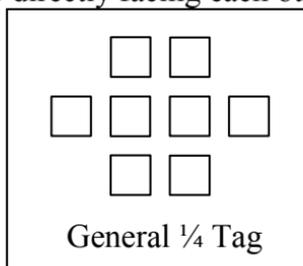


Keith's Klass

by Keith Rubow

This month we will look at **Chain Reaction**. This call is introduced at A1, but it is not until C1 that all the varieties from different starting formations are allowed. The key to being successful at this call is to learn the proper definition from the beginning. Then that definition will continue to work for you as you are introduced to additional starting formations.

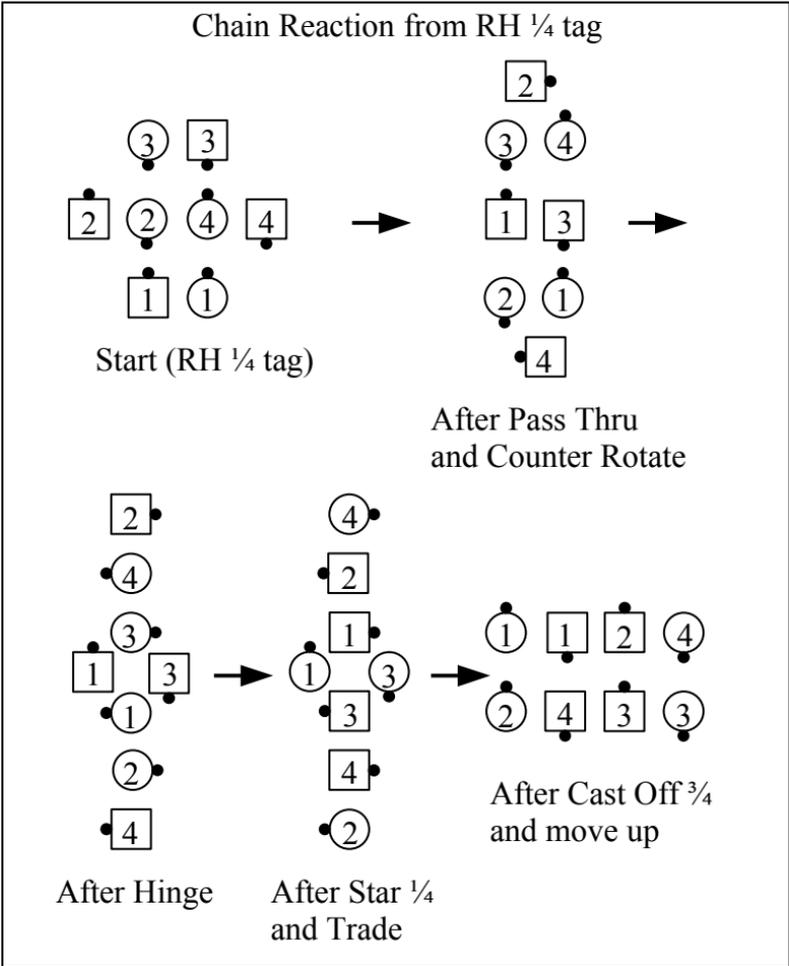
Chain Reaction starts from a general $\frac{1}{4}$ Tag formation as follows (note that I am not showing the facing directions of any of the dancers). The only requirement is that the very center two dancers and two of the outside dancers must be directly facing each other.



Here is the definition:

The very two center dancers Pass Thru with the outside dancers that they are facing, while the ends of the center line Counter Rotate $\frac{1}{4}$ (this is just walk forward $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way around the outside of the set, turning 90 degrees). It is VERY important that the outside dancers who are not doing the Pass Thru do NOT move. The original very center dancers now Hinge with the original outside dancers who did not yet move. The center star of four dancers Turn the Star $\frac{1}{4}$, while the outside dancers Trade. Those who meet Cast Off $\frac{3}{4}$ as the others move up to become ends of lines (like they would do when finishing a Coordinate).

