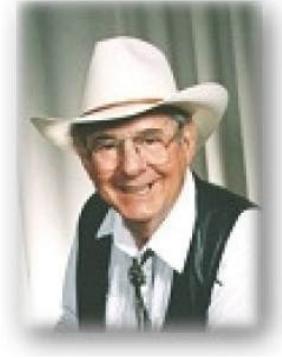


Welcome To Semi-Sight

A free, self paced course to help you to learn sight calling



created by Tom Perry

Recreated from the scanned pages that were made available on the Florida Square Dance Federation web site Floridadancing.com with thanks to their webmaster Bruce Morgan

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Introduction

When I began trying to learn extemporaneous sight calling as a tool to use in presenting patter, I found it extremely difficult because I kept forgetting the identity of my key dancers. At that stage there were too many other things to worry about; timing, body flow, use of the theme calls I had set out to use, etc. In addition, I had heard the top pros say you needed to remember the identity of four adjacent key dancers in each of three or four squares in case your pilot square breaks down. I had trouble remembering my wife's partner.



who were dressed alike and resolve. This worked fine until the first time I used all eight circulate. It was at this point that I realized there is no miracle method.

Undaunted, I started to search for a half-way point between the easy to team but very limited two-couple sight and the unlimited but hard to learn extemporaneous sight. The result is Semi-Sight, so named because it is the halfway point that I needed and also when using it you only have to deal with half the square. By the way, you will only have to remember, at most the identity of two dancers.

Let me explain more fully.....

Then someone taught me a technique called two-couple sight and it was wonderful I could call heads/suits square thru and then call anything I wanted while only remembering two dancers and, bless their hearts, they were dressed alike. Best of all, if my pilot square broke down. I could just go to another, Find the couple

Three Sections

The goal of every caller should be to provide an interesting, smooth flowing, slightly challenging dance for his/her dancers. The *setup section* is not normally used for this and is usually simple sight or memorized routines to get the key dancers in position to start the dancing section.

The *resolution section* begins once the caller has decided to get out and identified the location and relationship of his four key dancers. It is usually accomplished by using people moving techniques and/or memorized get outs, and it's these techniques that are usually the subject of discussion in "sight calling" seminars.

The *dancing section* is where it all happens. This is where the extemporaneous sight caller can do anything he wishes because he has the ability to remember four key dancers in each of several squares.

As Mr Rogers would say. "Can you remember four key dancers in each of several Squares?"

Well, neither can I. We are therefore limited in the dancing section because we are afraid of losing the location of our key dancers.

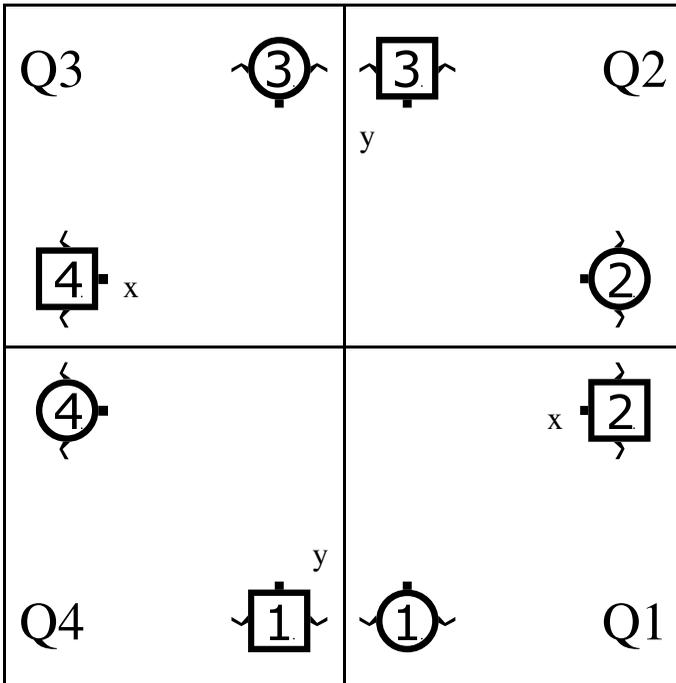
Semi-sight will help us to get around that problem and use any call we want at any time we want, as long as it works. Please remember that good body flow and timing are critical in the presentation of a dance



