

ON THE BEAT

PAGES FROM THE NOTEBOOKS OF 'MELODY MAKER' REPORTERS

RETURNED from Britain after his show with Humphrey Hutton, Pierre Braxlavsky gave these impressions of his stay in British audiences, he said, "are quieter in their appreciation, but listen more to the music than French audiences. Because the French make a lot of noise it does not mean that they are more understanding. I also think musicians would prefer a full measure of orderly appreciation than a raucous row. After all, it is bad for other bands which might follow."

European festival?

Talking of the future, this young and upcoming musician, who is only 19, wondered why a purely European festival might not be staged. He agrees with Charles DeWigny, as already reported in the Melody Maker, that American musicians ask too much money, and revealed that the last festival set many of the limits back to a considerable extent.

The sales of records fell off and so did seat sales for concerts. The festival was expensive for a lot of people, and not only for the promoters, but also for the artists.

He has no illusions about the results of a European festival, however. "I am not sure it would be a resounding success," he said, "because fans are contentedly sold on the U.S., but it might be worth trying."

International spirit

Braxlavsky is a little worried about style. He knows it is difficult for bands, old and new, not to copy the American giants, but they should carry their music one step further and try to develop a style of their own. Finally, he feels that pop is a little too close to modern classics, although he feels sure it will develop its own way still further. He himself plays a New

Orleans variation style of his own. I have to watch myself and criticize plenty, he told me, "for like other bands I am inclined to pattern my style too much, at times on others. One thing I liked more than anything else was the London fans knew "That's the St. Germain bands." That's the kind of international spirit we want," he said.

Welcome!

It was a cold night and the Mills-Martin night was on the air. At the Tower Ballroom, Birmingham, only a couple of dozen stalwarts were dancing to Leslie Douglas and awaiting the arrival of Johnny Meyer and his sextet. When he arrived, he just couldn't understand why there was such an apparent lack of interest, but he took the stand and soon had the eager few asking for more.

Manager Bert Thomas had no explanation to offer. The visit had been well publicised by both poster and press. Perhaps the cold and the night were albino. Bert had also had to alter the programme times for the sextet because, when they arrived at their hotel, they were told that they wouldn't be allowed in after midnight!

Wrong advice, I understand, at the start of their English tour, was to blame for their half-hearted debut at the London Palladium.

In search of peace

I HAVE given up handleading peace because I want some peace. In those few treacherous words, trumpet-star Leslie Hutchinson summed up his feelings after six years of fronting his own orchestra on the road. Back with Gerardo again, Les has written a new story. Leslie confessed frankly: "When, after two and a half years with Gerardo, I decided to leave him and take my own hand on the road in 1944, Gerry's only comment at the time was, 'well, you're asking me?' " number-one asked head-ache? " number-one asked head-



The coloured musician who joined him, Hutchinson explained frankly (a) that it is extremely difficult to collect a complete band of three-class coloured players, and (b) that you have to be a disciplinarian—the sort compared with whom Captain Bligh of the Bounty was a Sunday-school teacher—in order to succeed with your band of temperamental stars when you have got it.

Although selecting my musicians and finding a good manager have both been among the major headaches of the past few difficult years, I consider that the experiment has been well worth while. Leslie told the Melody Maker, Leslie Hutchinson (trumpet star) is grateful to Gerardo for the co-operation which the Maestro is extending in helping him to carry out some of the commitments which Leslie Hutchinson (band-leader) must still honour. One of these is this Sunday (5th) at the Riviera Club. Others are at Boston and Reading.

Calypso clankate

AN unusual commotion was caused in Parlophone's Albany Road studios last Monday afternoon (3rd). The order was this time to record a session in the quality of genuine Calypso music, and to mark the date. Parlophone there a cocktail! Calypso and arranged for the Press and Calypso lovers to witness the recording.

An interesting point about Calypso (which was described in these columns last week) is that they are always sung in Trinidad by men. There are no women Calypsonians known anywhere. Lords Kitchener and Banger, accompanied by Cyril Blake's Calypso arrangers, they each sang two of their own songs: "Underground Train," "N.O.R." (Kitchener), "Marti-money" (Banger), and "Doubler." And the audience were Charlotte Mona Baptiste, Mrs. Rex Harris, Mrs. Steve Black, Lord and Lady Donnell, Iain Lane, Humphrey Lyttelton, "Pistol," Robin Scott, Edgar Jackson, Max Jones, Sinclair Trail, Bert Wilcox and Tain Cundall.

The band comprised Freddy Grant (cell); Cyril Blake (tr.); Puzos Coleman (tr.); Bryio Ford (quatro); Neville Boucarut (bass); and Dreamer (conga drums).

Mallo, twiss!

HUNDRED years ago, Jean Baptiste Villanne made 4,000 violins, and on Monday two of them, bearing consecutive numbers, turned up side-by-side on a London shop counter! One of them belonged to Stravinsky violinist Sid Williams, had been taken to the shop for repair, and it was when Sid called there on Monday to collect his instrument that the strange happening took place. An inspector and assessor came in to the shop and remarked that the violin being handed to Sid looked on the counter like another lying on the floor. They were twins, made one after the other, in 1852.