Here is a step-by-step illustration of Chain Reaction from the most common starting formation, which is a right-handed $\frac{1}{4}$ tag formation:



So what can possibly go wrong? There are many paces where this call can break down. The most frequent mistake is that the outside dancer not doing the Pass Thru fails to stand still. This alone can cause a host of problems. If they walk forward into the center of the square there will be five dancers in the center star (or six if both outside dancers make the mistake). This can also leave the original very center with no one to hinge with. The result is breaking down the square. The outside dancer not doing the pass thru **MUST STAND STILL**.

Another common mistake is for the dancers doing the hinge to not realize that it can be a partner hinge. There will be a partner hinge whenever one of the outside dancers is facing out at the start of the call. A partner hinge can result in one (or both) of the hinging dancers ending up in an unexpected position for the next part of the call. By “unexpected position” I mean a position different than what it would have been if the hinge was a “normal” right or left hand hinge. If they don't do the partner hinge properly, someone always goes to the wrong place and tries to do the wrong thing for the next part of the call. Watch out for a possible partner hinge!

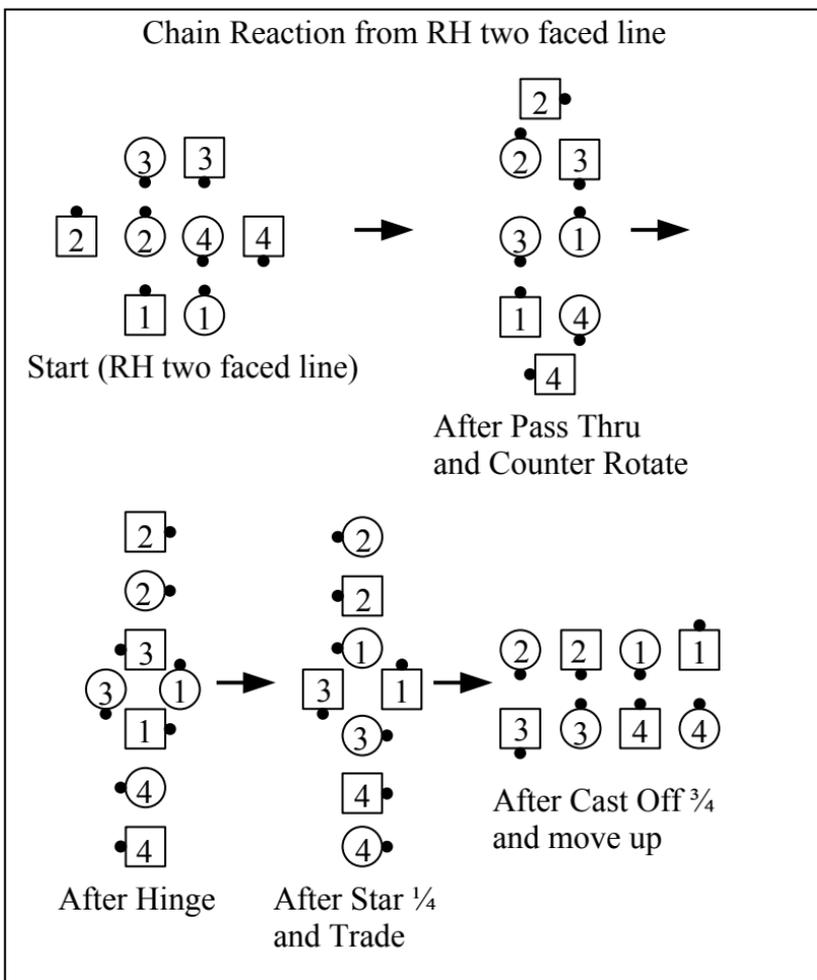
Another thing to look out for is the Trade that the outsides do. You would think that a trade would be easy. It is, but all the “easy” chain reactions have the outside dancers trading by the right or left hand. When it suddenly (and unexpectedly) becomes a partner trade, someone may think they must have made a mistake, and they turn around to “fix” it. Sure enough, they just made a mistake. Be prepared for a partner trade.

