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AMERICAN SQUARES



THE MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FOLK DANCING

VOL. XI—No. 5

JANUARY, 1956



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AMERICAN *Squares*

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VOLUME 11

JANUARY 1956

NUMBER 5

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THE YEAR IN REVIEW

As the new calendar year begins, it has been our custom to review the year just past, and make a few rash predictions for the year to come.

Two facets of the square dance picture come to my mind as evincing change during 1955. One is the present trend in "hash" dancing. The things I see and hear as I travel begin to convince me that "allemande hash" has become outdated in most areas. The popular technique of today is mixing "forward eight" with "crosstrail" and "pass thru."

A careful scrutiny of our Grab Bag section for the last few months will offer many excellent examples of the tendency to produce "new" dances by combinations of old established figures. The pattern is, apparently, the less pattern the better!

And where will this take us in 1956? We can only hope that history will repeat itself and that the hashed figures will eventually join the repository of hashed breaks.

Songs for Singing Calls

Another fad which, we devoutly hope, reached its peak in 1955 was the seizing upon every popular tune, regardless of its suitability or lack of it, and using it for a "new singing call." I once heard Ralph Page say, in this regard, "They've used almost everything except 'Nearer My God to Thee' and they're getting close to that."

A great many of these musical monstrosities have no place in the square dance field, as their sisters have no place in the round dance field. The nicest thing about them is the rapidity with which they are thrown into the discard and forgotten. Perhaps the year now beginning will find a touch more of sanity in this connection too.

Big Dances

The idea of the big convention, rather than just a big dance, is on the upswing, and it will take longer than the next twelve months for it to hit the downward slope.

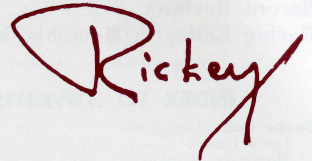
The Fifth Annual National Convention in San Diego looms as a gigantic affair. Due to its geographical situation, the trend will again probably be toward Western names and Western styles, but there are enough dancers to whom this is bread and meat and breath of life to make it a successful achievement. It is in the regional conventions where the line to be trodden is a narrow one, and the chances of complete success are proportionately sligher.

The Dance Itself

The AMERICAN SQUARES Summer Dance Camp in Kentucky this year again proved, without any question, that dancing for the primary joy of dancing is the privilege that must be kept within the reach of all participants in the folk and square dance world. In Kentucky in 1955, just as in Stokes Forest and Kentucky in 1954, we found folk dancers doing square dances, and square dancers joining in the folk dances—and all of them discovering that the important thing is dance—the type is secondary.

This can and will happen, slowly perhaps, in more areas in 1956. The progress of this happy merging of the creeds has been delayed by leaders—petty, jealous, fearful, or just unknowing—who have kept the two halves of the whole apart. But the factions come closer. Perhaps 1956 will be the big year of unity.

In brief, the years behind have been good. The years ahead can be better. Happy Dancing in the New Year!



OUR COVER: Virginia Wallace rings the bells for the New Year with a heartfelt wish from us all.

Aren't They Darling!

By Ralph Page

Following is an excerpt from a letter written by one of my closest friends living not too far away:

"I have come to the conclusion from my experience of the last two weeks that we must get over to dance leaders of youth that a main aim of all this dance activity is to condition the youngsters for successful appearance in public. So many of them, even school teachers, are still thinking on the level of "cute kids" "having a wonderful time" when, come right down to it, the kids take over and run riot to some degree or other."

Better read that paragraph over again—carefully this time. There's plenty of food for thought in it. It would be wonderful if every folk and square dance teacher in our public schools from grade through college had to memorize it before he or she ever tried his or her hand at teaching a dance.

There is far more to dancing than the mere moving around the floor to music. I would not expect the ordinary Saturday night dancer to realize it, but is it too much to expect of our dance teachers? When properly presented to children of grade school and high school ages square dancing teaches them manners and poise and a feeling of being at ease in front of strangers. City kids certainly need the first and country kids can make good use of the second and third.

Some of the most horrible examples of square dancing I've seen has been done by youth groups. They kicked high over their head in the balance as a varsity punter would do when backed up against the goal posts and kicking his team out of danger; they stomped the floor like a herd of mad bulls at the slightest provocation or without one; they did stiff-armed bull-by-the-tail swings and were as humped up as a dog sitting in a briar patch; the boys threw the girls around like so many bags of meal and did their best to yank their partners' arms loose from their shoulders; the girls did useless and ungainly twirls that certainly added nothing to the beauty of the figure—not even good cheesecake.

It wasn't all the kids' fault. They'd

been taught that way or allowed to dance any way they wanted to just so that they were "having fun." So is wrestling fun, but I doubt if it belongs in a square dance. "Oh but you must not correct them, you'll retard their development." Development of what? Mayhem and slaughter set to music? Any dance teacher who tolerates such tactics in his classes is a spineless individual lacking the guts to stop it and had better return to teaching tic-tac-toe.

On the other side of the fence and about as far removed as it is possible to be have been the superb performances of such grade and high school groups as the Fairlee, Vt., children; the Silver Spurs of Spokane, Washington; the high school group in Atlanta, Ga., taught by John Graham; the Franklin School of Manchester, N. H., and the Levis and Laces of Glendale, Calif., taught by Ralph Maxhimer. Here you saw dancing at its utmost best, and every one of those kids was having the time of his or her life—and they idolized their teachers. Why? Because their teachers had respect for the dances and had imparted this respect along to the students, and from this respect for the dance had grown respect for their partners and everyone else in the set. If you respect your lady, you treat her as one, thus acquiring good manners through the dance.

"Oh, we dance only for fun." Does this mean that you believe in doing whatever you want to do without regard for your fellow dancer? Then you are a "non-conformist" which is a polite word for something else. So, being a non-conformist you drive on the left hand side of the road; when playing poker you make up your own rules; if you play basketball or any other sport you make your own rules.

Nonsense. You do nothing of the sort. Then why do you bring such tommyrot onto the dance floor? Thank heavens only a few do so—just enough to spoil the dance for a hundred others.

Yes, there's a lot of selling of common decency and common sense to many of our would-be folk and square dance teachers.

IN THE BARN — OR OUT?

