

Walk Around Your Corner / See Saw

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English Abstract

This article examines two underestimated calls that have more capabilities than they are often granted in everyday Mainstream calling. The calls are defined in a somewhat irritating and unnecessarily restrictive way, which may be the reason why callers do not know them better.

Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Dieser Artikel untersucht zwei unterforderte Calls, die – wie wir alle – mehr wollen, als sie im heutigen Mainstream-Leben dürfen. Die Calls können ihr Potential wohl auch deshalb nicht einbringen, weil sie verwirrend und unnötig restriktiv definiert sind und daher nur zu sehr eingeschränkter Verwendung einladen.

Introduction

First of all note that the definitions of the calls *Walk Around Your Corner* and *See Saw* have recently slightly been changed. This will need to be reflected here – I plan a revision of this article for the near future.

The two calls are beyond the oldest ones – they were already in Bob Osgood's list of 50 basics in 1968 – at that time called “26. *All Around Left Hand Lady*” and “27. *See Saw Pretty Little Taw*”. They also belong to the most simple calls, both in definition and in their execution. In spite of that, they are certainly quite underrepresented in actual calling. Visit any club night of any club, and you will not encounter them, except – possibly – one or two times in the stereotypical singing call break *Circle Left – Walk Around Your Corner – See Saw Your Own – Allemande Left*...

I became curious and asked myself if the calls have possibly something else to offer. Here are some of my results.

Quotes From Callerlab

Before we start, a short look at the definitions.

Definition – 25. ALL AROUND THE CORNER
Starting formation – square or circle. All dancers

Definition – 25. ALL AROUND THE CORNER

face their corners. Walking forward and around each other while keeping right shoulders adjacent, dancers return to face their partner.

STYLING: Men's arms in natural dance position. Ladies use both hands on skirt, moving skirt forward and back to avoid opposite dancer.

TIMING: 8 steps.

Definition – 26. SEE SAW

Starting formation – square or circle. Each dancer walks forward and around the partner keeping left shoulders adjacent, then steps forward to face the corner. (NOTE: This call is to be used ONLY in conjunction with ALL AROUND THE CORNER)

STYLING: Same as in ALL AROUND THE CORNER except that left shoulders are kept adjacent and left hand and shoulder should be kept forward.

TIMING: 8 steps.

Even more as with most other calls, I very much doubt the timing numbers (just remember that *Allemande Left* is defined as taking just four beats if – as usual – half around). But a discussion on timing certainly needs a much bigger focus; so we will not further extend on it here.

Walk Around Your Corner

First of all, the name is a peculiar thing. Wherever I danced, the caller always used the wording *Walk Around Your Corner*. Apparently it took Callerlab decades to change the name accordingly – the definitions currently still show the name *All Around the Corner*.

As for the rest of the definition, note that it includes a turning to the corner (as much as needed) and is therefore very similar to *Allemande Left*. Only the starting formations seem needlessly limited.

See Saw

This call apparently tries not to be much more than the necessary counterpart to the other one. If it had been invented a generation later it might be called *Reverse Walk Around Your Partner*. But really irritating is the note in brackets – what does 'in conjunction' with the other call mean? If we can say *Girls Make a Left Hand Star – All Walk Around Your Cor-*

ner, why on earth are we not allowed to say *Girls Make a Right Hand Star – All See Saw*?

We can take for granted that it is good to prelude the call by *Walk Around Your Corner* – at least today while this is what dancers are used to. But why should *Turn Corner Right* not be acceptable to lead into *See Saw*? Or *Box the Gnat Your Corner – Right Pull By*?

The truth is that until November 2003 the wording of the call had the meaning *Left Shoulder Dosado* except after *Walk Around Your Corner*. At this time a twice-overdue change led to clarification and separated the meaning of the two *See Saw* definitions from each other, giving half of it to *Left (Shoulder) Dosado* – but at this point, the strange 'note' with the dangerously looking word ONLY has not been removed. Looking at the history of definition changes, I get the impression that never a single letter more has been changed than what just seemed necessary – and usually some inconsistency stayed which then had to be repaired in the next year – if anybody did bother.