Division Of The Square

Look at the illustration. It divides the square into four equal parts which we will call quadrants. (Q1 thru Q4) Imagine that both the quadrants and the divider Lines (x and y) are permanently etched in the floor and do not move. Going one step further, any two adjacent quadrants form a semi (half a square) and the semis are named after the quadrants they contain *ie: semi 12 contains quadrants 1 and 2, semi 23 contains quadrants two and Three, etc.*

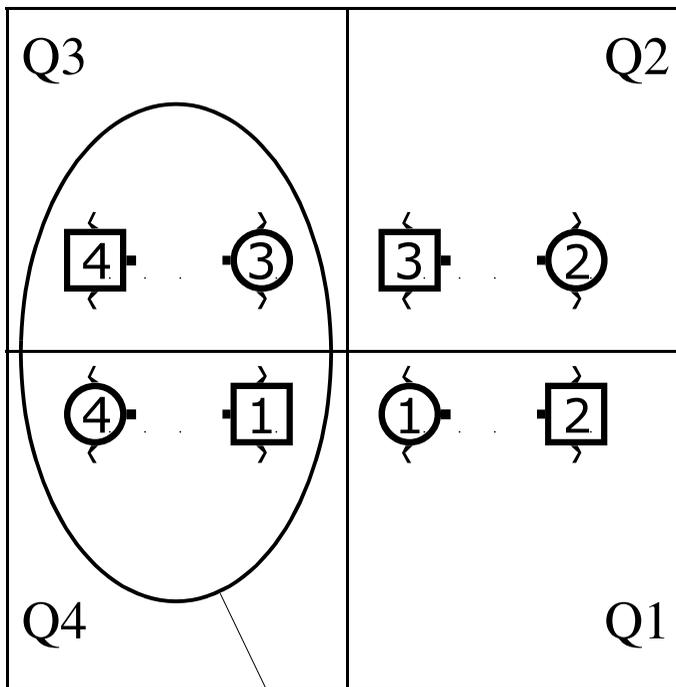
Quadrants and semi's are in no way related to formation, arrangement, relationship or sequence They are simply a division of the square into equal parts



Proper Semi

The last term we need to learn is *proper semi*. It is necessary for a sight caller to know the identity of four adjacent dancers in order to resolve the square. These four have traditionally been called key dancers and a *proper semi* is one which contains all four of the key dancers within its borders. For example, if a caller selects man one, lady 4, man 4 and lady 3 as his key dancers, then calls heads square thru, [see fig.] *semi 34* is *proper* because it contains all four key dancers

The term "*proper semi*" will be of primary importance to us throughout the rest of this document. Learn the definition well!



semi 34 contains all four key dancers
so it is a proper semi

The Mirror Image

Once upon a time a very wise old caller discovered that if he monitored the group of four dancers on one side of his pilot square, he could resolve the square without bothering to look at the group on the other side. This became known as the mirror image because the action in one group of four reflects the action in the other.

It is possible therefore to

1. Set up the square
2. Select a group of four and monitor them
3. Call any calls you wish as long as your group of four remain together.
4. Resolve your group of four, and
5. The entire square will be resolved

The above is called *two-couple sight* and is used by almost all sight callers to some extent. It does have one big drawback, but in the words of Scarlet O'Hara, that paragon of southern womanhood. "Let's worry about that tomorrow."

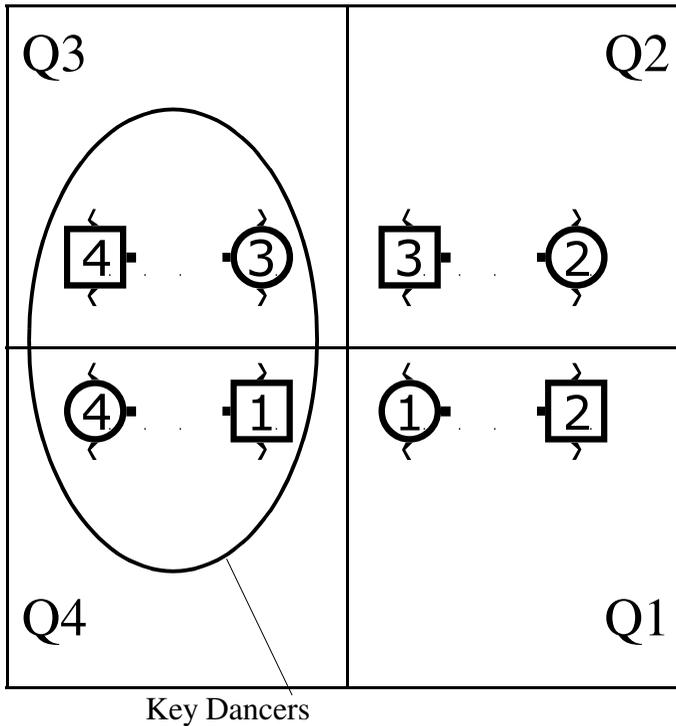
In the meantime, it is an excellent technique for practising body flow, timing, partner pairing and formation awareness. Let's examine it a little.