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LETTERS

I THINK I am reading the opinion of many dogs and seeing fans who reported to see a really first-class show on TV on January 11, after seeing Nat Allen's line-up in the "M.K."

This line-up was very appetising, but was spoiled in the cooking and serving. The best the BBC could have done was to have given a few hours of their outstanding history-meritists. Yes, "Seasider," I enthusiastically agree with your review of this show.

I also see that the BBC has plans for putting the London Jazz Club on the TV screen. This, again, sounds a great idea... but I and a lot more can imagine what it will be like. To have disappointment, I would rather go to the local club—hall to see the local band.—Brian Morton, Leekhampton, Surrey.

A S Ken Thornor's words in the Melody Maker (21/7/49) do not, to our mind, constitute a logical criticism of our book, we are obliged to take up our pens in self-defence. In writing this book, we took it for granted that the reader would have some feeling at least for jazz as such, and it was with the intention of showing him how to translate this feeling into progressive jazz that we set out to explain, as briefly as possible, some of the mechanics of modern harmony—which is, after all, the basis of this kind of music. Ken Thornor seems to have over-looked this all-important point entirely.

We don't think that a 25-page job is worth measuring 41 in. x 11 in. terms, and in his first seven words he seems to have meant it only too clear that, to his mind, there was something hardly worthy of consideration, in the words of our book, which he referred to as "the" (p. 10) answer as bridge as

SO ENDS MY SEARCH FOR A DREAM
THE ORGAN MAN
THE AMERICAN SINGERS
WONDERFUL BLISSION
EL CUMBARCERO
THE GREAT HEART
THE AMERICAN SINGERS
THE AMERICAN SINGERS
THE AMERICAN SINGERS

DIZZY GOES COMMERCIAL....



Thus do the mighty fall

—says Edgar Jackson

DIZZY GILLESPIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA

"Say When" (Mundy, Davis, Feldard) (Am. Capitol 4318).
"You Stole My Wife—You Horse Thief" (Brit. Sims) (V. by Dizzy Gillespie) (Am. Capitol 4318).
(Capitol CL13225—5s. 6d.)

IF you are expecting more and even better pop from Dizzy now that he has gone over from Victor to Capitol, you are in for a shock.

For, believe it or not, the guy who became internationally famous as the Bop King, has gone "commercial."

His record of "You Stole My Wife" is a comedy number, treated as such.

"Say When" is just a very conventional swing piece, the arrangement and performance of which sound pretty much like a not very good copy of Les Brown.

Whether all this was the cause or result of Dizzy's changeover

to Capitol I don't pretend to know. But I can't see it getting him very far.

Goodness knows Dizzy's big-band Victor recordings often left much to be desired. For one thing, the intonation varied from doubtful to shocking. Also, the playing was often anything but polished.

But in spite of these failings, the music was generally not only original, but also usually played with a spirit and understanding of what the band was trying to do, which made it at least interesting. One could invariably rely on a Gillespie record to "have something."

In these new Capitol records the musicianship is better. The band at least plays something like in tune.

But practically everything else that made Dizzy worth while has gone. The band has become just

another "commercial" proposition, and by no means outstanding enough to be likely to be able to compete very successfully with its more musically skillful brethren.

And from what I hear from friends in America, this is no special act put on for Dizzy's Capitol debut, but something which is likely to continue at least for long enough to see how it works out.

Thus do the mighty fall.

★

NELLIE LUTCHER AND HER CHYTRIM

"The Pig-Latin Song" (Nellie Lutchter) (Am. Capitol 2186).
"Kiss Me, Sweet" (Milton Drake) (Am. Capitol 3774).
(Capitol CL13225—5s. 6d.)
"Fine and Mellow" (Billie Holiday) (Am. Capitol 2189).
"Lake Charles Boogie" (Nellie Lutchter) (Am. Capitol 2207).
(Capitol CL13224—5s. 6d.)

IF you thought Nellie's "Cool Water," "My Little Boy," and "My Mother's Eyes" poor, wait till you hear "Pig-Latin" and "Kiss Me, Sweet."

"Pig-Latin" is one of the most puerile songs one could imagine, and Nellie no more puts into it any of that rollicking rhythm which is among her chief attractions than she does into "Kiss Me."

Nor is "Fine and Mellow" or "Lake Charles" up to her "Hurry On Down," "Fine Brown Frame," or some of her other earlier releases. But both are certainly improvements on what Capitol have been giving us of her more recently.

The lyric of "Lake Charles" is just—

Oh, Lake Charles! Oh, Lake Charles!
Oh, Lake Charles! Oh, Lake Charles!
Now, this little ditty was named after the city where I was born.

—and the tune is as trivial as the words.

But treating the piece as an up-tempo boogie, Nellie gets into it at least some of that spirit and infectious joie de vivre that made her earlier records so successful.

"Fine And Mellow" is even better.



Dizzy

It is a slow blues, and in both her singing and playing Nellie reveals not only a nice understanding of the blues, but also a sincerity which, while not, perhaps, as deep as one would wish, is greater than any of her previous records may have led most people to expect.

Also she plays some of the most tasteful and feeling piano we have had from her on records.