By John Sabin

Most authorities who have done extensive research into the beginnings of square dancing believe that it has its origins in and with the American people, even though there are strong reasons to believe that the square dance had its antecedents in the quadrille, the Kentucky running sets and, farther in the background, in English country dances. Dr. Lloyd Shaw has called the square dance "the great American folk dance."

Indefatigable investigators have come up with indisputable facts that many square dances, or rather, many square dance figures, had their origins in or as "barn" dances—literally, dances held upon the completion of a barn by a group of persons living in one section, during the early days of our country.

There is little dispute with the claim that American square dancing would fit into the category of what are loosely called "folk dances."

Webster's unabridged dictionary defines "folk dance" as "a dance originating among and characteristic of the common people of a country." And the Encyclopedia Britannica says the term "folk" includes "only those who are mainly outside the currents of urban culture."

Those definitions should be a cue to all of us city square dancers (and we number in the many thousands) to get off the floor and discard our "Western" clothes which "never saw a steer" and wouldn't know what to do if they did see such a critter.

Of course, you square dancers who "whirl your lady" around the floor of a barn in which your dances are held apparently have the right to do so but, for goodness sake, pick her up off the floor; she's been there long enough.

The term "folk dance," according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, is of modern origin. But, this learned reference book says, "its existence implies a certain complexity of development in the social order." The encyclopedia goes on by saying that "in its common applications to civilizations of the western type it (folk) is narrowed down to include those who are mainly outside the currents of urban culture and systematic education, the unlettered or little-lettered inhabitants of villages and countryside."

Do you know what this means? It is a clarion call to all who are reading this learned (?) discourse that if you can read you have no business answering the call of "Square your sets."

And if you want further support of the contention that square dancing is not for you, but only for those persons who spend their lives and make their livelihood in the rural areas, this is what the Britannica has to say: "In a developed civilization we may say that folk-dancing is that dancing which has evolved among the peasantry and is maintained by them in fluid tradition without the aid of the professional dancer, teacher or artist, and is not practised in towns, on the stage or in the ball-room."

It's not even necessary to read between the lines to understand that "demonstration groups" and "club squares" which give exhibitions are usurping the rights of the "unlettered or little-lettered habitants of village and countryside."

The foregoing appears to be indisputable evidence that those of you who rush out on to the floor to answer the call of "One more couple needed over here," should stop that rush in mid-air because you are trespassing on the rights of others.

* * * * *

Frederick C. Othman, popular syndicated newspaper columnist, discussed square dancing boots while on a recent visit to Tucson, Arizona. Here is what he had to say on the subject.

"There is a Wild Westerner here in Tucson named George A. Masek (he hails from St. Louis), who has turned me into a stuffed moose in French heels and I don't think there's any escape.

"He and Ronnie Stewart are the unashamed manufacturers of cowboy boots, which they sell to dudes all over America. Most of these latter barely know which end of a horse is front, and they wouldn't think of climbing on top of such a dangerous beast.

"They wear 'em to square dances," said Masek.

"And how do they get out of their boots when they want to go to bed?" I inquired.

"That," he said with an evil leer, "is their problem."

"Hardly had I arrived here to sample some of Arizona's celebrated sunshine

PEOPLE WORTH KNOWING

Born a Hoosier, raised a Coloradian, but for many years an adopted son of the great State of Texas, Tom Mullen, a Houston oil company attorney, considers his last ten square dance years the most enjoyable. From the standpoint of trying to maintain and preserve the square dance traditions of the old Southwest, Tom is probably more ardent than many natives of the State. While not averse to styles from other areas, he nevertheless feels that it is better to thoroughly know and be able to dance well the local style, than to dance a smattering hodgepodge of all styles.

Square dancing, teaching and calling are his hobbies. They have led him into many positions as club president, teenage leader, Houston Council president, vice-president of the Houston Callers Association and Third National Convention director where, as the latter, he was co-chairman of the Convention workshop clinic.

Tom and law Leah are inveterate square dance travelers, having danced extensively throughout Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Colorado and California. They attend at least one school each year. This past summer they were on the staff of the Foot 'n Fiddle Vacation School at Ruidoso, New Mexico.

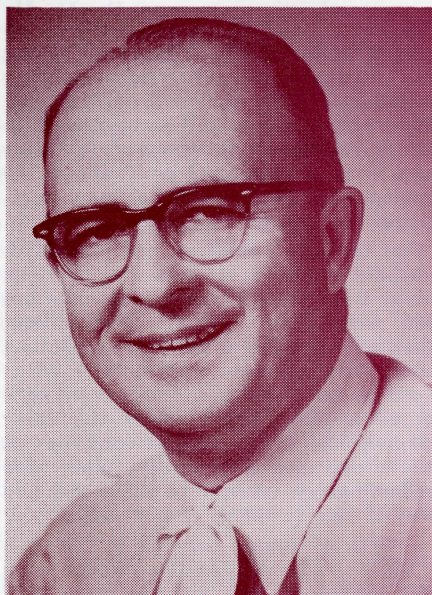
Tom has composed a few dances—Houston Star, Sally's Favorite, Deep in the Heart of Texas, and the latest, Back to the Shade. He is believed to be the first to promote the "refresher course" idea among square dancers, having used it in clubs in 1948 and then city-wide in 1950. He is the author of the "Sally Goodin Plan" for operating clubs in areas that must depend upon club members to do the calling.

Teaching is his long suit. Never content to let his clubs decline in membership, Tom insists on bringing in new members each year and through a teach-

BARN from page 6

before I was climbing into a pair of wrangler pants so tight at the knee I could hardly sit down; I also donned a purple, red and black shirt with pearl buttons, a 10-gallon hat colored pale green, and a pair of these fancy boots.

"It took two men and a pretty girl, plus steel hooks, known as boothooks,



ing plan whereby the club members help out, he is instrumental in maintaining good club attendance. (See AMERICAN SQUARES Sept. 1954 page 10.)

Tom worked his way through college as a dance band musician, playing several instruments. This musical background was a tremendous aid when he took up calling, in that he already was familiar with rhythms, tempos, phrasing etc. Though predominantly a patter caller he also does enough singing calls to be well rounded.

The Mullens' square dance library contains practically all books printed since 1937 and all copies of most magazines, including all back issues.

Tom is a general square dance enthusiast, combining dancing, teaching and calling. He is constantly working to retain the Southwestern or Texas style, so very popular in his area.

to get my feet inside 'em and when I walked I rolled."

