOV CLOV+ X X/CIRC  
HSHOE PSEA SPL SQT L  
STEP+SL TRANS COL EBEND  
EXPL LINE SWAP REV 2 ST  
SQ CH THRU L SCT+DGE 3 ST  
+CROSS 1/2 BREED CYC+W  
1/2 TOP 1/4 3/4 PAIR  
GD 1/4 THRU 3/4 L 3/4  
TCH 1/2 3/4 L/TCH 1/2 3/4  
CAST 1/4 1/2 L/PT  
IN/CIRC 1/2 OUT 1/2 SLIP  
SGL WHEEL SLITH SLIDE SW  
SPL CT ROT 1/2 3/4 SCT+WEA  
BOX 1/2 3/4 TRD CIRC MOT  
SWITCH/W /DIA /HR P+ROLL  
SCT CH THRU REC WIND L  
HR/CIRC FLIP CUT P+NEIGH  
ZIG-ZAG ZAG-ZIG ZIG ZAG  
CHK COL MINI TR OFF  
REMAKE GD SPL TRANS BOX  
SPL CH THRU DIA CH THRU  
PEEL+TR TRANS+

**DANCE FLOOR**

NORMAL SQUARE  
ASYM REG.II 165

VIEW NORMAL RESTORE 1 2 3 4 5 SPEED

Clear Save

Navigation buttons: < >> > ||

## **Overview of Callarama Dance Floor**

Initial Setup - We can initialize the square to a variety of starting positions. The small square labeled 0, 1, 2 sets the region with 0 being the normal symmetric square and 2 having two adjacent couples half sashayed. The numbers under the Bridges heading are the allowed arrangements of dancers for the selected region. For example, click on 2 and then click on some of the numbered bridges and check out the different arrangements.

### **Symmetric Call Selection**

The large box on the far right contains all the calls from the standard lists organized by tab. Custom calls which come with Callarama and custom calls developed by the user are shown in the white box. Some calls are extensions of regular calls (such as roll and sweep). These extensions are shown in the blue box labeled "Special." As callers, we always designate the active dancers who are suppose to do the call. This is done in the purple "Active Dancer" section.

### **Asymmetric Call Selection - Split Square**

One example of an asymmetric call is to have only half the square dance a regular call. This is done using the split square active dancer boxes immediately above the #3 couple. The small shape in the square shows how the square will be split in half. Clicking the square will cause half of the square to be surrounded by a box showing the active couples. Clicking the box again will shift

the active couples to the other half of the square. Double clicking will have both halves of the square dancing the same call but from a mirror formation. For example, half the square has a right hand wave and the other half has a left hand wave. For all of these selections of active couples, the call is selected from the regular call lists on the right.

### **Asymmetric Call Selection from the Asymmetric Call List**

Another example of an asymmetric call is to have the active dancers not symmetrically distributed in the square. For example consider two lines facing out, one has men on the ends while the other has men in the center. We then call MEN FOLD. This case cannot be handled by the regular call list because it assumes symmetric distribution of dancers. However, these calls can be found in the white asymmetric call list. Finally we have a special box immediately to the left of the asymmetric call list to specify the active dancers for the asymmetric call. We can select only couple #1 to half sashay or the infacing dancers, even though they may not be evenly distributed.

In summary, the Actives box names the active couples for symmetric calls. The split square asymmetric calls work just like symmetric calls, but only half the square dances. Finally the asymmetric active dancer box works together with the asymmetric call list. This is initially somewhat confusing but the following example will show the practical use of these capabilities.

## First Demonstration

From a static square have COUPLES 1 & 2 HALF SASHAY. This puts the square in region 2. Note that each couple has their original partner at the time they entered region 2.

### Using Callarama

1. Click on the Asym button directly above the #3 man to get in asymmetric mode..
2. Click on the small box #3 in the split square section. Note how couples 1 & 2 are surrounded by a dotted triangle.
3. Note that ALL is selected in the lavender Actives box.
4. Click Half Sashay from the blue MS Calls tab. Note that only the couples in the active area do the call.