STAN KENTON back personnels

"Capitol Punishment" (1528)/
"Lover" (1899)—Capitol CL13094;
"Spider And The Fly" (1933)/
"How Am I To Know?" (1671)—Capitol CL13096. Kenton (pno.); Cooper, Dorris, Gloga, Meyers, Mueser (reeds); Alvarez, Anderson, Childers, Hanna, Wetzell (trps.); Milt Bernhart, Kahak, "Skip" Layton, Varsalona, Winding, Zito (tms.); Ahern (gtr.); Safiranski (bass); Manne (dra.); and in some also Eugenio Reyes (maracas); Ivan Lopez (boogie) February and March, 1947.

"Eager Beaver" (1112)—Capitol CL13033;
"Artistry In Rhythm" (114)—Capitol CL13012. Kenton (pno.); Eddie Meyers, Art Pepper (trps.); Maurice Benson—"Red" Dorris (trps.); Bob Goggin (bar.); Ray Borden, John Carroll, "Buddy" Childers, Karl George, Dick Morse (trps.); George Faye, Harry Forbes, Bart Varsalona (tms.); Bob Ahern (gtr.); Clyde Singleton (bass); Joe Vernon (dra.). November 19, 1943.

"Temptation" (341)—Capitol CL13039. Kenton (pno.); Sam Alcocca, Al Anthony, Bob Cooper, Gloga, "Boots" Mussulli (reeds); Johnny Anderson, Russ Burgher, Childers, Bob Lamperla, Ray Wetzell (trps.); Milt Kahak, Jimmy Simms, Varsalona, Fred Zito (tms.); Ahern (gtr.); Max Wayne (bass); Bob Varney (dra.). July, 1945.

McKINLEY

—gives middle-aged Hannah another tumble!

RAY McKINLEY AND HIS ORCHESTRA

"Hard-Hearted Hannah Without A Song" (Capitol CL13282)

HOW many readers remember "Hard-Hearted Hannah—the Vamp of Savannah Town"?

For the enlightenment of the under-thirties, this pop tune was quite a hit in its day. It dates from 1924—the year of "Everybody Loves My Baby," "Fascinating Rhythm," "I'll See You In My Dreams," "Nobody's Sweetheart," "Tea For Two" and "What'll I Do?"

Personally speaking, "Hard-Hearted Hannah" conjures up nostalgic memories. I vividly recall spinning a worn recording of the tune by the then-famous duettists, Layton and Johnstone. Turner Layton, of course, is still going strong; Clarence Johnstone—who once earned as much as \$45,000 in three months—was, in 1948, reported to be working as a messenger in New York.

I must have been an impressionable youngster. The tale of the "gal who loves to see men suffer! To tease 'em and thrill 'em; to torture and kill 'em" frankly used to appal me. How could a woman be that cruel!

Hannah has been neglected all these years. She's now resurrected by former Glenn Miller drummer, Ray McKinley.

Understandably, perhaps, I started playing Ray's recording with some expectations. Before the first chorus was through I was sadly disappointed.

It may, of course, be pointless to compare the Layton and Johnstone and McKinley versions; mellow memories might tempt me to think the former recording better than is actually the case. But I do know that the McKinley

performance lacks the light touch of Layton and Johnstone's.

Ray also sings a slightly different lyric. Instead of the delightfully naive "to torture and kill 'em" line, we have the more sophisticated (and, to my mind, less effective) "to love 'em and to squeeze 'em; to hold 'em and to tease 'em."

Ray sings rhythmically enough, but his orchestra is poor. Furthermore, the ponderous arrangement and weak solos by trombone and clarinet are not helped by the woolly recording—unusual for a Capitol issue.

However, even though Ray has handled Hannah roughly, I'm glad she's been given another recorded tumble in her middle-age.

The dated arrangement and performance of "Without A Song" is reminiscent of pre-war Tommy Dorsey. The brass section is guilty of one particularly corny lick that rightly belongs to a past decade. If he wants to create a British following for his big-band swing, McKinley will have to do better than this.

★ TONY MARTIN

Foot Toot Tootie (Gee-type) A Thousand Violins (HMV 58523)

THE first title, another good old-timer (from 1922) was soundtracked by Al Jolson, for star Larry Parks, in the films "The Jolson Story" and "Jolson Sings Again."

Whether Tony Martin fully captures the breezy virility of Al Jolson's interpretation is a moot point; but he undoubtedly puts the song over with plenty of gusto and rhythmical feeling. Skip Martin's orchestra gives

Sweet Reviews by Laurie Henshaw

Tony admirable backing; it plays with tremendous drive and beat. Which proves one important point: even though a song is "corny," it can still be made to swing.

Orchestra-leader Henry René's strings get a good workout on the coupling and Tony Martin sings with vibrant expression.

★

GORDON MACRAE

Mule Train Dear Hearts and Gentle People (Capitol CL13282) ARTHUR (Guitar Boogie) SMITH Mule Train Dime A Dozen (M-G-M 554)

AFTER Tennessee Ernie's "Mule Train" (reviewed 14/1/50), the MacRae and Smith caravans seem composed of tired mokes. Neither of these singers has the vigorous and menacing voice of the whip-wielding Ernie. His recording is still unsurpassed. "Dear Hearts" is given hill-billy treatment with whining Hawaiian guitar and hand-clapping effects; "Dime A Dozen" is worth no more.