* * * * *

Now, gentle reader, there is one more thing you can do. If you know of a good hoedown, be sure to let me know because I want to be there with my boots and my Belle.

ROVING EDITOR IN

MEMPHIS
MOBILE

By H. H. "De" Harris

MEMPHIS, TENN. It has been a long hard struggle to get square dancing started in the Memphis area, I am told, but now it is going well and enthusiasm is high. At present there are eight active clubs with a membership of about 150 couples, plus five classes being conducted for the benefit of about 80 couples.

The Caller's Swapshop has ten active members. Calling is done to recorded music. Both singing and patter calls are used with equal facility. The calling, taken as a whole, is good as to diction, clarity and technique, but in their effort to get as far away as possible from such figures as Red River Valley the other extreme has been reached—not by all callers and not with every dance, but predominantly enough to drive dancers away if this tendency is not curbed.

Growth of square dancing in the area is being hurt because the callers have little change of pace and use no mixers. Technique is placed before fun. The joint facts that they are able to persuade only a small percentage of each class to remain active in square dancing, and that each fall sees an exceptionally high drop-off of dancers appears to bear out such conclusions. Incidentally these conclusions are not entirely my own, but are arrived at by discussion with various and sundry people. I am not an authority. I am a reporter and I attempt to present the facts as I find them.

Couple dancing has a small beginning and as yet no couple dance instructors have come to the foreground to relieve the callers of this chore.

My stay here was brief because Thanksgiving was less than a week away; however, I managed to attend five dances and a session of the Caller's Swapshop. On Friday I spent the first part of the evening with the Land-O-Cotton Swingsters at the American Legion Hut. Bill Sawtelle is the caller. This is an open intermediate group which meets every Friday. J. O. Bailey is club president.

The latter part of the evening, thanks to the excellent taxi service of Bob Krouch, president of the Tennessee Twirlers, I was able to visit his club and dance to the calling of Alan Wolfson. The Tennessee Twirlers is a closed hi-level group which meets the first three

Fridays of each month in the lounge at the CIO-AAU Building.

On Saturday I attended the regular dance at the Peabody Community Center, called by Charley Johnson. This is an open intermediate dance sponsored by the Circle Eight Club, of which Wesley Crouch is president.

Sunday afternoon I went to the Caller's Swapshop and met most of the callers and their taws. The discussion was very interesting, covering these topics:

1. Cooperation with the newly forming Dancer's Association.
2. The fourth annual New Year's Eve dance.
3. The Cotton Carnival Festival Dance, held about mid-May.
4. First Monday of each month dance for novices at the Casino.

The meeting was ably conducted by Charley Johnson, Chairman by rotation.

Monday evening, with Alan and Fay Wolfson I attended their beginners class at the Casino. This is sponsored by the Memphis Recreation Department and supervised by Miss Crystal Steger, an ardent square dancer. Mr. Marion Hall is the Superintendent of Recreation for the City of Memphis.

The Casino is an immense dance pavilion located in the Fair Grounds. It has been made available for square dancing on Monday nights and the callers are seeing that it is put to good use.

One plan they have which will start the first Monday in January is the dance for novices. The forgotten group in square dancing seems to be those dancers who wish to dance only occasionally, and who also like to bring with them friends who have never square danced. They have no desire to become expert dancers—all they know is that square dancing is supposed to be fun and they would like to share in it. For this group the Memphis callers together with the Recreation Department propose to conduct this dance on the first Monday of each month.

The program will be light-hearted and lively with a walk-thru before every dance. Fun will be emphasized rather than square dance technique. Callers will donate their services and will work from a list of selected dances, using the same

The Caller Speaks Up

In this argument or what ever it is between folk and square and round dancing—just what is it all about? In our groups which have been dancing for over ten years, we do any and all of the dances. Hence the name Portland O.N.O. Dancers, meaning Our New 'n Old.

If the music is good and the steps flow with the music, then the dance is fun and that applies to squares too. In all dances you will find a dance that fights and jars with the music. If you have to struggle and work to keep on the beat, then why dance it?

I for one would get very tired of an entire evening of any one of the various types—squares, folk, round, contra, modern or what have you.

I enjoyed the Readers Comments on Square vs. Folk in the October issue. And we have heard lots of comments by the folk dancers that Southern Swing was taken from Dodi Li. Well, we are quite frank and will say that the chorus step was, but part one and part two are from the fox-trots that were being danced when I was a kid just starting to dance, about 1916. So now which was

first—Southern Swing or Dodi Li (which was first introduced into America about three years ago)?

I feel that a lot of the discussions being brought up between folk and square are caused by teachers and callers who are not qualified to teach these dances. They have not had the experience or the training. They are doing mighty well for the time that they have been at it. But do they go to any of the big Folk Dance Camps or such places where they can improve themselves? I'm afraid they don't. One reason is we have to work for a living, and then, it costs money.

I have been teaching dancing since I was a kid, starting in 1917, but there is plenty that I still don't know, and Metha and I are always looking for a place to improve ourselves. There is no such thing as standing still.

Let's dance and why worry about whether a dance is new or if it has been aged in wood. If it's fun, well—let's dance!

Arthur Gibbs
Portland, Oregon

EDITOR from page 8

list month in and month out, modified to adjust to crowd reaction. I believe this is an excellent idea and hope it proves successful.

As y'all know, your Roving Editor raves against incomprehensible calling that has squares constantly breaking up and reforming which is always accompanied by an endless hashing of breaks that makes the dances seem almost endless and leaves hardened dancers worn out by mid-evening. This current rave covers the omission of a report on such a dance.

MOBILE, ALA. We (Peg, the taw, and I) popped in on our friends down in Mobile and were so pleased to see how well things are going in square dancing there. Four clubs have an active membership of about 60 couples. Active callers are Clarence Lent, O. H. Tabb Jr., Cecil M. Ward Jr. and Laurie Winter.

I attended a meeting of the Mobile Square Dance Association. This is the dancers' organization, and I listened to interesting plans for the Azalea Trail

Festival, slated for March 2 and 3. Harlan Ison has been selected as chairman of the Festival. Officers of the Association are Ken Steele, Jessie Snyder and Tom Stafford. An Association Dance is held on every Fifth Friday of a month.