Alternative #1: From the initial square click #1 box in the asymmetric actives white box. Then click TWIN SASHAY in the asymmetric calls box. That call is a custom call that has the selected couple and the next couple on the right half sashay.

Now we start calling just like we would to any normal square. Before we start we identify the head men because they are the only dancers we need to track for sight calling purposes in region 2.

HEADS SQUARE THRU

Couples #1 & #2 half sashay using the split square approach.

## TOUCH $\frac{1}{4}$ , SCOOT BACK

### Using Callarama

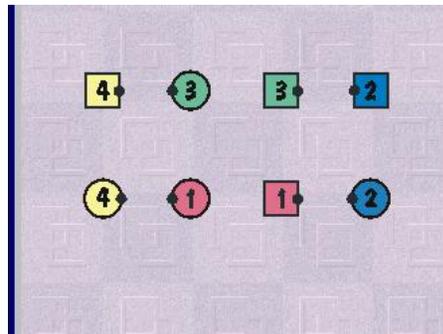
Even though the square has an asymmetric arrangement, we will call normal, symmetric calls so we use the symmetric call sections.

1. Click heads (HD) from the lavender Actives section.
2. Click square thru (SQT) from the MS calls. Then select SQT 4 from the drop down list.

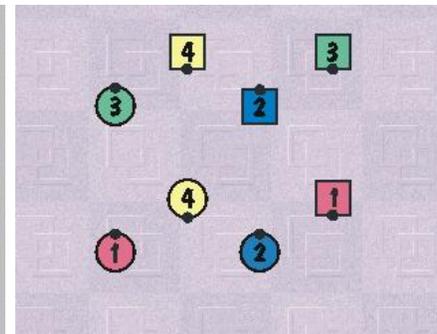
In a normal square we might call MEN RUN here, so this is a good spot to spell out the limitations on what calls we can use. Check out where the men are positioned in the square and note that MEN RUN will not work here. We must use only symmetric calls. Technically this means that image dancers must be doing the same movement relative to the center. In practice, this means you cannot have any call directed to the men or women. So MEN RUN is not allowed. However, we can call OUTFACERS RUN and get the same result we had in mind. We must also avoid any call that has men or women as a part of the definition, such as Star Thru or Slide Thru.