★

CAFE VIENNA QUARTET

The Harry Lime Theme The Café Mozart Waltz (Columbia DB2911)

I CREDIT colleague Max Jones with the crack: "Four men trying to sound like one! Unfair perhaps—but not too far from the point. The Café Vienna Quartet (an astutely chosen title, this) consists of three guitars—one Hawaiian—and a bass. And the musical outcome? Fairly effective. But more like Felix Mendelssohn than Anton Karas.

Recorded February 26, 1926, but.... THESE HOT FIVES ARE STILL STIMULATING

LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND HIS HOT FIVE
Muskrat Rambles/Cornet Chop Suey (Col. DB282—5s. 6d.)

Armstrong (cornet); Kid Ory (tmb.); Johnny Dodds (cl.); Lil Armstrong (pno.); Johnny St. Cyr (banjo). Recorded in Chicago, February 26, 1926.

IT is good to be reviewing records when companies are releasing stuff like the Meszrow-Bechets and Armstrong Hot Fives, new to this country.

In these cases, the reviewer can praise without fear of over-rating the records. The music is extraordinary, and the evidence of his ears is supported by enough expert testimony to convince even my colleagues on this page. With these Hot Fives, there are also the comforting facts that the music has lived a quarter-century already and is today more highly (if not more widely) esteemed than it was originally.

These titles—the first to be released here from this 1926 season—are not perfect instrumental performances. Technically, there are several faults, but these should not hide from anyone the splendid vitality and melodic quality of the music.

After knowing these, and similar sides, for many years, I am still astonished by the swing of the two-piece rhythm team, and the overall force of this quintet and especially by Armstrong's full, glorious tone in all registers.

"Muskrat" (published here and in the States under the name "Muskrat") is doubtless the first recording of this wonderful Ory tune.

There is a discrepancy between what Louis plays in his solo and what the rhythm duo are chording at one point in the number. And this may offend musician-listeners, though you and I can still enjoy it as some of the most stimulating and altogether remarkable jazz ever put on record.

Armstrong is superbly poised in his solo, Dodds is fine, and

Jazz Reviews by Max Jones

Ory gives a demonstration of rough tailgate style, so unlike the playing of Brunson, Edwards, Pecora and the other white New Orleansians. Most impressive of all are the final driving ensemble choruses.

"Cornet Chop Suey" is one of the earliest Armstrong showpieces. And yet it is also good New Orleans jazz, so rooted is the cornet-playing in the jazz idiom. Louis plays an incredible stop-time solo and many beautiful breaks; and his famous coda is played with an ease that suggests those high notes are attacked with feather lightness.

The strangest aspect of these sessions is that they took place on the most casual basis, the numbers being virtually unrehearsed. That might account for the informality of the music but not for the complexity and correctness of the "ear" ensembles—always a highspot of these sides.

This is pure New Orleans jazz, by Armstrong's finest jazz band.

★ FREDDY RANDALL AND HIS BAND

Dark Night Blues/Washington And Lee Swing (Tampa A45—5s. 6d.)

Randall (trp.); Ed Harvey (tmb.); Bruce Turner (cl.); Pat Ross (baritone); Al Head (pno.); Gene Magarity (bass); Harry Miller (dra.). Recorded in London, September 22, 1949.

FREDDY RANDALL'S playing has strains of Spanier and Wild Bill Davison in it. On "Dark Night" he is on a Muggsy plunger kick for most of the record, winding up with some explosive breaks in Wild Bill tradition.

Since Randall plays four of the six choruses solo (and leads and plays breaks in one of the others), this side is to be recommended

to all Freddy's admirers. It shows him at his best, playing with form and some feeling. He could be taken for Muggsy unless "Relaxin' At The Touro"—the rough Spanier equivalent—were played just before or after.

The backing is taken too fast to make a good jazz march, though (its ensembles, with bits of Crosby-style riffs, a busy baritone part, and a trumpet lead apparently based on 1925 Armstrong, suggest a shambles to me. There are two choruses of rapid baritone and some fourteen bars from Eddie Harvey. His trombone is strangely subdued when one remembers the crack tail-gatemans of George Webb days.

★

THE DUTCH SWING COLLEGE BAND
Come Back, Sweet Papa/Wilts The Weeper (Tampa A42—5s. 6d.)

TALKING of the Webbs, here is a full-sounding band reminiscent of those powerful pioneers. Like the Webbs, these Dutch Dixielanders play lots of ensemble, although they use two clarinets instead of two cornets, and are thus more flexible.

"Come Back" is a favourite tune of mine, so I like this melodious recording despite the uneventful course it follows.

"Wilts The Weeper," another winner associated with the Webbs, features leader Schliperoort, pianist Joop Schrier, and trumpeter Van Dorsser in solos. As on the first side, clarinetist Schliperoort plays a lot of notes without getting very far. The piano lets the tension down, but the trumpeter does better, though his lead playing is much in advance of his solo stuff.