One little incident which tickled me: the Bill Sawtelles of Memphis are expecting and one evening before the dance the Land-O-Cotton Swingsters had a shower for Jean. Jean protested to one of the girls because Bill had known in advance about the shower and had not told her, but after the dance the men proceeded to have a shower for Bill! Consequently the baby is now provided with a five year supply of toys which Bill will probably play with while he waits!

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THE NEW LEADER

By Vern Steensland

Should a new leader take a casual approach to his work? Yes—a tense person does not belong in recreation work. No—if he is ill prepared he will drive folks from folk dancing to their television sets. Preparation, breaking in and keeping fit end only with death or retirement. But here are specific “don’ts” and “dos” gleaned from successes and failures of the past:

For a beginning leader to send out circulars offering his services is usually unfruitful. As in other professions new jobs come to those who do good work. Further, if by canvassing the leader does get a job, he thus becomes less a leader and more a servant.

Beware of hiring a hall for a series of classes. One leader, already well established, lost a fistful of money on rent and city license fees. Especially among those who’ve not “caught the folk dance bug,” attendance is low unless the dancers have, as Charlotte Underwood says, “some previous basis of association” or “an existing social bond.” The

new leader might better be sponsored by church, PTA, YWCA or the like.

A beginner, offered a large group, may be wise to decline. A false start not only embarrasses the leader but also gives folk dancing a black eye among those exposed and among those exposed to those exposed.

Work with small groups “for free” as often as work is offered, to gain practice and publicity. Teach individuals. Lead reluctant friends in your parlor. You’ll either lose the friends or develop your salesmanship.

When ready for larger groups, offer to lead part of the program of an established leader. Get the reactions of him and his key dancers to your work. Record your work on tape so that you can study it from the viewpoint of the dancer.

Attend institutes and workshops, there to observe how the old masters help others to have fun. Summer workshops operate four to six days each with fees of \$8 to \$10 per day—cheaper than most vacations. AMERICAN SQUARES will publish a list of these in a spring issue.

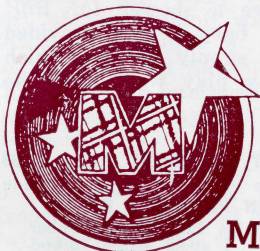
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#742-B — “POWDER YOUR FACE WITH SUNSHINE”
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with call by Fenton “Jonesy” Jones

#745 — Same as #744
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ABOUT PILOTS: MORE

By Vern Steensland

The article "Try Pilots" which appeared in the November 1955 issue created so much interest that we are glad to bring you further details from Vern as to the rewards and hazards of this particular procedure.

One man's meat is another man's poison. This old saw means little to mathematicians but much to people whose work involves aesthetics and other people. If folk dance leadership is divided into 437 areas, perhaps it's possible to write in only nine of them without using "if," "but," or "occasionally." Grey occurs oftener than black or white.

Qualifications of a pilot. So it is with the pilot group arrangement described in the November issue of AMERICAN SQUARES. We wrote, "Perhaps talent with the feet is as important a qualification for a pilot as personality. Within limits, the other pilots can mellow a harsh personality, an achievement for them and for the folk dance activity."

How glad we are that we said "perhaps!" We've now heard of a specific pilot group whose members have developed a deity complex. They dance over-much with each other and take only a nodding interest in fellow dancers who are new or befuddled. To treat this malady the wise leader has invited new people to be pilots—on a personality basis instead of a skill basis.

A bubbly, friendly girl whom he nominated as a pilot reminded him that in the one year she'd been dancing she'd not gained much of a repertoire. Said the leader, "What we need is your spirit. The routines we can teach you."

Pilots can be more trouble than help.

A letter from the West relates ill fortune with the whole pilot idea. The leader complains that during walk-thrus his pilots give private lessons here and there on the floor, jump the gun, collect phone numbers (one of our hobbies, by the way) etc. These particular pilots might use part of a pilot session in a self-appraisal discussion. They might discover (1) some of the problems the leader has, and (2) how as pilots they can help him to help the other dancers.

But leaders are not by definition saints. It is their responsibility to thoroughly prepare their material. Walk-thrus should be so fluent that neither pilots nor other dancers can afford to be distracted. A new leader might do better without pilots until his delivery becomes facile.

A rewarded pilot is a helpful pilot. Here's a circular from England (where American squares are more popular than English routines are in the U.S.). It offers "hints to the master of ceremonies" including this: "It is helpful if the M.C. and floor stewards wear some distinctive emblem." From such an emblem pilot dancers can gain pride in their responsibility as hosts to newcomers. The leader might say, "If you need help, ask one of our stewards to be your partner. They all wear two pairs of shoes." One pair (oh how cute can a person be and live?) is costume jewelry attached to blouse or shirt.

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RECORD REVIEWS

MacGregor records, 10 inch, plastic, 78 rpm, also 7 inch 45 rpm.

Price \$1.05

#742. Bully of the Town//Powder Your Face with Sunshine (Approx. 3:00) 128. **Called by Fenton Jones.**

Two rather pleasant dances of medium difficulty. Very well recorded with the usual Jonesy style. We note, however, that with these records Jonesy is becoming more lyrical so that there is a tendency more toward song than call. This is probably following the present tendency towards singing which has captured the callers' imagination. The kind of singing that Jonesy does is a challenge to the average caller, particularly one who is slightly tone deaf.

#743. Instrumental of #742.

#744. Pivot to a Susie Q (Approx. 3:20) 126//Star Route (3:30) 126. **Called by Fenton Jones.** Two extremely difficult patter calls in the latest California style.

#745. Instrumental of #744.

The tunes used are "Rickett's Hornpipe" and "Billy in the Low Ground."

Windsor records, 10 inch, Vinylite, 78 rpm

Price \$1.45

#7445. Floatin' Down to Cotton Town//The Trail of the Lonesome Pine (Approx. 3:00) 128. **Called by Don Armstrong.**

Nicely called simple squares which should prove very popular.

#7145. Instrumental of #7445.

Well played, nicely recorded. Orchestra is the Sundowners, a very capable group of musicians.

#7446. Any Time//Down by the O-Hi-O (Approx. 3:00) 130. **Called by Robbie Robertson.** Beautifully called dances of medium difficulty which should prove popular. Down By the O-Hi-O should become a standard. It is an excellent square dance tune.

#7156. Instrumental of #7446.

Played by the Sundowners.

S I O records, 10 inch, plastic, 78 rpm

Price \$1.45

#2081-2. New Chinese Breakdown (4) 132//Fire on the Mountain (3:50) 130.

