

## Call of the Month: Connect the Diamond by Barry Leiba

A couple of months ago I wrote that ACEY DEUCEY, from the A1 list, was the new Mainstream quarterly, and that the Callerlab Mainstream committee had voted to drop the calls LEFT TURN THRU, PARTNER TAG, and CROSS TRAIL THRU from the Mainstream list. Well, the Plus committee has since met, and there's news in both areas. The Plus committee recommends adding PARTNER TAG (but not the other two dropped Mainstream calls) to the Plus program. It also recommends adding two A1 calls: ACEY DEUCEY and CUT THE DIAMOND (which was a Plus quarterly selection a couple of years ago). The committee recommends dropping the call TRIPLE TRADE from the Plus program (and after I wrote a whole column on it, too!). The recommendation has been put to the general Callerlab membership this month for a vote.

In other Quarterly Selection news, SHAKEDOWN, which has been an Advanced quarterly since January, is no longer a quarterly, and there's a new Plus quarterly: CONNECT THE DIAMOND. We'll talk about that call this month.

CONNECT THE DIAMOND starts in normal right-handed or left-handed diamonds. The points CROSS FOLD (SPLIT COUNTER ROTATE AND ROLL, for the A2 dancers) while the centers HINGE and EXTEND. The call ends in box circulate formation — right-handed columns from twin right-handed diamonds (point-to-point diamonds end in parallel waves). You might like to consider the similarities between this call and CROSSFIRE. In each call, the ends CROSS FOLD. Here the centers HINGE, while in CROSSFIRE the centers trade. Well, if we take the normal right-handed two-faced line that we start CROSSFIRE from and have the centers do *half* of their trade (HINGE), we get right-handed diamonds. Now if we finish the CROSSFIRE, we'll have done a CONNECT THE DIAMOND. So, from the standard formation, CROSSFIRE is the same as "HINGE and CONNECT THE DIAMOND".

Remember that CONNECT THE DIAMOND, like many other calls (such as CROSSFIRE, FLUTTERWHEEL, and SCOOT BACK), is a *four-person call*. You do it in a diamond, you end in a box of four, and how you start or end in relation to the others in your square is irrelevant. So be sure, especially if you're the point facing in, to stay in your own diamond and not stray into the other half of the square.

Now, of course, we don't **have** to do the call from normal right-handed twin diamonds, right? (You knew we didn't.) We'll look at two less typical formations here. First, from a squared set, have the heads LEAD RIGHT and all PASS THE OCEAN. We have a grand (tidal) wave. If the girls HINGE AND U-TURN BACK (SHAZAM, for the C2 dancers), we'll have *point-to-point diamonds*. They're still right-handed, but instead of the girls having a wave across the middle, we have points in the middle and points out on the ends. It's important that the girls retain their handhold; there's a tendency for the boys to form a wave across the middle, since that's a more familiar formation, but then we get confused about who the points are. If we CONNECT THE DIAMOND from here, the boys will CROSS FOLD and the girls will HINGE and EXTEND, and we'll end up in parallel right-handed waves with the boys looking in and the girls looking out. In formations such as point-to-point diamonds, it's very important to keep track of who the centers are and who the ends (points) are.

Let's go back to a squared set, have the sides LEAD RIGHT and all VEER LEFT, the centers (girls) HINGE and the end (side) girls RUN. We have *funny diamonds* — three of the dancers in each diamond have right hands in, but one, the head girl, has her left hand in. If we CONNECT THE DIAMOND now, the ends (boys) still CROSS FOLD as always, and the centers (girls) still HINGE — but this time it's a PARTNER HINGE, which gives them right hands with each other. Then all EXTEND to make boxes of four, and the whole thing ends in a right-handed column. Note that we couldn't have done that (at least not at Plus) if we started with the sides leading **left** and veering **right**. Do you see why? In that case, the points would have had left hands in, but the centers, after their PARTNER HINGE, would have held right hands. When we tried to EXTEND from there, we'd not have found a reasonable formation for Plus level dancing.