

Melody Maker

3^d INCORPORATING "RHYTHM"

EVERY THURSDAY Vol. XXI No. 627

ALL-BRITAIN FIXED FOR OCTOBER 14

Six Area Finals Around the Country

THE 1946 "ALL-BRITAIN" DANCE BAND CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE KING'S HALL, BELLE VUE, MANCHESTER, IN THE AFTERNOON OF SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14 NEXT.

It will be presented, as last year, in the form of a grand Dance Music Festival before a seated audience, with one of the nation's most celebrated swing bands as an added attraction to the country's finest semi-pro bands, who will compete for the highest honour they can achieve—the "All-Britain" title.

This season the all-time record number of fifty-three of the County and District Championships, which are, of course, the first steps to the "All-Britain," are due to have been held by the time the last one—the 1945 Northern Counties Championship at Manchester—takes place on August 31.

TO DECIDE WHICH OF THE WINNERS OF THESE COUNTY AND DISTRICT EVENTS SHALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO COMPETE IN THE "ALL-BRITAIN," A QUALIFYING ROUND, IN THE FORM OF THE FOLLOWING SIX AREA FINALS (ALL OF WHICH, EXCEPT WHERE OTHERWISE STATED, WILL BE DANCES, WITH NON-STOP DANCING TO THE COMPETING AND "HOUSE" BANDS), HAS BEEN ARRANGED:—

AREA FINALS

North Britain (Western Section) Area Final.—Sunday, September 8, at 2 p.m., in the Empress Ballroom, The Winter Gardens, Blackpool, before a seated audience.

South Britain (Eastern Section) Area Final.—Tuesday, September 11, at 7.30 p.m., at the Hammersmith Palais de Danse, London.

Mid Britain Area Final.—Friday, September 14, at 7 p.m., at the de Montfort Hall, Leicester.

South Britain (Western Section) Area Final.—Tuesday, September 18, at 7.30 p.m., at the Hammersmith Palais de Danse, London.

Greater London Area Final.—Tuesday, September 25, at 7.30 p.m., at the Hammersmith Palais de Danse, London.

North Britain (Eastern Section) Area Final.—Sunday, September 30, at 2 p.m., in the Oval Concert Hall of the City Hall, Sheffield, before a seated audience.

All bands which have won a County or District Championship this season are, of course, eligible for an Area Final, and subject to the necessity of equalising as far as possible the number of bands in each Area Final, each of these County and District winners will go to the Area Final nearest its home town.

Eligible bands will be advised in (Please turn to page 3)

NAT GONELLA BANDLEADING

BACK into full civilian stride, following his discharge from the Army a few months ago, and a short rest to restore his health, trumpeter Nat Gonella started up last Monday (23rd) in his first big job since the old days, when he opened with his own ten-piece band at the Court Royal Hotel, Southampton.

Nat has gone all out to build up a good band for a date where an enterprising management is bringing down first-class outfits for its patrons.

The following well-known London boys are with him: Jack Penn (piano); Dave Fullerton (drums and vocalist); Frank Osborne (trombone); Jack Forbes, Ken Lumb, Dennis Cracknell, and Chris Curtis (reeds); and R. Montgomery and Leon Steinberg (trumpets).

Nat and his Band are playing for a month at Southampton. Next Sunday (29th) they are being featured at a Sunday concert at the Capitol, Cardiff.

GRAPPELLY LEAVES BATES

BATES CLUB in Park Lane (London) makes headlines this week with an extensive "general post" going on among its musicians. Stephane Grappelly and his outfit left last Saturday (21st) after a long and successful run, in the course of which they have done much to give the establishment a fine musical prestige.

Roberto Inglez and his Orchestra are carrying on at Bates, where on June 29 last, Roberto celebrated his first anniversary.

Taking the place vacated by Stephane Grappelly is well-known London leader Stanley Carter and his Band, who have just finished up a run of nearly a year at the Slevia Club.

With Stanley presiding at piano and vocalising, band includes George Roberts (alto sax and clarinet); Tommy Keith (trumpet); Claude Taylor (bass); and Victor Brown and "Daphne" (vocalists).

Drumming, and looting after everything in a managerial sense, is Lou Murray.

MORE BANDS ON THE AIR IN NEW B.B.C. PROGRAMMES

THIS SUNDAY (JULY 29) IS THE BIG DAY WHEN THE B.B.C. PUTS ON ITS CIVVY SUIT AGAIN AND GOES BACK TO PEACE-TIME BROADCASTING. IT IS VERY GOOD NEWS FOR READERS OF THE "MELODY MAKER" THAT THE NEW PROGRAMMES WILL FEATURE MORE DANCE BANDS AND DANCE MUSIC THAN EVER BEFORE.

As forecast in these columns, the very popular A.E.F. Programme goes off the air on Saturday, after fourteen months' valuable service, and the present General Forces Programme goes on to short-wave for the benefit of British troops abroad.

Home listeners will be catered for by the Home Service and the Light Programme, the former split up into seven regions, as follows: London Region (342.1 metres); Midlands (296.2); North (449.1 and 285.7); West (514.6 and 203.5); Scotland (391.1); Wales (373.1) and Northern Ireland (285.7).

This service is radiated from 6.30 a.m. to midnight each week-day, and on Sunday from 8 a.m. to midnight.

NEXT WEEK'S BANDS

The Light Programme, which will be on the air from 9 a.m. to midnight every day, is a long-wave programme on 1,500 metres, or may be received on 261.1 metres, medium-wave.

That fans will have plenty of opportunity of hearing British dance bands in action is proved by the following selection of items you will be able to hear during the first week of the new programmes:

MONDAY: Home—Victor Silvester (3 p.m.); George Elrick (10.30 p.m.). Light—Gorraldo (5.30 p.m.); Lou Praeger in Hammersmith Palais 22.00 "Write-a-Tune" Competition (9.30 p.m.); Nat Gonella (11 p.m.); Edmundo Ros (11.30 p.m.).

TUESDAY: Home—Jack Payne (7.45 p.m.); George Elrick (11.05 p.m.); George Scott-Wood (11.35 p.m.). Light—Stanley Black (0.15 a.m.); Blue Rockets (6 p.m.); Spiko Hughes' Swing Club (6.30 p.m.); Billy Cotton (9 p.m.); Debroy Somers (10.30 p.m.).

WEDNESDAY: Light—Francisco Condo (11 a.m.); Bram Martin (4.30 p.m.); Roland Poachey (11 p.m.); Harry Hayes (11.30 p.m.).

As we announce in separate stories elsewhere, the pre-war policy of regular weekly broadcasts from London hotels and restaurants is also restarting, so, keeping our fingers well crossed, we look forward to brighter broadcasting times ahead.

SAVOY AND BERKELEY "DEPS"

EVERY year, in the month of August, the annual holiday season for the musicians at the Savoy and Berkeley Hotels causes a big reshuffle among the dance band "pool" of London.

This year, Carroll Gibbons and his Orchestra, from the Savoy, and Al Collins and his Band, from the Berkeley, commence their annual vacations on July 28.

A ten-piece band, under well-known violinist-vocalist Simone, takes over at the Savoy Hotel for four weeks; while a smaller outfit, led by London sax-ace Jock Scott, will play at the Berkeley for nine weeks. The latter part of the season in which Carroll Gibbons and his Band are away from the Savoy Hotel will be played by Al Collins and his Band.

Musicians to be led by Simone at the Savoy will include Cyril Jusohau and Pat Redmond (pianos); Lou Harris, Wally Rold, Percy Winnick and Micky Deans (saxes); Jimmy Redmond (trumpet); George Gibbs (bass); and Benny Lag (not to be confused with the well-known vocalist of that name) (drums). At the Berkeley, Jock Scott will lead Jack Clappor and Wally Purdie (saxes); Jack Geller (piano); Joe White (bass); and Mott Moseley (drums). Griff Lewis will be playing "relief" piano.

As is the usual custom, both these outfits have been fixed up under the aegis of well-known London band-leader-drummer Sam Webber.

BIG break for noted Crewe "M.M." contestants, Edgar Harrison and his Band is the news that next week (commencing Monday, 30th) they are to deputise for Harry Lander and his Band at the Astoria Dance Salon, Charing Cross Road, London. Harry and his Band are "questing" for the week at the Plaza, Derby.

ROS CLICKS B.B.C. WEEKLY SERIES

ONE of the plums of the new B.B.C. Light Programme has been secured by popular Edmundo Ros and his taut Cuban Band, who will broadcast weekly, starting on Friday, August 3, from the Regatta Restaurant, Mayfair, London.

Transmissions will be direct from the restaurant, where the outfit is such a great attraction, and the series will be heard every Friday at 11 p.m. in the new Light Programme.