### Calling HEADS SQUARE THRU

Setup after SQUARE THRU



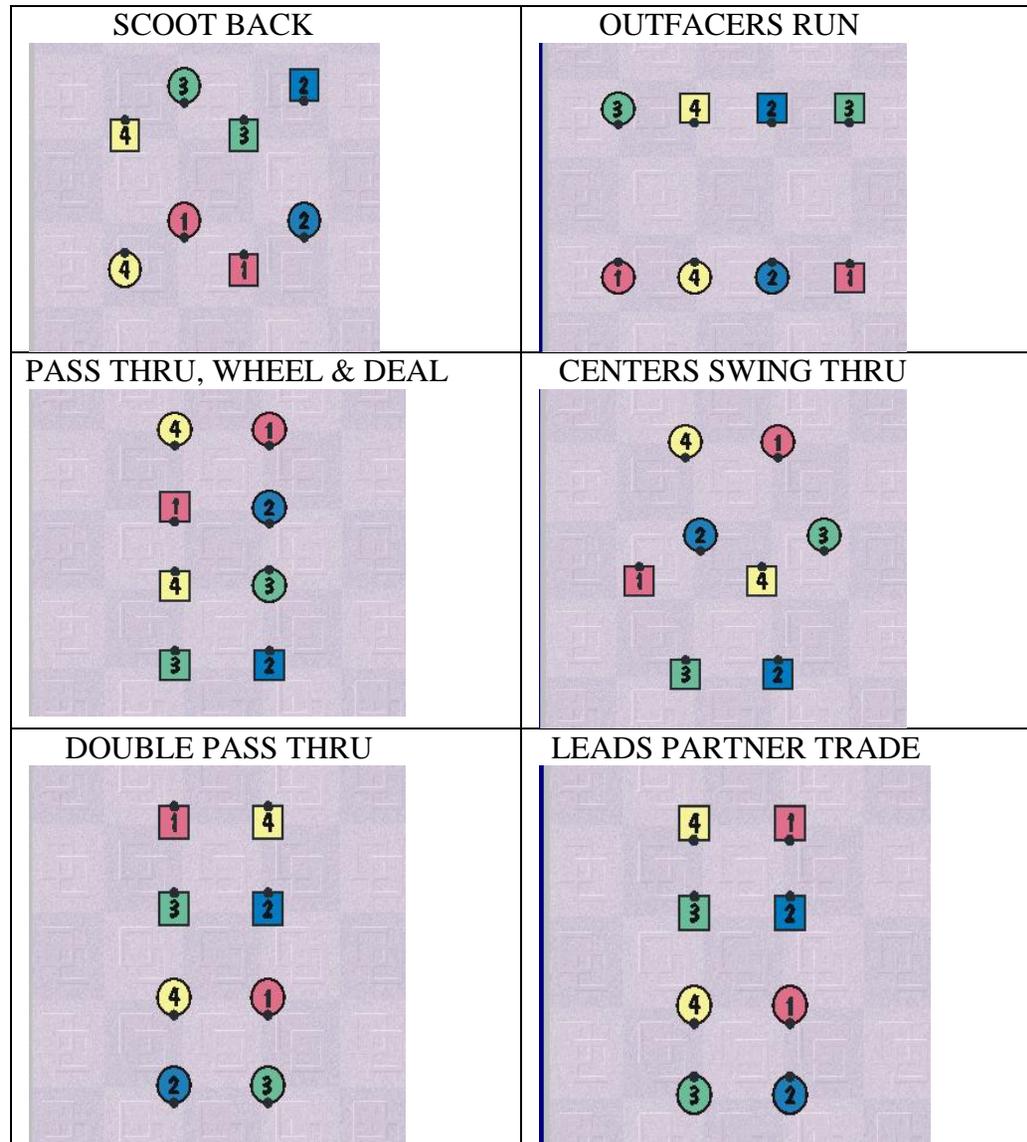
TOUCH  $\frac{1}{4}$



OUTFACERS RUN  
 PASS THRU  
 WHEEL & DEAL

Let's say that this is the end of our extemporaneous calling. We now want to get back to the regular symmetric square (normalizing) and resolve.

Regardless of what we called during the extemporaneous section, we use the following procedure to re-normalize the square. The first step is to setup same-sex waves. We can get the men together in the center with a SWING THRU. Then DOUBLE PASS THRU, LEADS PARTNER TRADE, STEP TO A WAVE puts the setup into same sex waves.



From same-sex waves use the following rule to normalize the square:

1. If the head men are both on the ends, or both in the center of the wave, then call SPLIT CIRCULATE,
2. If the head men are adjacent in the wave, then call ALL 8 CIRCULATE,
3. If the head men are facing the same wall, then call CENTERS TRADE, (then #2 applies), ALL 8 CIRCULATE.