As if an unexpected partner trade wasn't bad enough, the star in the center can be a facing star! Then either someone turns around (thinking they must be wrong), or no one can figure out how to turn a facing star. Just do your part and pass right shoulders.

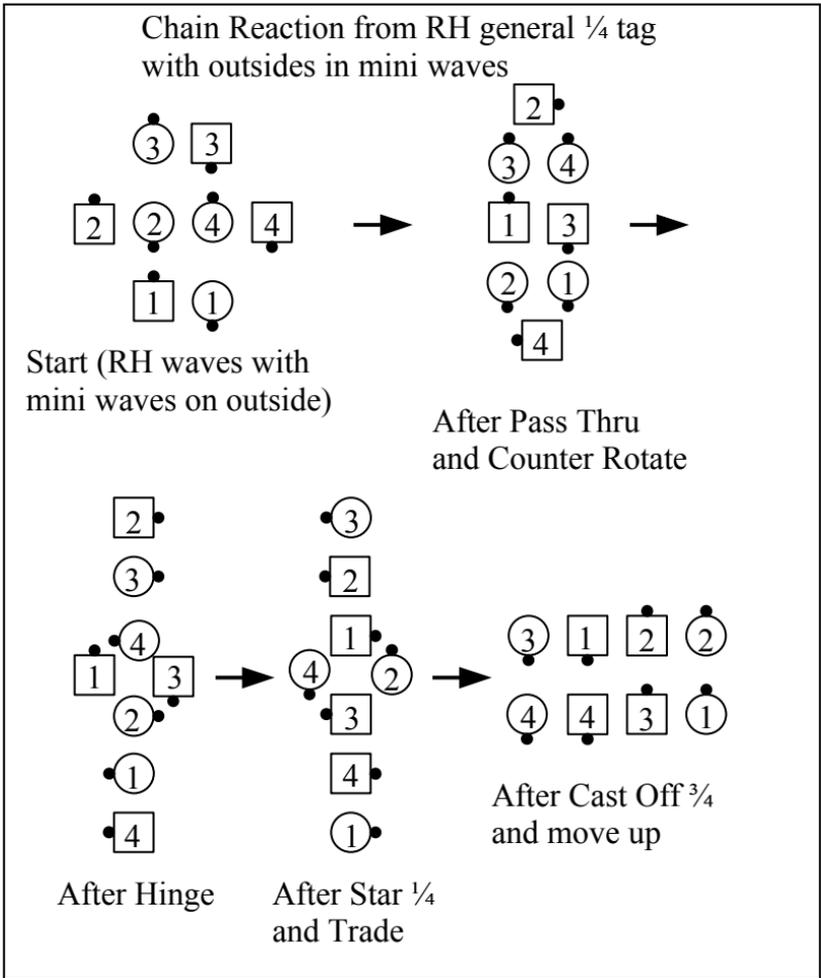
The last place it breaks down is the Cast Off $\frac{3}{4}$. Don't be surprised if it is a push cast. Often when this happens, someone thinks they must be wrong, so they turn around to “fix” it.

There are eight possible starting formations for Chain Reaction. The centers can be in a right or left handed ocean wave, or a right or left handed two faced line. For each of these the outsides can be as a couple or as a mini-wave. A few of the interesting Chain Reactions are illustrated below.

Chain Reaction from RH two faced line



From RH two faced line it is the outside BELLE that does the Pass Thru with the very centers. The Beau must stand still. The Hinge becomes a right hand hinge, resulting in a left handed star. The outsides must do a PARTNER trade, and the Cast Off $\frac{3}{4}$ becomes a PUSH CAST.



Just changing the outsides from a couple facing in to a RH min wave makes a huge difference. After the Pass Thru, the Hinge becomes a PARTNER hinge. And notice that the original very centers end up in the center star after the hinge (from the right handed setup above, but not if the setup is left handed). The star becomes facing, so pass right shoulders when turning the star. The outsides must do a partner trade.

To summarize, Chain Reaction starts out as an easy call, but there are many surprises when the call is done from other starting formations. It is essential that you learn the proper definition for Chain Reaction

from the very start. This will make it much easier to learn the harder Chain Reactions later.