

MODERN DRUMMER

JULY 1977

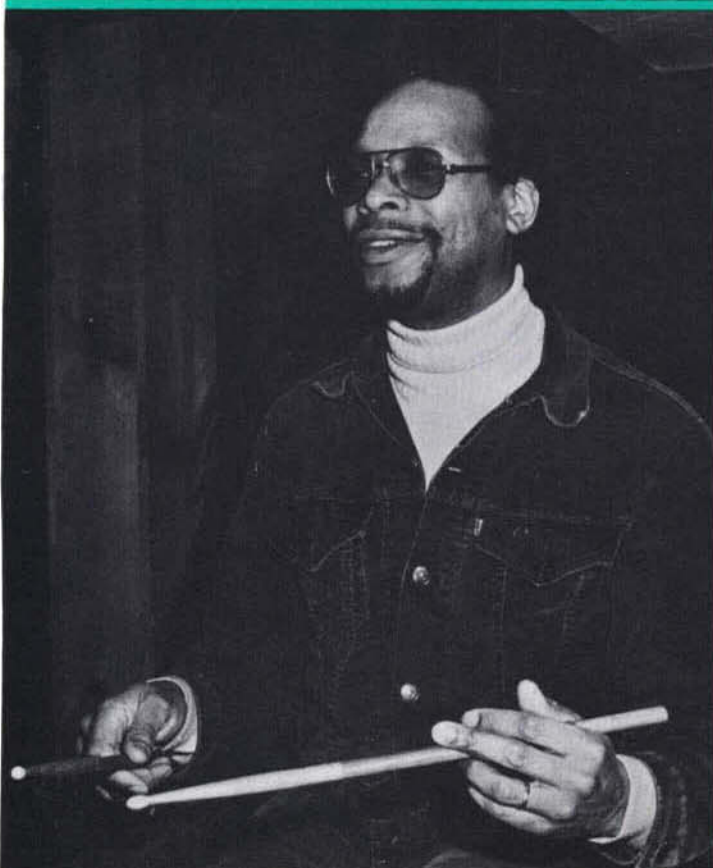
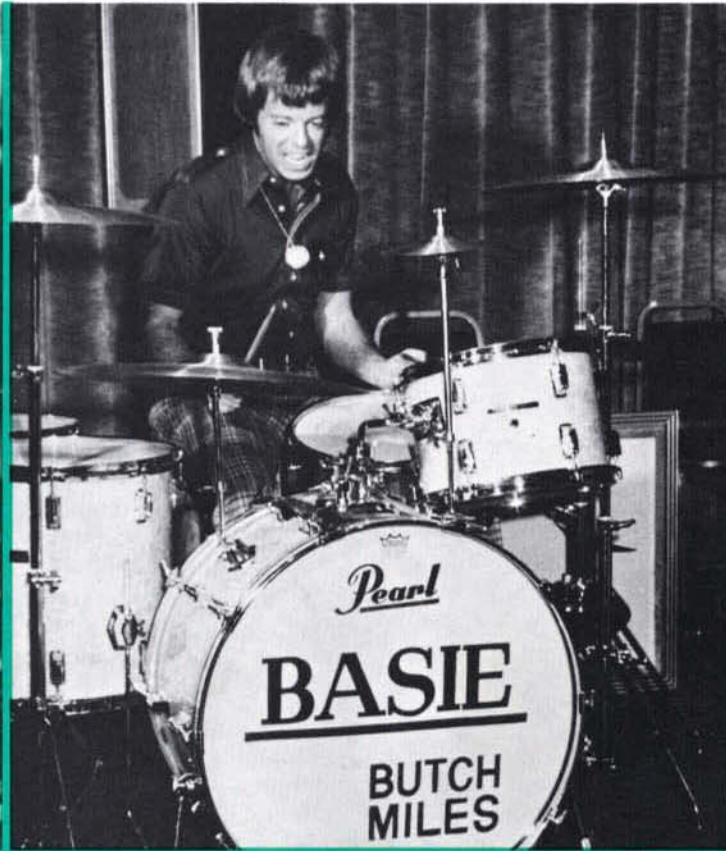
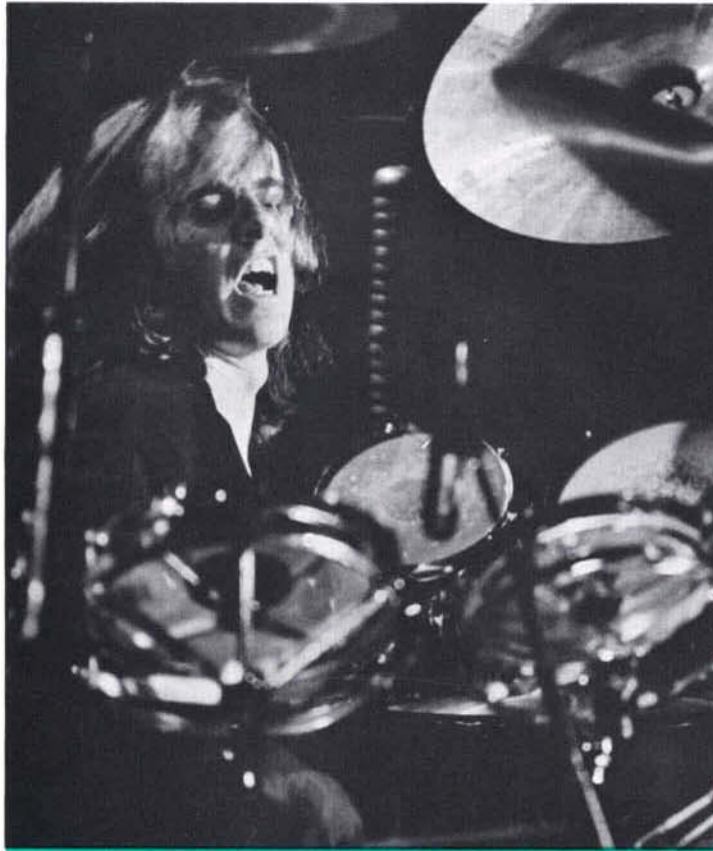
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A Contemporary Publication Exclusively for Drummers

VOL. 1 – NO. 3



In this issue

ALAN DAWSON EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

MD TALKS WITH BUTCH MILES

PHIL EHART: 'KANSAS' ENERGY

CLOSE-UP: – ONTARIO COLLEGE OF PERCUSSION

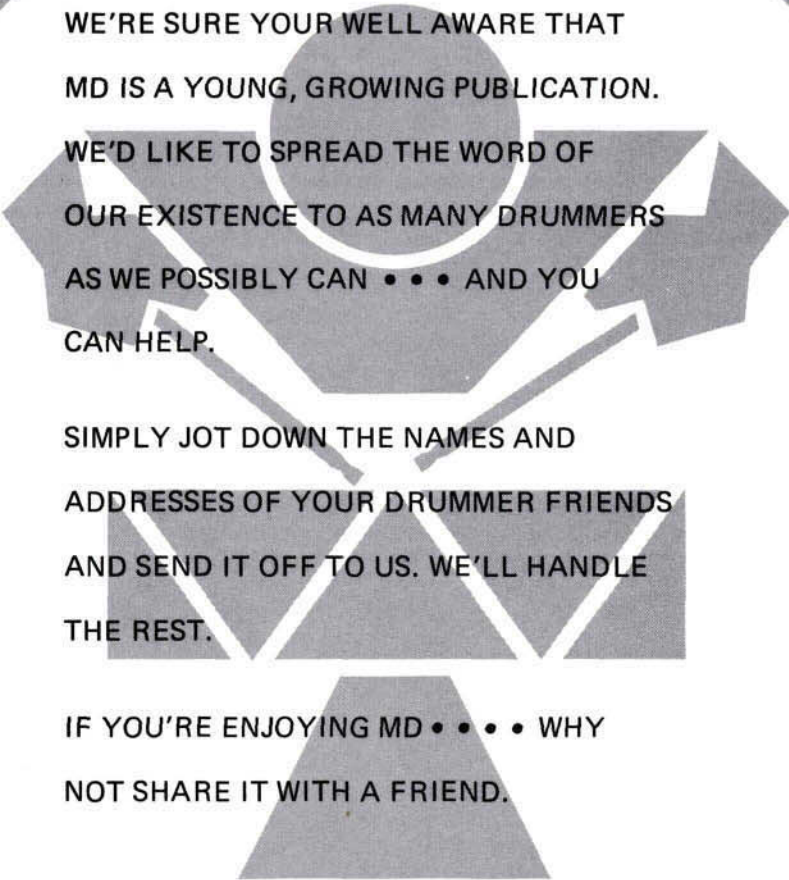
DRUM SET SHOPPERS GUIDE – PART III

ED SHAUGHNESSY: TUNING TIPS

BRAZILIAN DRUMMING

FROM THE PAST: THE LEGENDARY CHICK WEBB

**YOU
CAN HELP
MODERN DRUMMER GROW!**



WE'RE SURE YOU WELL AWARE THAT
MD IS A YOUNG, GROWING PUBLICATION.
WE'D LIKE TO SPREAD THE WORD OF
OUR EXISTENCE TO AS MANY DRUMMERS
AS WE POSSIBLY CAN • • • AND YOU
CAN HELP.

SIMPLY JOT DOWN THE NAMES AND
ADDRESSES OF YOUR DRUMMER FRIENDS
AND SEND IT OFF TO US. WE'LL HANDLE
THE REST.

IF YOU'RE ENJOYING MD • • • • WHY
NOT SHARE IT WITH A FRIEND.

**MODERN DRUMMER MAGAZINE
CIRCULATION
47 HARRISON STREET
NUTLEY, NEW JERSEY 07110**

Editor's Overview



I'm proud and elated to report that MD is continuing to grow in veritable leaps and bounds. Our subscribers hail from all across the country and twenty four foreign nations, and we're now available at some of the nations leading drum shops and music stores - and as far away as Australia.

In April, we announced the formation of our Advisory Board. Members are listed each issue on the masthead - and what a list that is. We're as proud as any new publication can be of that outstanding array of authorities. Three new members join our board with this issue: jazz giant Charlie Persip, rudimental expert Mitch Markovich, and big band great Mel Lewis. Our advisors will be supplying constructive comments and guidance in our continual effort to keep MD on course and as editorially accurate and well balanced as possible. We sincerely thank them all for supporting our effort.

This issue is jam packed with tips and entertainment for drummers only, leading off with our feature interviews on the inimitable Alan Dawson, Count Basie's own Butch Miles, and Phil Ehart of "Kansas". Heavyweights, to say the least. Our story on the Ontario College of Percussion highlights the many features of their outstanding program for serious drummers. Equipment connoisseur's McGarrity and Weidman wrap up their report with Rogers, Tama and Camco in the last of their Drum-Set Shoppers Guide three part series. The dynamic Ed Shaughnessy has some tips on tuning drums - and we're proud to present, by popular request, the inception of a new series of columns on latin drumming aptly entitled, "South of the Border". Robert Hillary provides an inspiring portrait of the legendary Chick Webb, and MD's informative column roster adds the finishing touches to our package for July.

To all who have written regarding some unfortunate delays in receiving your magazines, we ask for your kind patience. Please bear with us, until we work out all the bugs. We're working quite hard to arrive at your mailbox right on schedule - and we won't be satisfied until we do just that.

Finally, we thank you for all those kind cards and letters. Keep 'em coming. We have tons of ideas for future
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MODERN DRUMMER

A CONTEMPORARY PUBLICATION EXCLUSIVELY FOR DRUMMERS

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READERS PLATFORM

I am looking forward with special interest to articles on jazz drumming, and drummers such as Philly Jo Jones, Roy Haynes, Elvin Jones, Jack DeJohnette, Max Roach, Tony Williams, Art Blakey and Ed Thigpen. I wish you much success in your publication.

MICHAEL BROWNSWORTH
EUGENE, OREGON

Your magazine has been most useful with students in the drum teaching studios I maintain in three music stores. In general, serious students will profit the most from MD, as their quest for knowledge is never ending, and they are willing to read, work and practice to gain this ability. The individual columns devoted to different types of drumming are also most interesting and I trust they will continue to be a part of the regular format. Continued good luck with Modern Drummer.

TRACY BORST
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

I enjoy your magazine immensely, finding it a nice balance of equipment, styles, tips and exercises with notation. How about features in coming issues on such oft-debated topics as cymbal pitches, tuning of drums for "wet sound"

and other effects, use of timbales or Roto-Toms as alternates to small toms, big toms, etc?

H. ALAN STEIN
UPPERMONTLCAIR, N.J.

It's a sad affair when a particular concept becomes practically extinct in the art of percussion. I'm referring to "brush work". Think about it. How many drummers of today implement the coloristic and musical subtleties brushes can provide? Less than 1%, I'm sure. Let's face it-brush technique requires much more from a drummer than sticks, mallets, or what have you. With the help of MD, perhaps a few more of us will begin to appreciate what the brush masters of the past and present have provided for the drummers of today and tomorrow.

JAMES C. POTTER
WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

Amen.

ED.

Alas, the drumistic brethren of the world can unite to laud the inception of a long awaited publication. May other members of the percussion fraternity take heed and now learn to give sub-

stance to their works instead of incessant, repetitive "jive jibberings", which are their trademark. It has been a delight to partake the first compilation of Modern Drummer and to joy in its truly professional approach. In a drumming world deluged with scores of repetitious ramblings over the years, your magazine is quite timely, and a publication every drummer worth his hi-hat stand should possess.

PETERZITO, III
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Right on! Having received the first issues of MD, I promise to be a life long subscriber. It's about time we drummers had our own magazine as informative as yours. I'm sure the rest of the percussion world would like to see MD go monthly with a circulation topping its contemporaries. Thanks again-and keep up the great work.

MICHAEL PRICHARD
PENSACOLA, FLA.

I recently looked through a copy of Modern Drummer and said to myself, "Where have you been all my life"? It's about time someone came out with a good magazine. How about twelve times a year instead of four?

JIM ARNOLD
BAY CITY, MICH.

Thank you gentlemen. Your enthusiasm and encouragement is greatly appreciated. MD's staff is rapidly growing and though a monthly would be pushing it a bit right now, it is in fact-our ultimate goal. Stay with us.

ED.

CORRESPONDENTS WANTED

The editorial staff of Modern Drummer Magazine is looking for drummer-writer correspondents located in or near major metropolitan cities, domestic and foreign, for free-lance reporting and assignments. Writing experience helpful. If you're interested in more information, send a brief resume to Modern Drummer, Correspondents Dept., 47 Harrison St., Nutley, N. J. 07110.

BACK ISSUES

Many of you have been asking for our premier Volume 1, No. 1 and No. 2 issues of MD. Unfortunately, we are out of stock on both issues for mass distribution at the present time. There will, however, be a second printing in the near future and an announcement of the availability of these back issues will be made. We thank you for your interest.

The Editors

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IT'S QUESTIONABLE

by CHARLES McKAY

Q. I am considering buying a 20" bass drum for my next set and would like your opinion on this.

T. O.
ALBANY, N. Y.

A. Sizes must always be chosen according to the musical situations you encounter the majority of the time. Though the trend seems to be in favor of the 22" and up for large band and rock work where volume and projection is essential, many players still prefer the standard 20" for general purpose work.