Resolution Setup

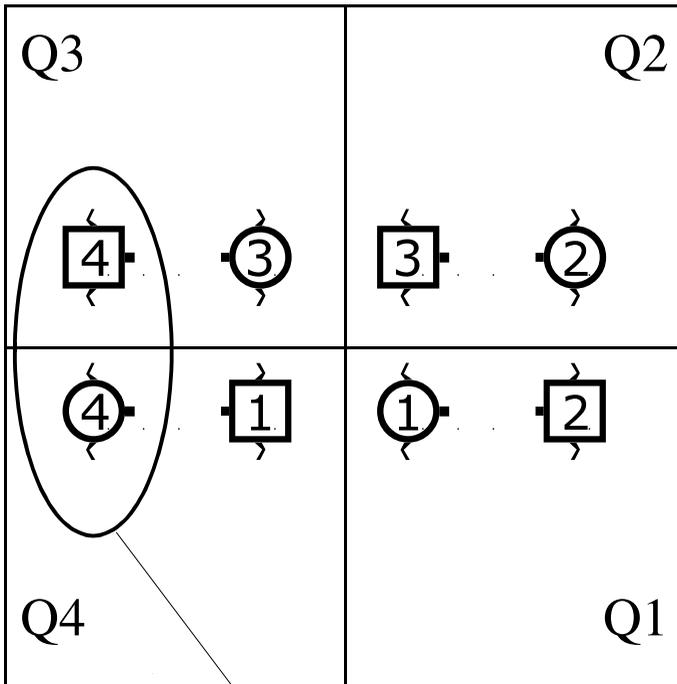
From a squared set, call heads square thru. The result is a corner box [see fig 1] and an allemande left can be called from here to resolve the set. For the time being, we will call this our resolution setup. When we are ready to resolve, we will bring the dancers back to this position

Any setup can be used as the resolution setup depending on the getout you want to use, and the principles explained here will work for all of them. But, we chose the corner box because it is probably the best known.



Big Deal, You Say

I still have to remember the identity of four adjacent dancers and that's what I was trying to get away from. Do not despair, there is still hope. The mirror image has an application here too. As you begin to practice, you will realize that if you first get the dancers normalized (girl on boy's right), then get any two of these four dancers into the resolution setup, the other two are also in the correct position. Therefore, you only have to remember the identity of two key dancers.

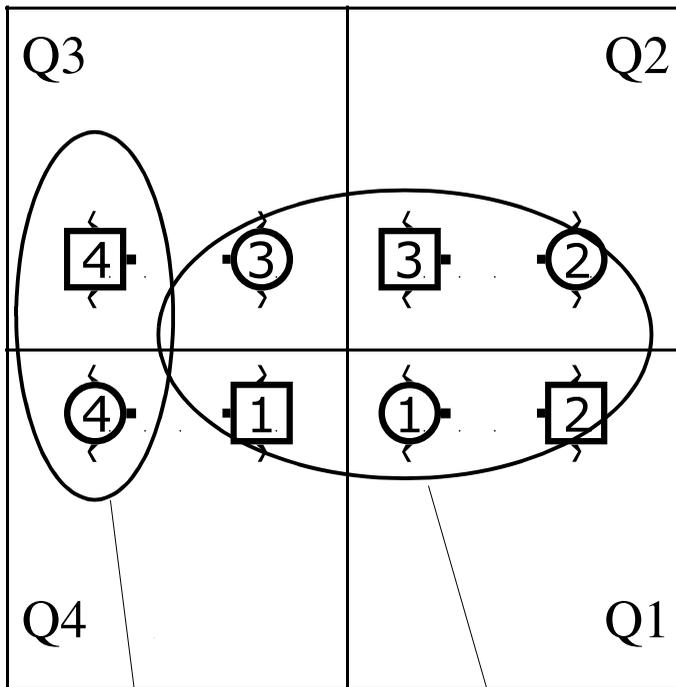


Remember, These two are probably dressed alike

Finally

If you have a proper semi with normalized couples and any two key dancers in the proper position then the other two will be in position also and so will the other half of the square.