Edmundo is also very much in the broadcasting news in other directions. He and his band are carrying out a late-night dance-music broadcast from the B.B.C. Studios on July 20 (11.20-12 midnight, Light). The previous day (July 20), Ed. is broadcasting in the

first "Variety Band Box" under the new B.B.C. programme scheme (5 p.m., Light).

He is also broadcasting a number of Latin-American programmes during August.

On all these broadcasts Edmundo will be featuring his new vocalist from Spain, Liliata Fontana. There has been a change in the Ros Band in the piano department, and well-known rumba expert Eric Spencer replaces Olarry Wears.

At present enjoying a well-earned holiday in Torouay, Edmundo Ros has a tremendously busy programme mapped out for the coming season towards which the foregoing forms an impressive start.

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"JAZZ AND SWING?—NO DIFFERENCE!"

—SAYS ARMSTRONG

Latest News from New York

by LEONARD FEATHER

HILL-HARRIS DISCUSSIONS ON THE AIR

WHEN the new B.B.C. programmes commence on July 29, one of the features likely to make a strong appeal to "M.M." readers will be a half-hour every Thursday evening (6.30 p.m., Light) devoted to gramophone records, which will be reviewed in the form of a discussion between well-known straight and swing critics, Ralph Hill and Rex Harris.

Rex, through our "Collectors' Corner," and his numerous broadcast, and Ralph Hill through his writings and B.B.C. work, are both renowned in their respective spheres and need no introductions here. They joined forces to work on lecturing under the auspices of E.N.S.A. and from April, 1944, until May of this year, have given 120 talks illustrated with gramophone records on the topic, "Jazz v. Classics."

Their Forces' audiences ranged from 25 to 700, and wherever they went this unique discussion, which was a happy combination of education and entertainment, was received with the utmost enthusiasm. In fact, many units offered the opinion that it was the best thing E.N.S.A. had sent them.

In addition to the above news, the Melody Maker learns that at the end of October, Ralph Hill's position as Music Editor of the "Radio Times" will be terminated.

This is made necessary by his acceptance of the offer to succeed the late Edwin Evans as permanent Music Critic for the "Daily Mail," which also means that it is impossible for him to continue working for E.N.S.A. Ralph's resignation comes after twelve years' service with the Corporation.

Fortunately, it hasn't meant the end of his association with Rex, because they have both received a number of dates to appear next season at schools and music clubs in various parts of the country. And, of course, there are the broadcasts already referred to on which they will feature together.

One further item of news concerning Rex is that he has lately been acting as jazz adviser to a series of short programmes being broadcast on the Indian Service on alternate Wednesday afternoons at 3.15.

Weedon Leaves Gerrard

BECAUSE of heavy free-lance and teaching commitments, well-known London guitarist Bert Weedon is giving up his position with Harry Gerrard's Band at Fischer's Restaurant, Bond Street, London.

Next week Bert will be appearing as special guitar soloist with Harry Leader and his Band at the Plaza, Derby. He has often been featured with Harry Leader on the air, and is nowadays on all Harry's sessions.

CALL SHEET

(Week commencing July 30)

- Nat ALLEN and Orchestra. Empire, Oldham.
- Carl BARRITEAU and Band. One-night Stands, Manchester.
- Billy COTTON and Band. New Theatre, Cardiff.
- Johnny DENIS and Swingtet. Dome, Brighton.
- George ELRICK and Band. Band of the Week, B.B.C.
- Glória GAYE and Band. Hippodrome, Lewisham.
- Nat GONELLA and Band. Court Royal Hotel, Southampton.
- Adelaldo HALL. Empire Kingston.
- Henry HALL and Band. Garrick, Southport.
- Jack JACKSON and Band. Palace, Plymouth.
- Joe LOSS and Band. Empire, Edinburgh.
- Felix MENDELSSOHN and Hawaiians. Jephson Gardens, Leamington Spa.
- Harry PARRY and Orchestra. Empire, Chatham.
- Oscar RABIN and Band. Green's Playhouse, Glasgow.
- Monty REY. Hippodrome, Wolverhampton.
- Harry ROY and Band. Palace, Manchester.
- Anne SHELTON. E.N.S.A.
- TROISE and his Mandollers. Winter Gardens, Morecambe.
- Maurice WINNICK and Band. Empire, Nottingham.
- Eric WINSTONE and Orchestra. Empire, East Ham.

U.S. HIT PARADE

- HERE are the latest available list of the nine most popular songs in America, as assessed by the weekly nation-wide ballot conducted by the American Tobacco Co., and broadcast in their "Your Hit Parade" programme over the C.B.S. network:—
1. SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY (1-1-1-1-3-4-3-9).
 2. LAURA (2-3-3-2-1-5-7-2-4-8-6).
 3. DREAM (3-2-3-5-1-8-3-7).
 4. YOU BELONG TO MY HEART (0-0-6).
 5. THE MORE I SEE YOU (7-8-0-9-0-0-0-0-7).
 6. BELL BOTTOM TROUSERS (6-5-8).
 7. THERE, I'VE SAID IT AGAIN (5-4-7-7).
 8. WHILE YOU'RE AWAY. (6-4-7-7).
 9. BAIA.

THE "M.M." joins with his innumerable friends in offering hearty congratulations to well-known pianist-composer Clifford Hellier on the recent birth of a daughter. Both mother and daughter (who is to be named Carole Lillian) are doing well.

Engaged as E.N.S.A. accompanist during a good deal of the war period, Clifford has had some interesting experiences abroad. Says the most exciting of them, for him, was being in a front-line town in Germany just before the end of hostilities, and hearing—despite the thudding punctuations of shellfire—his own "English Rhapsody" coming over on the radio, played by Rae Jenkins and the B.B.C. Midland Light Orchestra.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG PUT A DECISIVE END TO AN UNNECESSARY CONTROVERSY RECENTLY WHEN HE STATED FLATLY THAT AS FAR AS HE IS CONCERNED THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN JAZZ AND SWING, AND THAT IT IS RIDICULOUS TO CLAIM THAT LOUIS PLAYS ONE AND NOT THE OTHER.

Contradicting an extraordinary article in a New York paper by a critic who tried to conjure up technical differences between jazz and swing, Louis wrote, in a characteristic Armstrong-type-written letter:—

"I differ with him. . . . To me, as far as I could see it all my life, Jazz and Swing is the same thing. . . . In the good old days of Buddy Bolden it was called Rag Time Music. . . . Later on in the years it was called Jazz Music—Hot Music—Gut Bucket—and now they've poured a little gravy over it, called it Swing Music. . . . No matter how you slice it, it's still the same music."

In the same letter Louis gave the lie to a number of fantastic stories that have been built up around one "Bunk" Johnson, who was alleged to have been his musical mentor and teacher.

"If there is anybody who should give it to King Oliver. . . . It seems that somebody's trying to make a mess out of the issue as to who taught me and who did this and that. What does it matter, anyway, as long as they don't get the right person to give the credit to? . . . Oh, well, it all doesn't make sense. . . . If anybody wants to know a solo can be swung on any tune and you can call it Jazz or Swing."

Louis thus falls in line with Duke Ellington, Lionel Hampton, Coleman Hawkins, Red Norvo, Cootie Williams, and virtually all the other top jazz musicians who have stated flatly that all this talk about jazz being different from swing is sheer nonsense.

DUKE'S TWO BASSES

Mention of Ellington reminds me that the Duke has gone back to his old method of using two bass players, as he did in the late 1930 with Hayes Alvis and Billy Taylor. Supplementing Junior Raglin in the band now is Al Lucas, formerly with Eddie Heywood.

Heywood and his present bass player, John Simmons, were arrested in Hollywood the other day for alleged marijuana smoking. They were released on bail and scheduled for trial in July. Heywood's band has been scoring a big success at Billy Beale's Club in the film city.

Charlie Barnett's projected overseas tour has been called off again, and Gene Krupa's plan to play far to the tropics abroad is also not too sure to materialise. Anita O'Day is expected to be back with the band when it follows Harry James at the Astor shortly. Her place with Stan Kenton's fine band was taken by June Christy, who sings in a style remarkably close to Anita's.

Benny Winstone, now a familiar figure around every New York bandstand, and a friend of hundreds of New York jazzmen, has been in rehearsal with Jess Stacy's new orchestra with which Mrs. Stacey (Lee Wiley) will probably be featured. This is Benny's first U.S. job since his arrival here from Canada. He still has a broad Glasgow accent.

Teddy Wilson left Benny Goodman's Band when it departed from New York. Teddy dislikes travel and is studying and free-lancing in town, also recording for Musicraft. Charlie Queener, pianist with the Goodman band, now doubles with the sextet. Dottie Reid took Kay Penton's place as "B. G.'s" singer. Slam Stewart is still with the sextet, despite rumours that he would leave and that harpist Adele Girard would join.