Q. Can you suggest a good method for developing a feel for tempo? I have a tendency to "push" the last few bars of a phrase especially if I'm adding a one or two bar fill.

T. L.
CHICAGO, ILL.

A. This is not an uncommon problem. Though the question of "perfect time" is certainly debatable, it is a fact that the drummer's primary value to any musical situation lies in his ability to keep good time. Rushing the time, especially during fill-ins, generally is the result of over excitement at these times. Most important, learn to relax and stay loose. Many teachers and players have admitted to the use of metronomes for practice in this area. Try practicing playing time and short fills between phrases at varying speeds set on the metronome. You'll be amazed at just how difficult this can be, though over extended periods of practice it most likely will aid your general time conception.

Q. How can I best increase my reading and technical abilities without enrolling for private instruction?

J. L.
PITTSBURGH, PA.

A. Though the guidance of a competent teacher is highly recommended for all serious students, we cannot cancel out the possibility of a young player with some degree of natural ability going it alone. A wealth of material exists in both the reading and technical improvement areas of drumming and you should begin immediately to build a library of the top material in these areas. It's also essential to discipline yourself to a regularly scheduled practice routine.

Q. I am very interested in the "North Drums" discussed in your Volume 1, No. 1, "Cobham-Equipment Close-up". Can you supply more information?

M. P.
PENSACOLA, FLA.

A. MD will be doing a special feature on the history and current status of the exciting new North Drum line in our next issue. In the meantime, for more information on North Drums write to; Music Technology, Inc., 105 Fifth Ave., Garden City Park, New York 11040.

Q. I have always started my rolls and rudiments with my left hand though I am a right-handed drummer. Also, whenever I learn a new beat, I can naturally and easily play it the even-handed way (left hand on hi-hat, right hand on snare). Could this create any problems later on, or do you see this as an advantage?

C. Y.
MIDDLESBORO, KENTUCKY

Have a problem? A question? Ask MD.
Address all questions to:
Modern Drummer, It's Questionable
47 Harrison St., Nutley, N. J. 07110

A. The fact that you have the ability to lead with the left hand in most situations is surely an advantage, and certainly nothing to worry about. Most right-handed players go through life with the frustration of trying to get the left hand to react in the same manner as the right. In essence, you're very fortunate.

Q. Do you think it's better for a drummer to have some idea of what he is going to play before he performs a solo?

J. G.
DETROIT, MICH.

A. Most professionals we've discussed this with have admitted to having some basic conception or simple construction format in mind before soloing. The true art of improvisation lies in the individual player's innate ability to construct and relay his ideas spontaneously, however always within the framework of a basic form of some kind, essential in the production of truly creative and musical solos.

Q. When tensioning my tom-toms, I am never quite sure which head to adjust first, batter or bottom. Just what happens when the batter head is adjusted and when the bottom head is adjusted?

D. F.
ANAHEIM, CALIF.

A. It doesn't really make much difference which head is adjusted first. The important thing to keep in mind is that the bottom head for the most part determines the pitch of the drum. Loosening the bottom head, while tightening the batter will generally give the drum a greater depth popular in today's sound, yet enabling the batter head to remain tighter for a more comfortable playing surface. Some experimentation with varying degrees of tension on both heads should result in the precise sound and feel you prefer.

Q. Could you kindly help me in my efforts to get in contact with any of the drum corps in the east?

L. W.
OMAHA, NEB.

A. Drop a line to Drum Corp News, 899 Boylston St., Boston, Mass. 02115. DCN is a bi-weekly publication for corps enthusiasts and can relay information on the happenings and whereabouts of just about any eastern corps you might be interested in.

Q. I am currently looking for music schools. Are there any schools specifically for drums and percussion?

S. A.
PLAINFIELD, VERMONT

A. Most all reputable music schools maintain a percussion department, with of course, varying degrees of qualifications and expertise. Contact the Admissions Office of those schools you have in mind. A current catalog will tell you just what they have to offer. Be sure to choose a school that puts emphasis on the kind of percussion study you're most interested in or inclined towards. See this issue, "Go North Young Man", a close-up on the Ontario College of Percussion in Toronto, Canada.

ALAN DAWSON ...

chops and brains equal a Boston master

by PETE DANCKERT



"Yeah, Alan Dawson", Max Roach reflected recently. "I consider him to be a key man. Alan was the drummer we had to contend with whenever we played New England", Roach chuckled, remembering. "Man, we trembled when we knew we had to deal with him."

Dawson hears of Roach's praise midway through a lesson with one of the 30 students he teaches each week in the studio of his rambling split-level home in the Boston suburb of Lexington. "That's real nice of Max", he says with his typical half-smile. He turns back to the student, a twentyish man facing him across a wide practice pad. "Hey Patrick", Dawson cracks, "you're not trembling".

Patrick looks up from his six-stroke rolls just long enough to laugh; he's only got an hour with Dawson and he wants to make every minute count. But on his way out, he confides to a visitor, "Alan is a monster. For ten years I thought I was playing, but I really just started when I began studying with him".

Those two appraisals—one from an awed disciple, one from a long-time idol of Dawson's—tell much about how far the 47 year old Boston drummer has come in doing what he loves: playing and teaching.

As a performer, he has long since won the respect not only of legendary drummers like Roach, but of an astonishing array of jazz instrumentalists he has backed live and on records. Apart from his recently completed seven-year stint with Dave Brubeck, Gerry Mulligan, and Jack Six, Dawson has recorded with Phil Woods, Jaki Byard, Richard Davis, Booker Ervin, Illinois Jacquet, Al Cohn, Reggie Workman, Lionel Hampton, and other luminaries on more than 35 albums.

His live performance credits are more staggering still. From 1963 to 1970, Dawson's steady gig as house drummer at Lennie's, the late, lamented Boston Jazz Club, had him backing diverse talents ranging from Roy Eldridge to Mose Allison. His appearance at George Wein's Festival of Jazz in Nice, France last July found him in the company of similar giants like Kenny Clarke.

But despite his travels (the Brubeck gig included 50 road concerts a year), Dawson has called Boston home since his family moved to the Hub shortly after his birth on July 14, 1929 in

Marietta, Pennsylvania. Emerging from a childhood spent banging away on any available table or chair, he got his professional start playing with the Basie-like riffs of Tasker Crosson's local band

"THE MORE DRUMS YOU HAVE, THE LESS RHYTHMIC VARIETY YOU TEND TO HAVE. THERE'S A LOGICAL TENDENCY TO SUBSTITUTE PITCH FOR RHYTHMIC VARIETY—EVERYBODY ON EVERY INSTRUMENT DOES THAT."

in 1943. The only formal instruction of his career followed in 1947 when Dawson began four years of fundamental study with Boston percussionist Charles Alden. Army duty in 1951 ended his private lessons, but began Dawson's long association with top jazz names of the post-bebop era.

Dawson's short-lived job with Lionel Hampton's band would seem to have been his first big break. But he discounts that stay with Hamp as "three months that seemed like 15 years". His 1950 - '51 gig with Gigi Gryce and Joe Gordon in Sabby Lewis's eight-piece group was what made him in Boston, says Dawson. Yet even local renown and nationwide rumors of his prowess couldn't give Dawson steady work in what he calls, "those years around 1956 when that terrible rock of the SO's took over".

Regardless of his stature among his peers, Dawson's name crops up less often than those of younger stars like Cobham or Mason. Part of the reason stems from his reluctance to quit the Boston area for longer than the time taken up by brief tours, clinics, and his numerous New York recording dates. "If somebody ever calls from California and says I can do one three-hour date a day for \$200,000 a year guaranteed for ten years, then I'll go", he chuckles.

But his influence is everywhere. When you hear Joe La Barbera, Joe Corsello, or any of the drummers produced by the Berklee College of Music in Boston, you're hearing more than a bit of Alan Dawson. He was the famed school's original drum instructor, teaching there for 18 years before resigning in 1975 to pursue a lighter, private teaching schedule. His decision to limit his teaching to 30 hours a week has

spawned an ever-growing waiting list of students anxious to learn first-hand the coordinated freedom and lightning chops that are the hallmarks of the Dawson style.

It is an oversimplification but no understatement to say that listening to Dawson is like hearing four drummers at once, each devoting all his energies to do the work of one hand or foot. Sure, some guys may have their bass drum together and others have made a religion of freeing the left hand or knocking out hi-hat accents. But Dawson has come as close to achieving ultimate hand and foot independence as any drummer now sitting a stool. Once more, he can switch complex poly-rhythms among his four limbs, play them fast, slow, loud or soft and make it all flow out in one logical, musical groove. If that weren't enough, he swings his tail off.

That he makes it look easy testifies to his musicianship. But his approach with his students makes it obvious that he's put in almost as much time figuring out how to teach the instrument as how to play it. So, because he's thought through the different technical methods—innovating some and improving others—Dawson has most answers at his fingertips. And, he relishes clear explanations.

Developing coordination Dawson style is a case in point. He uses Ted Reed's *Syncopation for The Modern Drummer* and George Stone's *Stick Control* according to their original purposes. But he's added a few wrinkles of his own. "I've got about 35 or 40 different ways to study the Reed book", Dawson says casually. "One of them involves playing the snare drum line with the bass drum while the hi-hat

hits the 2 and 4 and the right hand plays time. But, whenever the bass drum isn't hitting a note, the left hand fills in playing triplet figures. So, between the bass and the snare, we're playing no more than 12 notes-four sets of triplets--in each bar of 4/4 time. Actually, we wind up playing in 12/8.

"We also work on ostinato exercises-repeated figures which the students help make up themselves. See, we choose a time signature-3/4, 4/4, 5/4, or whatever-and get a basic pulse happening between the bass drum, hi-hat, and right hand. Off that, we play recurring left hand figures like eighth note or quarter note triplets and their partials: the third note of the triplet, second and third, first and second, and so on."

The results of these exercises can be wickedly complicated, as a visitor discovers when one of Dawson's students executes a syncopated 5/4 figure and lays eight note triplets in 4/4 over it with the left hand. Dawson listens intently for a minute, then stops him. "Eric, I don't hear the downbeat. You can be as intricate as you want, but the further out you get, you've got to hit the sign posts; touch home base a little more often."

Dawson elaborates Later. "Coordination is a nice thing to have going, don't get me wrong. But taken to extremes, you set up rhythmic interference instead of maintaining a groove. It's not that you're being too busy. It's just a case of having things running so counter to each other that the whole thing stops swinging. Grooving means getting into whatever's happening around you in the band. Basically, it means following the path of least resistance."

This brings up the varied definitions of cooking and swinging, topics that begin to reveal Dawson's own roots. "First off, cooking doesn't necessarily mean swinging. I think of cooking more as a person's energy level, his ability to project his playing. Swinging, on the other hand, sometimes means laying back like, say, Basie does when he comps on the piano. He's secure enough and laid back enough not to throw in a lot of stuff; he just *lets* it swing. So often you hear drummers who are trying so hard to propel things that it doesn't happen-they don't let it happen."

But can cooking or swinging be taught? Dawson is too experienced a teacher to give an unqualified "yes", but by the same token, he doesn't subscribe to the "its got to be born in you" school. "I don't think you can teach energy; that's inbred or picked up real early. But, I do know that you cannot learn to swing by playing fast. And

youngsters, particularly drummers, are always in a hurry. They always want to play things fast."

To illustrate, he picks up his sticks and starts laying down some lickety-split quarter notes in 4/4 one-handed. "If you're playing this fast, momentum tends to carry you along and it really isn't evident whether you're swinging or not. There's not much problem with

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accents or placement of the notes because your own momentum takes care of that."

Now he winds down to a slow ballad tempo, still playing unaccented notes in the same meter. "At this slow speed, it's evident that nothing much is happening swing-wise. The notes are naked, they need something to make them sound more interesting. One of the most basic ways to help is to accent the second quarter note." Suddenly, the sluggish beat starts to lift and swing. Dawson grins, delighted that the point has been grasped. It's plain that he gets off by making you understand, not by showing off.

And again, his listening habits come to the fore. "You know, one of Elvin Jones's biggest strengths is that he can play slow tempos and swing up a storm." Dawson shakes his head in admiration. "He makes it sound full by playing inside the jazz eighth note feeling, really getting a triplet feel in 12/8 time."

Now a previously hidden point of that 12/8 Reed exercise he explained earlier comes across: relate your studying not just to the instrument, but to music at large.

"That's exactly it", he nods. "I try to teach people to play music, the instrument is secondary. We try to look at everything from a musical standpoint. We go beyond using books for technique. We sing tunes to the exercises, learn about the forms of tunes so that automatically, you're relating the technical things to musical situations. Then, you don't wind up going out on a gig and saying, 'Wait a minute, this has got nothing to do with that *Stick Control* I've been practicing.'"

But, if relating practice at home to playing on the job is vital in Dawson's teaching, the link between his own teaching and playing careers is equally firm. Many of the ideas he passes on to his students for practice have been de-

veloped from his experience on the gig. That's where, for instance, he conceived a certain trick for learning how to play softly with control, eliminating the tendency of overdeveloped muscles to make sticks jump around and miss notes at low volume.

"One time", he remembers, enjoying a joke on himself, "the Brubeck band was playing with a symphony orchestra

and I set my drums up directly in front of the conductor. Right away, he started telling me to quiet down, but when I tried to, I started hitting notes that weren't supposed to be there and missing others that were. After that happened, I started practicing my rudimentary chop books on the snare drum quietly enough to hear the metronome ticking. If you can hear that metronome over snare playing and still execute cleanly, then you'll get the control you need."

And surprisingly, that same workout will also build the stamina and power needed for loud passages. Dawson again goes to the pad to demonstrate. "I know it sounds funny, but strength is not necessarily equated to volume. Try playing an open stroke long roll pretty fast, but keep your sticks low and the volume soft." He starts a smooth roll that sounds like a mini-bike warming up down the street. "When you're down this low", he goes on, "you have to rely on just your fingers and your wrists to articulate the beats; there's very little stick rebound to help you. A single stroke roll is even harder. That's all wrist and it really builds them up."

Power alone, though, is nothing without cleanliness, warns Dawson. That's where brushes come in. "Brushes have a wonderful tone color too much neglected these days. But also, the approach you have to use with them makes you pick up and play each note much more than with sticks because you're not getting as much rebound help." Won't brush practice interfere with stick execution? "Not at all. While you're getting your brush chops together, you're helping your stick chops all along. If I don't pick up a stick for a week, or if I'm pressed for time after teaching, I'll go through the rudiments on the drum set with brushes and be pretty well warmed up for the gig."

It sounds a little odd to hear a man famed for his jazz talent talk of rudiments like a drum corps judge, but Alan Dawson believes in the rudiments as strongly as any traditionalist. By this time, though, it's no surprise to learn that Dawson the innovator uses some 50 rudiments, not just the standard 26, as part of his daily three-hour workout with his 8-D sticks. Apart from the tried and true varieties of rolls, ruffs, drags, flams, and diddles, he exercises on ten Swiss rudiments and 12 patterns called, "innovations--things I got third-hand from a fellow in upstate New York. 'Course, I added a few elaborations of my own--just logical extensions, you understand."

