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## ROUND DANCE - IT'S A BLAST

by Peg & John Kincaid

We have heard about Square Dance BLAST weekends and the positive results coming out of one of those weekends. We thought—if it works for squares, surely it can work for rounds. Then we looked at the differences and similarities between squares and rounds. Square dancing has mainstream, plus, advanced and challenge. Round dancing has phases—phase 2, phase 3, phase 4, phase 5, phase 6. But square dancing is one rhythm basically, and round dancing has numerous rhythms. So we wondered how we were going to accomplish this task. We thought maybe we could do a Round Dance BLAST around one phase, aimed specifically at beginners. So that would be all the phase 2 steps in the phase 2 rhythms. Two step and waltz are the phase 2 rhythms. Or maybe we could do a weekend devoted to just one rhythm and do all the steps up to phase 4 in a specific rhythm. Then we thought about it again. Doing one rhythm wouldn't be too exciting for a beginner. If we chose rumba as the rhythm, then all they could do is rumba when they went to a dance, and nothing else. What to do.....

After careful consideration, we decided that we needed more variety in our BLAST weekend, so we settled on the 4 basic rhythms—two step, waltz, rumba and cha. We decided to concentrate on some of the phase 2 and phase 3 figures in these 4 rhythms so that the beginner dancers could have a better exposure to round dancing. We planned our teach program so that the dancers would be able to participate in some of the round dancing at the square/round dances (2 X 2's). We selected figures that were included in several of the current round dances being programmed at the 2 X 2 dances locally. Because they were doing so well we included a couple of the popular phase IV figures like umbrella turn in our teaching. We combined rumba and cha for a 3 hour time frame, and gave 3 hours each to waltz and two step. We prepared a list of dances that the participants in the weekend should be able to do at the end of the weekend of instruction. We culminated the activity with a party dance on Saturday night using material that related to the steps they had been exposed to during the BLAST weekend. Some of the dances they were able to do include Beach Party Cha, Could I Have This Dance, Just Another Woman In Love (the phase 3 of course), Fiddlesteppers Polka, and they even got through I'm Alive after we showed them how to do their waltz steps SQQ. The dancers went home happy, and so did we.

We selected our date for the BLAST weekend so that it would coincide with the beginning of the dance season in September. We wanted the dancers to have the opportunity to practice what they had learned as soon as possible. We had to limit the number of attendees based on the capacity of the hall we were using, and had such a good response that we were forced to a waiting list. We had 14 couples in attendance. They came from Maryland, New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania.

We feel that the weekend was a huge success. We were so pleased with the results that we are thinking about doing another BLAST Weekend. Since we did not have time to do all of the figures in phase 2 and 3 in these 4 rhythms, we would try to include the remaining figures in phase 2 and 3, and expand into some of the phase 4 figures in those rhythms. Recognizing that many people do not have the ability to sign on for weekly classes for many reasons, the BLAST is a good alternative. Thanks to the person or persons who first came up with the idea of a BLAST weekend. We think it is a great idea to promote dancing of any kind and to move the dancers into the activity quickly so they can experience the fun—and have a BLAST!



**ICBDA CAROUSEL CLUBS  
FOR AUGUST 2012**

*MOST TAUGHT DANCES THIS REPORT*

1. TRICKLE TRICKLE	JV VI	SHIBATA
2. IF GOD TAKES MY LIFE	RB V	SHIBATA
2. YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND IN ME	FT VI	PRESKITT
3. POEMA	TG VI	NOBLE
4. APPALACHIAN LULLABYE	WZ VI	WORLOCK
4. DANCE TO THE HEARTBEAT	MB IV	SHIBATA

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## MORE EDUCATION

### MAKE IT LOOK EASY

by Harold & Meredith Sears

When Fred and Ginger made their movies back in the 1930s, they practiced each routine for weeks — even months. By the time they got it on film, it looked so easy and natural that you could believe they were making it up in the moment. They flowed across the floor so naturally and comfortably that it seemed like the most casual of conversations between friends. They had worked out absolutely every detail ahead of time, so they didn't have to struggle with them during the dance.

Now, we are not doing a performance, and we are not going to work on a dance for months, but isn't this how we'd like our dancing to *feel*? As we hear again and again, this is our recreation. We don't want a rough struggle. We want a smooth cruise. And the secret is in the details. For

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