Two hoedowns by the Woodshed Four. The New Chinese Breakdown is an interesting interpretation. It will probably be easier for patter callers to use this record than the lyric Chinese Breakdowns published heretofore.

J-Bar-I records, 10 inch, plastic, 78 rpm

Price \$1.05

#105. Jellybean//Mine all Mine (3:10) 128. **Called by Joe Lewis.**

A pair of excellent called sides by the master of the Jazz style.

#106. Instrumental of Jellybean and Outlaws Hoedown.

The instrumental of Jellybean matches the called record #105. The other side, however, is a hoedown played with a very definite Texas style. The tune is reminiscent of an old English country dance which I can't quite place. Will somebody please listen to it and tell me its derivation.

Longhorn records, 10 inch, plastic, 78 rpm

Price \$1.05

#113A. Loose Talk//Instrumental (2:50) 128. **Called by Red Warrick.**

A hillbilly song with the usual frustrated love motif which has been adapted for square dance. It is very well done by Red Warrick but in this reviewer's opinion the music is the wrong idiom for square dancing. It is very close to being what I might term poor taste in selection of music for square dance.

There are many types of music which are not at all suitable for square dancing. In general one might say that hillbilly love songs, Christmas Carols, Bach Fugues, and operatic arias are rarely written for square dance use. Well-meaning square dance writers would be making a major contribution to our folk arts if they would avoid these fields.

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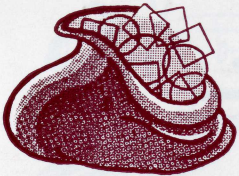
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DANISH DOUBLE QUADRILLE

Danish—Progressive "Four" Circle Contra

One of the most universally danced American folk dances is the Portland Fancy. If your groups have already mastered the idea of progressive fours, this imported fours dance will stimulate them even further. It is great fun and should become just as well liked as Portland Fancy and the Fireman's Dance.

—Frank and Olga.

RECORD: Folkraft #1163.

FORMATION: A circle of "Fours" facing "Fours".

STARTING POSITION: Lines facing, two couples in a line, Women on partner's right. Couples on outside of circle are Couples 1 and 2, inside couples are Couples 3 and 4.

Measures

I—Circle Eight

Music A

- 1-8 All eight join hands and circle left with sixteen walking steps.
- 9-16 Circle right to place.

II—Promenade

Music B

- 1-8 Man 1 and Man 2, honor opposite lady with a slight bow, join inside hands with her and walk eight steps toward center of circle, passing between the inside couples, then change hands and lead lady back to place.
- 9-16 Man 3 and Man 4, repeat pattern of Measures 1-8, leading opposite lady away from center, passing between outside couples, and return to place.

III—Right and Left

Music B repeated

- 1-8 Right and Left, across and back, with opposite couples. All walk forward to opposite's place, passing right shoulders with opposite, then keeping side by side as though inside hands were joined, turn or pivot half around as a couple and reface opposite (8 counts). Repeat the same movement, returning to original place (8 counts).

IV—Circle Four

- 9-16 Opposite couples join hands, forming two circles, and circle left with eight walking steps, then circle right to place.

V—Polka (or Two Step)

Music C

- Partners in shoulder-waist position or ballroom dance position.
 - 1-16 With sixteen Polka steps or Two-steps, turn clockwise with partner moving counterclockwise around opposite couple, then progress to meet a new line of "Four". Lines must always advance in the same direction, couples maintaining their relative positions in the line and progress as a unit. Repeat entire dance with new line of "Four."
- Note: With beginners or with large groups, Figure V may be simplified as follows:

1.

Music C

- 1-16 Partners, in promenade position, walk counterclockwise around opposite couple, then progress, men passing left shoulders, to meet new line of "Four".

OR

2.

Music C

- 1-8 Four Polka steps forward and four Polka steps backwards.
- 9-16 Eight Polka steps forward, passing opposite by right shoulder to meet new line of "Four".

HAPPY NEW YEAR

SAME OLD FACE

(Introduced 1955 by Doc Heimbach,
Blue Island, Ill.)

Use any intro and break

First old couple bow and swing

Go down the center and split the ring

To a four-in-line down there in place

Sides turn in for the same old face

(Side couples turn in so they are facing the
same direction the other line of four faces)

Forward and back there is no doubt

The ends will hinge and middle turn out

Forward eight and back again

The center arch and the end turn in

To a right hand star just you four

Once and a half in the middle of the floor

To a left hand star with the same old sex

One with the fellahs and one with the chicks

Two left hand stars keep burning bright

Gent one will break it up tonight

Find your own and you promenade

In the usual way with the same old maid

*It's one and four and three and two

Promenade home like you always do

*When couple 2 is active

It's two and one and four and three

Promenade just you and she

*When couple 3 is active

It's three and two and one and four

Promenade her home once more

*When couple 4 is active

It's four and three and two and one

Promenade cause you're almost done

LOOSE TALK

(Introduced 1955 by Red Warrick, Kilgore, Tex.)

Record: Longhorn #113

Swing with your partner and sashay your
corner

The gents left hand star turn it one time about

Pick up your maid in a star promenade

Hold 'em tight boys make each minute count

The girls turn right back meet your own with
a right hand

A left round your corner then promenade your
own (original partner)

We'll swing don't you worry we can if we
hurry

If people will leave us alone

The heads you promenade go half way round
with your maid

Then you do a right and left thru turn 'round
where they are

Side pass on thru separate go round two

(Sides pass thru; lady go right, gent go left
back to home)

Come back into the center and star (right
hand star)

Turn that star round the land do a left
allemande

Sashay right with your own take your corner
promenade home

I'd give that new honey a swing worth the
money

If people would leave us alone

REPEAT figure for heads, break (same as
opener)

REPEAT figure twice for sides, ending (same
as opener)

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THE SAILORS' MEDLEY

(Introduced 1955 by Jack Atkinson, New York)

Suggested Record: Folkraft #1217B "Bell Bottom Trousers"

All form a right hand star once around you go
Star left back the other way hurry don't be slow

Do-si-do your corner girl go back and swing your own

Promenade your partner as on your way you roam

Head two couples ladies chain side two couples swing

Then side two couples ladies chain now head two couples swing

Head two couples chain back again sides you do the same

All swing your partners swing them around and around

Right hand over with your corner left hand back again

Right and left thru with right hand couple right and left and back again

Go back and swing your corner girl then promenade your own

Promenade her around the ring as on your way you roam

Do-si-do your corner girl go back and swing your own

All join hands and circle left once around you go

Circle right back the other way hurry don't be slow

All swing your corner maid now she is your new girl

Allemande left your corners right unto your own

Grand right and left around the ring as on your way you go

When you meet your partners swing and swing and swing

Promenade your pretty maid back to your place in the ring.

