Managing Groups Part 3 – The Final Calculus

By Kip Garvey

"I watch them, and I know where they are."

Now, this is a frustrating statement. It is frustrating because it is so very succinct, and makes you feel like you should well know what it means. When we don't know precisely what it means, we feel a bit like an amateur, like we're not in on the joke.

Almost all the experienced callers participating in our sight calling experiment said these words, in one way or another. They said it like it is an entire revelation that everyone listening should understand. Fact is, many of us sense the meaning because we do the same thing. However to articulate it, to put into words the precise meaning, that became the challenge.

We now understand that this single phrase entirely sums up the essence of Sight Calling: To simply 'know' where the dancers are at any point where we want to make the determination.

Many of us have some experience with Extemporaneous Calling in one form or another. Extemporaneous Calling only makes sense if, at some point, we can determine precisely where the dancers are. Once we know this, we can guide the dancers to an appropriate and different Getout without the need to follow the Extemporaneous Sight Calling Resolution algorithm.

Knowing what we know about Groups, the statement "…*I know where they are*" begins to take shape and form. What we now need is a formula that we can use to determine precisely what Group the square is in at any point. Knowing this, we can call extemporaneously, visually spot the square, ascertain the Group, and apply a known Getout.

We know the largest single take away from Group technology is this: If we keep Groupies together, the square will be in the Group represented by the Groupies as long as we do not call a Conversion Module, or if we do call Conversion Modules, we call an even number of them so they negate themselves.

However, if we do not want to worry about the Conversion Module effect, we can restate this in a more global manner. We can say **if we recognize the Lady with our Focal Man the square will be in one of three Groups: the Group defined by the Lady with the Focal Man, or one of the two Groups in the other Major Group because a Conversion occurred.**

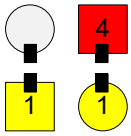
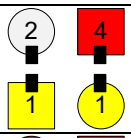
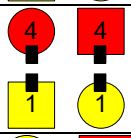
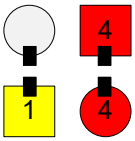
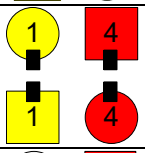
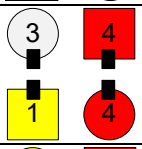
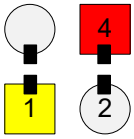
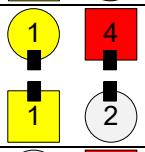
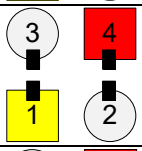
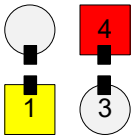
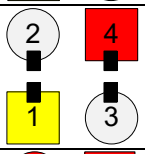
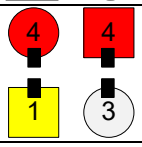
In determining which Group the square is in, we start with the Focal Man and his current partner, or 'Groupie'. If no Conversion was called, the square will be in the same Group as this Group Lady. However, if we look at all other pairing possibilities, we see there is only one other pairing possibility that determines the actual Group the square is in.

If the square is not in the same Group as our Focal Man's 'Groupie', which Group is it in? We can eliminate the opposite sub-group right away. We only need one more piece of information to determine the Group. Once we get that extra piece of data, we '…**know where**

they are.' We can reference dancer relationships in Group speak, know which Group they are in, and be ready to apply a known Getout that we associate with that Group.

If we view a table like the one below, we can see how these dancer relationships equate to Groups. We use Symmetry, Relationship States, Groups, and logical deduction to understand where all the dancers are, meaning their overall associations. Each choice is an either/or choice as depicted.

Assume dancers are normally paired Facing Lines. It makes no difference if Focal Man is on the left end or the right end of the line. We first determine which Lady is paired with Focal Man. We know that in each instance the Secondary Man can only have one of two possible pairings, and the square can only be in one of two Groups.