It may thus be a consequence of the call's rare usage that even today our dancers do not expect *See Saw* except after *Walk Around Your Corner* – apparently this has no technical but only traditional reasons. If you want, you will find ways to change this in your group.

Styling

The styling explanations of *See Saw* do not refer to those of *Walk Around Your Corner* but to its defini-

tion paragraph. I am sorry to say this but this again does not give the impression that somebody cared to proof read the result after the change.

Apart of that: The styling details also do not talk about something that many dancers today will consider as a very important element: While performing any of the two calls, the dancers should look each other into the eyes. This way, the dancing sensation makes a real difference to the arm turns the two calls otherwise could easily be replaced by.

'8' Shape Pattern

In the introduction I quoted the most common sequence where the calls are used: *Walk Around Your Corner – See Saw – Allemande Left*. But honestly, do you like this? If yes, you might similarly call *Walk Around your Corner – Right and Left Grand*.

For my personal taste, one of the important elements of the two calls – although not expressed in the definition – is the pattern of alternating shoulders they introduce. The interruption of the flow by the use of the unexpected hand feels somewhat disturbing if not insensitive. I must admit though that this can be the fun in it, and also that it is not necessarily severe as long as the hand is available (as most of us would not mind *Walk Around Corner – See Saw – Box the Gnat – Pass Thru – Swing*).

You might find that there is not really much what the two calls can add to the dance program, but I think the pattern of alternating shoulders and the eye contact (see *Styling*) are perhaps their most important contributions.

Choreo in the Ring

Formation

Apparently, the definitions only encourage the use of both calls in the ring. We already mentioned that they have built-in a turning to the corner or partner. This way, they create a formation where everybody faces another person; we can call this formation the 'Grand' formation because a *Left and Right Grand* or *Wrong Way Grand* are the most natural things to do from here.

Getting In

The calls always feel natural when the girls are inside and the boys outside:

- [S] *Girls Make a Left Hand Star – Walk Around Your Corner*
- [S] *Girls Make a Right Hand Star – See Saw Your Partner*
- [S] *Circle Right – Boys Take a Backtrack – Walk*

Around Your Corner

- [S] *Circle Left – Boys Take a Backtrack – See Saw Your Partner*

The formation I use to call the 'Grand' formation does not know insides and outsides, but here body flow and/or hand availability help leading the dancers:

- [S] *Boys Star by the Left – Find Your Corner, Box the Gnat – Walk Around Your Corner*
- [S] *All Roll Away – The Next Turn Right – With Your Partner Wrong Way Left and Right Grand – Go Five Hands – Walk Around Your Corner*
- [S] *Walk Around Corner – Left Shoulder Weave the Ring – See Saw Your Partner*

Getting Out

The '8' Shape Pattern has the calls follow each other very well, but sooner or later we need to break from this routine. What calls can be useful?

- *Walk Around Your Corner – Boys Make a Left Hand Star*
- *Walk Around Your Corner (– Left Shoulder Dosado) – Girls Make a Right Hand Star*
- *See Saw – Boys Make a Right Hand Star*
- *See Saw (– Dosado Your Corner) – Girls Make a Left Hand Star*

Stars are certainly a good means to change flow and lead to a new formation, be they induced by a *Dosado* or not. Some other possibilities:

- (The classic:) *Walk Around Your Corner – Do Paso*
- (Abbreviating:) *Walk Around your Corner – Courtesy Turn Your Partner*
- (Longer again:) *Walk Around your Corner – Left and Right Grand – Courtesy Turn*
- (Surprise 1:) *Walk Around Your Corner – Left And Right Grand – On Your Fourth Hand, Box the Gnat – Look Her in the Eyes – U Turn Back, Swing and Promenade*
- (Surprise 2:) *See Saw – Swing your Corner, Promenade – Don't Stop, Don't Slow Down – Girls Backtrack, Swing Your Partner*

The last example might raise the idea to have the dancers meet all other dancers of opposite sex one after the other in a longer sequence in the ring: Especially in the beginning of an evening, it might be nice if the boys do a promenade with each of the girls, in a somewhat singing call like fashion. Here the two calls come handy, allowing to easily approach the current corner with the correct hand for a *Swing*.