This means that if you are working within the confines of proper semi, you need only remember the identity of two adjacent dancers. Also, if your pilot square makes a mistake, look for another square, pair the two who are dressed alike and put them in position. Chances are you will resolve correctly



If these two are in position

So are these

Practice - Practice - Practice

At this point, one should practice until all of the things we've talked about are second nature. Move the dancers around within the semi white practising good body flow and timing. Cause them to change partners and position on the floor. Use every call you can think of that does not remove a dancer from the semi, and put them together in all the combinations that you can think of.

Have another caller position the dancers, then you put them back into the resolution setup. It is critical to the rest of the program that you be able to do anything you'd like within the proper semi and this comes only with practice.



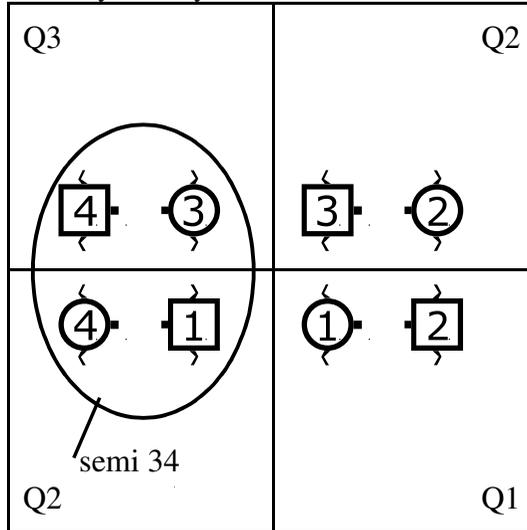
Examine This

Select the four dancers in Semi 34 -as keys and call

heads square thru.

Semi 34 is still proper because it contains all of your key dancers

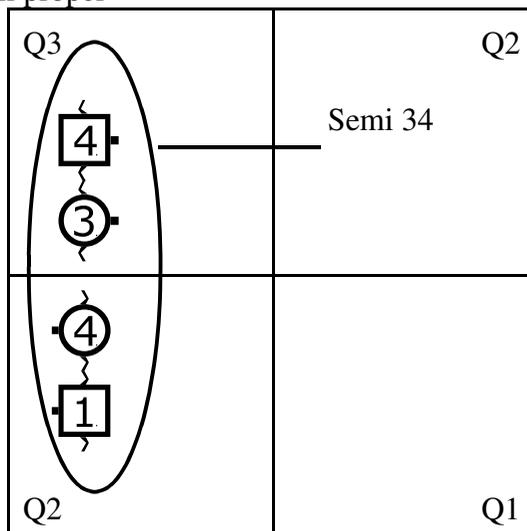
Semi 34 is therefore, your key Semi



Swing thru - boys trade - boys run

Although the formation and partner pairing (relationship) have changed,

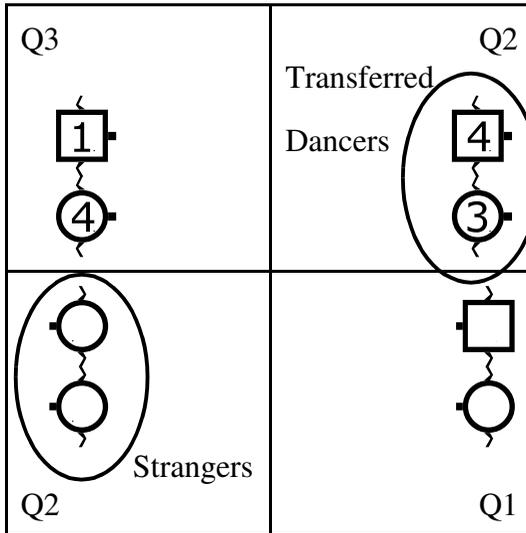
Semi 34 is still proper



Double Transfer

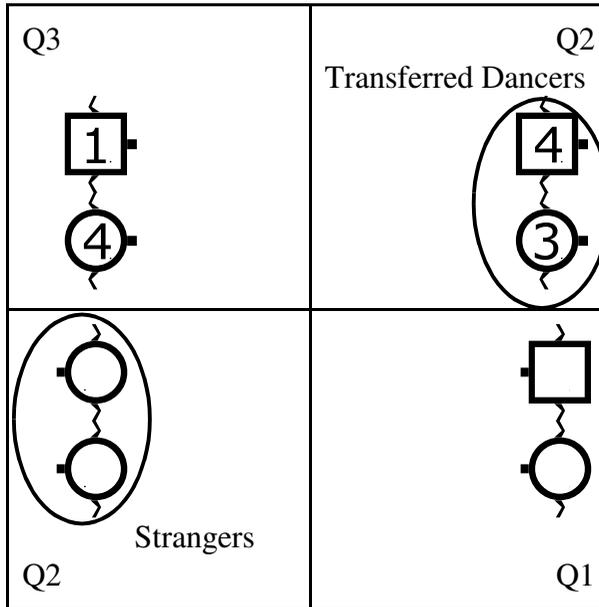
Now call *couples circulate*.