This is, nevertheless, a performance which has method and ideas. Enthusiasm and technique have gone into it, and even if it lacks the vehemence of first-rate jazz, it reaches the standard of most of the young American revivalists' work.

The line-up and recording date of this record are the same as those of the sides reviewed here on November 26, 1949.

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MUSICIANS COMMENT ON THE LEWIS-EVANS CONTROVERSY

Vic Lewis began it. In the "Melody Maker" of January 21 he announced his intention of going all out for a progressive policy in 1950 and turning his back on the dancers. "Fine!" said arranger, bandleader-coach George Evans in the following week's "Melody Maker." "I'm sure all regular dancers will breathe a sigh of relief." His article went on to point out that falling box-office receipts at the dance-hall were the inevitable result of the bop and progressive bands ignoring dancers' requirements and making it tough on bandleaders who followed them in.

At once the profession became split into two camps: those who argue that bop at least can be played for dancers, and those who maintain that the ballroom was a place to dance in and not to study musical experiments.

This week we give over page 6 to three well-known musicians, each putting forward his own personal outlook upon this nationwide controversy.

Lewis is showing the way ahead

says
JOHNNY DANKWORTH



IN every sphere of art we encounter a school of thought which refuses to accept a departure from convention.

Music in all its forms has perhaps suffered more than the other arts in this criticism of the innovator, and the student is often understandably perplexed by the fact that, for instance, Schumann and Brahms failed to appreciate Wagner, Saint-Saens found Bach boring, and Tchaikowsky disapproved of Brahms.

Even in the modern school of composition we find such a distinguished composer as Cesar Franck openly hostile to the new musical approach of Maurice Ravel.

Much hideousness

It is, therefore, not surprising that such a predominant and talented figure in the world of dance music as George Evans, after many years of bewildering changes of policy, has at last joined the forces of reaction. It seems, indeed, a short time ago that he was doing everything in his power for the advancement of his music.

In a number of respects George is quite reasonable in his atti-

tude to the modern trend in popular music. Much has been perpetrated under its banner.

I, personally, find much of Stan Kenton's music tiring and even hideous; the Lennie Tristano school, in spite of its admitted musical accomplishment, often tends to make this an end in itself rather than a means of achieving a goal.

What George Evans fails to realise is this. A period of stagnation is almost invariably followed by a period of experiment. Although this latter seldom achieves artistic integrity in itself, it is assimilated by the rising generation which uses the new technical and musical devices in a natural and subconscious manner. This usually results in what we know as progress.

It is only because of these pioneers that we are able to add to our textbook of musical rules.

George then proceeds with a fashionable attack on bebop. Much as I hate this last word, and all its implications, I am compelled to use it to avoid confusion. Inevitably, as with any other new trend in art, the initial impact of this music has caused much cheap and inferior imitation.

Rising above it

This has been largely but forgiveably the fault of the younger generation who, as George rightly points out, attempt to become artists before they are capable musicians.

But this is clearly no indictment of bebop, as no matter what type of music an inefficient musician attempts to play, the net result will be unmusical. The new music has brought no influx of inferior jazz players; there has been a percentage of them ever since the beginning.

No, an artist of any description is a person who learns how to use and respect the existing rules of his art, and then rises above them to display his own personality.

George built his own reputation during the late 'thirties and

early 'forties when dance music had reached a particularly humdrum period, and harmonic and rhythmic progress had practically stopped to make way for technical perfection.

Even so, it is surprising that he, of all people, should be following retrogressive paths, presumably because of his failure to recognise the importance of the new ones.

It is only by instructing the new generation of musicians and listeners that we can hope to produce artists of a calibre worthy of the new fields we have found in jazz.

Two paths

In the past ten years the progress of dance music has found disapproval in the eyes of dancers and increasing support by students of the idiom. Hence we see crowds round the stand and an almost empty floor. What could be more natural, therefore, than to promote the music in the excellent conditions of the concert hall where both listeners and musicians are given a fair chance?

To both George Evans and Vic Lewis I can only wish the best of luck and the greatest of success. But, as George readily admits, he must conform to the rules of a functional dance band with all its limitations in rhythmic and melodic scoring.

And while this is already done quite capably by bands of the calibre of Victor Silvester, Joe Loss and Billy Ternent, I feel it will be a most depressing handicap to George's capabilities, and I can hardly predict for him a happy musical future.

Vic Lewis, on the other hand, with his more ambitious programme of music for the listening public, may easily lead the way to the time when jazz musicians and composers may be heard and received with the intelligence, dignity and appreciation an artist deserves.

But can we call it progress?

asks
Harry Gold



IN the main, I agree with George Evans.

Ballroom dancing has developed in this country in an entirely different way from American dancing. Bands must not overlook this fact when considering entering this field of employment.

Nor should bandleaders ignore the fact that teachers of dancing are at work every day teaching thousands of people basic dance steps which can only be danced at certain tempos.

While these people pay money to dance, they expect to be able to dance the steps they have been taught. Jive dancers are in a minority, and it is a fact that the majority of people in a ballroom complain if they are unable to dance at the proper tempos.

The "progressive" element will no doubt protest—but facts are facts.