Once again New York is awag with news of innumerable new record companies. Ben Pollack has started his own label and will record Kay Starr, former Barnett vocalist.

Irving Mills is going back in the record game. Cosmopolitan is the biggest of the new ventures, having signed up such names as Oscar Niessen, Jerry Wayne, Gertrude Niessen, Coleman Hawkins, and Joan

Edwards, and promised to turn out literally millions of discs a year.

Melodisc, Juke Box, Modern Music, Comet, Atlas, Guild, Continental, Black and White, and scores of others are active with hot jazz sessions. There hardly seems to be a company left (out of the 200 now functioning) that hasn't made at least one date with Coleman Hawkins, Slam, Don Byas, Johnny Guarneri, or Cozy Cole.

Men like these pop up either as leaders or as sidemen on half the jazz records turned out nowadays. And less than two years ago there was literally no jazz recording going on in the entire United States!

Buddy Rich has at last gone ahead with his long-threatened plan to leave Tommy Dorsey and form his own band. Tommy has not found a permanent replacement yet, but his other current featured artists make a strong list, including the great new pianist, Tommy Todd; tenor man Vido Musso; clarinetist Gus Bivona; and the inimitable Charlie Shavers on trumpet.

KIRBY BREAKS UP

John Kirby has broken up his band completely, even Buster Bailey having at last left him. Kirby is now rehearsing a new group for Café Society Downtown. It will include young Benny Harris, a Dizzy Gillespie-style trumpeter; Rudy Williams, alto; and the talented ex-Cootie Williams pianist, Earl (Buddy) Powell.

Phil Moore, pianist-vocalist-composer-arranger whose sextet has been a hit at both Cafes Society, starts on his first theatre dates soon. Gene Sedric, tenor and clarinet, is leaving him and will not be replaced. Chuck Wayne, the sensational young guitarist who made a number of records with Bigard and Marsala, is now Phil's only white sideman.

Moore's joint record with Lena Horne, "I Want a Little Doggie," is a big thing commercially; unfortunately, some of the excellent jazz numbers he has been featuring at the club are not yet on wax.

Caught Earl Hines during his week at the Harlem Apollo, and was impressed by Earl's new rhythm quartet, which did a number on its own, featuring Clifton Small, piano (doubling from the trombone section); Rene Hall (guitar); Gene Thomas (bass); and a very good vibraphonist named Bill Thompson.

Girl musicians are very much in the news. Charlie Barnett has been featuring a femme trumpet player, Jack Teagarden has vocalist Mildred Shirley doubling on bass, and Lionel Hampton found a young white girl named Dardanelle from Mississippi who plays vibes, piano and arranges. She has done several scores for Hamp, and sat in on piano at his last record date for Decca.

Louis Jordan recently fired his entire band claiming they were unco-operative. He now has Aaron Izanhal, ex-Ernie Fields, on trumpet; Josh Jackson (tenor); Carl Hogan (bass); Bill Davis (piano and arranger); and Eddie Byrd, who was with him once before, back again on drums. Joe's first record with Bing Crosby came out recently, and his fame is hitting new heights.

Buddy Johnson and his enlarged and improved band, featuring sister Etta Johnson on blues vocals, has a new hit with "That's the Stuff You Gotta Watch," which he recorded on Decca. This is the Buddy Johnson who plays piano; the other one, known as Budd Johnson, plays tenor and has just opened at the Thru Deuces with a small band, replacing Dizzy Gillespie, who's gone on the road with his new full-size unit.

THE "M.M." is sorry to report that London tenor sax stylist Aubrey Spell has been indisposed. After a spell in hospital he is now slowly convalescing, and hopes to return to the normal round of activities soon.

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Peach of an Air-Series for Peachey

ROLAND PEACHEY, whose dance band celebrates its first anniversary at the London May Fair Hotel on September 4, is shortly to be featured in a new broadcasting series in which Roland and the band will be on the air from the May Fair every Wednesday night from 11 to 11.30 p.m. in the new Light programme of the B.B.C.

This series of broadcasts has been negotiated by Jack Payne, who presents the Peachey Band on all its engagements. First airing in the new series will take place on August 1.

Personnel being featured by Peachey these days includes himself on his special triple-necked Hawaiian guitar; Henry Krein (accordion); Jim Easton and Jimmy Callahan (alto saxes); Shirley Waldron (tenor sax and violin); Gill Port (tenor sax); Bert Bullimore (trumpet); Len Graham (bass); Wally Mitchell (guitar); and Sid Harris (drums). (Sid Harris, who was announced as having joined the "Jazzmen," now finds it impossible to tour for family reasons, so is settling down with Peachey in Town.)

Vocalising on the first two airings from the May Fair will be well-known Jack Payne vocalist Betty Webb. For succeeding broadcasts, Jane Lee, who is broadcasting with the Jack Payne Band, and who is also featured in the Jack Buchanan air shows, will sing with Peachey.

Since starting at the May Fair, Roland Peachey has carried out four broadcasts from the hotel, one of these being on VE night.

It is good to know that this great home of dance music is once again to be featured regularly on the air.

IVY AND GIRLS OFF TO EUROPE

MOST of those who have seen Ivy Benson and her Girls starring in the grand Variety show at the London Victoria Palace this current week can have little idea that many of the girls have been bravely carrying through the show whilst suffering considerable pain and discomfort as the result of the many inoculations they have received prior to their forthcoming Continental tour.

This, incidentally the last week of Variety at Victoria Palace, is also Ivy Benson's last appearance on the English stage for some time. Within a matter of days of the final curtain coming down at Victoria, she and her girls will be on the high seas, bound for eight hectic Continental weeks that will take them to many of the principal cities over there where the Allied troops congregate, and which may, Ivy fervently hopes, find them eventually playing in Berlin itself.

Ivy is fronting a particularly strong and accomplished contingent of musical ladies these days.

With her own inimitable alto and clarinet leading she has Toni Beale, Briquette Barrois (of Brussels), and Norma Birch (tpts.); Betty Thomas and Elsie Rodgers (tmps.); Norma Cameron, Ivy Gunn, Lena Kidd, Joan Taylor, and Pat Sloane (reeds); Pauline Ponting (drums and vibes); Julie Rogers (piano); Elsie Ford (bass); and Joan Marriott (guitar).

Vocalists are Joyce Clarke, Doris Knight, Lillian Farrell and Kay Yorstan; and Rita Roden is accordionist and specialty dancer. The onerous task of management is on the capable shoulders of Renee Fitzgerald.

NIGHT-CLUB BAND ON WAX

Edgar Jackson's Record Reviews

ALL-BRITAIN

(Continued from page 1)

due course of the Area Final in which they will be required to compete, until when they need take no further action regarding their entry.

To the "All-Britain" will go the winners of each of these six Area Finals, together with the winners of the 1945 "All-Scotland" Championship (considered as an Area Final, as it was the only event to be held in Scotland this season) and George Chambers and his Band, who, as last year's "All-Britain" winners, are seeded to this year's Final.

A weak point in this scheme may seem to be that the second band in one of the Area Finals may turn out to be a better combination than the winning band at one of the other Area Finals, in which case it would be rather tough on the second band if it had to lose the right to take part in the "All-Britain" merely because, owing to the location of its home town, it had been unable to compete in the Area Final it might have won.

It has therefore been arranged that all bands placed second in an Area Final shall have another chance to qualify for the "All-Britain."

A special heat for all these second bands will be held in private at Belle Vue in the morning of the day of the "All-Britain" (Sunday, October 14), and the bands placed first and second in it, and possibly also those placed third and even fourth, should any of the otherwise qualified bands drop out of the "All-Britain," will be passed to the "All-Britain" Final in the afternoon to make up the total number of bands in the Final to ten.

GREAT interest has been aroused by the opening of Glasgow's Kelvin Hall for a 14 weeks' season of ice-skating, and also by the news that from now on this hall will be used for its peace-time activities, which include carnivals, exhibitions and promotions of all kinds, most of which will require music.

For the ice-skating, commencing this week, Chalmers Wood has installed a six-piece band, with "Six Swingers" instrumentation, the band being looked after by Frank Barnott, who, as well as being M.D. at Glasgow Pavilion, has been on Chalmers Wood's managerial staff for some time.

In a Glasgow bookshop last week we ran into Max Bacon looking around for some light reading. Max had to lay off his Glasgow Empire week entirely, a recurrence of his throat trouble upsetting the date.

However, Max tells us that after some treatment by a Glasgow professor, the latter has diagnosed the trouble correctly. So, after fulfilling three weeks' dates in the provinces, Max will return to London for an operation which should clear the trouble once and for all. H. H.

CARLO KRAHMER AND HIS NUTHOUSE CLUB BAND

***Blue Lou (Edgar Sampson) (Parlophone CE11373).
***Muskrat Ramble ("Kid" Ory) (Parlophone CE11375).
(Parlophone R2071-5s, 4;d.)