Another feature of the two calls is that they do not use hands, which allows following *See Saw* by a *Star Thru*, this way again re-establishing a circle:

- *See Saw – Star Thru – Circle Left – Roll Away and a Right and Left Grand.*

Leaving Relationship

The calls are some of the few calls that expect to be performed only with one particular person in the entire square. Although this will always be the regular application, it is a question is if we consider it as a really essential aspect of it. If not, we might as well try to perform the calls with other dancers:

- *Allemande Left – Box the Gnat – Wrong Way Grand – Walk Around Your Partner – See Saw the Next – Swing Your Partner*
- *Allemande Left – Turn Partner Right – Left Pull By Your Corner – Walk Around the Next – See Saw Your Corner – Wrong Way Grand – On Your Fourth Hand Allemande Left*
- *Right and Left Grand – On Your Fourth Hand See Saw Your Corner – Walk Around the Next – Allemande Left With a Full Turn – Swing*

Wrong Way

Giving up the fixed relationship is one thing – but something else is to use the calls *Wrong Way*. And here we go:

- *Right and Left Grand – Walk Around Your Partner – See Saw Your Corner – Swing and Promenade.*

I regard this as a surprising but convincing usage of the calls although the letter of the definitions certainly does not support it. My impression is that for many dancers doing the calls with somebody else but still in the expected direction round the flagpole seems closer to the definitions than doing it wrong way. – But perhaps you may find *Wrong Way* more of a gimmick.

Leaving Arrangement

When we accept both giving up the strict relationship and also performing the call *Wrong Way*, we will certainly be interested in ways to use it in a boy-boy and girl-girl arrangement. Even dancers know that these arrangements are not usual and will most probably appreciate this stuff – provided you have practiced the two settings before so your group is able to handle them in a fluent movement without many mistakes.

It is not really difficult to construct examples for the boy-boy/girl-girl arrangement. Staying consistent with the approach in my article *Calling Through Ring Formations* I do not give an example here.

Choreo from 'Modern' Formations

Solution Process

As we said in the beginning of the preceding chapter, our calls convert any formation into a 'Grand' formation. As a consequence, they can basically only be used in the solution process. If called from an arbitrary formation, *Walk Around This Corner* ac-

tually will **make** the dancers corners, and – to a lesser extend – *See Saw* will make them partners. So it seems quite apparent to replace *Allemande Left, Swing and Promenade* by *Walk Around Your Corner, Courtesy Turn and Promenade*.

We might wonder why this approach is not in a more common use. But when we think of the boys'

common moving pattern, we will sooner or later find the answer: In an average piece of square dancing choreo, the boys constantly are moving clockwise – ok, with a lot of modulation, but generally to the right. After some time, the *Allemande Left* is an almost necessary preparation for the intimate *Swing* which again gives a strong spin to the right before *Promenade* leads the dancers home in a soft left bend. Frankly, in sight calling most of us will not really be able to escape this right spin tendency. *Walk Around Your Corner* would then even continue this spin, but *Courtesy Turn* will not have enough intensity to go against this.

So although the idea seems good and useful, we possibly understand better why in history this approach apparently could not compete. Nevertheless, I will try to find some examples for *Walk Around the Corner* solutions; they are certainly good for a surprise. For the sketched reason, some of the examples purposely try to before establish a bit of overflow into the opposite direction.

From Facing Dancers

- Zero box (right hand free, e.g. after *Ferris Wheel – Centers Left Square Thru Three*): *Walk Around Your Corner – Do Paso and Promenade Home*.
- Zero box (left hand free): *Left Touch a Quarter – Scoot Back ('Lefty') – Single Hinge – Girls Cross Run – All Walk Around Your Corner – Courtesy Turn, Go a Quarter More – Wrong Way Promenade Home*.
- Zero line out of sequence: *Right and Left Thru With a Half Sashay – Ends Box the Gnat, Centers Slide Thru – All Walk Around Your Corner, Left And Right Grand...*

From Waves

The ocean wave rule allows performing the calls from a wave also – here is one example from right hand waves and one from left hand waves:

- From zero line: *Pass the Ocean – Swing Thru Twice – Boys Circulate – Walk Around your Cor-*

ner – Do Paso (from zero line out of sequence, skip the two *Swing Thrus*). The *Circulate* can of course instead be called for the girls or as *All Eight Half Circulate*, in this case as a handy at home get-out.