Here we get into trouble because two dancers have been removed from Semi 34 and replaced by other dancers coming in (double transfer) Semi 34 is no longer a proper Semi. But if we can restore the Semi to its proper state, we know that we can resolve using two-couple sight. Read on



The Mirror Again

When we transferred dancers out of the semi 34, they were replaced by two dancers from the other Semi. Let's call them strangers. The mirror law says that, if at some later time, we transfer our key dancers back into the key Semi, the dancers they replace will be the same two strangers. The Semi will then be restored to its proper state



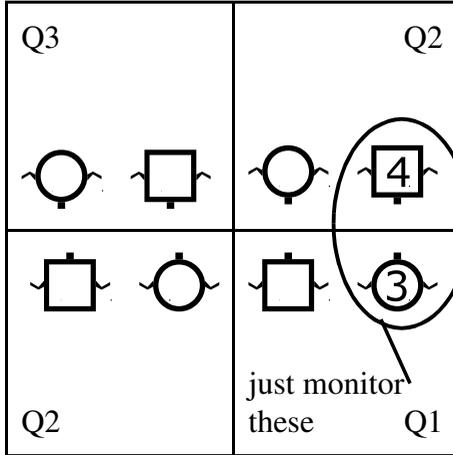
This means that if you transfer dancers from the proper semi, you need only monitor the transferred dancers and at any time you desire, set up and transfer them back. The proper semi is restored and you can resolve the square using two-couple sight.

At no time do you have to remember the identity of more than two dancers.

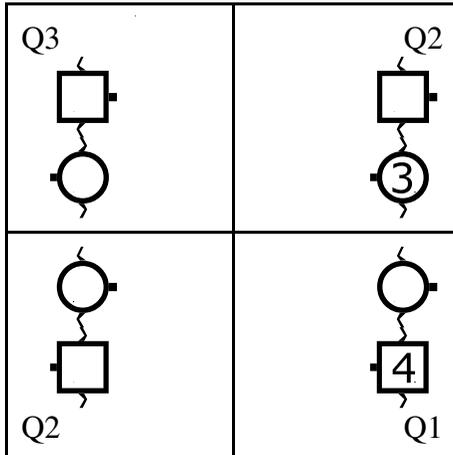
So

Starting from where we left off in the last diagram, let's just monitor the transferred couple (boy 4 and girl 3).

Chain down the line



pass the ocean



Note that the transferred couple are the in-facers in an ocean wave. An all eight circulate at this point will transfer them again and our Semi 34 will be proper. From here, you can easily restore using two-couple sight. Or if you prefer, call a two couple sight module while they are still in Semi 12, then, when you are ready, set them up and transfer them back.

Know Your Calls

Of course there are a number of couple transfer calls from various formations and any of them will work. It becomes evident that you must know what each call does as far as transfers are concerned. This may seem hard when you first think about it. but with the help of some checkers you will be able to group all of the calls into single, double, triple or quad transfer lists, and *you will be amazed at how many of the calls on the Callerlab lists are zero transfer calls.*

Now You Try It

Practice with a set of dancers using the following format for starters

1. set up in a corner box (heads/sides square thru)
2. choose your key semi
3. call a module of two-couple sight
4. call a double transfer call
5. call another module of two-couple sight
6. set up to transfer back
7. call another double transfer call
8. resolve to an Allemande left.

Caution

Do not attempt to work with facing lines of four or columns at this point. We will cover them later.

Single Transfer Calls

It should be easy to see by now that if you establish a proper Semi, then use a single transfer call, there is only one dancer to monitor; the single transferred dancer. Then when you transfer that dancer back, the proper semi is restored and you can resolve using two-couple sight



It's Easy

But...