Krahmer (drums), with Manny Prince (lead alto); Ronnie Chamberlain (2nd and solo alto); Ernie Mansfield (tenor); Jimmy Edwards (cornet); Gerry Moore (pno.); Alan Hodgkiss (gitar); Bert Howard (bass). Recorded May 18, 1945.

WITH the exception of guitarist Alan Hodgkiss, who was added for the session, this is the band which drummer Carlo Krahmer has had at London's "Nuthouse" alterie in Regent Street more or less regularly for well over a year now.

Some of the names may be unfamiliar to you because, apart from old-timer Gerry Moore, Bert Howard, who has recorded with the Lewis-Parnell Jazzmen, and young Ronnie Chamberlain, the musicians have not yet crashed the recording and broadcasting circles which bring the widest recognition.

But don't let that put you off. It is in the night dices that one finds many of our sometimes less-known but nevertheless most go-ahead jazz and swing players, for the simple reason that it is in such resorts that they find the greatest freedom to play as they like.

Also, of course, it is often easier to get a job in a night-club band than in the better-known radio and recording orks, where ambition and swing understanding are of secondary importance to cast-iron reading and a thorough knowledge of "the business."

THE RIGHT IDEA

Many of our best-known big-timers graduated from the ranks of semi-pros through the night clubs to their present eminence, and that they may to-day be more experienced and consequently polished musicians doesn't alter the fact that it was in the earlier days of their careers, before economic inducement made them realise the value of "commercialism" that they showed their greatest enterprise.

Not that this is a paving of the way to an excuse for deficiency of musicianship in this Krahmer band. No such paving is necessary. The musicianship purely as such is at least adequate.

But it is a build-up to letting you know that this is a band which hasn't yet had the right idea knocked out of it by the lure of big sales among a public whose idea of swing is anything that is loud, busy, and fast enough.

Except that the first-rate ensemble parts of "Blue Lou" were arranged (by tenor-saxman "Spike" Hornett), both sides consist mainly of improvised solos.

Best are the alto contributions by Ronnie Chamberlain, especially the one in the Dixieland version of the old Edward "Kid" Ory classic, "Muskrat Ramble." The record is worth getting for him alone.

But on the whole, even though Jimmy Edwards's cornet solo in "Blue Lou" isn't a world-beater, everybody would be well.

There's something satisfyingly solid about the drive of Carlo's drums, and all round this is a band which deserves the recording break it has been given.

CONTEST FIXTURES

"ALL-BRITAIN" FINAL
Sunday, October 14, 2 p.m. at the King's Hall, Ballo Vue, Manchester.

AREA FINALS

For list see page 1

LAST CHANCES TO QUALIFY

for the Area Finals.

LONDON AREA

Saturday, August 11, Kodak Hall, WEALDSTONE (Midx) (2.30 to 6 p.m.). The 1945 London Counties Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Syd Thompson, Kodak Recreation Society, Kodak Hall, Headstone Drive, Wealdstone, Middx.

PROVINCES

NORWICH.—To-morrow, Friday, July 27, at the Lido Ballroom 18 p.m. to midnight. The 1945 Norfolk Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Len Marshall, "Arcadia," Hallam Grove, Lincoln. (Phone: Lincoln 8362.)

CAMBRIDGE.—Wednesday, next.

August 1, at the Guildhall (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Cambridgeshire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Harry R. G. Bradford, 12, Stourbridge Grove, Cambridge.

SOUTHAMPTON.—Friday next week, August 3, at the Guildhall (6.30-11 p.m.). The 1945 East Hampshire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Philip Moss-Vernon, 17, Gloucester Mansions, Cambridge Circus, London, W.C.2. (Phone: Temple Bar 9140.)

NEW BRIGHTON.—Friday, August 10, at the Tower Ballroom (8.15 to 11.45 p.m.). The 1945 Wirral Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs.

WESTON-SUPER-MARE.—Tuesday, August 14, at the Pavilion (8 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Somersetshire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Philip Moss-Vernon, 17, Gloucester Mansions, Cambridge Circus, London, W.C.2. (Phone: Temple Bar 9140.)

LINCOLN.—Friday, August 17, at the Drill Hall (8 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Lincolnshire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Len Marshall, "Arcadia," Hallam Grove, Lincoln. (Phone: Lincoln 8362.)

COVENTRY.—Thursday, August 23, at Neale's Ballroom (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Warwickshire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Arthur Kimbrell, 38, Rugby Road, Hincley, Leics. (Phone: Hincley 563.)

LLANELLY.—Friday, August 24, at the Ritz Ballroom (7 to 11 p.m.). The 1945 West Wales Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs.

HOLYWELL (Wales).—Monday, August 27, at the Assembly Hall. The 1945 North Wales Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs.

LONG EATON.—Thursday, August 30, at the Rialto Ballroom (8 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Trent Valley Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Basil A. Halliday, 82, Wiltshire Road, Long Eaton, Notts. (Phones: Long Eaton 243 and 597.)

MANCHESTER.—Friday, August 31, at the Levenshulme Palais de Danse (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Northern Counties Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs.

SWING-BAND CHAMPIONSHIP
Thursday, September 6.—Town Hall, Wembley, Middx. (7.30 to 11.30 p.m.). The 1945 Greater London Swing Band Championship.

Organiser: Mr. R. W. Davies Taylor, Entertainments Office, Town Hall, Wembley, Middx. (Phone: ARNold 1212.)

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YOU TALK TOO MUCH (Harold Barlow)
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NOTED collector Ron Whitehead, now abroad with the R.A.F., is another who is keen to see sides from the American race lists issued here. More than that, he suggests we keep readers informed of current race releases through the Corner.

"Sluce Leonard Feather and the rest make no reference at all to the better race items," he writes, "and, as you know, many people are becoming increasingly aware of the virtues of this most fascinating form of jazz, can you not see fit to give us details of these records as far as possible?"

We have no intention of ignoring Ron's appeal, which, as it happens, meets with our wishes and those of dozens of correspondents. We had planned a series of short pieces about blues singers like Blind Lemon Jefferson, Blind Blake, Pectie Wheatstraw, and some listings of blues items from the Paramount catalogue. This will throw some light on various race records, old and new.

But for the current recordings we haven't a steady supply of race supplements from the States. Perhaps one of our readers more favourably placed would like to oblige?

With regard to the Paramount listings, we must mention that Albert McCarthy has for long been compiling a book of Para. items, and that he will be glad to have any unpublished information about obscure sides.

Norman Evans, too, is working on a similar project and welcomes assistance. Any material sent here will be passed on to them.

OFF THE RACE LISTS

(1) Blind Lemon Jefferson
Every jazz critic some time or other remarks on the fact that blues is the basic stuff of jazz. Iain Lang said, "All of the blues is jazz" while Roger Pryor Dodge claims, "All that is great in jazz has sprung from the blues." And the others have said something very much like it.

Now, most of what we hear in the blues line is instrumental music, sometimes incorporating more or less conventional blues vocals after the style of Big Joe Turner at best, or Herb Jeffries at worst. But blues is really a vocal expression which achieves as much from words as it does from melody.

When you hear one of the unformalised blues, sung by a folk artist of distinction like Blind Lemon Jefferson, you can at once recognise the essential jazz elements in the music—the accent, the lilt, the instinctive rhythmic accomplishment. And besides that you hear folk-verse, often displaying great power and biting humour.

But it is not so easy to get to hear this unalloyed blues music. Nearly everything on records is formalised, much of it hopelessly sophisticated and lacking in the artistry which could have compensated for loss of simplicity, and nine-tenths of it is shot through with jazz ideas and conventions.

For us here it is difficult to tell what is reasonably "pure" folksong and what is studied folksy stuff. Even the most exclusively racey of race lists, such as Black Swan and Paramount, had their let-downs. Not just with vaudeville songs and "pops," but sometimes with white musicians imitating the styles. Worse than that has been the trend towards empty indelicacies (to meet the demands of the smart people of both colours) so marked during the last decade.

Listening to the whole of an up-to-date race catalogue revealed that more than half the output was valueless.

COLLECTORS' CORNER

by REX HARRIS and MAX JONES

while of the rest, perhaps 10 or 15 per cent, had appeal for its musical quality or documentary importance.

* * *

There are a few singers, however, who rarely descended to smart and dirty trivialities, or it seems, to poses of any sort. Among these giants, Blind Lemon Jefferson and, of course, Lead Belly figure prominently.

The former—a mighty singer of the "primitive" variety—sounds always completely unaffected singing for coloured audiences about their common experiences, in their own idiom.