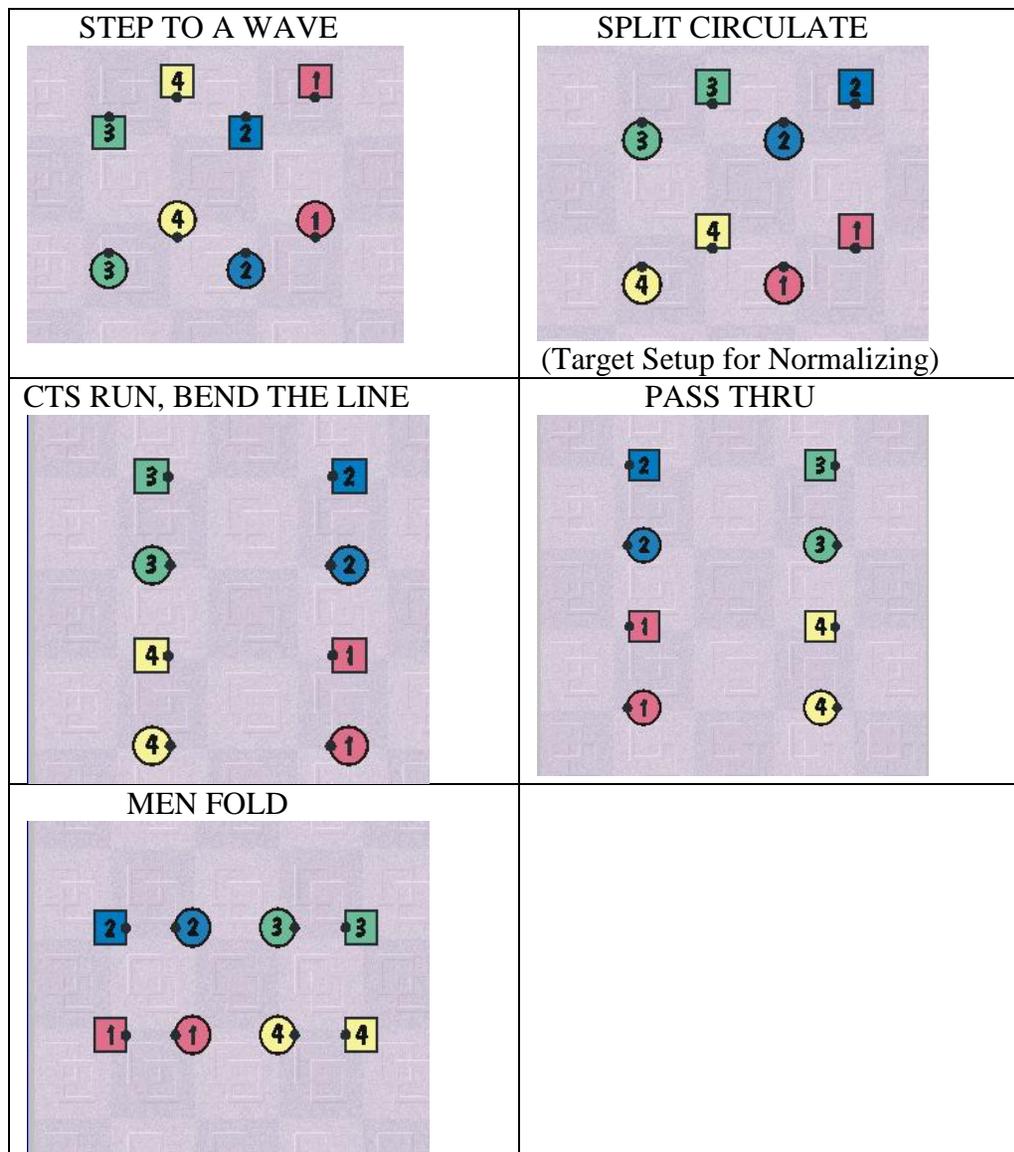
The result of following this procedure is that each quadrant of the square will have the following:

- one man and one woman,
- head men are in opposite quadrants and
- everyone has the same partner as when they first became asymmetric.

