

Call of the Month: Track what? by Barry Leiba

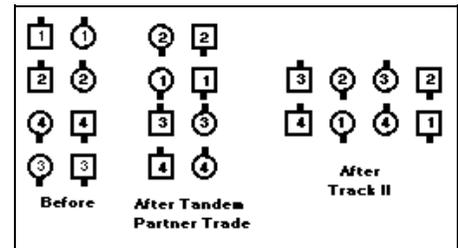
TRACK II is one of those calls with a mysterious name. What does it have to do with anything, and why TRACK II instead of some other number? The name comes from the fact that the dancers are working in two “tracks” — the inside track and the outside track. From the normal starting formation (completed DPT with boys on the left) the boys take the outside track and the girls take the inside track.

The definition of the call at the Plus level is a bit vague. Here it is, as published by Callerlab in their Plus definitions dated 7/1/91:

The dancers work in “tandem”, that is, the trailing dancers follow the lead dancers. Those in the right “track” move single file to the left, counter-clockwise, staying to the inside of the dancers on the left “track”, who move single file, clockwise, to the right on the outside. The movement continues as in a DOUBLE PASS THRU, until the dancers have reached parallel right-hand ocean waves.

The bits of this definition that are vague are the parts about the “tracks” and the explanation of when the call ends. When you're actually dancing, of course, it's no problem to find the parallel ocean waves. Still, the lead dancers, for instance, have to be sure to go far enough and not to stop in the wrong wave.

So how can we make the definition less vague? To answer that, we first have to look at the “work in tandem” part of the definition. The full range of IN TANDEM calls aren't valid until the C1 level, but we can still talk about simple tandems at Plus. A TANDEM (or TANDEM DANCERS) is no more than one dancer behind another, so that the trailing dancer could put her hands on the shoulders of the leading dancer. When we tell dancers to work IN TANDEM we mean that they should work together, as though they were a single dancer. With that knowledge, we can define the *start* of TRACK II as IN TANDEM PARTNER TRADE. Look at the accompanying diagram, and note that we have tandem dancers with the heads in the lead to start. In that sense, the completed DPT formation is actually TANDEM COUPLES FACING OUT, so when we have the tandems trade, we end with TANDEM COUPLES FACING IN, or starting DPT formation. Note that, since the tandems worked as units, the heads are *still* in the lead.



Now that we've started the call, we need to finish it. Let's use TRACK II's number “2” in a different sense; we'll say that so far we've done TRACK 0. From here we'll EXTEND THE TAG the appropriate number of times — twice for TRACK II. Thus, TRACK I will give us QUARTER TAG formation, TRACK II will give us parallel waves (half tag formation), TRACK III will end in ¾ TAG formation, and TRACK IV results in completed DPT (full tag formation). The definition of TRACK II thus becomes “IN TANDEM PARTNER TRADE, EXTEND THE TAG TWICE”. This is, in fact, the definition that's used to arrive at the other TRACK calls, though, historically, TRACK II came first.

This definition also makes it clear that no one can ROLL after a TRACK II. While it might seem that the beaux can roll right and the belles can roll left after the call, ending TRACK II AND ROLL in starting DPT formation, the actual motion at the end of the call is *straight ahead* for everyone, so no one has rotating motion for ROLL.

Another TRACK II variation that shows up here and there is LEFT TRACK II. For that, the beaux take the inside track and the belles take the outside track, so that everyone passes *left* shoulders and forms left-handed waves. Or, with our more precise definition, IN TANDEM LEFT-SHOULDER PARTNER TRADE, THEN LEFT-SHOULDER EXTEND THE TAG TWICE, and so we can do LEFT TRACK III and so on as well.

Still another variation is CROSS TRACK, which starts from lines facing out. In CROSS TRACK, the centers TRADE with each other while the ends CROSS FOLD. That results in starting DPT (zero tag). Now everyone EXTEND THE TAG TWICE to end in parallel waves.

Since we have TRACK II defined as a TAGGING CALL, we can do with it as we can with any tagging call, by doing TRACK BACK TO A WAVE, TRACK YOUR NEIGHBOUR, TRACK CHAIN THRU, and so on (and we can do the same with CROSS TRACK). In a future column, we'll have a comprehensive look at these TAGGING CALL variations.