- From zero box, left hand free: *Left Swing Thru – Girls Trade, Boys Circulate – See Saw Your Partner – Walk Around Your Corner – Courtesy Turn and Promenade*.

Unprepared See Saw

The last example seemed more difficult than the one before. While *Walk Around Your Corner* will usually be understood without a problem even in a non-ring context, this not so sure for an unprepared *See Saw* – dancers certainly expect it only after the other call. It is a question if we should enforce and practice such an unexpected usage. Although I would love to have 'orthogonal' calls at hand, it is perhaps not too important in the overall mainstream landscape. For most groups it will certainly be unusual enough to make me prefer either *Do Paso* in such a situation, or at least precede it by *Left and Right Grand*. So the other examples here concentrate more on *Walk Around Your Corner*.

Singing Call Practicing

Often callers want to practice difficult singing call figures before actually using them. In this case they should be careful about hand availability – often enough, it is not possible to simply replace *Swing Your Corner* by *Allemande Left*. Being not a friend of *one size fits all* solutions, I nevertheless suggest giving a try to *Walk Around Your Corner – Left and Right Grand – Courtesy Turn* (or *Do Paso*), and *Promenade* – as long as the partners approach each other from the regular side. Note that the *Left and Right Grand* was inserted here by purpose to avoid uncertainties about the length of the *Promenade*.

Modifiers

After having tried what the definition allows, we can also think of some modifiers. Although the Mainstream program defines only very few ones, others can be tried that are either part of the so-called *Glossary* or are used by tradition.

Frankly, there are not many modifiers that I consider as appropriate. But here is what I found:

Fractionalization

As the dancers are not really aware about the exact angles of their ways, we certainly cannot simply ask

to go half way or three quarters. But what we can use is *Go Full Around*. Samples choreo:

- *Walk Around Your Corner – See Saw, Go Full Around – Right and Left Grand But on Your Fourth Hand See Saw Your Partner...*
- *Walk Around Your Corner, Go Full Around – the Next Turn Left – Right and Left Grand – Go Five Hands – See Saw Your Partner...*

Of course, *Go Full Around* can also be combined with *Wrong Way*, and with other relationships resulting in something like this:

- *Walk Around Your Corner – Go Full Around – See Saw the Next – Walk Around Your Corner, Full Around – See Saw Your Partner, Full Around – Walk Around the Next – See Saw Your Partner...*

Whenever I think of *Full Around*, I usually also think of *A Quarter More* – but I do not see how it could be useful here, both because of the way and the ending formation.

Do Your Part Of...

This is one of my favorites. The dancers must of course be used to start a *Right and Left Grand* with

somebody else than their partners – we need this long call as it gives us time to prepare:

- *Walk Around Your Corner – See Saw Your Own – Wrong Way Right and Left Grand – Boys Only Walk Around Your Corner, Girls Dosado – Go Single File in Indian Style...*
- *Walk Around Your Corner – Left and Right Grand – With Your Partner, Boys See Saw But Girls Do a Left Shoulder Dosado – Promenade Single File...*

In both examples, boys and girls apparently can be exchanged.

Colophon

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Source

Find this article in the Internet at www.calling.scootback.de.

Who Are My Readers?

I got some response in the beginning when I started my site but much less in the recent year. Of course I ask myself if what I write can be of any use for somebody else. So I invite you to let me know that you read the article and tell if you did find anything in it that can be of use to you. By writing even a short email, you actually help convincing me of the sense to write an essay like this and motivating me to go on.

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Version History

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2007-12-15	Reflected change of the name from <i>All Around the Corner</i> to <i>Walk Around the Corner</i> .
2008-02-25	Remark about the changed definitions.