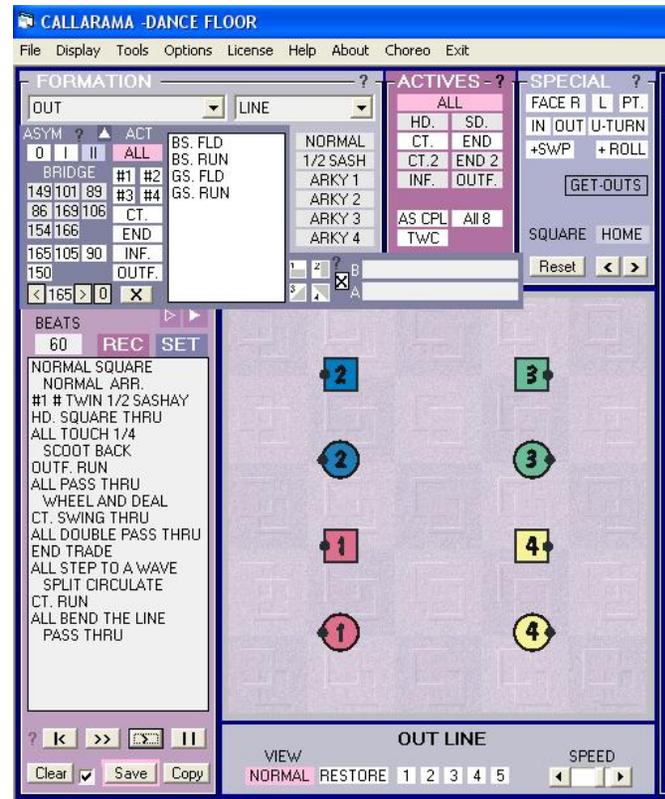
This setup is called the Target setup for normalizing. We used a set procedure to establish it, but any way of getting the square to this setup works just as well.

Notice that everyone has their original partners. However, the square is still not symmetric, but it is in the right setup to cross back to the symmetric region. To lock the square back in a symmetric setup call CENTERS RUN, BEND THE LINE, PASS THRU, MEN (OR WOMEN) FOLD

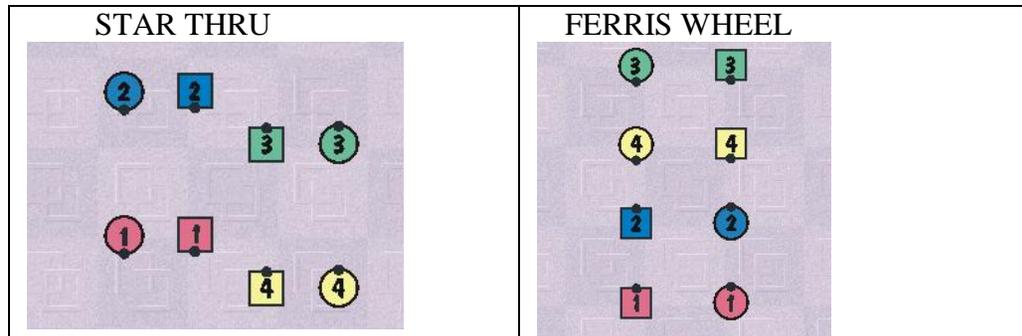
The call MEN FOLD is an asymmetric call in this case. For this reason, in Callarama it cannot be