Typically, he shrugs off suggestions that he's doing anything fancy by making up his own rudiments. But such creative effort devoted to exercises long since dismissed by other drummers as mere parade ground stuff is just one more example of how Dawson thinks a little harder than the ordinary player about the instrument. His way of playing them, is also a bit out of the ordinary, again originating from musical considerations apart from drumming

"I TRY TO TEACH PEOPLE TO PLAY MUSIC, THE INSTRUMENT IS SECONDARY. WE TRY TO LOOK AT EVERYTHING FROM A MUSICAL STANDPOINT. WE GO BEYOND USING BOOKS FOR TECHNIQUE. WE SING TUNES TO EXERCISES, LEARN ABOUT THE FORMS OF TUNES SO THAT AUTOMATICALLY, YOU'RE RELATING THE TECHNICAL THINGS TO MUSICAL SITUATIONS."

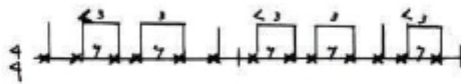
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"You hear some guy putting down some other cat: 'Man, that fella's too far into the rudiments. He sounds like a march!' " Dawson shakes his head. "Well, it isn't that he got too far into them--he hasn't gone far enough. See, rudiments were originally intended to help a band march, so all the accents were right on the beat." He whips off some military five-, seven-, and nine-stroke rolls to illustrate. "The difference with jazz is like the difference between marching and dancing: marching is on the heels, dancing is on the toes. So, if you apply that to the rudiments--take away those accents or syncopate the rolls--you get a nice, floating jazz feeling rather than that obvious, abrupt 'one-two' stuff." And, he plays several five-stroke rolls which manage to lay a 3/4 pulse over two bars of 4/4. "It helps you get across the bar line, too."

That last saying crops up a lot in Dawson's conversation, both as an explanation of a basic jazz phrasing device and as a judgment of playing ability. "Getting across the bar line" means creating phrases that don't start or stop

at the beginnings or ends of measures, but which use syncopation to flow over several bars, starting or stopping according to the relationships among the notes within the phrase itself.

Playing 3/4 over 4/4 is one way to do it:



"That lick goes all the way back to my other idol, Jo Jones", Dawson grins. "Now there was an innovator, In the late 30s and 40s, when Jo came up, the bass drum was playing very solid, strict and loud: boom, boom, boom, boom. The hi-hat was played real staccato too, a very definite chaaaa, chit-chit chaaaa, chit-chit chaaaa. Jo took the emphasis away from the bass drum, brought it up to the hi-hat more and by half closing and opening it, he smoothed out the sound.

"Max Roach, too, is a master at getting across the bar line. He was doing it with 5/4 and 3/4 in the 50s, before Brubeck did *Take Five*. You know, with all due respect. *Take Five* wasn't really

a free, blowing-in-five type of thing: it had a strict lick going on all the time. Max could really play in five. His tunes had form to them, too. They weren't modal things like *Take Five* where you didn't have to keep track of the chord changes."

Dawson is reminded of his own days with Brubeck and how the pianist insisted on keeping that famous 5/4 riff going throughout all the choruses of that big, 60s hit. "I didn't need that steady comp", Dawson confides, "I could keep it in my head. You see, the whole point with these time signatures is to get them to flow. Sure you got to lay down strategic downbeats, but you can't be too obvious about it. It's the same thing as the rudiments: change them around a little and you can get that looser type of feel happening."

Dawson's stint with Brubeck brought him the attention of his widest audience yet. You might expect, then, that endorsement offers from equipment manufacturers would have followed hard on the heels. But, by the late 60s, he had already been a long-time enthusiastic member of the Avedis Zildjian star lineup. Although he uses a standard set of

14-inch New Beat hi-hats, the diameters and tone qualities of his larger cymbals are predictably unusual, each having both crash and ride characteristics. He plays a 20-inch Mini-Cup, an 18-inch Flat-Top and a wondrous 17-inch Mini-Cup he lovingly calls, "my baby" that is capable of both pinpoint precision and broad overtones.

Such precision is vital for a style as complex as Dawson's--anything less would muddy his squeaky-clean execution. And projecting that sound with minimum effort has converted him from wood drums to the Fibes fiberglass camp. In fact, Dawson was the first player of note to endorse the drums. He tunes them to approximate pitches and intervals spanning a fourth from his 18-inch bass to his 15 x 16 inch floor tom, a major third from the floor tom to the single mounted 8 x 12 inch tom, and another third up to the 5 x 14 inch snare. The 15-inch diameter floor tom is an odd size and is surprisingly deeper sounding than a standard 14-inch model. Dawson covers it with a street drum head and says he gets almost as much bottom out of it as he can with a 16-inch.

In these days of multiple melodic toms and bass drums, Dawson has no wish to switch to a larger set. "Using all those drums, that's all beautiful and I don't knock it. But two things have influenced me not to do it. One is that I still can't afford a band boy to lug it all around. And two, the more drums you have, the less rhythmic variety you tend to have. There's a logical tendency to substitute pitch for rhythmic variety--everybody on every instrument does that. You don't hear much rhythmic variety from sax players, for instance, because when you've got all those pitches to deal with, you can't very well get into that much rhythmically--Sonny Rollins being the exception, of course. And that's even true with Max. When I first heard him with Bird, he was playing a cymbal, snare, hi-hat and bass, period. And he had a lot of variety he didn't have later when he added toms and other cymbals. Don't get me wrong, now", he says, lifting a finger in warning, "he still sounded great. It was just less varied".

Variation, then, is Dawson's goal; achieving it musically, his passion. So, he intends to keep on keeping on in Boston with his quartet, his small drum set, his practice pads and his 30 adoring students. Secure against the fads and dedicated to growth, he shows no inclination to rest on his considerable laurels or to trade on his reputation. "There are two things I like the most; the first is playing, the second is teaching. And they're compatible provided

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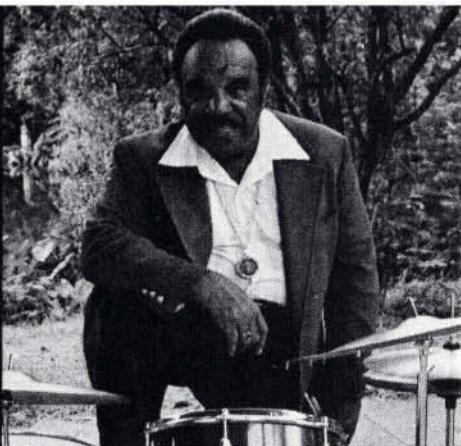
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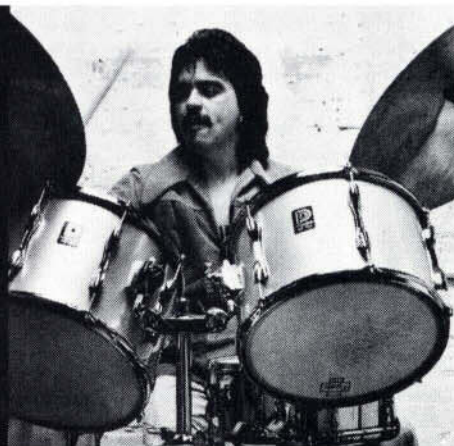
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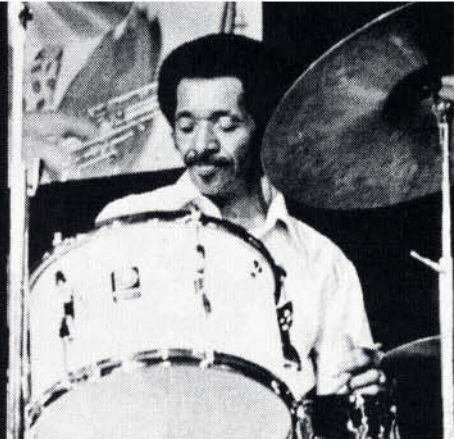
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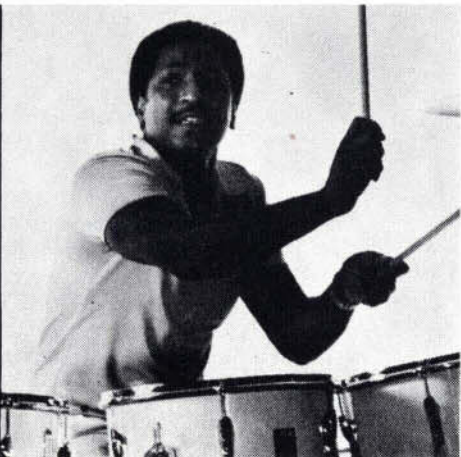
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At the helm of this adventurous band of versatile performers, surrounded by a wide array of percussive gear, sits drummer Phil Ehart, propelling and driving, classically typifying the high energy

"I COULD NEVER SEE THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND MATCHED GRIP ANYWAY. AS LONG AS A GUY CAN PLAY THE SET, WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE HOW HE HOLDS THE STICKS."

drumnastics of the modern rock scene.

An extremely personable and articulate individual, Phil has been playing drums for nearly twenty of his youthful twenty-seven years. He's held down the drum chair with Kansas for nearly five years, grinding out close to 200 one-night headliners per year, plus a total of four albums with a combined sales of over one million copies.

Managing to make our way backstage at the Capitol Theatre in Passaic, New Jersey, amidst throngs of youthful admirers waiting outside, we were greeted by a most cordial Phil Ehart about an hour before concert time. Quiet and undisturbed in a hallway dressing room he relaxed momentarily, despite the rigors of an exhausting east coast tour, where he spoke openly about music and drumming and some of the hassles of the lifestyle he leads.

MD: Where are you originally from Phil?

EHART ENERGY: Movin' up

A CANDID DISCUSSION WITH UP AND COMING DRUMMER

PHIL EHART OF "KANSAS"

by MICHAEL CRAMER

PE: I was born in Kansas. My dad was in the service, so I spent most of my early life travelling all over the world. I didn't actually settle down until Senior High School. Before that, I was changing schools like every two years.

MD: When did you first get interested in drums?

PE: I first discovered I had some natural rhythm, oh, I guess around second grade or so, you know the usual, beating on things with pencils and such. I imagine I was around seven or eight years old. I never had formal lessons of any kind. I more or less picked it up on my own.

MD: Kansas has a very disciplined classical quality, the kind of approach that's usually an outgrowth of musicians with formal college music education. Did you have any training in that area?

PE: We do have a very disciplined sound, but I've never had formal musical training. I wish I did have some schooling, but I've had to depend on my

see what I could do over there. It was kind of a weird experience because when I got there, the English were really more interested in the fact that being an American, I could play good blues and country and western styles. Well, that wasn't what I wanted to play. I wanted to get into more of an English style. As a result, I burned myself out there pretty quick. I only stayed for about three months.

MD: Did the whole Kansas thing come about shortly after your return to the States?

PE: Yes, it did. I more or less put the original band together. We started out as a threesome and later, I added the other guitars and a bass player. Drummers in Kansas are pretty rare, so when the original people learned I was available, they were all ready to do something. We've been together almost five years now, so its taken us a long time to get to where we are now. I like to think of putting the whole thing together and making it work as my only real claim to fame, since I don't really do any of the writing or anything.

MD: Can you tell us something about your equipment?

PE: Well, I'm using Slingerland drums, pretty much of a stock set-up, nothing really customized. I use a 26" bass drum and a Buddy Rich snare with the wood shell in it which I really love. I have three concert toms, a 10" x 14" mounted, and a 16" and 18" floor tom. I'm also into Roto-Toms which I use mostly for special effects. They're so sharp and pure, and I really like them a lot, especially for soloing. I also use a 26" and 29" timpani, and a gong.

MD: We noticed that you don't use double bass drums. Any reason why?

PE: Well, I tried double bass once, but I think you have to decide for yourself just what kind of drums you want to play based on the style of music you want to play. In our band, I've never found that double bass drums were conducive to the kind of music we play. Our music is so orchestrated, what with the violin and the synthesizer, that double bass would clutter things up considerably. I'm very concerned with keeping the bottom clean, because there's so much going on, on top in our particular sound. I don't really have anything against the double basses; I've heard a lot of guys who sound great

with them. It's just something that doesn't work well in my particular situation.

MD: Your drums have a very distinctive quality. Can you pass along any tips on how you achieve your particular sound?

PE: I use Remo CS Series heads for one thing. To me, definition is the most important thing. One thing that really drives me crazy is when I go see a drummer and he's using like forty tom-toms and they all sound exactly alike. A lot of people seem to forget that they should try to make each drum sound good in itself, and then to try and blend them so they sound good as a set. Sometimes, you may get a drum that sounds good on its own, but it just won't mix with the rest of the set and you have to experiment with different heads or dampening devices to get it to sound like a set of drums. I'm also pretty much of a bug on crisp and precise snare drum definition.

MD: What kind of a cymbal set-up are you using now?

PE: I use a 24" ride cymbal. A lot of guys have trouble controlling a cymbal of that size because it can really build up. You do have to be careful with that large a cymbal, but I've adapted to it since I've been using that size for a long time. I also use two 20" Chinese cymbals, two 18" crashes and 14" hi-hats, all Zildjians except for two Paiste. I find the Zildjian's seem to have all the bottom while the Paiste's have all the top. I have trouble finding individual cymbals that have the full range, but combined

chrome drums, but they have wood shells. I'm more interested in how something sounds. Sure the chrome drums look good on stage, but if they didn't sound good, I certainly wouldn't use them. As time goes on, I think we'll probably see the whole scene pass as the companies begin to work their way back to wood.

MD: Do you get much of an oppor-

"ROCK IS A CERTAIN FEELING AND I HONESTLY DON'T FEEL THAT JAZZ DRUMMERS CAN HANDLE IT SO WELL. LIKewise, I DON'T THINK THAT ROCK DRUMMERS CAN REALLY HANDLE JAZZ STYLES. THEY'RE JUST SUCH SEPARATE STYLES OF DRUMMING. BUT I THINK THAT'S GREAT 'CAUSE THAT'S WHAT DIVIDES THE TWO FIELDS AND EACH FIELD RESPECTS THE OTHER FOR IT."

tunity to practice being on the road so much?

PE: Not as much as I'd like to. I work out before a performance on the Gladstone snare drum pad I carry with me, but I never really get much of a chance to sit and work things out on the set simply because I'm on the road so much. I'm going to be getting a practice set at home soon so at least I can work things out during the time we're off.

MD: Any feelings on the matched grip?

PE: I can play with the traditional grip, but I prefer the matched most of the time simply because it gives me a bit more speed and power that I've got to have for the kind of things I do. I could never see the controversy between traditional and matched grip anyway. As long as a guy can play the set, what dif-

Its taken me nearly five years to learn how to mike a cymbal correctly so it will sound right on stage without blowing your head off, or breaking up. There's an art to miking drums. Of course, I won't spend the whole clinic on just that, but it's something I think a lot of kids would like to know.

MD: What kind of drumming do you enjoy listening to, Phil? Do you have

any favorites among the players of today?