A glance at his record titles suggests that he sung mostly the "worry blues," for in those days the word "blues" still connoted a degree of trouble. The American Negro was ill-fated as an historical fact, and his emotional reactions survived the episode of slavery. Jefferson seemed to sum it up when he exclaimed, just as one record drew to a close: "Too bad, Mama, I mean it's just too black bad!"

* * *

Some of his songs cover domestic scenes like "That Crawling Baby Blues." A more sinister but equally wild theme is found in "Lemon's Cannon Ball Blues," wherein he tells us—

"I got a dirty mistreater—mean as she can be,
I didn't think she was so mean as to drop that cannon on me.

"When my rider draw de cannon,
oh my flesh began to crawl;
And a man feel kinda different
when he faces the cannon ball."

But perhaps the majority of his blues concern prison life. One of the most moving, "Hangman's Blues," is delivered in a way which gives the starkest impression of his subject. Words alone can convey little but the substance of the story:—

"Hangman's rope is sure tough and strong,
(Repeat.)
They're goin' to hang me because
I done something wrong.

"I wanna tell you the gallows,
Lord's a fearful sight,
Hang me in the morning—'n cut
me down at night.

"That's a mean ol' hangman,
wailin' to tighten up the noose,
Lord up above us! I am trembling
in my shoes.

"Jury heard my case, they said my
hands was red,
The judge he sentenced me to be
hanged until I'm dead.

"There's a crowd round the court-
house, the time is growing fast,
Soon a good-for-nothin' killer is
goin' to breathe his last."

The reference to himself as a "good-for-nothin' killer" typifies the objective outlook which peasants the world over have been able to cultivate in some such circumstances. There is also implied and bitter comment on the feelings of the people gathered

to witness a sordid exhibition. All through, a resemblance to another and older folksong—"Sam Hall"—is evident.

Although no condemned man stands much chance of immortalising his emotions in song, many have done the next best thing with a few couplets on the wall. Anyone who has bothered to study the subject will discern the relationship between those scribbles and their folksong counterpart.

* * *

As for Jefferson's style, that is best described as basic Lead Belly, without jazz trappings. The same goes for his guitar—fine, simple stuff in a Spanish manner, played so as to provide the sketchiest background, really nothing more than fill-ins where the singer pauses.

His voice hasn't the rich tone of Ledbetter's, but a lot must be put down to poor recording. (All those we possess are Paramounts, presumably made around 1927/8.) On everything we've heard he sounds like Huddle on the early Melotone stuff.

There, Huddle employs guitar sparingly, largely to supply the breaks, and, although it doesn't quite swing like his present boogie-bass work, it has a special role which is very pleasing.

Ledbetter's singing, too, has changed lately. On "Four Day Worry Blues" and "Black Snake Moan," made in the middle thirties, he sings a lot like Lemon Jefferson, using the same moan, same conversational style, often gabbling huge sentences in order to compress them within the limits of a line of blues verse.

"Black Snake" may be a Jefferson number for he recorded it at least three times. In any case, it would express well-worn sentiments in regions like Texas, where the little black reptiles abound. Huddle sings: "It must have been a bedbug, 'cos a elinch couldn't bite me that hard!" Lemon's repertoire also crawls with references to such vermin, when he's not complaining about hard-headed women or locksteps.

Other obvious points of similarity between their styles are the habit of talking before the vocal chorus begins and the introduction of narrative effects into the song—often bringing in the singer's name.

Lead Belly discourses freely on several of his sides, like "T.B. Blues," "Sail On, Little Girl," "Fannin Street," and the rest, and it was suggestive to hear Lemon open "Hangman's Blues" by muttering: "This piece is Spanish and is always my bad luck piece. If I could find me a Voodoo doctor I'd make my getaway."

Finally, it can be noted that on faster sides Lemon's strumming is very like Huddle's on some of the fast tunes in Musicraft's album of Sinful Songs.

* * *

Of Jefferson's life, practically nothing is known—to journalists at any rate—beyond the fact that he spent most of it in and around Texas.

In Dallas he met and teamed up with Ledbetter, and in all probability taught him a trick or two, the pair playing what one writer terms "the barrelhouse circuit."

It was no doubt in the early 'twenties that he partnered Lead Belly, and then that he made his first discs—in the rug department of a Dallas furniture store, on portable equipment. No evidence of the date exists, but nearly all significant jazz events took place in that vague period it seems.

At a later date (sic) Lemon was assisted musically—and led around, for he really was blind—by Josh White. It begins to look as if he was to sing with guitarists what Bunk was to New Orleans trumpeters.

Another musician who had been said to have accompanied him is piano-playing Sam Price. More than that it is impossible to say. We don't even know if he lives. His records are extremely hard to come by in the States; over here they are rarer than jazz musicians. Nearly all his work appeared under the Paramount seal, and all that we know had his own guitar in support.

Elliott Goldman reports alley-fiddle background to "Boar Hog Blues," but hasn't the record to convince us.

Need we say that all information will be welcomed? To conclude on one of Lemon's more jubilant notes:—

"I say hey hey Mama, that rider done and gone,
And I jes' can't see what in the world is you waitin' on.

"I got another Mama—she ain't long at all,
But to tell you the truth, man,
she's so't a butter-ball.

"She got Elvin movements from her head down to her toes,
And she can break in on a dollar,
man, most an' where she goes."

RECORDS BY BLIND LEMON JEFFERSON, ALL ON PARAMOUNT

12347. "Got The Blues" / "Long, Lonesome Blues."
12354. "Black Horse Blues" / "Corinna Blues."
12367. "Chock House Blues" / "Jack O'Diamond Blues."
12373. "Beginnin' Back Blues" / "Old Rounders Blues."
12394. "Stocking Feet Blues" / "That Black Snake Moan."
12407. "Booger Rooter Blues" / "Wartime Blues."
12425. "Bad Luck Blues" / "Broke And Hungry Blues."
12443. "Teddy Bear Blues" / "Rising High Water Blues."
12487. "Black Smoke Blues" / "Right of Wav."
12510. "Struck Sorrow Blues" / "Rambler Blues."
12541. "Chinch Bug Blues" / "Deceitful Brownskin Blues."
12551. "One Dime Blues" / "Gone Dead On You Blues."
12578. "Lonesome House Blues" / "Sunshine Special."
12593. "Lectric Chair Blues" / "See That My Grave Is Kept Clean."
12608. "Lemon's Worried Blues" / "Prison Cell Blues."
12622. "Balky Mule" / "Mean Jumper Blues."
12631. "Change My Luck Blues" / "Lemon's Cannon Ball Moan."
12650. "Piney Woods' Money Mama" / "Low Down Mole Blues."
12666. "Lone Lastin' Lovin'" / "Blind Lemon's Penitentiary Blues."
12679. "Hangman's Blues" / "Lockstep Blues."
12692. "Christmas Eve Blues" / "Happy New Year."
12712. "D.B. Blues" / "Maltese Cat Blues."
12728. "Competition Bed Blues" / "Sad News Blues."
12739. "Dynamite Blues" / "Eagle Evad Mama."
12756. "Tin Cup Blues" / "That Black Snake Moan, No. 2."
12771. "Oil Well Blues" / "Saturday Night Spender Blues."
12801. "Peardrop Orchard Mama" / "Bad Night Blues."
12852. "Bakershop Blues" / "Lone Distance Moan."
12872. "Bed Springs Blues" / "Yo Yo Blues."
12880. "Pneumonia Blues" / "That Orwaling Baby Blues."
12899. "Southern Woman Blues" / "Mosquito Moan."

Okch 8455. "Black Snake Moan" / "Match Box Blues."
Okch ? "Boar Hog Blues."

* * *

It should be noted that for "Piney Woods," Norman Evans gives the number as 12650 instead of 12650. Can anyone check, please?

A great many collectors have kindly looked over this list and sent additions where possible. To all of them we extend our thanks. Albert McCarthy gave the most valuable assistance by means of his Paramount files, and he writes:—

"You have sixty-two Para. sides there. After the last number my files are fairly complete, and it is possible that Jefferson recorded for another company or else died."

The second Okch record was youched for by Elliott Goldman, who says that there are more titles by Jefferson in that catalogue. The numbers queried in the Para. listing are also sent by Elliott, who believes them to be B.L.J. sides.

* * *

F. T. Goff, 18, Whitfield Street, Gloucester, has a few records for sale, including Bob Crosby, Duke Allen, T.D. and Lunceford.

Mr. Wolfe, c/o 36, Hyde Park Mansions, Marylebone Road, N.W.1, has "The Kingdom of Swing" for disposal, also some assorted discs.

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An Outstanding New British Musical Film Reviewed

by MAX JONES

THERE is a new Gainsborough film, "I'll Be Your Sweetheart," that I strongly advise you to see. It has nothing to do with jazz or swing, but it has special interest for readers of this paper, inasmuch as it attempts to portray faithfully the early days of the popular song-publishing business in England.