Many of the single transfer calls such as spin chain thru or Mcoordinate have complex action and are a little hard to follow so it may become necessary to take a slightly different approach. For example, suppose you call a spin chain thru (the in-looking end on the wave is the transfer dancer) and halfway thru it your pilot square blows it. How do you pick up the pieces? Well, if you knew that in the ending formation, the in-looking center is the dancer who was transferred, then it's easy to pick up another square and continue. Use two-couple sight to set him/her up (centers run, bend the line, pass the ocean) then transfer him/her back (ends circulate, centers trade) and resolve

Back To The Checkers

Using your list of single transfer calls and your checkers make note of the ending position of the transferred dancer after each of these calls. Have you noticed we are not talking about boys and girls but about dancers. Sight calling from non-standard positions is actually easier than using only certain arrangements because there are fewer limitations. Before you start this project, you may think it is a large one. But, the low number of single transfer calls makes it easy and once you use each of these calls several times, the location of the transferred dancer in the resulting formations will be locked into your memory.

Practice

Now, go through the same kind of practice that you did with double transfer calls. Setup; call two-couple sight; use a single transfer call; call some more two-couple sight; setup to transfer back; call another single transfer call; then resolve.

Once you feel comfortable, try using a double transfer call then two single transfer calls to restore the Semi. The combinations are endless

How Do You feel?

At this point you should be more aware of what's going on in the square, more confident that you are in control, and your patten should have better timing and flow.



A New View

Let's talk a little about the proper semi and where it resides on the floor. If you recall, we defined a proper semi as one which contains all four key dancers. Let's suppose we select Semi 34 as our key semi (contains man one, lady three and couple four). When we call a single or double transfer call we then say that the semi is not proper and we will restore it to it's proper state before revolving

*Here's Where It
Gets Easy ...*

Quad Transfers

So far, so good, but let's call a quad transfer which transfers all four key dancers to Semi 12. *Rather than try to monitor the four dancers and bring them back to semi 34 before resolving, why can't we just consider Semi 12 our new proper semi (it does contain all key dancers), and resolve Semi 12?*

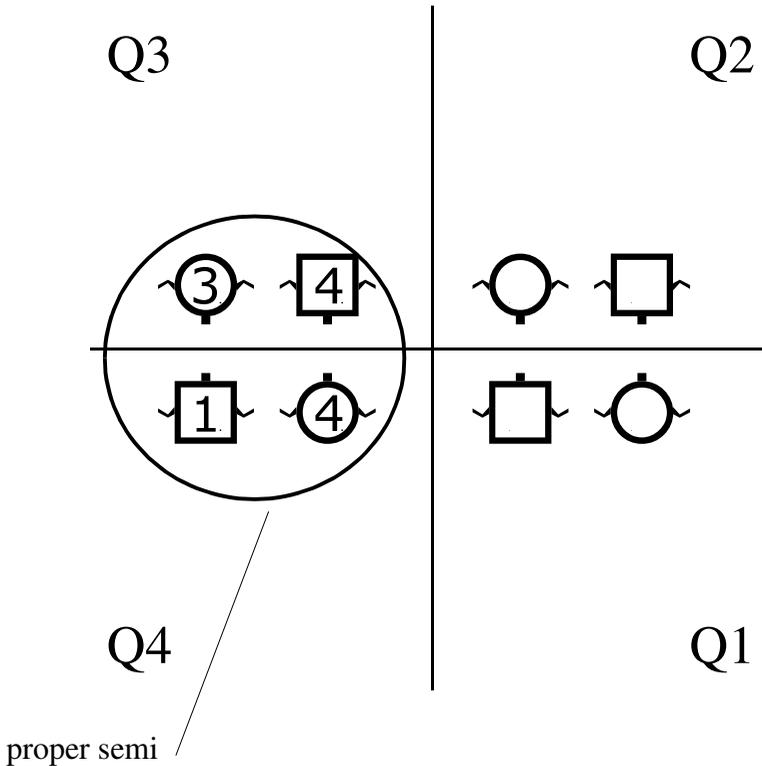
Sounds Good To Me

If you call a quad transfer from a proper semi, then it's basically the same as a zero transfer. When all four keys leave your proper semi you simply go with them. Since a proper semi by definition, is any semi which contains all four key dancers, you may change your key semi at any time you'd like.