PE: I love to listen to jazz drummers, even though I sometimes find it depressing 'cause their so damn good. There's a guy in England with a group called Genesis named Phil Collins who's a tremendous jazz drummer even though he's basically in a rock band. I enjoy listening to guys like Lenny White, Steve Gadd, and, of course, Billy is a real freight train, a marvelous player. But, I really think my all time favorite guys are the big band drummers. I could just listen to those guys all day long because that's something I don't think I'll ever be able to play. Just to watch guys like Buddy and Louie and Ed Shaughnessy. Wow! I'd love to have the opportunity to meet some of those guys. The ones that I have met, are always glad to talk to you, and that means a lot to somebody like myself. I mean, what can you say; those guys are just the best around.

MD: Any feelings on jazz drummers who lean towards the rock style and vice versa?

PE: I can't help but feel that many of the jazz drummers who try to swing over to the rock school really have a lot of trouble doing it. Rock is a certain feeling, and I honestly don't feel that jazz drummers can handle it so well. Likewise, I don't think that rock drummers can really handle jazz styles. They're just such separate styles of drumming. But, I think that's great 'cause that's what divides the two fields and each field respects the other for it.

MD: You put in an exceptional amount of time travelling. How do you view life on the road and the music business as a whole from your experiences thus far?

PE: My first impulse is to say that it's just a job, but it's more than that because I truly love my work. I'm very thankful I can do what I do. I know there are probably a million guys out

(continued on page 23)

"I'M BASICALLY A WOOD MAN. I USE CHROME DRUMS BUT THEY HAVE WOOD SHELLS. I'M MORE INTERESTED IN HOW SOMETHING SOUNDS. SURE THE CHROME DRUMS LOOK GOOD ON STAGE, BUT IF THEY DIDN'T SOUND GOOD - I CERTAINLY WOULDN'T USE THEM."

I'm able to get the full spectrum of sound that I like.

MD: What type of stick do you prefer?

PE: I use a Slingerland 3A. I have a bursitis condition in my right wrist and I can't use a long stick which really bugs me out, because you can get such a nice bounce from a long stick. My wrist just kills me if I do, so I have to use kind of a short, chunky stick.

MD: What do you think of the new materials like plastic, fiberglass, stainless steel and so forth being used in drum construction today?

PE: I think there's probably a certain market for that kind of thing, but I also think it's all very fadish. I mean, who really cares if you can see through your drums when it actually comes down to it. I'm basically a wood man. I use

ference does it make how he holds the sticks. I imagine it must be very confusing for kids just starting out, to see one guy doing it one way and someone else another way.

MD: Can we look forward to any Phil Ehart clinics for Slingerland in the future?

PE: Yes, as a matter of fact, I will be doing some clinics soon. I've never done one before and I've been giving it a lot of serious thought. One thing I'm going to try to work on which a lot of young kids don't get very much exposure to is how to mike drums for live performance and recording. It's something I really never new anything about until I went into a studio. I would have loved to have somebody tell me how to mike a bass drum, or how to mike a cymbal.

GO NORTH YOUNG MAN

MAY BECOME THE CALL AS MORE AND MORE YOUNG ASPIRING PROFESSIONALS GET WORD OF TORONTO'S UNIQUE AND EXCITING ONTARIO COLLEGE OF PERCUSSION

by RONALD G. VAUGHAN

If you're a drummer looking for a top-notch program of instruction to develop your skills, you may be surprised to learn that one of the best places for this is the city of Toronto, Canada. Here one will find possibly the largest, finest-equipped percussion school in North America. It's called the Ontario College of Percussion, and if you've never heard of it before, you'll be hearing a lot about it in the future.

Founded in 1965 by well-known Canadian drummer-percussionist Paul Robson, the school has developed a reputation over the years for turning out well-trained students who are prepared to meet the challenge of the modern music industry. At the time the school was founded, Paul Robson was teaching music for the local Board of



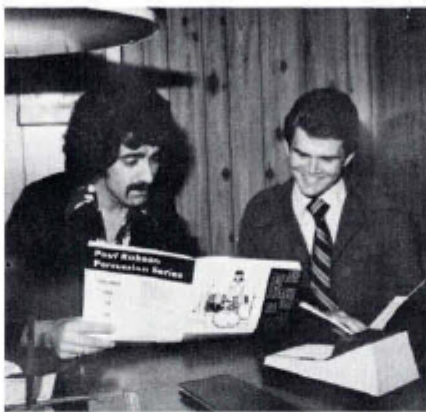
Paul Robson, principal of Ontario College of Percussion and author of the Paul Robson Percussion Series.

Education. Realizing that school music programs were inadequate in preparing a student for professional performance, and good private instruction was hard to find, Mr. Robson laid the groundwork for a school specializing in percussion instruction. The emphasis would be on drum set performance, with the stipulation that the drummer should be an educated musician, and not just a timekeeper.

The curriculum was based on the fundamentals of drumming skills; reading, technique, music theory, etc.; but with a significant addition. To bridge the gap between the learning and performance stages, course material was directed to application of the necessary skills. Putting the student in a performance or simulated performance

situation to try out the material he has just learned removed much of the repetition and tedium of the learning process. Concepts could be grasped much more quickly when the student was at once shown where and how to apply them. An effective end to the "Why do I have to learn all this junk?" situation. This approach to teaching was reflected in the course material that Paul Robson wrote for his students. It stressed a step-by-step progression from the basics, right up to chart reading performance using the full drum set. By 1968, enough interest had been generated in this material to warrant its publication. As the *Paul Robson Percussion Series*, it currently consists of six volumes and a Teaching & Learning Guide, the only set of books by a single author to take the drummer from novice to professional level using a systematic approach.

Mr. Robson carefully hand-picked his instructors right from the start, to be sure that students at the college would have the best possible quality of instruction, as well as instruction materials. A firm believer in word of mouth as the best form of advertising, he knows that a student's playing abil-



John Ansara, Jr., left, Director of Percussion, discussing the finer points of college curriculum with the author.

ity will be an important factor in attracting other students to the school. On the other hand, even a small number of poor players coming from the college can ruin a reputation of many years standing. At the Ontario College of Percussion, perfection has always been a key word. For this reason, the course is designed in stages, with examinations, and certificates of completion for those



A teacher monitors his student's progress from the central control room.

who live up to the high standards the school maintains. Courses are tailored to professional, semi-pro, or hobbyist levels of interest. Each novice student, or one with little formal training begins with an eight week introductory period of lessons. This covers the basic theory and technique of reading music and playing simple exercises. During this time, an impartial examiner administers two sets of tests on the material covered. If the examiner and teacher are satisfied with the student's aptitude and progress, he is then accepted as a student of the college, and proceeds with the course material. Further examinations are given on completion of each volume of the Paul Robson Percussion Series.

These tests, particularly the two sets of introductory ones, allow the staff of the college to detect any student who is unwilling or unable to handle the course, at the early stage of their training. Students who feel that a teacher can wave a magic wand and turn them into professional players, are shown right away that there is a lot of hard work, study and practice involved in becoming a good drummer. This screening process also keeps the instructors free to concentrate on those students who are really dedicated to their instrument, which is no small number. Ontario College of Percussion has enrolled over thirteen hundred students.

As the student progresses, he is exposed to a wide range of knowledge. Stress is put on reading and technique in the early stages, preparing the student both mentally and physically for the delicate business of musical interpretation, and the many different styles of music he will encounter. Not only are the standard forms of pop, jazz and rock covered, but also Latin rhythms and a selection of classical material. Chart reading, as applied to on the job performance or recording studio work, is also studied. Those students who are interested can even specialize in the Latin instruments, or in mallet percussion.

The college is a recording engineer's dream, equipped with soundproofed studios that contain full drum sets. Each studio is electronically connected to a central control room, with facilities for recording and playback using records, tapes and radio. The instructor can pipe music through the student's earphones, have him play along with it, and record the result for playback and discussion.



A corner of Drum World, the Percussion Capital of Canada, showing some of the wide range of accessories and part bins storing hundreds of small parts for percussion equipment.

In this way, the student's progress can be evaluated instantly by reference to his tape file. An extensive library of records and tapes covering all styles of music is maintained to give the students experience in different playing situations. Naturally, as with other course material, constant revision and updating is necessary to insure that the available repertoire is relevant to the current music scene.

In conjunction with the Ontario College of Percussion is Drum World, the Percussion Capital of Canada. Opened by Paul Robson in 1972, this is an operation which sells, rents, and repairs percussion equipment. Not content to have just another drum specialty shop, Robson built Drum World's reputation on the basis of its custom drum building operation. For example, if you like a certain make of drums, but dislike the tom-tom mounts. Drum World will obtain the equipment minus the hardware. From that starting point, one can pick and choose from any hardware on the market, custom designing the drum set as you go. Excellent workmanship and a large stock of parts has made this business a success from the start. Drum World became a necessity as OCP grew in size, since drummers are very often particular about their equipment. When a school is turning out so many musically aware graduates, many of them are going to be dissatisfied with the type of

service they receive from local music stores. As in any field, better consumer education develops a more knowledgeable and demanding clientele.

It should be obvious that Paul Robson has created a multifaceted operation of some importance to the percussion world. For years, drummers have been plagued by the fact that they are playing an instrument which is barely out of its infancy (the drum set as we know it not having been developed until early in this century). We have a lot of catching up to do, not only in the field of technical development of the instrument - which has proceeded rapidly during the past few years - but more important, in the field of education. Not so long ago, it was difficult to find more than a handful of top quality drum teachers. Instruction materials were outdated or concentrated on only one aspect of playing. Most of the recognized schools of music wouldn't admit that the drum set existed, much less providing programs for the aspiring professional. So, the old cliché about a four piece band being three musicians and a drummer had some validity, as drummers had a hard time obtaining the training that would make them equal to their fellow musicians. It's nice to be able to report that modern drummers don't need these excuses any longer. With a lot of plan-



Drum World's custom hardware installation service. All the work is done by hand with skill and lots of tender loving care.

ning, talent and organizational skill, the Ontario College of Percussion has made it possible for the student or pro to rise above this "second-class musician" status, and make other musicians realize just how much artistic potential there is in a "musical" drummer. Anyone interested in learning more about the Ontario College of Percussion should write direct to: Ontario College of Percussion, 1656 Bayview Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4G 3C2.

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BUTCH MILES: Drivin' the Basie rhythm machine

by GABE VILLANI

It would probably be difficult to name a big band that swings and pulsates more than the dynamic Count Basie Orchestra. For over forty years, Basie has kept his aggregation alive and swinging with his inimitable brand of big band excitement.

Numerous elements characterize the Basie sound, but none more so than the unique Basie rhythm section - an unmistakable trademark recognized around the world. What could be more musically fulfilling than being the heartbeat at the core of that infamous trademark? Well, drummer Butch Miles can't think of anything he'd rather be doing. Sitting in the hot seat - once occupied by the likes of Jo Jones, Gus Johnson, Sonny Payne and others - this young, energetic and talented player generates the steam that so aptly propels the Basie band - and loves every minute of it.

MD's own Gabe Villani met with Butch in Miami during a recent engagement and gained some insight from the man who drives the Basie rhythm machine.

MD: Butch, could you tell us a little about your background?

BM: Well, I was born in Ohio and raised in West Virginia. I only had a year and a half of formal training, but my teacher was beautiful. He didn't have a lot of technique - but he swung his ass off. His name was Frank Thompson, back in Charleston, West Virginia. He's the man who got it together for me on the set.

Frank was one of those rare teachers who couldn't play a lot of things, but he could hear everything you were doing and correct whatever you were doing wrong. If he heard you trying to go somewhere without knowing how, he would get you there. A gifted teacher who is still teaching back in Charleston. I'm very grateful to Frank.

The man who taught me to read was a band director - Bob Leurant - a very fine drummer in his own right. If it weren't for Bob and Frank, I don't know what I would have done.

MD: What memories do you have of

those early days in your career?

BM: I practiced my ass off! I practiced eight hours a day. I would get up in the morning - grab a towel, put on a tee shirt and swimming trunks and go down in the basement and practice until everyone came home. I was sixteen years old and had just started taking lessons from Frank.

I would practice EVERYTHING! I practiced with records and without records. I practiced straight time, with a metronome and without a metronome. I practiced soloing with everything - sticks, brushes, mallets and fingers, and I practiced 4/4, 3/4 and 5/4 time, Latin beats . . . everything. I practiced everything I felt like - but I had to feel it.

Young drummers always ask me how much they should practice. Well, I think it varies with the individual, but you've got to want to practice. If you don't want to practice, you can sit down for two hours and not get a damn thing done. If you really want to practice, the time spent isn't important, but you must definitely practice on something, and not fool around.

MD: Should a drummer practice with a metronome?

BM: I used one, but the damn thing kept changing time! They cheat. I don't trust them. The only metronome I trust is Freddie Green.

MD: What musical experience did you have that prepared you for the Basie band?

BM: I played with school bands, did the "Mickey Mouse" jobs, weddings, barmitzvahs and Elk's clubs. I played the gigs for \$5.00 and a chicken sandwich and I even played with the Charleston Symphony. I also completed four years at West Virginia State.

I paid a lot of dues, and I don't think you ever stop. If you ever stop paying dues, it means you've stopped learning.

MD: How about big band experience?

BM: I was with a trio out of Charleston, a good group called the "Iris Bell Trio". We travelled quite a bit and wound up in Ann Arbor, Michigan. There, I decided that what the group was doing wasn't the way I wanted to go - so I quit. One day, I went to a rehearsal with a friend and sat in with the first big band that I'd ever played with.

MD: What year was that?

BM: That was 1971. I was always into

big bands, but I'd never played with one. I LOVED it! It was as natural for me as a bird taking off and flying. It was the "Austin-Moro Band" in Detroit - a hell of a band. You know, looking back, the first big band that I ever heard live was the Basie band. It was 1960 at a jazz festival in Virginia Beach and Sonny Payne was playing drums. He was a big influence on me.

While I was playing with the Austin-Moro rehearsal band in Detroit, I started getting into commercials and other type jobs. Through a series of mis-adventures, I finally got into a house band in Plymouth, Michigan - John Trudell's band. John used to be lead trumpet player for Paul Anka. We were working at a club called Lofy's and that's where I met Mel Torme. In fact, I was hired to start the week that Mel opened.

A few weeks after Mel left, I was on my way to a big band rehearsal when I heard on the radio that the club burned down to the ground. Luckily, I had my drums with me. The following day Mel happened to call to say hello and I told him that I was out of a job. He talked with his manager and offered me a job.

I opened with Mel, October 18, 1971 at the Century Plaza Hotel's West Side Room, in L.A. Talk about a nervous kid - I was scared to death.

MD: How old were you?

BM: I was 27. I was with Mel for 39 months, from October 18, 1971 to December 19, 1974.

MD: How do you remember all those dates?

BM: Well, they were very important to me. At the opening with Mel at the West Side Room, I was flabbergasted! I had never seen so many stars, actors and actresses up close before. For a kid from West Virginia . . . I didn't know what to do.

I could never thank Mel enough for what he did for me professionally. He opened a lot of doors and helped me in many ways. Through Mel, I've become close to Buddy Rich. Buddy and I share the opinion that Basie's band is the greatest.

Let me say something about Buddy Rich. Buddy treated me with respect when I was a nobody - just a kid who would hang around clubs and bother him between shows. He was never rude, and he'd always talk to me. One time in Windsor, Ontario, I got him alone for an

hour and we talked and had a great time. Buddy's a great man, and also the man that helped me get together with Basie.