In the early years of the present century—before the passing of the Musical Copyright Act—publishers and music-writers were engaged in a life-and-death struggle with the song pirates, who took each "hit" just as its popularity was nearing the peak and flooded the market with cheap copies, often selling them in the gutters for a few pence per copy.

This naturally endangered the livelihood of composer and publisher, and seriously affected the whole profession until the efforts of a bold few combated the menace, finally helping to steer through Parliament a Bill which ended the pirates' activities.

The fight between publishers, writers, and their association's agents on the other has been made the central plot of the picture, around which has been hung the usual love tale.

But romantic interest is definitely secondary to the struggle, and the film has some moments of unusual excitement as well (I must admit it) as a good deal of that sentimentality which too often surrounds celluloid portrayals of "our lovable cockneys."

However, I am not concerned with finding flaws—there are one or two unconvincing scenes and traces of "ham" acting—for the film's main appeal lies in a unique story and the honest treatment accorded it. And I can say with assurance that the story is 10 per cent. history. The other 10 per cent. is well worth enduring for that.

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THE PIVOT DASHING AROUND

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Set in the London of 1800-1806, "I'll Be Your Sweetheart" conveys pretty accurately the atmosphere of musical life as it affected the ordinary people of that era. There is no high-falutin' nonsense about artistes' souls, and very little of the lavish stage settings so beloved of motion-picture directors. The music, it's true, has been brought up to date in the scoring here and there, but essentially it is music-hall stuff unadulterated.

The film, a Gainsborough production, was directed by Val Guest—himself a well-known song-writer—with Louis Levy in charge of the musical side of things. Among the numerous credits I observed "Orchestrations by Bob Busby and Ben Frankel." The screen play was written by Val Guest and Val Valentine, and must have entailed a great deal of painstaking research. To round off these details, the cast is headed by Margaret Lockwood, Vic Oliver, and a newcomer, Michael Rennie.

At the start we are introduced to such song-writers as George Le Brun, Sam Kahn and Matt Kelly, all of whom are busy persuading Edie Story (Miss Lockwood), London's most popular music-hall star of the period, to accept one of their songs. Vic Oliver plays Kahn, and Moore Marriott Le Brun.

"LILY OF LAGUNA"—E2-1-3!

An early shot shows the premises of Francis, Day and Hunter in Charing Cross Road, where a budding publisher, Jim Knight, is also acousting the singer with Kahn and Kelly's "I'll Be Your Sweetheart." Later we see Knight and Bob Fielding, another budding publisher, at the Tivoli, both bent on selling the same song to Miss Lockwood.

Eventually she accepts the "Sweetheart" song from Bob (Michael Rennie), who is clearly cut out for the hero's role, sings it at the Tivoli, makes a great success of it, and the day is nearly won for Bob.

Nearly, because soon the pirates bring out a 2d. edition of the song, which they sell in vast numbers.

At that we get plenty of action. Bob rallies the composers, they smash up dozens of pirate stalls in Berwick Market, finish up in court, and finally Bob receives a visit from the pirate king himself, who threatens to break the hero and anyone else around.

And all this is history! There really was a pirate king, who gloried in the name. Letters in "The Era" at that time reveal the tremendous extent of his activities. One from David Day tells how he (Day) found the pirates' printing shop, entered to see thousands of copies of one of his songs being turned out, and claimed them all—successfully in this instance.

The first song ever to be pirated was "Soldiers of the Queen," written by Leslie Stuart, perhaps the leading writer of that era. But Stuart made next to nothing out of it, because 2,000,000 copies were sold cheaply in the streets without any royalties for him.

In a letter to "The Times" (in 1906) Stuart sent his royalty accounts for January-June, the best part of the year from a cash viewpoint. Figures tell the whole amazing story!

"Soldiers of the Queen" yielded him the sum of 4s. 1d. "Lily of Laguna" brought in £2 1s. 3d., and the entire proceeds of the music for "The School Girl" totalled £14 2s. 3d. Moreover, Stuart offered in print to dispose of his royalty claim on all his work for the next six months for the sum of £50.

The "Era" of February 3, 1906, published a letter from Charles Warren, of Witmark and Co., who claimed his firm had suffered more than most from musical piracy. To back up the statement he quoted the song "Good-bye, Little Girl, Good-



The publishers and songwriters smash up the song-pirates' stalls in Berwick Market. A scene from the Gainsborough film, "I'll Be Your Sweetheart."

bye" as an example, on which tune alone their losses reached £3,000 to £4,000. Though the most successful song of the year 1905, it was yet the least successful from a financial viewpoint!

The same issue featured a conversation with Bert Feldman explaining how the pirates worked in the provinces. First, they used hundreds of hawkers to retail sheets in the gutters and outside theatres; second, they organised a door-to-door sale, leaving copies behind and returning for the cash another day; Bert F. had that week witnessed twenty vendors in Birmingham's market square selling pirated stuff who, when he threatened them with prison, replied that they were "prepared for any emergency" and fully armed to deal with the Association people.

Feldman songs pirated included "Down by the Old Bull and Bush," "A Bird in a Gilded Cage," "Whistling Rufus," and "Anona." If "Bull and Bush" had not been stolen, its author should have had about £1,500 out of it.

PENILESS HIT-WRITERS

That should give a clear picture of the scene in which this film is set. The pirate king, "Wallace," is played to the life by Garry Marsh, who excels in these parts. As a hard-hittin' hero, Michael Rennie is satisfactory and more personable than any local lead I've seen in months.

A counter-plot, not yet mentioned, deals with the poverty and ill-health of Le Brun, who wrote such sterling favourites as "Oh, Mr. Porter," "Liza Johnson," and "The 7th Royal Fusiliers." He dies penniless and the heroine sings his last song. The history behind George Le Brun is equally grim. Described as "More than any other... he was the maker of the people's songs of his day," Le Brun died in poverty, at the age of 43, in December, 1905.

Upon his death, Leslie Stuart wrote to "The Times" revealing the deplorable state of Le Brun's finances.

His account, from F.D.H., for the year past listed nearly fifty songs,

including many of world renown, and each of them had "received the death stroke from pirates." Incredibly, the total of royalties due to him at his death amounted to £1 0s. 7d.—a figure which is tellingly put over in the film.

And that was for tunes like "Mr. Porter," "The Dandy Coloured Coon," "Maisie, My Maisie," etc.

PIRATES' DEATH STROKE

Regrettably, he doesn't live to see the pirates getting the death stroke which is delivered by law through the endeavours of T. P. O'Connor, M.P., and by direct action through the efforts of hero Bob.

The former at last succeeds in getting passed his Bill protecting the composers and publishers, while the latter collects a likely-looking gang of writers and publishers to go to pirate headquarters in order to break it up completely. Which they do—and provide one of the film's most exciting episodes.

The film takes us to Blackpool, where we see the stalls, demonstration shops, brass bands, singers and bandwagons, all busy boosting the firm's No. 1 hit.

Most of this, too, is history. If we forget the romantic interludes.

And it is obvious that Knight and Fielding are both composite characters drawn from actual publishers. "John Fryer" appears in an early scene, played by Elliot Makeham, and it isn't hard to guess that he represents John Abbott, of F.D.H., who played a vital role in the real battle against the pirates.

A final word of praise must be given to Val Guest for his direction, writing, and for some extra songs featured which he wrote in conjunction with Manning Sherwin.

As I've said, the film has its duller moments, but all round it is a good British musical with an intelligent script, absorbing plot, and—of even greater importance—in a musical—good, healthy music in the light vein.

It is also a very interesting historical record of a black chapter in the long tale of popular music.

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"M.M." Contest Reports

THE Great Ormond Street (London) Hospital for Sick Children is to receive a by no means negligible monetary donation as the result of the 1945 Gloucestershire Championship held last Monday week (16th) at the Bristol University's Victoria Hall, Bristol.

The organiser, Mr. Lewis Buckley, discovered that it was the hundredth contest he had presented under the auspices of the "M.M." since he started organising for us in 1929, and to commemorate the occasion is giving all his profits on the event to this most deserving cause.

What with prizes, judges' fees and expenses and all the other heavy overheads, promoters as a rule do not make big profits on contests.

But luckily this one was not only well attended, but in view of the charity angle a much higher price than usual was charged for tickets, so the hospital may expect a nice cheque within the next few days.

The event produced two sensational incidents.

First concerned Len Britton and his Band, of Bristol.

Almost before the judges had had time to get into the hall leaders of other competing bands were queuing up to lodge objections against the Britton combo.

Grounds were that most of its musicians played more frequently with other bands, therefore they were not regular members of Britton's band, which, in fact, did not exist as a regular combination.

These objections were all overruled, because in these days especially many musicians play with two or more bands and so can be considered regular members of all of them.