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708: Sally Two-Step ('My Gal Sal')

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SALLY TWO-STEP—mixer

(Introduced 1955 by Rose Zimmerman, New York)

RECORD: Rock Candy #708, "My Gal Sal".

POSITION: Open; inside hands joined.

FOOTWORK: Opposite; directions given for man.

Measures WALK TWO THREE KICK; BACK

1-2 TWO THREE TOUCH: starting on outside foot, walk forward three steps, then kick inside foot fwd. Walk backward three steps (man: R L R, and touch L beside R.)

3-4 SLIDE TWO THREE FOUR, SLIDE TWO THREE FOUR; dropping hands, take four slides to outside, moving away from partner. Take four slides toward partner. Join inside hands again.

5-8 Repeat all of Measures 1-4.

9-10 HEEL TOE TWO-STEP; HEEL TOE TWO-STEP; place L heel forward, then touch L toe beside R foot. Take 1 two-step fwd. Repeat, starting R heel.

11-12 TWO-STEP, TWO-STEP, TWO-STEP, TWO-STEP; four two-steps turning away from partner in a wide circle, man to left, lady to right. Finish in open position.

13-14 Repeat measures 9-10.

15-16 TWO-STEP, TWO-STEP, CHANGE PARTNERS, TWO-STEP; man advances to fwd lady with 4 two-steps. Lady turns back (right-face turn) to meet new partner in 4 two-steps.

LEAD 'EM TO A LINE

(Introduced 1955 by Johnny Davis, Covington, Ky.)

Join hands and circle to the right

Circle right halfway around

Circle to the left go single file

And we'll follow the leader about a mile

Head gents backtrack and led 'em to a line

(Head gents backtrack and each person in turn follows after the one ahead has turned back. The leader leads the people to a straight line in side positions. All face center.)

Forward eight and back with you

Forward again and pass through

Join hands and the ends turn in

Circle four in the middle of the floor

One time around

Go once around and pass thru

Allemande left the corner girl

New partner right and left grand

(This gives each gent his original corner as a new partner. REPEAT once for heads then twice for sides)

YORK FUSILIER—contra

1-3-5 etc. active

Beats

- 8 Everybody forward and back
- 8 Forward again and cross right over
- 8 Both couples down the center
- 8 Other way back and first couple cast off
- 8 Right hand star with the couple above
- 8 Left hand star back to place
- 16 Right and left with the same couple

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BACK PORCH SWING—mixer

(Introduced 1955 by Rose Zimmerman, New York)

RECORD: Rock Candy #705, "Last Night on the Back Porch."

POSITION: Varsovienne.

FOOTWORK: Identical throughout dance. Left foot starts.

Measures WALK WALK TWO-STEP, WALK

1-2 WALK TWO-STEP; Walk fwd L R, take one two-step fwd. Repeat starting R foot.

3-4 WALK WALK PIVOT POINT, WALK WALK PIVOT POINT; Walk fwd L R, step L, making 1/2 right-face pivot to face RLOD and point R toe fwd. (Lady remains on the outside.) Repeat, starting R foot and moving RLOD.

5-8 Repeat measures 1-4.

9-10 BALANCE LEFT BALANCE RIGHT, STEP, CLOSE, STEP, SWING; Step L to side, step R across in front, step L in place. Repeat, starting R. Now step L to side, close R to L, step L to side again and swing R across in front.

11-12 BALANCE RIGHT BALANCE LEFT, STEP, CLOSE, STEP, SWING: Repeat measures 9-10, starting R.

13-14 BALANCE FWD BALANCE BACK, WALK WALK TWIRL; Step fwd L, touch R beside L, step back R, touch L beside R. Man walk fwd L R L R while lady makes one right face twirl under joined R hands.

15-16 BALANCE FWD BALANCE BACK, TWIRL THE LADY BACK. Repeat action of measures 13-14, but this time as man walks 4 steps fwd, lady twirls back to meet the man behind her and assume varsovienne position to repeat dance.

PIGTAIL PROMENADE

Recognizing the fact that many of our American Squares subscribers are often called upon to plan programs for children's groups, this page will be devoted to material suitable for the younger set, folk dances, square dances, song plays, play party games, mixers, etc. We hope to make this a regular feature and have snared for our Mother Goose, Olga Kulbitsky of Hunter College.

BINGO

(American Play-Party Game)

Record: Folkraft #1189

Measures SONG

Music A

- 1 There was a farmer had a dog
- 2 And Bingo was his name Sir
- 3 That farmer's dog's at our back door
- 4 Begging for a bone Sir

Music B

- 1 B with an I and I with an N
- 2 N with a G and G with an O
- 3 B.....n.....g....o, go
- 4 Bingo was his name Sir

DANCE

FORMATION: Circle of couples facing counterclockwise. Girl on partner's right. Extra children in center

STARTING POSITION: Inside hands joined on girl's left arm linked thru partner's right arm.

Measures

Music A

- 1-4 All walk counterclockwise, singing. On last count of fourth measure, at the word "Sir" boys face about.

Music B

- 1-4 Boys skip clockwise, girls counterclockwise. On last count at the word "Sir" boys take the nearest girl for partner and extra players find partners go to the center.

Note: Boy-girl partners are not necessary for this game. In groups of one sex or uneven division of sexes, all children in inner circle face about and walk clockwise during Part 2.

VARIATION

Music A

- 1-4 The same

Music B

- 1-4 GRAND RIGHT AND LEFT. Give right hand to partner, pass and give left hand to the next and continue to weave around the globe, alternately passing by the right and left.

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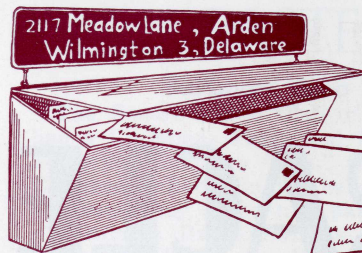
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LETTERS

FROM
OUR READERS

Folk Song Book

Dear Rickey:

Could you let me know where I can get a copy of the IOCA Song Book you spoke about last summer in Kentucky? The name and address of the publisher and the price will help. I think there has been a big improvement in your magazine lately, not only in looks but in material as well.