Six weeks after I left Mel, I was hanging around, depressed and wondering if I'd ever work again, when on January 28, 1975 at 8:30 in the morning, I got a call from Basie's office. The funny thing was, I had just seen the movie "Blazing Saddles" the night before, and the part with Basie in the desert killed me. Anyway, Sonny Cohn was on the phone and he told me, drummer Ray Parello was in a car wreck the night before and if I'd fill in with the band for a few weeks. I caught the first plane for Chicago. Two months later, Ray had recovered. I asked Basie what he was going to do, and he said, "You've got the gig".

MD: You certainly seem to be quite content with what you're doing.

BM: I am. I'm having the 3rd time of my life. I've never had so much fun, and I don't know how you can top that.

I've just celebrated my second anniversary with the band, and it's been incredible! We've been all over the world - Japan, London, all over. While we were in Toronto, I went out with Basie to see Buddy's band. Buddy has always been Basie's favorite overall drummer, and Basie has always been Buddy's favorite band. I found out that Buddy was keeping an eye on me. He would frequently ask Basie how I was doing, and if Basie would have a problem concerning me, he would discuss it with Buddy. I also found out that before I joined Basie, Buddy had given me a very nice build up. If Buddy reads this, he'll deny every word, after all he has his image - but I'm here to tell you that Buddy Rich is a sweet man - a very nice man.

MD: This may sound corny, but what does it feel like playing with Count Basie's band?

BM: (laughter) Another gentleman did an article on me a year ago, for a Charleston, West Virginia paper. He asked, "What does it feel like to be the first FULL TIME white drummer that ever worked with Basie?" I said, "How do you think the first man on the moon felt?"

I love playing with the band. Every night I learn just by listening to Basie. Louie Bellson once told me, "whatever you do, just listen to Basie". Basie and I have continuous eye contact. I take all cues from him and the band takes all cues from me. He tells me what to do and I turn on the juice. I'm in the driver's seat back there and it's a scary seat to be in, but I've got to be in it, and I've got to perform. Basie doesn't hire slouches.

MD: When I tried to reach you at the hotel, the operator accidentally rang

Basie's room and woke him. I was concerned about waking him, but he very graciously spent a minute chatting with me. He's a real gentleman.

BM: There are probably a handful of incredibly beautiful people I have met in this business. Gene Krupa was one of them, and Louis Bellson is another. I can't say enough about Louis, he has helped me so much. I consider him one of my closest friends, and Basie is another!

He's beautiful to work for, and as long as you do what's good for the band, he lets you do what you want. He has a great sense of humor and he's a brilliant musician. A lot of people take his easy going personality for granted; they think he doesn't care anymore. Don't believe it for a minute!

"IT TOOK ME THE BETTER PART OF A YEAR TO LEARN NOT TO PHRASE SO MUCH. I DIDN'T HAVE TO KICK EVERY BRASS FIGURE. I LEARNED TO LET THE BAND BREATHE. THE BAND IS A LIVING ORGANISM, AND BASIE PLAYS THE BAND MORE THAN HE PLAYS THE PIANO."

Basie is on top of the game as much as ever. He's got giant ears. He can take a tune that was written for the band that doesn't make it, and insert a piano chorus or cut a section and make it pure Basie. He's got it in his head. As a piano player, there are nights that he'll ROMP. He's incredible - damn!

MD: Is it true that Freddie Green makes the Basie rhythm machine what it is?

BM: Freddie is fantastic and his sense of timing is uncanny. I have never heard anybody play chords like he does either. You would think an un-amplified guitar pitched against seventeen blowing instruments wouldn't be heard. You know, there are times that you don't hear Freddie - and when he isn't there, you can hear the silence. Freddie is a huge part of the Basie sound.

The Basie sound is also the way the brass and reeds phrase out of time and come back as a unit. It's really incredible. It's the only band in the world that does that . . . that's what makes it Basie.

MD: Does that bother you?

BM: It used to drive me nuts! I'd hear the thing go out of time and I'd feel if I didn't keep that steady tempo going, the time would go all to hell. It also took me the better part of a year to learn not to phrase so much. I didn't have to kick every brass figure. I learned to let the band breathe. The band is a living organism, and Basie plays the band more than he plays the piano.

MD: Could we briefly mention the type of equipment you use?

BM: I use Pearl drums which I've had

for two years, and they've been fantastic. They've withstood band boys, sky-caps, planes, boats, buses and trains. I've gone through two sets of cases a year - but the drums have remained trouble free. I use the full fiberglass and they give me a great sound. I use a 5 1/2" metal snare, one 9" x 13" and two 16" toms. I also have 14" and 16" Roto toms by Remo, and a 14" x 24" bass drum. All my cymbals are Zildjian - 14" New Beat high hats, an 8" paper thin splash, two 18" crashes - medium thin, a 20" ride and a 20" medium thin swish with no rivets. The rivets came out one by one from travelling, but it sounds like one of Dizzy's old cymbals - wow - I love it.

MD: If you had a chance to have your own band, what type would you have?

BM: I hadn't given it a thought. I'm happy enough where I am, but for conversation sake, I'd have a small band • six to nine pieces. I'd play Jazz, Rock and maybe some funk. I'd also do some 5 and 7 time, and lots of colors and textures - not just triple forte.

MD: On the order of the Don Ellis Band?

BM: I love Don Ellis- I've got lots of his recordings back home. I love to listen to Don's band, but I don't think that I could get that deep.

I would like to do some things with an extra percussionist. Exciting things can be created from rhythms.

MD: How about some advice to pass on to fellow drummers?

BM: There's only two things that I'm really concerned with. The number one thing all drummers should be concerned with is TIME. It's hard to learn time - it can't really be taught. You have to feel it. My time is not great - it's passable enough for the job - but not perfect. I don't have Freddie Green's time, few drummers do - except, maybe, Shelly Manne and Buddy when he's thinking about it.

The other thing I would be concerned about is two-part. Technique and textures. You can have all the technique in the world, but if you can't color an arrangement, it doesn't do you any good. If you've got the fastest single stroke roll in the world, but you can't play pianissimo, it won't do you any good. You've got to have textures - the coloring. You can learn technique

(continued on page 23)

Drum-Set Shoppers Guide

by JOHN MCGARRITY and DAN WIEDMAN

ROGERS

c/o CBS Musical Instruments
1300 E. Valencia
Fullerton, Calif. 92631

No question about it, the people at Rogers have given this business of hardware a great deal of serious thought, resulting in some outstanding innovations for the working drummer on the move.

The Rogers Memriloc hardware design leaves nothing to chance and has reduced set-up time to a fraction of what it was. This impressive system represents years of research and a tooling, up period of over a year. Based on a series of interlocking grooves and the use of a lock and key mounting principle, the pre-set locking mechanism offers the player his precise three dimensional set-up everytime, making minor and annoying instrument position adjustments unnecessary.

The outfit, which is acutally 80% set-up while still in the case, utilizes 1" tubing throughout, and Rogers claims the added strength hasn't added that much extra weight. The bass drum features 1" tubing spread angle spurs for a solid platform, and a powerful support tube running clear through to stabilize and anchor the receiver and tom holder. Dual or triple tom holders can be used for 1, 2 or 3 toms or any combination of cymbal assemblies, and drilling is unnecessary for additions or changes. The modular construction system offers playing by either right or left handers. A unique cymbal arm ex-

tension assembly affords virtually any cymbal position, without drilling into the Rogers 5-ply shell. Extension tubes are available for extra height to snare, tom, cymbal or hi-hat stands.

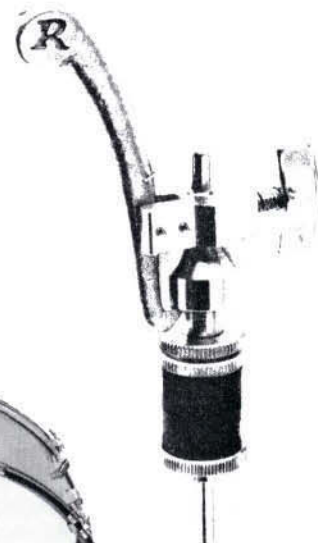
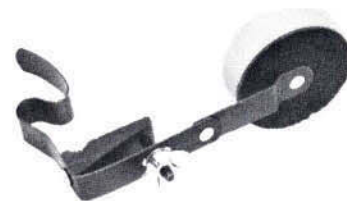
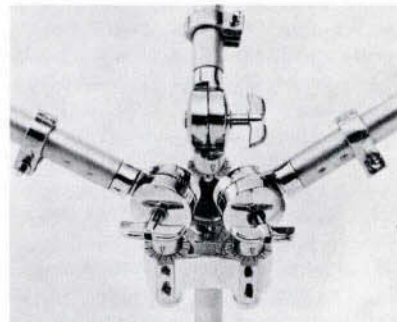
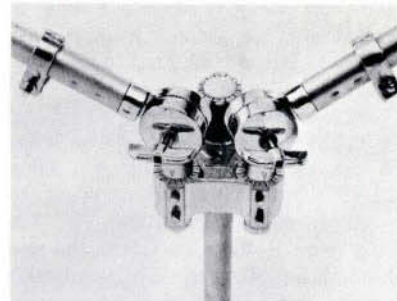
The Supreme foot pedal has some excellent features including industrial belting strap, stroke and axle adjustment, easy lever lock hoop mounting, and a strong, wide footboard.

The hi-hat stand is equally impressive with up to 40" height and smooth quiet action due to nylon moving parts. The Memriloc system, plus a dual-matic clutch which drops the top cymbal with the flip of a lever for closed position playing, all make for one of the most functional pieces of equipment on the market.

The improved "Dyna-Sonic" snare drum has a die-cast snare frame and snare wires that are manufactured to exactly 7 coils per inch, epoxy mounted. The snare frame floats and the bottom head is untouched by snare plates.

A few other fine ideas include springless lugs which eliminate buzzing and rattling; external clip-on mufflers for instant on-off adjustment, and a Memriloc boom stand attachment which can be added to the standard cymbal stand.

Rogers has given the discriminating drummer a lot to think about in terms of options and innovations. They've come up with some truly remarkable and progressive designs. Slightly expensive perhaps, but it's outstanding equipment and worth every red cent in our estimation.





TAMA
 c/o Elger Company
 Box 469
 Cornwell Heights, Pa. 19020

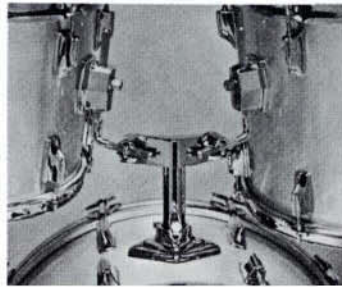
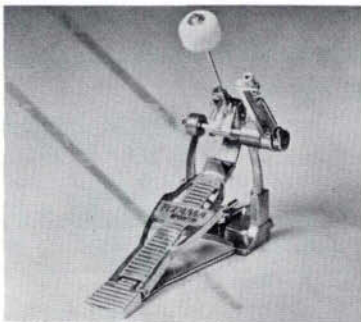
Tama is the youngest of all the entries in our report, and is a new name to percussionists; however, what they lack in recognition, they make up for in appearance.

Bass drums come equipped with Weather King heads, chrome plated metal hoops, and two-way adjustable spurs. Tom mounts - very similar to Ludwig in design - are simple and efficient.

Snare drums are seamless and constructed by a special process which assures a perfectly round shell. Inner flanges are set a perfect forty-five degree angle for added strength and increased acoustic response. Hoops are die-cast and afford perfect fit, plus consistent tuning and tensioning. The snare drum also has the Tama "One Touch" tone control so the exact amount of tone can be preset and brought in and out on cue.

Several lines of hardware are offered. Hi-hat cymbal, and snare stands come complete with heavy duty tripod bases and full height adjustment. Bass pedals offer adjustable spring and stroke angle within a twin ball-bearing construction.

The company is young and the name is new, but Tama could very possibly become a giant in the industry. It's a name worth watching.



CAMCO
 2117 Yates Avenue
 Los Angeles, Calif. 90040



CAMCO SNARE DRUMS

Camco, perhaps one of the slightly lesser known names in drumdom, has been around for some time, and they make a good drum. Now a subsidiary of Beckman Musical Instruments, Camco has seen some management changes over the years but seems to be on a direct course currently in the wood shell department exclusively.

Shells are handcrafted from 6-ply hard rock maple with twelve tasteful finishes available. Though the line is somewhat limited in terms of set-up choices, Camco makes up for it by offering the drummer some sturdy, good looking and efficient heavy gauge steel hardware. The bass pedal (#5000) is simple in design yet handsome, mechanically sound and rugged. The hi-hat stand (#500) has a variable knurled knob for spring tensioning and the double tom-tom floor stand has a very nice extra wide base design so important for steadiness and reliability.

Bass drums are equipped with claw hooks and steel inserted alignment tubes for true tension. Snare drums are available in 8 or 10 lug models and tom-toms have turret castings with solid brass receivers.

Though not amongst the "big boys" in terms of recognition, Camco is certainly a contender. It's a reliable company and a name worth remembering when shopping around.

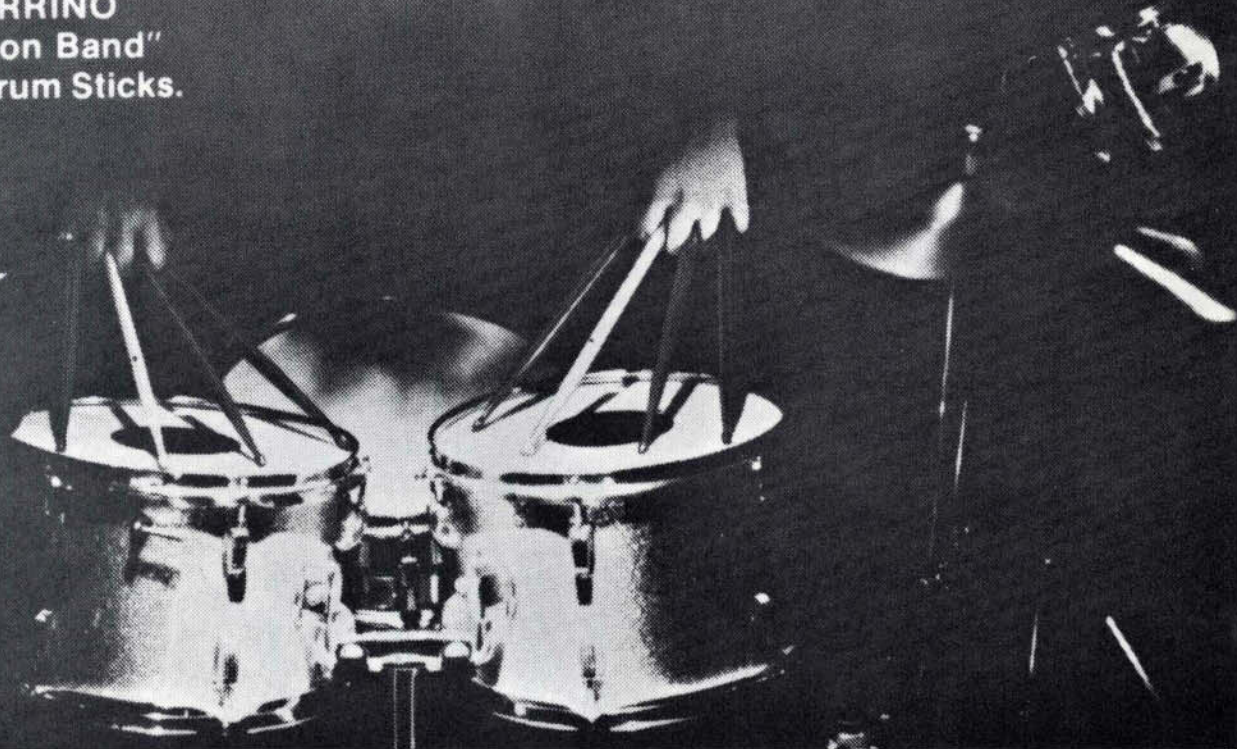


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ROCK PERSPECTIVES

by MARK KEENAN

A Study in Styles

The rock drumming scene has progressed a great deal since the fifties. Those of us who played through that era remember the monotonous eighths and afterbeats, and those relentless right hand triplets. During the past decade, we have witnessed a remarkable evolution, as those simple rhythmic patterns have evolved into increasingly complex drumming, demanding much greater levels of independence, coordination and creativity.

