

## Sussing The Floor      by Bill Harrison

The Term "Sussing" means to size up. When you are familiar with the dancers and their abilities, this will greatly assist in measuring their skill level. If you are unfamiliar with the skills of the dancers here are some things to think about in order to effectively suss the floor.

- 1) Your first tip use known choreography.
- 2) Use modules and equivalents to learn their dancing abilities.
- 3) Make sure your command voice is very clear, Do they have problems hearing?
- 4) Reduce the use of fill words during the first tip.
- 5) Keep module or sequence length short.
- 6) Watch for the dancers reaction time and execution of the calls.
- 7) Learn to read the faces of the dancers to understand if they are confident or nervous.
- 8) When exploring their abilities use extended application example: Heads ½ sashay slide thru before using same sex slide thru's.
- 9) Do they seem confident or hesitant?
- 10) Do they touch hands and make clean formations?
- 11) Be Careful of Dancer who have become over programmed anticipating the calls. (Swing Thru Boys Run) especially newer dancers.

Example: Mainstream, Swing Thru from zero waves (RH waves, boys on the ends), do we see an automatic Boys Run and Bend The Line? Lead Right, do we see an automatic Circle To A Line? Plus, Follow Your Neighbor, do we see an Automatic Spread?

If this is the case we need to start using "Helper Words" or give the command a little earlier such as Swing Thru, Boys Trade give the command Boys Trade before the dancers have the opportunity to think of Boys Run.

- 12) Tolerance for "Unusual" Positions:  
Determine if the dancers are tolerant with unusual positions.

Slide Thru that leaves some people facing out, will the dancers turn around to "fix" it? Will they "fix" left-hand waves? Will they accept same sexes together in waves or lines? Will they "fix" sashayed couples?

Example, from an eight chain thru have Centers In or Cast Off ¾ from inverted lines; Scoot Back with mixed sexes as Trailers going into the center or Spin The Top starting with boys on the ends.

13) Able to dance variations or fractionalization of the calls. Swing Thru 1 ½, Square Thru 1 ½, Circulate 1 ½, Scoot back 1 ½

Remember every tip after the first requires “Sussing” as the second tip may be different due to a different mix of dancers in the squares. It won’t be completely different, but you need to be aware that the floor in general may perform better or not so well than they did the first tip, and you will need to adjust accordingly.