Look at this

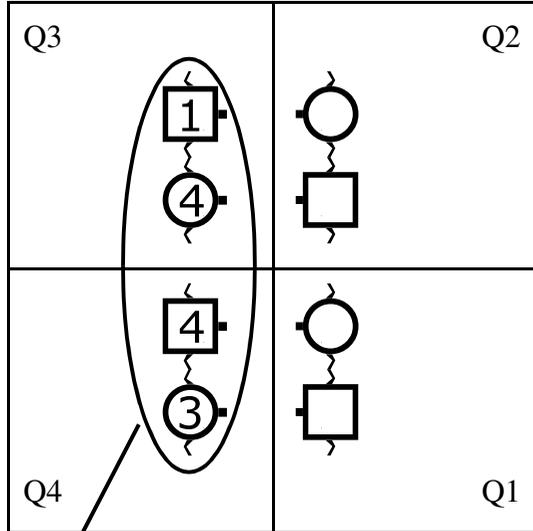
Selecting Semi 34 as the key, call

Heads square thru, Slide thru



Now call ***Pass thru, bend the line***

Even though the dancers are now in facing lines, all key dancers are still in Semi 34 so it is still proper.

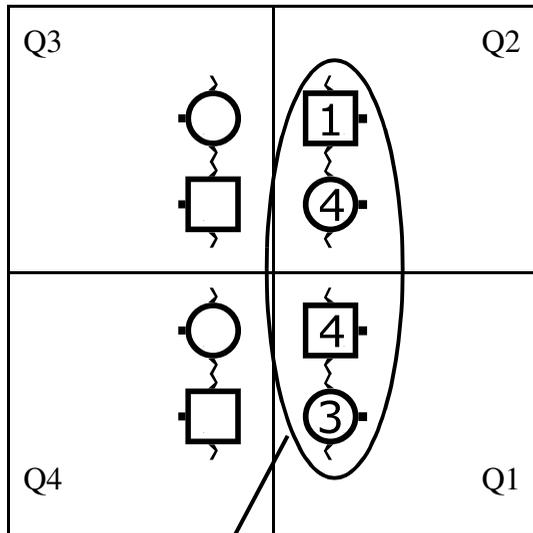


Still proper semi

Now call ***Pass thru***

All four dancers crossed the line into Semi 12. Therefore, this is a Quad Transfer call.

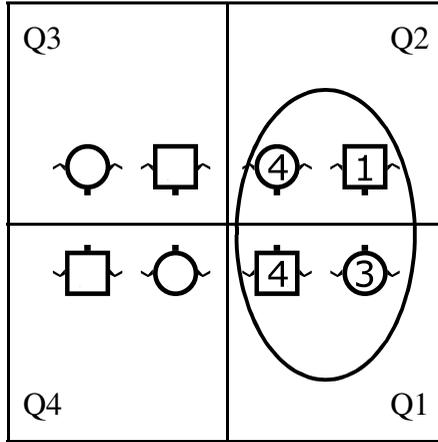
You may now call semi 12 your key semi and resolve it.