It is a moot point whether bop and "progressive jazz" are progress. Atomic power is progress; but in the form of the atom bomb it is reactionary, and a serious menace to the people of the world.

I have been pursuing a somewhat similar policy to that outlined by George Evans with very great success.

However, it should be realised that jazz (Dixieland jazz) is dance music. It can be danced to by ballroom dancers in this country. So I feature a big percentage of jazz in my programmes.

NEXT WEEK
we shall publish the views of "MM" Swing-Band Pull Winner
TED HEATH
and the man whose policy is being so hotly debated,
VIC LEWIS

Palais leaders' pro and con

As a reader of your splendid paper from 1926 without missing one copy, may I raise my glass and drink a toast to George Evans for his outstanding comments on bop?

British dance music is already in the mire. We can just about save it—by shooting all bop merchants!—Harry Thinkstone (bandleader), Empress Ballroom, Warsop, Notts.

I FIND it hard to believe that this is the George Evans we know as a great musician. There have always been those who tried to take dance music out of its narrow boundaries. The last three or four years have seen great strides in this direction. So rapid has been the progress and

so far the departure of many bands from the dance band sphere, that the big break is close ahead: the split between dance bands and progressive. At the moment we have a compromise which satisfies neither side.

For progress we look to the very best musicians to lead; in this country no more capable man exists than George Evans. With him goes quality. We expect more of him than the views expressed in his article.

Come along, George, realise that things must change and progress, and that the time has come to lift our music out of its present rut and raise it to a standard we can all be proud of.—Ron Bishop (bandleader), Shepherd's Bush, W.12.



Progressive music and pulling-power

by
TITO BURNS

MANY times, in the recent past, I have wanted to put my pen to paper in order to destroy one or two fallacies that other bandleaders insist upon believing.

Actually, of course, last week's article in the "MM" by George Evans had very little to do with me—my sextet does not play Progressive Jazz, as do the orchestras of Vic Lewis and Stan Kenton—but, reading on, we come to a little sentence which says:

"Isn't it about time, then, that we forgot this Progressive and Bop nonsense, and set about restoring the business to its former prosperity?"

This from one of our early bop pioneers, a man whom most of us looked upon as one of our British hopes!

Let me make it clear that George Evans and I are the best of friends, and a cross word has never passed between us.

Ballroom bop

But as for bop in the ballrooms, well, I can justly consider myself an authority upon this subject. In 1947 I wrote an article in the "MM" under the heading "Bebop in Dance Tempo—It Can Be Done," and I asserted that bop must have a beat.

It was with smug satisfaction that, two years later, I read articles by Dizzy Gillespie and George Shearing in which they extended the same views.

I have proved beyond all doubt that bop can be played in ballrooms to the complete satisfaction of even the most fanatical strict-tempo adherent. In fact, after one of my appearances at the Oxford Galleries in Newcastle a critic of the dancers' trade journal, "DanceLand," said some very kind things about the sextet and wrote at length about "the jazz band that plays in perfect dance tempo."

Old-timers

It is common knowledge that the sextet went into Wimbledon Palais for one month only, and eventually stayed for six. Just think about that, George. I am playing more bop than any other band in the country, and yet I hold a resident ballroom job for six months... and not for pennies, either. Small wonder the strict-tempo men are manning their guns against bop.

Progressive Jazz is a totally different thing. It most certainly does not belong in a ballroom, and nobody knows that better than Vic Lewis. Hasn't he con-

stantly striven to find different channels for his music to reach the public?

This week sees the realisation of his dream, for he begins his ambitious concert tour, and will not from now on play under the restrictions imposed by ballrooms.

And from there your article, George, falls flat and is quite pointless. Vic Lewis doesn't believe that his music belongs in the ballrooms, and has had the courage and enterprise to find a new field to conquer.

Your flashback to the glorious days of Jack Hylton and his contemporaries shows that you have not really studied the position that those bandleaders enjoyed in their heyday. There were very few name bands on the air in those days as compared with the one hundred and fifty bands that are queuing up for their share of air-time today. The few big bands had their regular radio spots and resident London engagements, and very rarely had to recourse to the one-night-stand circuit.

Youngsters

When such a band did go out to the provinces, it was naturally hailed as a great attraction and did good business. Today there are certain locations that engage three name bands in one week, and of course either two of them suffer or they all do mediocre business.

The manager of London's large ballroom tells me that the top four "pulling-power" bands at his establishment are Heath, Lewis, Ellington and Burns—all modern, all reasonably progressive.

You had something to say about the failings of our young musicians. Now, through your admirable "Students' Orchestra" scheme, you should naturally know a great deal more about them than I do, but please allow me to say this:

There isn't a teacher in the profession who would immediately put these youngsters on to bebop, and, what is more, these musicians are not to be found in professional bands; they are mainly

semi-professional musicians who have gained their "knowledge" of bop from the records they collect and from the numerous books that have been published on the subject.

And speaking of books, George, how is that one of yours doing? The one you wrote and called "Rebop—how to play it."

The answer

No, George: the answer, I am sure, lies in versatility—being able to present the right sort of show and the correct music at the appropriate moment.

It is not an idle boast when I say that I can take my sextet into any ballroom, any theatre, any jazz club, and do the right thing by the patrons.