Wally Fuhrmann,
New York, N. Y.

● The New Song Fest, edited by Dick and Beth Best, for the Intercollegiate Outing Club Association, is published by Crown of New York. It is available through AMERICAN SQUARES Book and Record Shop for \$1.75 in a paper cover; \$3.00 in hard cover. This is an excellent source of folk song material.

California Style?

Dear Grab Bag;

On page fifteen of November AMERICAN SQUARES you list "Around Just One to a Susie Que," and state that this is what is meant these days by a "California type dance . . ." To this I cannot agree, since no California caller worthy of the name would think of calling a dance which did not include at least five allemande thars. I am sure that in the original version "Partner left as you come down" must have been called "Partner left as in allemande thar, and etc." Or perhaps it was "Opposite right for a backward star etc." Probably it wouldn't have fitted the pattern, if any, but that is a minor matter.

Also, I am sure that this dance would include the California Convulsion, an uncalled (and uncalled for) spasm at the end of each promenade beginning with the lady's being twirled once clockwise, followed by one or more counter clockwise twirls, and topped off by one or more clockwise swings.

I was told that California dancers could dance to any caller, because they had not been taught dance patterns. Yet when I called one I had learned from Rickey (learned it good, too), "Sides Divide," I had to stop for a walk through. It was an open dance of regular club dancers, so they were not beginners.

Since I am griping, out here everyone "Square Shuffles" instead of "Square Dancing." The tempo is faster; I counted one caller at 180. The two step is censured as "folk dancing."

Do you feel I have sufficient grounds to request the Air Force to transfer me back to Texas?

Buckshot Unger,
Hamilton AFB, Calif.

B&R Still Ahead

Gentlemen:

I could get my records nearer to my home town but your service even across the country is only seven or eight days from date I order. I really appreciate the service. Thank you. I have nearly a hundred records purchased from your shop.

Leonard Shield,
Price, Utah



PRESENTS

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Western Jubilee Record Company

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THE



RACLE

Floor Too Slick

What is the best way to slow down a hardwood floor?

Joe Wilson
Chicago, Ill.

Although we've discovered and tried many methods, we still prefer that suggested by Doc Alumbaugh a couple of years ago: mix one part cream furniture polish with five parts of very hot water. Almost any good brand of cream (not oil) furniture polish will do, but we prefer Shell Cream Polish, obtainable from any Shell Oil Co. service station or dealer. One person applies the hot solution to the floor generously from a child's toy sprinkling can or some such receptacle, while a second person follows along immediately with a dry-type mop to spread and distribute the solution evenly over the surface. One pint of polish mixed with five pints of hot water will cover a hall holding fifteen squares—about 2400 square feet—with an application time of only 15 or 20 minutes. One application will last through two or even three consecutive nights of square dancing. Within two or three days the "slow down" effects of the application are dissipated and the floor returns to its former state without further attention, or the former hard polish may be restored immediately by a dusting of professional powdered dance wax.

High-Level Basics

I thought I was a fairly good square dancer, having eight years of dancing and six of calling behind me, but I visited a high-level dance the other night and came home with these three questions in mind:

(1) By definition of the term *allemande thar* as commonly used in square dances all over the U.S., is it correct to do an *allemande left* with the corner and swing into a right-hand backward star

then and there to the call "*allemande thar*," without first going on to a right hand to partner, left to the next before forming a backward star?

(2) Is there a complete directional call for the Teacup Chain, and is it a basic fundamental square dance term?

(3) Is the cross-trail through, in your opinion, a basic fundamental term in square dancing, or developing into one, as *allemande thar* did a few years ago?

Bob Tippett,
Houston, Texas

(1) I'm afraid *allemande thar* has been torn apart and put back together again in a rather unfortunate conglomeration. Originally, as you know, it was an interrupted grand right and left during which you did two backward stars. Now the idea is to do things "like an *allemande thar*" rather than the original movement itself. Therefore if the call is "Left to your corner like an *allemande thar*" you turn your corner with the left hand about once around and a little bit more, then gents stick right hands in center for a star, gents back up, ladies go forward.

(2) The whole business of the Teacup Chain is pretty complicated. Originated in Austin, Texas, it has become in the last year or so one of the spotlighted difficult things to do. It is definitely not a basic fundamental square dance term and the directional call is pretty difficult without having walked through the figure first.

(3) In my opinion the cross-trail through is definitely developing into a basic square dance term as *allemande thar* did about ten years ago. It developed from Pat Pattison's figure Corners of the World, introduced about 1939, which makes the cross-trail usage in modern dancing about fifteen years old now.

EASTERN NEWS NOTES

Baltimore Area

The Square Dance Club of Baltimore had a Christmas Party and Dance Dec. 14 at the Hamilton "Rek." Guest caller Clarence McLaughlin did the calling and, as usual, they had a nice party.

Baltimore Promenaders had their Christmas Party on Dec. 20 at the Church of Our Saviour, with invited callers doing the honors and my tax in charge of rounds. This was also a fine party.

Officers elected by the reorganized Callers' Association at their meeting in November were Jack and Ginny Carver, Robin De La Barre, Bob and Alice Wedge, Viola and Wes Quail. Mae and Frank Fraley, with George and Mamie Todd, have the task of deciding upon a name for us. Robin will write our news letter and list our open and closed dances.

We now have a caller and folk dance leader from Boston with us—John Hart. John danced and called at the Wagon-wheelers recently. All visiting dancers and callers passing through Baltimore are invited to phone Valley 3-3907 and dance with us.

Jack Carver

Cleveland Area

Brooklyn Recreation Center starts square dancing January 7 for ten consecutive Saturdays. Hall is located on Memphis Avenue west of W. 73rd St. . . . Ernie Koenig is new president of Denim Dancers in Cleveland . . . Bill Bothel has beginners dances on second and fourth Fridays each month at Bothel's Barn, 2269 Sourek Rd., Akron. He also rents the Barn to other groups for square dancing . . . Ernie Koenig and Rita Sylvester became engaged in the front seat of an automobile recently but we think the affair started a long time ago in a square dance set. Caller Cupid's arrows can be deadly . . . 75 people attended the SD Callers workshop and clinic in December in Akron, presented under the sponsorship of the City of Akron Recreation Dept. in cooperation with the Northeastern Ohio SD and Leaders group, and the Cleveland Area Callers Association. It was conducted by Ed Gilmore, who did an excellent job, and the clinic received much praise from those attending.