Though numerous players have made great contributions in this area, this author has found the rhythmic creativity and coordinative ability of Carmine Appice, Harvey Mason, Bobby Columby, Steve Gadd and David Garibaldi to be amongst some of the most exciting and inventive drumming in the field, and certainly representative of this facet of playing.

The following brief transcriptions were taken from assorted recorded works of these five important and influential players. Note" o = A quick opening and closing of the hi-hat.

CARMINE APPICE

Two staves of musical notation for Carmine Appice. The first staff shows Cym, SD, and BD parts. The second staff shows Cym, SD, and BD parts with a hi-hat opening (o) indicated above the Cym part.

HARVEY MASON

Three staves of musical notation for Harvey Mason. Each staff shows Cym, SD, and BD parts with various rhythmic patterns and accents.

STEVE GADD

One staff of musical notation for Steve Gadd, showing Cym, SD, BD, and HH parts with a complex rhythmic pattern.

BOBBY COLUMBY

Three staves of musical notation for Bobby Columby. Each staff shows Cym, SD, and BD parts with various rhythmic patterns and accents.

DAVID GARIBALDI

Three staves of musical notation for David Garibaldi. Each staff shows Cym, SD, and BD parts with various rhythmic patterns and accents.

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DRIVERS SEAT

Understanding the basics

by PAT ROWLAND

Anyone who hasn't had the thrilling experience of being in the same room with a driving eighteen piece big band has probably missed one of the more exciting experiences in all music. The fire and excitement generated by any big band is, of course, the responsibility of the man in the drivers seat and this series of articles will deal with the varied aspects of this most unique and interesting phase of drumming. This article should be interpreted as a broad overview of the fundamentals which make up good big band drumming, more or less putting things in perspective and setting up priorities. Each of the items discussed here will be the subject of complete articles in future issues.

Big band drumming can actually be broken down into four basic areas: 1) Time Conception, 2) Execution of Accents and Figures, 3) Execution of Fill-ins, and 4) Phrasing conception.

Let's look at each one individually.

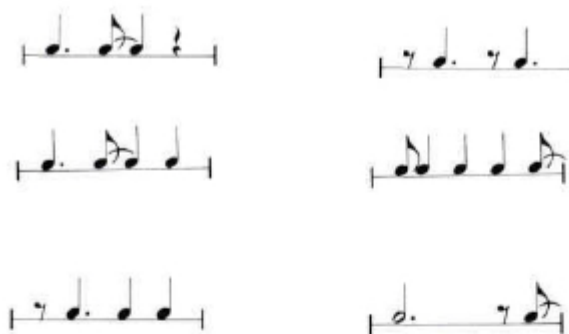
TIME CONCEPTION: A leader having set the tempo at a designated pulse, expects - and has the right to assume - that it will continue along and eventually end at the same tempo. This is the drummer's number one responsibility, not only in big bands, but any other musical setting as well. Competent reading combined with imaginative fill-ins and colorful phrasing are all important aspects of big band drumming, however none will compensate for a poorly developed time conception. Time is of the essence so to speak, and players overlooking this very important point will leave a great deal to be desired.

EXECUTION OF ACCENTS AND FIGURES: The accurate execution of the stage band drum part puts great demands on the drummers innate abilities. Contrary to some peoples thinking, the drummer actually must be an above average reader since the drum chart is by nature, nothing more than a rough guide or sketch of the composition. Though degrees of detail vary from one arranger to another, the drum chart will basically contain all instructions for the important ensemble figures and section cues. It is clearly a matter of learning correct methods of interpretation. There is a great deal of study material on the market to help the drummer sharpen his reading ability in this area and to learn to correctly interpret drum charts, certainly a whole study in itself.

One of the faults of many stage band aspirants is an over concern for complex or flashy fill-ins. Though commendable to a point, it should never take precedence over accurate reading and interpretation.

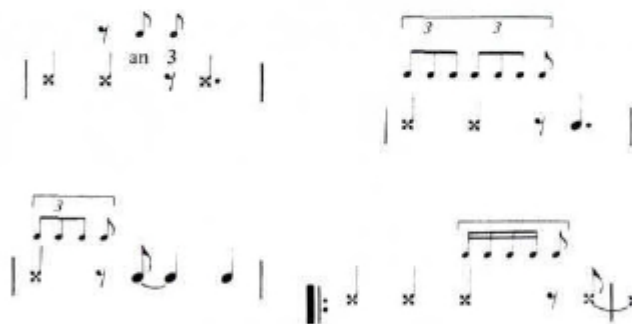
It is also of the utmost importance that the time flow is in no way adversely affected by the execution of accents and figures. The time must always continue to flow smoothly, undisturbed and swinging even amidst the most complex of parts.

EXAMPLES OF COMMON RHYTHMIC FIGURES FOUND IN THE DRUM CHART



EXECUTION OF FILL-INS: A fill-in can be described simply as a short solo break or a rhythmic fragment whose primary purpose is to set-up the oncoming ensemble figure or section accent. A precisely executed fill-in can add tremendously to the overall impact of the figure itself. After all is said and done, it is interesting to note that the simpler fills are generally more effective than the over-extended ones which fall more into the area of short drum solos rather than fill-ins. Over-complicated fill-ins can also distract from the actual figure it is supposed to be setting up. The drummer, unless quite proficient, is also increasing his chances of misplaying the figure when he resorts to lengthy, complicated fill-ins and can substantially upset the time conception if not totally conscious of it.

EXAMPLES OF COMMON FILL-INS USED TO SET UP ENSEMBLE FIGURES OR SECTION CUES



PHRASING CONCEPTION: Phrasing, which is simply the articulation and duration of notes and rhythmic figures, is an oftentimes overlooked item among stage band aspirants. When applied to the drum set, phrasing becomes a long note simulated by a cymbal crash, a trombone section cue reinforced by a bass drum accent, or short, clipped brass figures accented by crisp, biting snare drum. There are really no cut and dry rules for phrasing figures, as most experienced players develop their own style and approach to this matter. It is safe to say however that good musical sense must prevail, perhaps more so in this area than any other. Natural musical instinct and taste are the key words. Careful listening to individual sections with attention to the phrasing of particular figures and passages is essential. It is through this, the drummer will assimilate the qualities of various articulations and will hopefully apply his equipment to each varied situation.

A great deal can also be gained by intelligent listening to the time and drive of big band greats like Buddy Rich and Louie Bellson; the rhythmically precise execution of Ed Shaughnessy and the classic tastefulness, balance and blend of Mel Lewis's phrasing. Each one of these players combines all of the above-mentioned to varying degrees and can offer much to the aspiring drummer. Listen to fully appreciate the masterful drummer who can keep steady, swinging time, make all figures and accents unerringly, set-up figures with imaginative and tasteful fills, and choose colorful and musical phrasings. Most pros not only do all this, but also can do it the first time through a new chart. Perhaps it is here where clearly the thin line between the novice and the adept artist can be drawn.

Note: Two of the finest books on the subject of big band playing are *Get Your Fills Together* by Sonny Igoe, published by Sonny Igoe, Emerson, N. J. and *Stage Band Drummers Guide* by John Pickering, published by Mel Bay, Pacific, Mo. Both works should be part of the standard library of any serious big band aspirant.



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by DENNY KINNE

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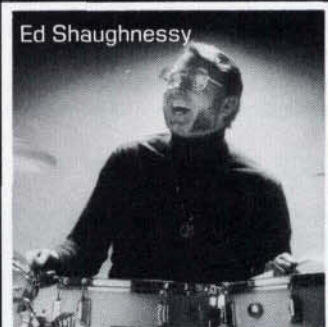
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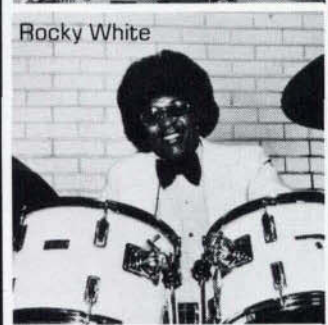
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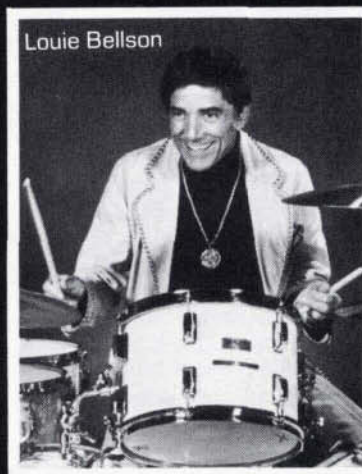
Louie Bellson with his big band, Ed Shaughnessy with his Energy Force, Butch Miles with Count Basie, Don Lamond with his own big band, and Rocky White with Mercer Ellington. They all depend on Pearl!



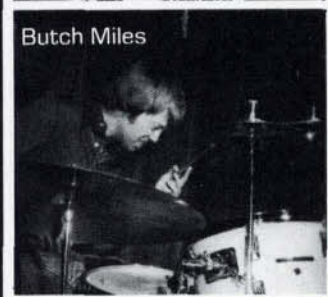
Ed Shaughnessy



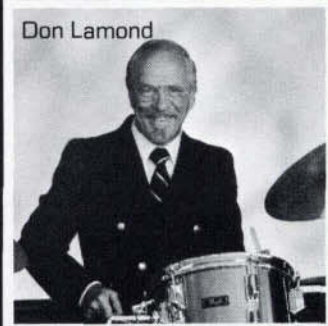
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SOUTH OF THE BORDER

"BRAZILIAN DRUMMING": THE SAMBA"

by NORBERT GOLDBKRG

Born in Argentina, Norbert Goldberg is 24 years old and holds a R.A. degree from Brooklyn College where he studied percussion with Morris Lang. At the age of 18, he travelled to Viet Nam and Thailand playing drums with a U.S.O. show. The following year, he toured Roumania with the Brooklyn College Percussion Ensemble, and has recently returned from doing independent research in Argentina and Brazil culminating with an engagement in the only jazz club in Rio de Janeiro.

Currently Mr. Goldberg is a free-lance drummer-percussionist in New York, and is recording with his group "Nightflight".

The samba is a typical rhythm and dance of Brazil. It gained popularity in this country during the forties initially as a ballroom dance mostly through the famous Brazilian singer-actress Carmen Miranda, who may be remembered as having the elaborate headdress made of tropical fruits. At that time, the common way of playing samba on the drums was with a brush and a stick, (see Ted Reed's *Latin Rhythms*), and for a while it was a standard beat in the dance drummers repertoire.

Since then, the samba has evolved greatly, in Brazil and in this country as well, where it has been recently rediscovered and incorporated with jazz-rock elements by musicians like Chick Corea, Airto, and others. Having spent some time in Brazil, I had the opportunity to observe some excellent drummers and, more importantly, to trace the roots of samba drumming as related to the Brazilian percussion section.

The following are steps in which the samba rhythms and "feel" can be developed, starting from the bass drum alone, then to the hands and their different functions, and finally, as a cohesive unit using all of the limbs. As with any music you hear or read, try to individualize these beats by bringing your own style as you play them, and by experimenting with your own variations.

The essence of samba drumming lies mostly in the feet, particularly in the bass drum, whose rhythm is derived from the "surdo" which is the large cylindrical bass drum used in Brazilian percussion. The surdo rhythm involves striking and muffling the first beat and letting the second one ring freely, thereby placing an accent on the second beat in a 2/4 bar, which is characteristic of samba music. Try this on your floor tom with a soft mallet to help you achieve the right feel.



Practice the above until a comfortable and relaxed feeling is obtained.

The snare drum rhythms punctuate the steady throb of the bass drum and are related to the rhythms of the "tamborim", a small hand held, single headed drum, and also to the differently pitched agogo bells. Although the bass drum is in two, the accompanying rhythms usually span two measures, or in this case one measure of four quarter time.



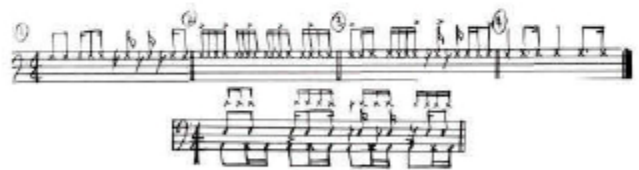
Do the above with rim clicks first, then on the snare drum head. Also, alternate between clicks, head, and rim-shots for interesting effects. Phrasing is important!

An excellent and very effective variation utilizes the tom toms in an almost melodic way. Take any of the snare beats and distribute them among the tom toms. Here's one example of the many variations possible.



Many Brazilian drummers have highly developed right hands that play sixteenth notes on the cymbal for prolonged periods of time. There are a number of options as to how the right hand can function, each creating a different style of playing.

- 1) Play exact rhythm of snare drum. Both hands together.
- 2) Straight sixteenth notes with samba accents similar to clave beat.
- 3) Sixteenth and eighth note rhythms outlining snare drum beat.
- 4) For jazz samba. Best when combined with #6 on snare drum.



Another variation can be derived at by playing one of the snare rhythms on the cymbal and combining it with a different snare rhythm, (R.H.#2,L.H.#4). In my opinion, the most effective cymbal rhythm combination is number three shown in the sample beat above, which emphasizes the snare drum rhythm and also subtly fills out the beat.

In playing samba on the drums, one should become familiar with each of the variations and be able to change from one to the other depending on the character of the music played. Although there is much activity and rhythmic interplay involved in samba drumming, the beauty of the samba beat lies in its free and relaxed feeling, and it is that which one should strive for in playing these beats.



SHOP TALK

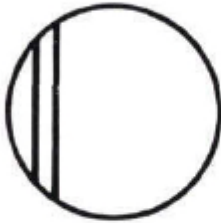
DRUM-SET TUNING

by ED SHAUGHNESSY

Ed Shaughnessy is truly a drummers drummer. His swinging style and flashy finesse can be appreciated most nights as he propels the Doc Severinson Orchestra on the Johnny Carson, "Tonight Show". Ed has worked with Charlie Ventura, Benny Goodman and Tommy Dorsey among others and along with his playing duties on the Carson show, also finds time to front his own group *Energy Force* and conduct clinics as a representative of Pearl drums. The following article is reprinted courtesy of Pearl Drums.