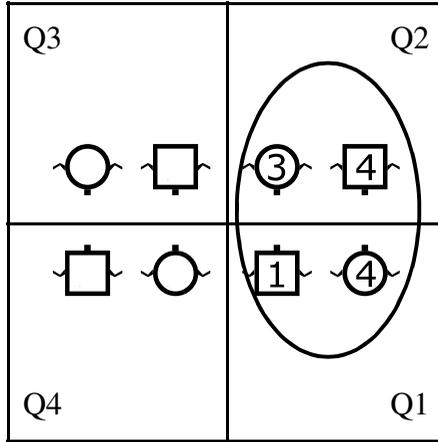
Key Dancers

Now resolve

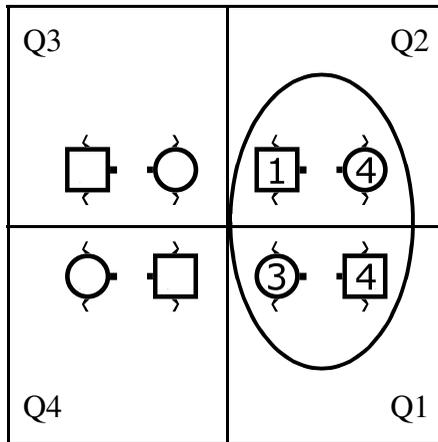
Bend the line



Right & left thru



*Slide thru
Allemande
left*

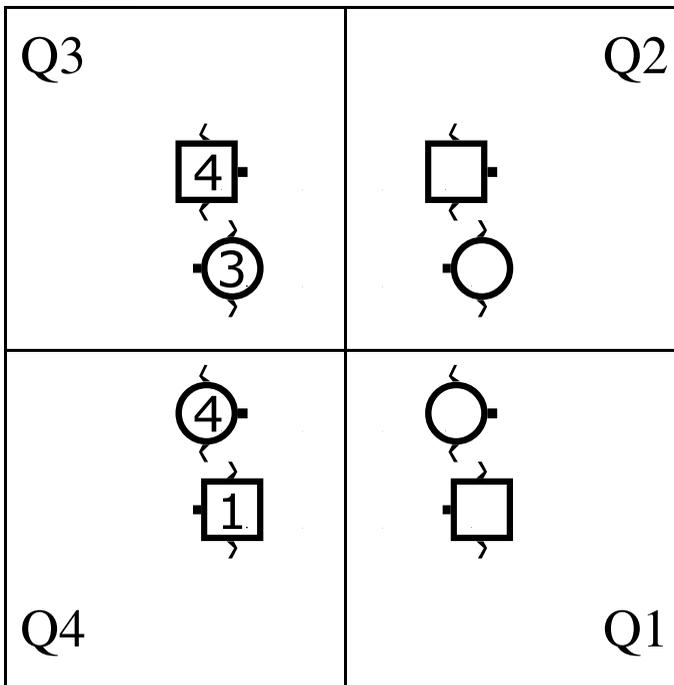


Triple Transfers

Since you now know that you can switch key semis whenever you'd like, it will make triple transfers easier. For example

From a corner box, using Semi 34 as the key, a spin chain exchange the gears transfers three dancers. The only remaining key dancer is the in-looking wave end. Just monitor him/her and later call a single transfer to send him/her over to Semi 12 where the other three keys are, then resolve Semi 12

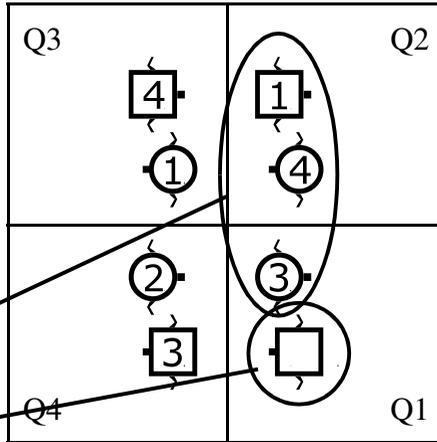
Starting formation



After calling
Spin Chain
exchange the
gears
the set looks
like this

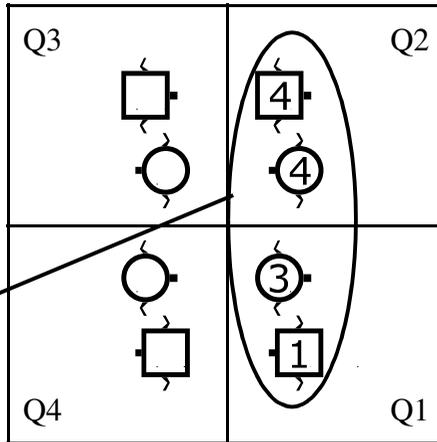
3/4 of proper
semi

stranger

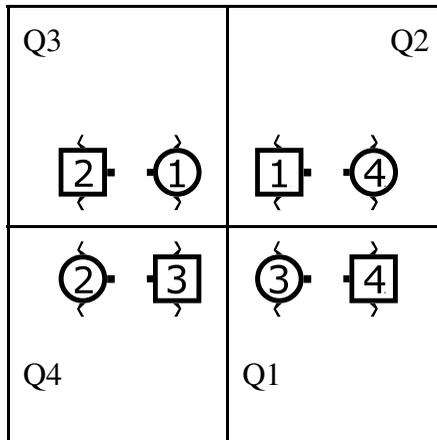


Call *Boys*
circulate

proper semi



Now resolve
using
recycle
allemande
left



The Finish Line

So there you have it. the basics of semi-sight. If you're like met you've read through this entire document, pausing only to work out something you didn't understand. That's good. Now you have a feel for it. But the only way to truly appreciate the simplicity of semi-sight is to use it. I have found that it gives the new sight caller far more confidence and helps him to understand the mechanics of the square. This confidence can only result in better body flow and timing in the sight callers presentation.

This document cannot possibly go into all of the different uses of semi-sight. That's left up to the individual caller. The more you use it, the more you will find ways to cut corners and do things slightly different. Hopefully, with semi-sight as an outline you will be in a better position to understand the mechanics of a square in motion