Harold Neitzel

Long Island

The Long Island Association will sponsor a series of dances on the third Sunday of each month at Levittown Hall in Levittown. The first dance will be held on January 15, and the program will include both folk and square dancing, shared by three or four of the Association callers each time.

Bill Kattke, Chip Hendricksen and Paul Hunt all called on the program at the Atlantic Square Dance Convention, with Paul Hunt calling for a Long Island exhibition set.

Anne Rechter

Virginia—Central Area

Looking over the SD picture in Central Va. at mid-season, 1955-1956, it is fair to say that interest in the activity is definitely on the upswing.

In Charlottesville the Virginia Reelers have successfully conducted their usual fall introductory course for beginners. The regular club dance on Oct. 27 was called by Lou Hildebrand of Hyattsville, Md., and served as the graduation exercises for the newcomers. So many club members are interested in learning to call that some individual instruction has been given by regular callers Chic Moran and Des Gourley. This culminated in a "Callers Night" Nov. 19 at which the learning callers had a chance to demonstrate their talent. Interest was so high that this will probably become a regular feature of the Reelers' annual program.

The Reelers are well into their plans for the Second Annual Virginia Folk Festival which is set for April 14. Again the Festival will include afternoon workshops and an evening dance featuring the calling of Rickey Holden. Music will be provided by the popular Rock Creek Promenaders from the DC area.

In Waynesboro the Circle 8 Club had so many applicants for their fall beginners' class that they were forced by space problems to limit the number of newcomers and create a waiting list. Soon after training this class, caller Will Ransom was transferred by his company to Richmond. The club held a farewell party for the Ransoms Oct. 28 and presented Will and Ally with a shirt and skirt featuring the Circle 8 symbol to remind them of their Waynesboro attachments. The club continues to dance to the capable calling of Frank Parker.

The terrific response to their beginners' class only spurred on the Circle 8 Club. In order to convince more people that square dancing is fun they sponsored an open dance on Dec. 15 in Waynesboro featuring callers from Staunton, Waynesboro and Charlottesville.

In the Richmond area the Capitol Squares are enjoying another season of dancing to the popular Cape Cod caller Dick Anderson. Dick also calls for the Bon Air Country Dancers, now in their second year. A special feature of the Bon Air program is a junior (11-15 years) session on the afternoon of the adult dance each month. The Capitol Squares and Bon Air Dancers danced together Dec. 31 for a New Year's Eve Dance Festival.

A club in Warrenton is also in its second season of dancing to Dick Anderson. From all reports they are very enthusiastic and are having a bigger and better season of dancing.

Des Gourley

Helen Denson

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RALPH PAGE

182-A Pearl St.

Keene, N. H.

Washington Area

NCASDLA is sponsoring Bob Brundage early in January. This is Bob's first tour and his program will include an afternoon session on contras.

An outstanding event was the Grand Squares Christmas party. This club is famous for its good food, so guests were especially delighted to receive as favors the Grand Squares' Cookbook. The program included a folksinger, Santa Claus, door prizes and a Pass-the-Mittens square. Best of all was a square dance fashion show put on by the lovely models of one of the area's big department stores to announce the opening of their new department of square dance clothes. Area dancers feel that this is one of the rewards of a long word-of-mouth campaign to eliminate the hayseed-hillbilly concept of square dancing. It is, of course, a public recognition of the number of people in this area who enjoy square dancing.

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Coming Events!

NATIONAL EVENTS

- Jan. 14—ALVA, OKLA. NoWest Dist. Fest. Am. Leg. Hall.
- Jan. 15—OWATONNA, MINN. SoEast Reg. Fest. Monterey Ballroom. 2-5 p.m.
- Jan. 20-21—TUCSON, ARIZ. 8th Ann. So. Ariz. Fest.
- Jan. 28—ARDMORE, OKLA. Ann. March of Dimes SD. Civic Aud.
- Jan. 28—SHAWNEE, OKLA. Ann. March of Dimes SD. Civic Aud.
- Jan. 28—CHATTANOOGA, TENN. Chattanooga Roundup.
- Jan. 31—OKLAHOMA CITY. Polio Roundup. Mun. Aud.
- Feb. 4—HOUSTON, TEX. 4th Ann. Couple Dance Fest.
- Feb. 11-12—CORVALLIS, ORE. Valentine FD Fest. Roosevelt School.
- Feb. 19—EUGENE, ORE. 4th Ann. Benefit by Danebo Circle 8 SD Club.

- Mar. 2-3—MOBILE, ALA. 3rd Ann. Azalea Trail Fest.
- Mar. 3—ARKANSAS CITY, KAN. NoCent. Okla. SD Fest.
- Mar. 17—TULSA, OKLA. NoEast Dist. Fest.
- Mar. 24—ARDMORE, OKLA. So. Okla. Dist. Fest., Mun. Aud.
- Mar. 24—AUSTIN, TEX. Mid-Tex Ann. Spring Membership Dance, Coliseum.
- Mar. 30-31—TEXARKANA, USA. 4-States Assn. 5th Ann. SD Fest.

EASTERN METROPOLITAN AREA

- Jan. 8.—WHITE PLAINS, N. Y. Westchester SD Assn., Little Theater, Co. Center. Rickey Holden.
- Jan. 28—NEW YORK. English Country Dance Party. Ralph Page.
- Feb. 4.—WHITE PLAINS, N. Y. Westchester SD Assn., Little Theater, Co. Center.
- Feb. 18—COLLEGE PARK, MD. 8th Ann. Eb & Ely Jamb., U. of Md. Armory.
- Mar. 4—WHITE PLAINS, N. Y. Westchester SD Assn., Little Theater, Co. Center.

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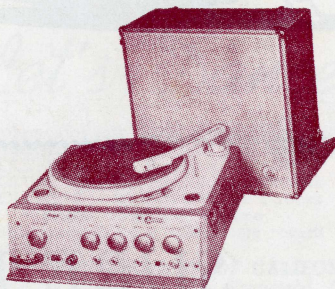
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