It must first be understood that what is here suggested is for what I call "all-around" tuning of the set. Meaning, a tuning that is good for both jazz and rock playing, as well as show playing, or drum set in concert band. There are some extra fine variations (particularly in the snare drum) that the fully experienced professional might make for individual situations. But the suggestions given here will give an excellent sound for overall playing such as I do on the "Tonight Show".

BASS DRUM - On the usual 22" x 14" (the best all-purpose size) bass drum, or 20" diameter, another popular size, two strips of felt should be used as a muffling device. One strip 3" wide on each head will be held on by the friction of the head against the drum shell. They should be placed about 1/4 the distance across the head in a vertical position as shown below.



The tension of the heads should be medium. That is, not so loose as to have any wrinkles in them, and not so tight as to have a thin sound without enough power. I tune both heads to the same tension to get the maximum sound possible. If a bass drum is particularly "ringy" after placing the two strips as described, try loosening both heads one turn of each tension handle. If the drum continues ringing excessively, repeat the

loosening process until a "flatter" sound is obtained. This "flatter" sound is especially needed in rock playing, where a busier style of bass drum is played continually.

Many rock drummers take off the front head to get an even "flatter" sound. Speaking from personal experimentation, a one-headed bass drum does not sound or feel right for big band playing where more "oomph" is needed. An acceptable sound can be obtained from a two-headed drum if the player knows what it's about.

As an extra tip, use a wooden beater if you wish a less boomy tone, and it will give more definition to the bass drum.

TOM TOMS - Tune both heads to the same pitch on all tom toms to get the fullest sound out of each drum. If two tom toms are used, tune them a fourth or fifth apart, starting with a good deep sound on the floor tom (usually 16" x 16") and going up the interval to the small tom (usually 9" x 13") with any excess ring taken out with the internal muffler.

If a group of tom toms are used in numbers of 3, 4, 5 or more, tune them with a third or fourth apart to get a melodic sound. Don't have two drums almost identical in pitch (a common mistake) which wastes the whole premise of a multi-tom set.

Whether a drummer uses two toms or more, the main thing to aim for in tuning is a definite melodic difference between drums.

SNARE DRUMS - The most important tuning secret of a crisp, definitive snare drum is in keeping the bottom head higher in pitch than the top or batter head. This is the tuning that produces an "alive" sound that cuts through the rest of the deeper pitches of the drum set. This is the sound that is associated with a quality drummer.

In helping hundreds of drummers with their snare drum problems, nine out of ten times the problem is the bottom head being too loose to give a sharp response from the vibrations of the snares! The interval of a third or fourth between heads (bottom head higher) is the best relationship for that "alive" sound. The overall pitch of the snare drum is higher than the toms.

EVEN TUNING - There is an important tip on tuning that must be adhered to for all the preceding advice to work. It is that each drum within itself must be evenly tuned.

This simply means tapping every tension rod and adjusting with a drum key until the same pitch is heard at every rod.

Many drummers with a complaint about their drums are extremely careless in this regard, and in helping them tune their set there would often be variations of a fifth or even an octave on the same head in different spots! A good sound simply could never be achieved on unevenly tuned drums like that.

It is usually best to get the heads evenly tuned around and then start to change tension (one turn at each rod).

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FROM THE PAST

The Legendary Chick Webb: a profile in courage

by ROBERT HILLARY



The story of Chick Webb is more than the story of a dynamic drummer of the swing era. It's the story of a gallant little man who overcame physical deformity, hardship and pain. A man whose spirit, courage and determination was perhaps unsurpassed, and whose drumming ability and total musicianship was nothing short of phenomenal.

William "Chick" Webb was born in Baltimore on February 10, 1907. Born badly crippled, his formative years were those of a virtual invalid until an operation as a youngster enabled him to use his feet. It was during this time, the young Chick first demonstrated an interest in drumming.

Throughout his entire adult life, Chick was hunchback and frail, just barely able to reach the foot pedal of his drums, but an unwavering determination got him to New York City at the age of 17 as drummer with the Ed Dowell band. Later in 1924, he formed his first band gathering together the talents of such outstanding section players and soloists as Jimmy Harrison, Benny Carter and Johnny Hodges, and working primarily in Harlem, the stomping grounds for all the fine young black bands of the day.

The Savoy Ballroom was a second floor walkup in the heart of Harlem and a well known dance palace during the years of the lindy hop. The exchange between the musicians on the bandstand and the dancers on the floor was oftentimes electrifying. Each fed off the other, setting exhausting paces, and creating exhilarating waves of musical excitement. By 1928, the management of the Savoy spotted the Webb band outplaying the likes of Fletcher Henderson and King Oliver's respective bands and offered them the house band job at

the Savoy. It was a turning point for Chick Webb as his band was to reign nightly for more than a decade as the unheralded kings of that swinging emporium.

Though the band recorded for the Brunswick label in 1931, it wasn't actually until 1934 when the swinging little band under the leadership of its pulsating powerhouse of a drummer began to achieve any prominence. By the onset of the big band era, Webb was leading a dynamic 13 piece band with such outstanding sidemen as Bobby Stark and Taft Jordan, John Kirby on bass, and tenor saxophonists Louis Jordan and Edgar Sampson, the latter being responsible for much of the writing. Sampson had written instrumental like "Blue Lou", "Don't Be That Way", and "Stompin' At The Savoy", all of which the Webb band played well before Goodman recorded them and eventually made famous in the mid-thirties.

Throughout the strong years of the swing era, the Chick Webb band held fort nightly at the Savoy, usually rocking the entire building with their great spirit and intense drive. In 1935, a young female singer came to Chick's attention. Dates at Levaggi's - a club in Boston where college kids from Yale and Harvard congregated - found crowds flocking in to hear the band with its new found singing discovery, relinquishing Chick's initial reluctance to hire a singer for the band. The shy young vocalist came on the band as a permanent fixture in 1935. Her name was Ella Fitzgerald.

Throughout the mid and late thirties, the band broadcast nationally on radio and produced a superb series of recordings for Decca. Under the management of Moe Gale - owner of the Savoy - the band was booked into the Paramount Theatre in New York, and an engagement at the Park Central Hotel gave the Webb band the distinction of being the first black band to ever play the hotel.

Webb rose to become one of the most acclaimed figures in jazz; a powerful drummer whose marvelous control of bass drum and cymbals lent the band much of its personality both in section and solo work. One of his greatest admirers was a fiery young drummer just out of Chicago by the name of Krupa. Webb's influence was evident in the

playing of Krupa, along with numerous other drummers of the swing era.

A massive crowd packed the Savoy Ballroom, with thousands more turned away outside on the evening of May 11, 1937 as Chick Webb and the Benny Goodman band fought it out in a legendary "battle of the bands". Police lined the bandstand, reserves in readiness, as the Goodman band stormed on, and aptly propelled by Krupa, reached a peak level of performance, but it was only the beginning. Though one might have thought it impossible to outplay the Goodman band of '37, Chick Webb proved otherwise that evening as his band came on, super-charged, blasting out one exciting arrangement after another. The huge crowd reached a frenzy level as the little dynamo put his band through its paces, driving them to unexcelled heights and practically blowing the roof right off the old Savoy. Krupa later wrote, "That night when we battled Chick at the Savoy - he just cut me to ribbons - made me feel awfully small . . . that man was dynamic; he could reach the most amazing heights. When he really let go, you had a feeling that the entire atmosphere in the place was being charged. When he felt like it, he could cut down any of us."

By 1939, it was determined that Chick had tuberculosis of the spine. The pain grew worse with each passing week, and yet, he refused to give up even after collapsing at the New York Paramount in 1939. In June, while playing on a riverboat in Washington, D. C., he collapsed again and was rushed to a hospital in Baltimore where an operation was performed to no avail. Chick Webb died on June 16, 1939 at the age of 32.

The band continued for several years fronted by Ella Fitzgerald. By '42, Ella had left and the band soon became just a fond memory, never regaining the spark and enthusiasm without Chick in the drivers seat.

Chick Webb's style was military oriented, similar to that of Baby Dodds who had been a great influence during his formative years. Webb however had a flair, a pulsation, an excitement that was unequalled. He played with a feeling of four in the bass drum as opposed to the predominant two feeling of players before him. His interplay be-

tween drums and cymbals and a sharp ear for coloration in timbre was nothing short of brilliant. Though not a great technician, he could propel a band with an infectious drive by laying down nearly perfect time, exploding in just the right places. Even though he lacked in physical power and endurance, this inimitable mixture of style and energy would charge the atmosphere of any place he played.

Perhaps the best summation to any profile in memorium to Chick Webb could best be taken from one writer's poignant observation. "Chick was perhaps the greatest of jazz drummers, a gallant little man who made his contribution to jazz within an extraordinary framework of pain and suffering."



ALAN DAWSON

(continued from page 6)

you don't get carried away.

"Sure", he says, gently, "I could teach 40 or SO hours a week. But then I wouldn't want to think about practicing or even about gigging most of the time. So you wind up getting stagnant, not getting any further ahead or even falling behind. And then, I wouldn't have anything to give anybody."

Earlier, he's marveled at a student of his who'd arrive for his lesson each week from Cambridge by bicycle, a 25-mile trip which he made even through blizzard conditions. "It was amazing that he went through all that", Dawson says.

Even more amazing is that Dawson chooses not to call attention to the most obvious reason for the trip: studying with Alan Dawson is worth just about anything.



EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

(continued from page 1)

issues of MD - but truthfully - we're more interested in your ideas. What would you like to see in the pages of the magazine? What would you like to see more of, or possibly less of? Don't be afraid to let us know what you don't like as well. We can take criticism. Remember - MD is YOUR magazine. Good reading.

EDITOR

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EHART ENERGY: MOVIN' UP

(continued from Page 9)

there who would give their left arm to do what I do and I don't mean to sound ungrateful, but life on the road is really bad news. By the time we're finished with this tour, we'll have played almost 85 headliners from one end of the country to the other. Not only does it get you health wise, but try to hold up a marriage under those circumstances. The pressure and the competition is just outrageous. It's a way of life that a lot of guys can't cope with, and I can certainly see why, even though I love it. You might say that I love music, but I hate the music business. It's a very unusual business. Our "Leftoverture" album went gold a few months ago, and you wouldn't believe the kind of people that brings out of the woodwork at our record company. They actually think that we owe it all to them. Well man, we're the ones who've been putting all the work into it; we're the ones who've been out there slaving our butts off for four years. All of a sudden they want all the credit and I'll tell you, it's very hard to be honest and say, well, we do appreciate the work you've done for us. You gotta kiss ass a lot in this business.

MD: Would you have any parting words of advice for young aspiring drummers, Phil?

PE: That's a difficult question especially from the standpoint of the field of music I represent. I think that perhaps the best words of advice I could give would be to say; I always knew in my mind that I was going to make it in a rock band, but I always had to keep in mind at the same time, that I might not, and be able to cope with that. To put so much time and effort into something like playing drums and to know that someday, you just might not make it. That's really a heavy thing for a lot of kids to accept, but you've got to remember that the competition is just so unbelievable, that you've either got to be the very best, or be in one of the best bands around, or you just might not make it. That's just the cold reality of this business.



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BUTCH MILES

(continued from Page 13)

quickly enough, but textures is another story. It takes a lot of playing and years of experience to learn textures. I don't care if you're a sixteen year old whiz kid on drums, you cannot sit down after only a few years of playing and know textures and coloring.

MD: Do you develop textures from your own inner feelings?

BM: I learned from listening. I listened to everybody. I bet I have almost every drum record that was ever recorded. I used to learn the solos by sound. I had no idea what they were playing on the record, but I could reproduce it note for note. I had no idea if it was left stroke or right stroke. I'd go by the sound and by going back and dissecting what I was playing, I could understand what I was doing. That's the important thing, to understand what you are doing and knowing why. Anybody can learn how, but to learn WHY is a different matter.



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TEACHERS FORUM

A LOGICAL APPROACH TO TEACHING THE ROLL

by FORREST CLARK

Forrest Clark has performed with the Utah Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. He has recorded with Leopold Stowkowski, Igor Stravinsky and Bruno Walter among others, and is the author of the Encyclopedia for Snare Drum. Formerly percussion instructor at the Music Academy of the West at Santa Barbara, California, Mr. Clark presently teaches at the California State University in Irvine.

Our current spectrum of musical instrument pedagogy seems to provide a wide array of divergent opinions, theories, and techniques for training and performance. From my viewpoint as a performer and teacher, I consider this to be healthy.

There is one type of teaching philosophy which I do not consider to be quite so beneficial. This is represented by the teacher who claims that his way is "the right way" and at the same time is unable to offer any adequate, logical proof or demonstration in support of his position. Tutors who fall into this latter category are often the staunchest defenders and perpetuators of the many myths, fallacies, or "sacred cows" of which percussion pedagogy has a very ample share. A brief sampling of such false doctrines are the following:

"Wrist action is essential to a well executed roll."

"Practicing with heavier sticks will build my chops."

"An untied drum roll should cease on the final 8th note count of its value."

In order that I may present the information which I believe can be helpful to those interested in the improvement of their snare drum roll, I find it necessary to contradict the first of the aforementioned common misconceptions.

In my earlier years as a musician, I began a rather thorough analysis of my percussion techniques with the object of increasing my comprehension as a teacher and for general improvement. During this process, I came to notice certain peculiarities about my Buzz Roll technique. Although my roll was smooth and controlled, my wrists stiffened noticeably (especially the left) and my execution was practically with arm motion alone. Recognizing this as

a fault, I immediately began a corrective action of daily practice using the wrist turn in my roll. My teacher had never mentioned my having this "bad habit"; nevertheless, I felt sure it should be corrected since wrist action is essential to all aspects of drumming execution (or so I assumed).

My efforts were without reward though. Turning my wrists was easy, but this seemed to induce a noticeable pulsation or accent at the start of each Buzz. During the next few weeks, I doubled my efforts but with absolutely no sign of improvement whatsoever. At this point, I began to study other drummers closely without their being aware of it. In every single case, those who utilized wrist action had roll problems, while those who played smooth rolls stiffened their wrists just like I did. This was rather surprising, but after careful consideration, I eventually realized that from the standpoint of natural physical law, it is only logical to roll with arm action and to avoid wrist turns as much as possible, particularly with the traditional left hand grip. This situation is not nearly so noticeable with matched grip players because the wrist leverage is not so critical as with the traditional left hand grip. My own body had discovered this for me although I was not consciously aware of it at the time because my mind concentrated upon "sound" rather than mechanics.

The false premise that one should turn their wrists while rolling is one which a great many percussionists, including the more well-schooled, tend to take for granted as did I even though I was not taught this concept.

The Buzz Roll has acquired a reputation of being a "stumbling block," "a problem area," "the very last thing one ever perfects," etc. Personally, I find it to be a very easy subject to teach; relatively easy to develop; and once developed, it requires little or no further practice to maintain. A drastic difference in outlook I grant, however, I am very capable of proving my point by demonstration. The cause of this drastic difference lies solely in the methods of training and developing this roll.