Some of the records to be made under my new Decca contract will be commercial, but I shall also keep faith with the modern music followers who have so kindly supported me throughout my efforts. I shall do my best for them, too.

WHO'S WHERE
(Week commencing February 6)

Steve CONWAY.
Week: Empire, Hackney.
Dr. CROCK and Orchestra.
Week: Palace, Huddersfield.
Ben DUDLEY Trio.
Week: Hippodrome, Wolverhampton.

Ray ELLINGTON Quartet.
Week: Empire, York.

Harry GOLD and Pieces of Eight.
Monday: Leeds.
Tuesday: Darlington.
Wednesday: Swadincote.
Thursday: Grosvenor House, W.
Friday: Rotherham.
Saturday: Epsom.

Vic LEWIS and Concert Orchestra.
Monday: Newcastle.
Tuesday: Sheffield (private).
Wednesday: Birmingham.
Thursday: Leicester.
Friday: Liverpool.
Sunday: Kettering.

Joe LOSS and Orchestra.
Week: Empire, Shepherd's Bush.

Felix MENDELSSOHN and Hana-an Serenaders.
Week: Pavilion, Liverpool.

Harry PARRY and Sextet.
Week: Middle East.

Freddy RANDALL and Band.
Friday: Ashford (Kent).
Saturday: Ongar.
Sunday: Coo's Ferry Inn, Edmonston.

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Archie May 13-piece follows Burns into Wimbledon

MAY-TIME IN WIMBLEDON



Snapped in the "MM" office—l. to r.: Archie May, Monty Norman, Joan Brooke and Freddy Byfield.

IMPORTANT dance-music changes at Wimbledon Palais bring in London band-leader Archie May and his thirteen-piece orchestra, who will take over the bandstand permanently as Tito Burns and his Sextet leave. Tito Burns finishes this Saturday (4th).

Archie May commences on February 13. During the intervening week Jan Raifini and his Band will be featured. These changes in no way affect Nat Allen and his Orchestra, who remain in residence at the Palais.

Tito Burns leaves after five months at Wimbledon. His immediate plans include concentrating on a number of recording sessions under his new Decca contract, announced "MM" 14/1/50, plus broadcasts and one-night dates, with a big Continental venture likely in the early future.

Archie May comes to Wimbledon with his band completely reorganised and with a number of musical notabilities in his ranks. Featured vocalists are Monty Norman (who is playing guitar) and Joan Brooke. Both are ex-Harry Parry, Joan being also late of the Ken Mackintosh Orchestra. Monty Norman carried out his first solo broadcast recently.

Complete line-up will include: Fred Byfield (piano), Jeff Weston (drums), Ronnie Stone (bass), Monty Norman (guitar-vocals), Gerry Alvarez (1st alto and arranger), Wally Beasley (2nd alto), Len Wood (1st tenor), Stu Robinson (2nd tenor), Benny Perrin, Terry Brown and Terry Gill (trumpets), and Bernard Ebbinghouse (trombone, vibes and arranger). Trumpet Terry Gill also arranges.

Len Taylor to play for Lawrence

Determined to have the finest possible accompaniment when he embarks on his solo venture in variety this month, popular radio vocalist Lee Lawrence has done well to capture the services of experienced pianist Len Taylor.

In order to join forces with Lee Lawrence, Len has brought to an amicable end his pleasant association of two years with stage and radio star Doreen Harris, whom he joined after spending twelve months with Paula Green. Since leaving Doreen just before Christmas—when she went into pantomime—Len has been acting as Musical Director for Doreen's comedian husband, Leon Cortez.

Ernie for Bernie in Kerrison Four

One of the founder-members of the co-operative Johnny Kerrison Quartet, guitarist Bernie Myers has resigned in order to concentrate on personal activities.

With the band right from its formation three years ago, Bernie left on Tuesday (31st), parting from his colleagues on excellent terms. Before the start of the Johnny Kerrison Quartet, Bernie was associated for some time with Tito Burns.

His place at the Café de Paris, where the outfit continues its successful resident engagement opposite George Colborn and his Orchestra, will be taken by Ernie Shear.

WARD 3 'IN TOWN'

Last week-end was the busiest, and one of the most successful, in the career of bandleader Hedley Ward.

Hedley broadcast with his band on Friday from Midland Region before dashing to town on Saturday for an "In Town Tonight" appearance with the Hedley Ward Trio. Sunday saw the Trio and Hedley travelling to the American Army Camp at Burtonwood for yet another cabaret spot.

It was an unusual distinction for Hedley Ward to broadcast in "In Town Tonight." Interviewed by John Ellison, Hedley told of the Trio's formation and his part as producer and manager in the set-up. Following this short interview, the trio played a short-tened version of "Who's Dat Up There?"

Hollywood in Town

Popular personalities Robin Richmond and Hamish Menzies will act as joint hosts and will supply music and entertainment at a new West End Sunday Club opening on February 19, and restricted entirely to those connected with the entertainment and allied professions.

Behind this venture is well-known musician and "MM" feature writer Len Conley. Called the Hollywood Room, the Club will meet at the premises of the Hollywood Club, in Quebec Street, Marble Arch, W.1.