Possible Focal Man Pairings	Determine Focal Pairing	Secondary Man Can Have...Or....	Square is in...
 Are they in P-Group, or...	Focal Man has original Partner. Therefore P-Group is a known possibility. Other is R-Group		R-Group Corner not in 4-some
			P-Group All Partners
 Are they in C-Group, or...	Focal Man has original Corner. Therefore C-Group is a known possibility. Other is P-Group		P-Group All Partners
			C-Group Corner is in 4-some
 Are they in R-Group, or...	Focal Man has original Right Hand Lady. Therefore R-Group is known possibility. Other is O-Group		R-Group Corner not in 4-some
			O-Group Partner not in 4-some
 Are they in O-Group, or...	Focal Man has original Opposite. Therefore O-Group is known possibility. Other is C-Group		O-Group Partner not in 4-some
			C-Group Corner in 4-some

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And there it is. Each Group determination comes down to one of two possibilities once we know which Lady is paired with Focal man. The square will either be in the Group named for the Lady paired with Focal Man, or *in the Group named for the Lady facing Focal Man*, the other Lady in the four dancer collection.

The two data points become these: Which Lady is Focal Man paired with, and which Lady is the other Lady in the four dancer collection? The puzzle is solved by visually recognizing only 4 dancers. This is how callers with fully developed Sight Calling technique 'know' where the dancers are.

Our more global statement is **if we recognize the Lady with our Focal Man, the square will be in one of three Groups: the Group defined by the Lady with the Focal Man, or one of the two Groups in the other Major Group.**

Can we refine this further? Yes. Closely examine the table and you will see that in each case, if the Group the square is in is not the same as the Groupies, then it is in a sub-group of the other Major Group. We also see in the case where the actual Group is not the same as the name of the Groupies, it is in a Group named by the Lady the Focal Man is facing, the other Lady in the four dancer collection.

The newly refined statement then is this: **When Focal Man is paired with his Groupie in normally arranged Formations**, i**f the square is not in the Group named for the Groupies, it will be in the Group named by the Lady facing the Focal man.** It is refined down to an either/or determination.

The final calculus thus becomes this:

In a four dancer collection that includes our Focal Man, the square is either in the Group named for the Lady he is paired with, or a Group named for the other Lady in the four dancer collection.

This rule applies to all situations where the square can be separated into two adjacent four dancer collections, not just those that have normally arranged couples.

This is precisely how the highly skilled sight callers "…*know where they are*." In the experiments we performed with these callers, one of them summed it up this way: "Regardless of where they are, they are always in one known Group or the other." It boils down to two choices. They then '…look at the dancers, and know where they are' by viewing and recognizing the two ladies associated with the Focal man.

It is not necessary to track Conversions. It is not necessary to track Transitions. This technique is the purest form of Extemporaneous Calling that leads directly to a correct resolution based on an accurate determination of global associations of the dancers, the Groups.

This is a technique. And like all other good techniques, it takes practice. It takes proper practice, meaning a structured method of learning the technique. The easiest Groups to work with and recognize these associations are Partner and Corner Group. This is because they always include our Key dancers, the ones we've memorized and recognize. It is more difficult to ascertain a Right Hand Lady or Opposite Lady pairing because in theory, we never recognize these dancers since they are not our Key dancers. By utilizing deductive reasoning, by determining when dancers we do recognize are NOT in a particular place, we can deduce where our Key dancers must be and when pairings with non-Key dancers exist.

Do we recognize this dancer, or not? We use this method particularly in distinguishing between sub-groups of the Major Groups. We determine between Corner Group and Right Hand Lady Groups by the presence or absence of our Focal Man's original Corner in the four dancer collection that contains Focal Man. We determine between the Partner Group and the Opposite Group by the presence or absence of our Focal Man's original Partner in the four dancer collection that contains Focal Man.

Our practice should focus on this reality. Whether or not we keep Groupies together, the square will be in a Group named for the Lady paired with our Focal Man or in a Group named for the other Lady in the four dancer collection. It will always be one or the other.

In practice, it is not always easy to ascertain the nature of the other Lady because she may not be one of our Key dancers. If there is a 'trick' to this technique, this is it. However utilizing all the structural rules of choreography including Symmetry, Partner Relationships, Transitions and Conversions, along with a small dose of logical deduction, with time we can develop the same intuition as well-versed and highly skilled sight callers.

"I watch them, and I know where they are."

This makes more sense now.