But a further objection on the grounds of professionalism was sustained.

It was found that one of the musicians had once played professionally. He did so twelve years ago in Africa. It seemed tough that he and his band should have to suffer for something which happened such a long while back; but rules have to be stringently enforced, and as the Presiding Judge, Edgar Jackson was left with no option but to disqualify the band.

Second incident concerned famous alto saxist Harry Hayes.

This was the first of last week's three out-of-Town contests on successive days, and Harry had promised not only to go on all of them to judge with Edgar Jackson, but to bring with him the brilliant young pianist, Norman Stanfall, so that the two of them could give swing sessions after the prize distributions.

But at Bristol Harry was suddenly taken ill.

Aided by Norman and some of the boys from the swell little Capitol Sextet, of Cardiff, who had acted as "house" band for the evening, he bravely went through with his session, and the wildly cheering audience knew nothing of his suffering.

But the next day he was worse and had to return to London.

acting as "house" band was the New Style Swingtette, of Doncaster, winners of this year's Central York Championship at Leeds last March and a combo that can tear it up loud and strong.

In spite of all efforts by organiser Buckley, assisted by a platoon of commissionaires, to keep the enthusiasm within bounds, the New Style boys kept half the swing-starved fans and jivesters of Sheffield packed round the stand while the other half litterbugged so furiously that the judges in their rostrum in the middle of the sprung floor were vibrated almost off their seats.

But the greatest excitement of the evening occurred when Norman Stanfall, assisted by the New Style Swingtette's bass and guitar, gave a twenty minutes' swing show, the like of which everyone admitted had never previously been heard in the hall.

BRISTOL JUDGES' REPORT

Adjudicators: Harry Hayes, Norman Stanfall, Edgar Jackson (President).

Winners: **GLOUCESTER R.A.F. STATION DANCE BAND** (three saxes, two trumpets, trombone, piano, bass, drums). All coms.: Cpl. N. G. Petchey, Hut 50, 4 Squadron, R.A.F. Records Office, Barnwood, Gloucester.

Individualists' awards for Tenor (Cpl. Norman Petchey), Trombone (Sergeant Tim Hout),

Second: **LEN ROY AND HIS BAND** (clarinet, alto, trumpet, piano, bass, drums). All coms.: Roy Chapman, 117, Station Road, Kingswood, Bristol. ('Phone: Bristol 54913.)

Individualists' awards for: Clarinet (Roy Chapman), Alto (Reg Howard), Trumpet (Len Rowe), Piano (Vincent Johns), Bass (Tom Osborne), Drums (Norman Clavert). Special award for best "small" band.

WE are taking the unusual course of making this report on this contest more or less a joint one.

Reason is that by so doing we can, we feel, shed some useful light on the still fiercely argued question of whether large or small bands have the greater chances of winning contests.

Actually, neither has any greater chance than the other, because it is not so much what a band does as how it does it that counts.

Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that how it is achieved has not only been described more than once in the "M.M." but is also explained in many contest programmes, there are still some who think it must be difficult to reconcile the contrasting features of big and small bands. They are not likely to be any the more convinced about how easy it really is by the fact that at this contest we gave the verdict to a six-piece band, only two of whose musicians won their individualists' awards, and placed second a six-piece band, every one of whose members won his prize for being the best performer on his particular instrument.

The simple answer to it is, however, that the larger band sounded the more experienced, and so convincing, ensemble.

Admittedly, it was not strong in soloists. Even the tenor and trumpet, who won their individualists' prizes, let alone the piano and clarinet, who did not win theirs, were hardly the equal as stylists of any of the men in the smaller band, and the trumpet was more conspicuous for command of his instrument than for what he played in his improvised solos or the style of his phrasing in the ensemble.

But even these weaknesses could not conceal the good sense of balance, accurate tuning and intonation, good tone, clean articulation, nice regard for expression and solidity which gave the impression of reliable musicianship adequately and competently rehearsed.

Not that the small band was lacking in all-round competence, either. Its ability went well beyond the capabilities of its individuals as such. Unlike so many small swing groups, it not only concentrated on ensemble playing as much as on solos, but made a distinct success of its sense of balance and front-line tonal blend being particularly good.

But it just failed to give that feeling of unshakable solidity and reliability that gave the larger combination a win by a narrow margin.

The Raymonds Dance Orchestra, of Bristol, was placed third.

Johnnie Harris's Swingtette, also of Bristol, secured fourth place; and their guitarist (George Hardwell) won his individualist's award.

Miss Rose Shepard, of Olley Gray's Blue Serenaders, was given an individualist's award for Accordion, and

But at Bristol Harry was suddenly taken ill.

Aided by Norman and some of the boys from the swell little Capitol Sextet, of Cardiff, who had acted as "house" band for the evening, he bravely went through with his session, and the wildly cheering audience knew nothing of his suffering.

But the next day he was worse and had to return to London.

It says much not only for Norman, but also for the understanding of the Crewe fans, that they just ate Norman up.

Although the hall seemed packed almost to its capacity and the gathering was anything but unappreciative of the contest, the attendance was over a hundred down on last year.

Reason given was that with munition work being curtailed and the change over to peace-time employments being effected only very slowly, there is not so much money available in the town.

HAPPILY, however, it would seem that no such unfortunate conditions prevail at Sheffield.

The 1945 South Yorks Championship, presented by Lewis Buckley on Wednesday July 18, in the ballroom of Sheffield's magnificent City Hall, drew an attendance of well over 800—as many as the hall now gets on Saturday nights, the most popular of the week, and when admission is very much less than it was for this contest.

And was this an uproarious night! The competing bands may not have been of a very high standard. But

acting as "house" band was the New Style Swingtette, of Doncaster, winners of this year's Central York Championship at Leeds last March and a combo that can tear it up loud and strong.

In spite of all efforts by organiser Buckley, assisted by a platoon of commissionaires, to keep the enthusiasm within bounds, the New Style boys kept half the swing-starved fans and jivesters of Sheffield packed round the stand while the other half litterbugged so furiously that the judges in their rostrum in the middle of the sprung floor were vibrated almost off their seats.

But the greatest excitement of the evening occurred when Norman Stanfall, assisted by the New Style Swingtette's bass and guitar, gave a twenty minutes' swing show, the like of which everyone admitted had never previously been heard in the hall.

BRISTOL... CREWE... SHEFFIELD... AND THE METROPOLITAN SWING BAND CHAMPIONSHIP

Terry Morgan, of the same band, no hon. mention for Bass.
Ten bands competed.

CREWE JUDGES' REPORT
Adjudicators: Norman Stenfalt, Edgar Jackson.

Winners: **BUNNY CARLESS' DANCE ORCHESTRA** (four saxes, two trumpets, two trombones, piano, bass, drums, conductor). All coms.: F. G. F. Clarke, 1, Inglewood Avenue, Bradford, Wolverhampton, Staffs.

Individualists' awards for Alto and Clarinet (Frank Lane), Piano (Arthur Slater), Drums (Jimmy Billau). Hon. mention for Trombone (Paul Moreton).

We hand it to this band for perseverance. This must have been its fourth, or maybe fifth, attempt in a contest this season.

But it wasn't out of any regard for its persistence that we were able to give it the verdict. Judging from reports of its previous contesting endeavours, it has improved out of all recognition, and thoroughly deserved its win on merit.

Except, perhaps, that the phrasing of the saxes might have been a little more stylish, the front line was quite impressive, the brass making an excellent showing, particularly in the muted wa-wa effects in the introduction of the quickstep "Rhapsody for Reeds," and the whole line doing well in a very nice arrangement of the fox-trot "Mean To Me."

About the only solos were taken by clarinet and trombone. The tone of the former was slightly squeaky, but he played with nice style and technique. The worst that need be said of the trombone is that he was not prominent enough. Until he acquires a brighter tone and more robust delivery, he would be well advised to take his solos on the mike.

Weakest section was perhaps the rhythm. The bass didn't keep his time by allowing his strings to slap back, and the agile and quite rhythmic drummer seemed rather tense in trying to hold a pianist who was more conspicuous for his legitimate capabilities than for ease or lift.

Second: **BARRY BERTRAM AND HIS BAND** (three saxes, two trumpets, trombone, piano, bass, drums, conductor). Belmont, Meaford Ave., Stone, Staffs.

Individualists' awards for Tenor (Sam Johnson), Trumpet (Art Forrester), Trombone (Phil Meiklejohn), Bass (Cyril Gilbert). Hon. mention for Drums (Jack Smith).

Nothing can be a greater asset to a band than to learn how to play quietly. For one thing, it gives a chance to achieve the great essential which so few semi-pro bands ever manage to attain—light and shade.

Opening with their slow fox-trot, the saxes of this band started up not only well in all other respects, but most pleasingly softly, and we thought that at last here was a band that really knew the meaning of expression.