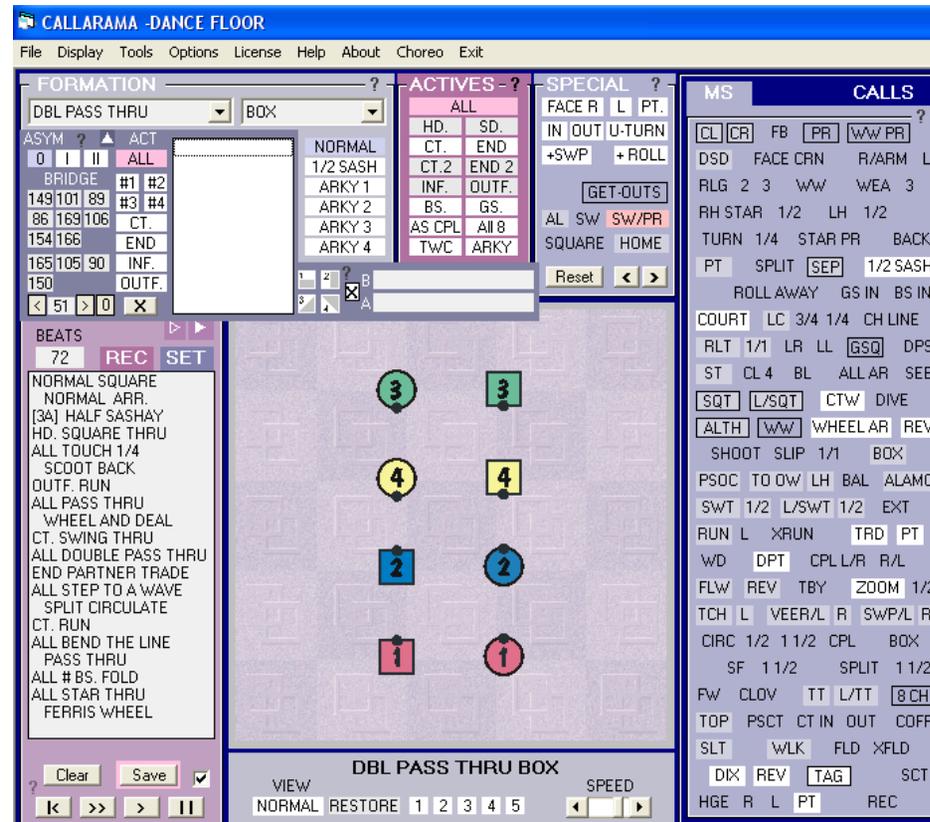
chosen from the normal call list. Note in the figure at right the Callarama screen at the time we want to call MEN FOLD. Remember our rule that we should avoid any call directed at the men or women because it would be an asymmetric call? Now we use an asymmetric call to move the square back to region 0, the normal dance region. The asymmetric calls can be found in the white box in the upper left corner of the dance floor. We have a choice of 4 calls: BOYS FOLD, BOYS RUN, GIRLS FOLD, & GIRLS RUN. Avoid the RUN calls because they will result in a more advanced setup which will be covered in a later lesson. Either BOYS FOLD or GIRLS FOLD will normalize the square at this point.



After calling MEN FOLD, we now resolve the square in the normal way. Calling STAR THRU results in two-faced lines with partners. If we are lucky we notice that FERRIS WHEEL will put the heads at home. Adding CENTERS SWEEP  $\frac{1}{4}$  will also put the sides at home to resolve the square.



The figure at right is the Callarama screen after calling FERRIS WHEEL. To get the centers to sweep a quarter, select CT from the lavender ACTIVES box, then select +SWP from the SPECIAL box. Finally select HOME from the SPECIAL box to return all dancers to home position.



Reviewing the Call Sequence

This makes the square asymmetric in region 2.

Extemporaneous calling of symmetric calls. Try anything you want here.

Put the square in same sex waves.

Follow the rule above resulting in CIRCULATE OR SPLIT CIRCULATE to reach target setup.

Call this sequence to re-normalize the square in region 0.

Resolve as usual.

This procedure is the simplest version of a more general approach to asymmetric sight calling which allows much more variety than shown here. This material is taken from Asymmetric Mechanics by Hal Barnes (1993).

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COUPLES 1&2 HALF SASHAY

HEADS SQUARE THRU 4

TOUCH  $\frac{1}{4}$

SCOOT BACK

OUTFACERS RUN

PASS THRU

WHEEL & DEAL

CENTERS SWING THRU

DOUBLE PASS THRU

LEADS PARTNER TRADE, STEP TO WAVE

SPLIT CIRCULATE

CENTERS RUN, BEND THE LINE

PASS THRU

MEN FOLD

STAR THRU

FERRIS WHEEL, CENTERS SWEEP  $\frac{1}{4}$  TO HOME