One approach, often used, has been to develop the double stroke RRL from slow to fast using wrist and arm movements on each stroke, then increasing the tempo to full speed by re-

bounding the secondary strokes. After this has been developed, the student is then told to increase the number of rebounds by increasing the pressure on the drumsticks. Although this is how many players (including myself) first learned the Buzz Roll, I now regard this as the most unsatisfactory method of all. Technique-wise, the double stroke and the buzz roll have little in common. Even the mere development of the double stroke roll prior to learning the buzz roll often establishes certain conditioned reflexes which interfere with, and sometimes prevent altogether, the development of a good buzz roll. The automatic wrist turn and the tendency to increase one's pressure during rebounds are two common problems often caused by this procedure.

The approach which I have found to be most successful is to indoctrinate the Buzz technique as early as possible in the student's basic training, usually commencing with just one hand at a time. A negative idea such as concentration upon "NOT turning the wrist" usually does not work well; whereas, a positive idea such as "lifting and lowering the entire drumstick gently with the arm, allowing the stick to freely bounce" will have better results. At this stage, the student can be made aware of how the speed or texture of the rebounds are controlled by pressure exerted by the index finger of the left hand and the second finger of the right hand (with most players). Here it is vital to stress the fact that the focal point of controlling pressure is of extreme importance. It can be easily and dramatically demonstrated that the greater the distance between the pressure point and the pivot point of the stick (located at the thumb), the more difficult it is to effect a satisfactory Buzz. When the finger pressure point is very close to the thumb, the rebounds will be far more consistent and more easily controlled.

As the student advances in his ability to effect a Buzz Roll, other factors which affect his roll may be clarified. Some of these are:

1. The angle of the drumstick at the moment of impact (usually a left hand problem). The more the stick is tilted towards the drumhead, the more crushed, stifled, and uncontrol-

lable are the rebounds. Always play as level to the drumhead as possible.

2. The hinge or pivot point of both sticks should be alike. If one stick is held at a point 4" from the butt and the other stick about 5 1/2" it is rather obvious that there will be some problems in acquiring an evenly textured roll.

3. Achieving fuller control of the rebound speed so that all Buzzes are equal in sound. Some years ago, the late Harry A. Bower taught me to rebound three strokes per hand. Many hours of practice gave me the ability to control this evenly to a full speed roll and, for concert playing, I use exactly 3 per hand 90% of the time. On a "dance band" type of drum with wire snares, I use more pressure to achieve a finer Buzz. The texture of one's roll is dependent upon the performer's concept of what sound is appropriate to the style of music he is performing. The practice I spent on controlling 3 per hand has helped

my hands develop a certain "feel" for equal pressure regardless of whether I play a finer or a more coarsely grained roll.

4. Speed of alternations. Four pulses to a beat at around M.M. 112-116 is the norm for practically all professionals. The speed tends to increase *above* this when playing loudly and decreases to around M.M. 96 in a super-soft roll.

5. Super-soft or pppp roll. Beyond the factors already mentioned, one item is most important - Pressure! Theoretically, any drumstick is too heavy to produce a roll at this dynamic level; therefore, it must somehow be lightened. All downward pressure exerted by the fingers must be eliminated and replaced by the opposite type of pressure from the thumbs. The proper application of this thumb grip pressure can be recognized when the bead of the drumstick tends to "float" lightly in the air like a cork on water. A musical Buzz can then be produced by lifting the bead of the stick as little as

1/8" above the head (ordinarily the stick cannot produce sufficient rebounds for a roll at this level). This is the most difficult item to learn in Buzz Roll technique. The "drum set" performer may never have need of it; while to the symphonic percussionist, it is an absolute necessity.

As for the last two aforementioned "sacred cows", consider the following:

A heavy 3 S model stick requires less wrist effort than will a light 7 A model due to the added helpful momentum of the heavy stick.

The cessation of the untied roll is not measured in such terms. They merely cease just prior to the end of the note value *exactly* in the same manner as any wind or string instrumentalist ends their untied notes.

There is little doubt that there are those who will cling to the false theory of the wrist turn without bothering to study the question honestly; nevertheless, it is my hope that there will be some who will reevaluate their position and gain from it.



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UNDERSTANDING RHYTHM

PART III

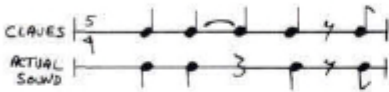
by GLEN PRIOR

THE TIE:

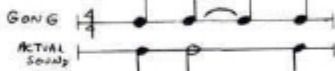
The Tie is a curved line that connects two notes together. Only the first note is played, but is held for the duration of the two notes involved.



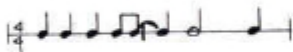
When playing instruments of short sound duration (claves, etc.), you would play the first note of the tie and forget about sustaining through the tied note.



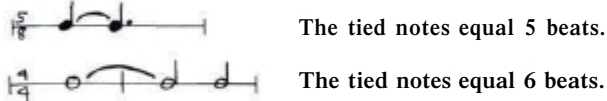
But as a rule, the instruments that have the ability to sustain a long single tone should do so through the tie.



The tie is good for connecting notes across the bar line.



It is also used along with dotted notes to increase note values.



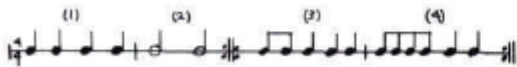
Notice that in the 5/8 measure, the tie is able to produce a note worth five beats, unlike the dotted note.

REPEAT MARKS:

A few signs you should be aware of:

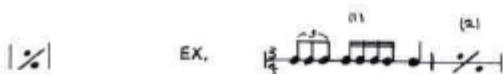
Repeat marks   mean to repeat anything


between these two signs one more time. If only the latter sign appears, start from the beginning of the piece.

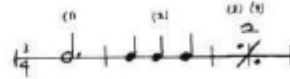


Here, we play measures 1 and 2, then repeat them. Play measures 3 and 4, then repeat them.

To indicate repeating the measure you just played, the follow-sign if used:

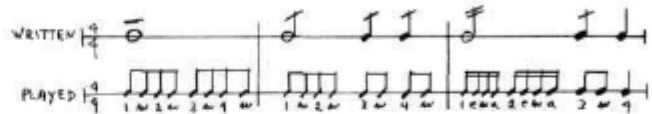


Measure two is exactly the same as measure one. To repeat the two previous measures, the sign  is used.




Measures 3 and 4 are exactly the same as measures 1 and 2.

NOTE ABBREVIATIONS AND COUNTING RESTS:

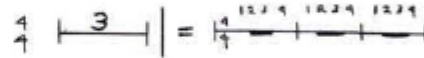


One line crossing a note always implies the 8th note.

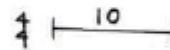
Two lines crossing implies the 16th notes.

Complete measure rests are indicated by the sign 

and a number above it indicating how many measures to rest.

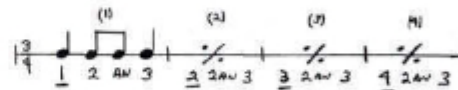


When counting rests, count them as follows to avoid getting lost.



Count: 1 2 3 4, 2 2 3 4, 3 2 3 4, 4 2 3 4, 5 2 3 4,
6 2 3 4, 7 2 3 4, 8 2 3 4, 9 2 3 4, 10 2 3 4.

Count a repeating playing passage the same way:



INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

LEIGH HOWARD STEVENS JOINS LUDWIG-MUSSER CLINIC STAFF

Ludwig Industries recently announced the addition of Leigh Howard Stevens to its educational clinic staff as a musser marimba clinician.

Mr. Stevens will be available to educational institutions, music retail dealers, and music associations for guest clinic and concert appearances.

Considered one of America's foremost concert marimbist, Leigh has studied with the renown Vida Chenoweth in Auckland, New Zealand. He is also a recent graduate from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York.

Clinic topics include a variety of mallet rolls and stroking techniques. His mastery of mallet independence has greatly expanded the composition and musical possibilities for the marimba. He has already premiered more than a dozen original compositions for solo marimba.

PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY PLANS INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The Percussive Arts Society has set October 28-30 as the date for the PAS International Convention '77 and has designated the campus of the University of Tennessee-Knoxville as the site. Although the program is not finalized, some of the artists include: Keiko Abe, xylophonist from Japan; James Blades, author and percussionist with the London Symphony; Billy Cobham, America's well-known rock-jazz drummer; Jack Conner, keyboard mallet artist; Michael Boulanger of the Canadian Drum Corps Association; Saul Goodman and Morris Lang of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. There will be several percussion performing groups and topping the bill in that area are: Nexus, an exciting Canadian percussion ensemble, and the Northern Illinois University Steel Band.

PERCUSSION SEMINAR

The 2nd Annual Percussion Seminar for music educators and drummers of all levels of playing proficiency will be held on the Florham-Madison Campus of Fairleigh Dickenson University of Madison, New Jersey, on July 28-31, 1977.

The four-day event designated, The PLZ Seminar will again be under the sponsorship of Premier Drums and the

A. Zildjian Company. Sessions will be conducted by a staff of 14 nationally known percussion clinicians and stellar performers from the New York-New Jersey-Pennsylvania area. The seminar will feature sessions on such diverse subjects as marching percussion techniques, rock drumming, small group and big band drumming, mallet instruments, and drum solo construction. Special programs will be presented by several outstanding personalities and groups including last year's outstanding surprise guest artist, Horacee Arnold, Premier drummer, composer, and recording artist, who will again be featured in a clinic on contemporary drum set playing. Other guest artists and student groups will also highlight the event.

For further information and applications contact Glenn Weber, Coordinator, PLZ Percussion Seminar, 14 Northfield Avenue, West Orange, New Jersey 07052.

DRUM CLUB FORMS

The Long Island Drum Club is a non-profit organization comprised of dedicated musicians. The club provides the means for all members to further their knowledge of all aspects of drumming through the exchange of ideas. Some of the many goals of the club are to use its influence on drum companies in bringing more clinics to the North-East; to provide the vehicle in which members can come forward to share ideas with the membership through demonstrations and clinics; and to provide the resources and ideas so each member can gain an additional perspective of direction and so each drummer can continue to grow musically. For applications and further information, write to Long Island Drum Club, 334 Hillside Ave., Williston Park, N. Y. 11596.

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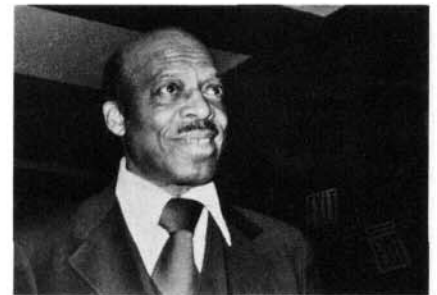
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DRUM NIGHT AT STORYVILLE

Photos by Aran Wald

On May 2, 1977, the Storyville Jazz Club in New York City played host to the Premier Drum Company for its "Drum Night". On hand, among others, were Horacee Arnold, Louis Hayes, Philly Jo Jones and "Papa" Jo Jones. A great night for drummers.



JUST DRUMS

PRO-MARK INTRODUCES NEW ROTOTOM STICKS

New Rerno Rototom sticks are now available from Pro-Mark Corporation. These new sticks were designed by Vic Firth of the Boston Symphony Orchestra specifically for the new Remo Rototom.



THE BLACK BEAUTY FROM LUDWIG is a new kind of snare drum, answering a heavy demand for a black snare. It is available in 5" x 14" and 6 1/2" x 14" sizes.

STAR UNVEILS SYNARE PERCUSSION SYNTHESIZER

The Synare Percussion Synthesizer, first in a family of revolutionary electronic music instruments from Star Instruments, is the first fully integrated percussion synthesizer.

The synthesizer has four sound sources (VCO, White Noise, Pink Noise, Ring Modulator), full mixing, a wide-range voltage controlled filter, and dual voltage controlled amplifiers. The Unit mounts on a standard tom-tom stand and may be positioned to be compatible with the arrangement of the drum set. Suggested retail is \$795.00.

For details contact Star Instruments, Inc., Dept. R, Box 71, Stafford Spring, Conn. 06076, (203) 684-4421.

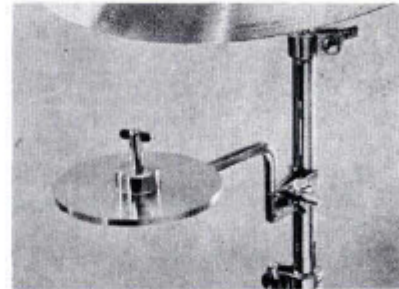
PREMIER ACCESSORY CASE

This smartly styled Premier percussion accessory case (PD5409) is now available to solve the percussionist's problem of how to carry sticks, beaters, mallets and a host of small accessories.

ROGERS DRUMS INTRODUCES PAISTE 2002 BELL CYMBAL

The Paiste 2002 Bell cymbal has been introduced by Rogers Drums. This thick eight-inch cymbal produces a high pitched, long-lasting crystal clear bell sound. When played with a mallet close to a microphone, the sound is like a giant church bell. When played in the bell area, the Paiste Bell cymbal provides unique Latin-type effects. For show drummers, it can take the place of a triangle when needed.

HOLDERS DESIGNED FOR SINGLE CROTALES



Avedis Zildjian Company has introduced a new chrome finish holder for a single Crotale (Antique Cymbal). It is equipped with an adjustable mounting clamp that enables the drummer to position the holder at whatever height he wishes on a regular cymbal floor stand.

DRUM MARKET - Classified Section

If you have anything to sell or trade • if you are looking to buy • if you have a service to offer • advertise in Drum Market. Drum Market is read by drummers • nationwide.

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Learn the world of Total Percussion! For beginners, intermediates and advanced students in the Bronx, Queens, and Westchester areas. Instructions on drums, vibes, marimba and timpani. Call Joe Forte at (212) 824-7489. Staff percussionist with Rising Sun Music, Inc.

Old "Ludwig & Ludwig" drum outfit: Light fixtures in bass (28") and snare, original stands, temple blocks, tacked heads on bottom of mounted toms. Send \$1.00 for pictures. (Serious inquiries only) Also large stock of new outfits at righteous discounts - write for quote. Cook Christian Supplies, 219 Prospect, Alma, Mi. 48801.

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DRUM GOODIES! Recorded home-study drum courses, Rock, Conga. Unusual, hard-to-find percussion items. Catalog free. TIP, 9926 Haldeman, Suite 24A, Dept. MD-2, Philadelphia, Pa. 19115.

Fibes Drum Kit Wanted: Double Tom-Tom (9 x 13) & (8 x 12 or 9 x 13 or 10 x 15) mounted on 14 x 20 bass. 16 x 16 F.T.T. and possibly 16 x 18. Must be in antique brass (not copper) finish with chrome snare. New or excellent used. Reasonable. Send particulars and best price to: Marion Moore, 1215 Forestwood Drive, Charleston, S. C. 29407. (803) 553-0367.





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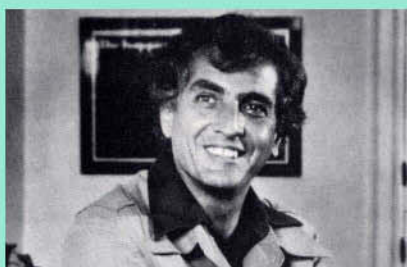
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