But it never happened. The saxes maintained their one level, and what could and should have been the effective piano jumping-off volume for crescendos and diminuendos was adhered to and became no more than a too subdued, ineffective monotone.

However, this is perhaps the worst that need be said of the band.

It is true that at times the brass over-accented slightly and tended now and again to clip, also that, being more robust than the saxes, they overbalanced them at times.

But otherwise the brass, with the trumpet and trombone showing up like the tenor, as good swing soloists in the quickstep, were well above average.

The rhythm section also was good. With its very nice-toned bass, who produced a clean, easy beat, and its capable drummer, it was well balanced and played with a nice lift, and did at least its share in a band whose worst shortcoming was the aforementioned lack of volume and light and shade in the otherwise by no means unsatisfactory saxes.

Jim Newton's Dance Band, from Hartshill, Stoke, whose Trombone (Tom Johnson) secured an hon. mention, was placed third.

Joe Kay and his New Arcadians, from Broseley, Salop, secured fourth place and the special cup for the best "small" band.

Six bands competed.

SHEFFIELD JUDGES' REPORT
Adjudicators: Norman Stenfalt, Edgar Jackson.
Winners: **THE JAZZ HOUNDS** (alto/

clarinet, piano, bass, drums). All coms.: Duncan Ballantine, "Grasmere," Moorgate, Rotherham, Yorks.

Individualists' awards for Piano (Don Waterhouse); Drums (Jimmy Felghery). Special cup for best "small" band.

BEST feature of this small swing outfit was its pianist.

Although forced by the always too loud bass and drums to overtax both himself and his instrument, he nevertheless showed up as an enterprising, understanding and generally first-rate boogie-woogie player in "West End Blues" and the quickstep "Orchard Street Strut."

As regards the bass and drums, the tone of the former, of course, suffered from the forcing, but he produced a good swing in the quickstep.

The apparently self-taught drummer has an unorthodox technique, but he manages to get there all the same. He knows what to do and when to do it, and all-round was both effective and rhythmic.

Of the alto/clarinet it is difficult to write in quite such generous terms.

He has good command, but in attempting to adopt the Bechet style tends to exaggerate his vibrato and glissando, and sturt about with more endeavour than taste or style.

Second: **FRED MANDER'S SWING-TETTE** (alto/clarinet, piano, guitar, bass, drums). 120, Woodseats Road, Sheffield, 8.

Individualists' awards for Alto (Stan Vickers); Guitar (Ted Needham).

This small would-be "drawing-room" swing outfit can only be described as regards both what it does and the way it does it as a most astonishing mixture of the old-fashioned demodé and modern styles. On the modern side is the guitarist, whose single-string solos and all-ins in the ensemble were not far short of being as good as they come.

Also on the modern side is the band's amplifying equipment. The stand bristled with mikes, and they were as good as they were many.

Midway is the alto/clarinet—a player with a satisfactory tone and no little technique, but who never quite knew whether he should try to live up to the style of the guitar or play down to — and now we come to the old-fashioned side of the band—the piano, bass and drums.

Not that the pianist was bad. He has a good technique, and the worst that can be said of him is that he doesn't know whether he ought to be a Charlie Kunz or to try to be a John Guarneri.

But the drums! It is unbelievable that in these days, when one can at least hear good British bands over the radio, anyone can have so little conception of how to play in a dance band.

And the "slappy" toned bass wasn't very much better.

The Rocky Ward Swingtette, of Sheffield, were placed third and won the Individualist's award for Bass (Kenneth Billam).

The Modernaires, of Rotherham, secured fourth place and Individualists' awards for Clarinet (Alfred Kendall) and Trumpet (Leonard Hughes).

The Savanna Dance Band, of Kill-marsh (Sheffield) won the Individualist's award for Tenor. Seven bands competed.

1945 METROPOLITAN SWING BAND CHAMPIONSHIP.
Saturday, July 21, at The Porchester Hall, London, W.

The Metropolitan Swing Band Championship, presented last Saturday afternoon (21st) by Syd Thompson at the Porchester Hall, Bayswater, turned out to be more than just a Swing Band contest. It developed into a non-stop swing session.

Call-ups and other last-moment emergencies reduced the original entry list of ten bands to five. But anything the competitors lacked in quantity they made up for in quality.

The event was won by Bill Cole and his Clubmen, from Portsmouth. But so high was the standard of the first four bands that any one of them could win five out of any six contests, and what little the competing bands didn't supply in the way of exciting swing, Freddie Miffield and his Garbage Men, acting as "house" band, did.

How completely the bands captured

their audience may be judged from the fact that hardly anyone could be induced to dance. They just sat or stood and enjoyed it all.

JUDGES' REPORT
Adjudicators: Bill Elliott, Johnnie Gray, Johnnie Marks, Norman Stenfalt.

Winners: **BILL COLE AND HIS CLUBMEN** (two saxes, trumpet, piano, guitar, bass, drums). All coms.: Alex J. Poore, 22, Tredegar Road, Southsea, Hants. ('Phone: Portsmouth 73833.)

Individualists' awards for Clarinet and Tenor (Ronald Bennet); Trumpet (Spencer Brown); Piano (William Cole); Bass (Nelson Peters).

UNLESS we have jumped to an entirely wrong conclusion, the object of these judges' reports is to help bands to improve by pointing out to them their weaknesses.

Presumably because, rightly or wrongly, one cannot help feeling that a good band is more likely to profit from criticism than a poor one, it is often the good bands that get criticised in these reports, at the greatest length and even most severely, and this sometimes tends to convey the impression that they are inferior to bands which actually they are far superior to.

So to get matters in something like their right perspective we had better start off by saying that this band of blind pianist Bill Cole's is not far short of being one of the best any of us has ever heard in any of the many contests we have between us judged.

With its outstandingly good bass player it has a rhythm section that has more than just a grand beat, even if its beat is its strongest point, and the front line isn't far behind the rhythm department for either ensemble or soloists.

Nevertheless, that the band is handicapped by the absence (through illness) of its alto is undeniable, and not only because the alto is necessary to complete a three-piece reed team.

The first tenor was not always perfectly in tune, and his slightly woolly tone didn't help to make the general effect any the more pleasing.

In addition, the second tenor (who doubled as a very capable clarinet) was by far the better soloist. In spite of occasional faulty harmonies.

The trumpet has more than enough musicianship to see him through, but in solos he is rather erratic. Sometimes he plays really good stuff, and other times he tends to get wild, and then it is little more than a case of notes without much meaning.

The pianist, too, for all his fine technique is not the most modern stylist ever heard.

But even with these shortcomings, which, anyway, are nothing like so serious as they may seem to be when set forth in cold print, this is still as good a band as most outside professional circles.

Second: **ERIC WAKEFIELD AND HIS BLUE RHYTHM BAND** (alto/clarinet, piano, guitar, bass, drums). "Clifford Villa," 87, Chapel Lane, Sudds, High Wycombe, Bucks.

Individualists' awards for Guitar (Maurice Goodearl); Drums (Ron Clark). Special prize for best "small" band.

BACKBONES of this band are its guitarist and excellent drummer. The former uses an electric guitar, and although it was often too loud in the ensemble there is no denying that it is one of the finest toned instruments we have ever heard, or that its player is a first-class performer.

The pianist can also take credit for having a good technique, but his style could be more modern. The strong point of the alto/clarinet either, any more than was his tuning on alto. He was always a shade flat, and at times he approached his notes with questionable intonation.

Nevertheless, this is a band well above average. It has an unusually good understanding of swing treatment (even if it has been acquired from Goodman Sextet records) and the rhythm section as such, which is to say the greater part of the band, plays with a most invigorating drive.

Ron Goodwin and his Orchestra, of Alorton (Middlex), were placed third. They won the Individualist's award for Alto (Charlie Payne) and an hon. mention for Tenor (Harry Mayle).

The Back Yard Boys, of Harrow, secured fourth place.

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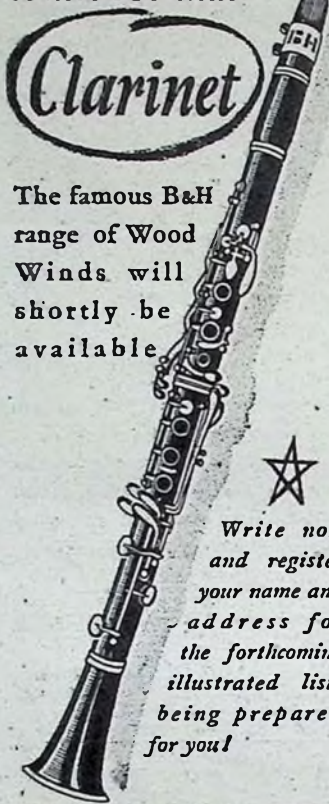
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