Membership forms can be obtained from Len Conley, c/o 14, Duke Street Mansions, 60, Duke Street, Oxford Street, W.1.

Radio break for Neva

Neva Raphaelo, singer with Humphrey Lyttelton's Band, gets a well-deserved break when she makes her radio debut in Robin Scott's "At The Jazz Band Ball," at 7.30 p.m. on Sunday, February 12, on the BBC's French Transmission.

NEWCOMER TO TROMBONE WITH GOLD 'EIGHT'

A well-merited break comes the way of Kenny Wood, a young trombonist from West Hartlepool, who joins Harry Gold and his Pieces of Eight on February 2 at Nuneston.

Aged 22, he was introduced to the trombone less than five years ago, when with an Army Cadet unit stationed at Loftus in Yorkshire. In a matter of weeks he was playing in the unit band.

He has played with most of the bands in the Hartlepool district, was with the Russ Nicholson Orchestra when at the Palais-de-Danse, Stockton-on-Tees, and later with Jimmy Gardner at the Spa, Saltburn.

Kenny was playing with the relief band when Harry and his group were the attraction at the Borough Hall, Hartlepool, last December. He attracted the attention of the maestro, and has now been engaged to succeed Jack Bottsrell, who has been with the Pieces of Eight since Geoff Love left some weeks ago.

Further news from the Gold camp concerns no fewer than five broadcasts which Harry will play during the present month.

Harry himself airs on "Jazz Club" (18th).

Baron Quintet for Kempinski's

Frank Baron, stylish pianist who has been appearing in one-nighters since his previous resident engagement as bandleader at Les Ambassadeurs, London, W., opens with his own all-star quintet at Kempinski's Restaurant, Regent Street, on February 15.

On January 4, Frank and his band, plus his featured vocal quintet, the Cherokeys, recorded their first titles for the Columbia label.

The personnel of the Cherokeys consists of Frank's wife Vera (lead soprano voice), Pat and Carol Nolan, Peter Knight (who arranges for this vocal group and Frank's band), and Charles Granville.

Bill Elliott joins New Century Artists

As from last Monday (30th), Bill Elliott is acting as General Manager for New Century Artists, Ltd., under the aegis of Eric Winstone, New Century Artists, in association with Elliott Direction, are acting as the exclusive managers and agents for the Eric Winstone Orchestra.

Both New Century Artists, Ltd., and Elliott Direction are being run from 23, Denmark Street, W.C.2. Mrs. Queen Butler remains as personal secretary to Eric Winstone—a post she has held for the past six years—while Benny Fields is assisting Bill Elliott in running both agencies.

THREE LORDS IN THE GROOVE



Three lords line up for the "MM" camera at Len's Preston's Calypso session for Parlophone last Monday (see story on page 2). They are Lord Donegall, between Calypsonians Lord Beginner (left) and Lord Ritchener (right).

Peggy d'Almain leaves Aldwych Brasserie: Syd Hellier succeeds

Frank Weir to play 'dance for moderns'

Well-known Northern impresario, Gerald Cohen, who was responsible for presenting the Johnny Meyer Sextet in several provincial towns, informs the "MM" that he is promoting a special "dance-for-moderns" at the Jubilee Hall, Leeds, on Saturday, February 11.

He has engaged Frank Weir's All-Star Band. This group features such luminaries as Johnny Dankworth, Don Rendell, Jimmy Power, and Bill Sutt (saxes); Leon Calvert (trumpet); Fred Enrico (piano); Jimmy Benson (drums); and Charlie Short (bass), led, of course, by Frank on clarinet.

Vocals will be by Alan Smith

BERLIN AND DAVISON JOIN FORCES

One-time bandleader, and former Butlin's musical director and musical adviser Al Berlin appears in a new West End rôle this month by joining forces with band-agent Harold Davison. The two experts are pooling their extensive knowledge of dance bands in the direction of several new projects which will be announced shortly.

For four years with Messrs. Butlin's, Al Berlin was responsible for booking the bands, and for the band policy adopted by the famous firm. During his several years in the Forces, Al instituted the famous Forces "21" Clubs at Blankenberghe, Brussels, and other Continental towns and cities. He acted both as bandleader and manager at several of the clubs.

At one time the youngest bandleader in the business, Al led his own group at the Casanova Restaurant in Trafalgar Square in 1931, when he was only 15. He continued bandleading until 1940.

New dance club opens

The Riviera Dance Club, a new weekly meeting-place for dance music and swing enthusiasts, has now been opened at the luxurious premises of Gunter's Restaurant, Park Lane, London, W.1.

The club, which is being run by Nancy Horwitz, Gerald Bearman and Leslie Wood, opens each Sunday from 7.30 to 11 p.m. and the "name-band" policy instituted by the organisers has already resulted in the presentation of Stéphane Grappelli and his Quintet (22nd) and Harry Gold and his Pieces of Eight (29th). Next Sunday features Leslie Hutchinson and his All-Stars.

When attractive, blonde violinist-leader, Peggy d'Almain left for Australia on January 31, her resident group at the Aldwych Brasserie, Strand, London, was taken over by well-known West End accordionist Syd Hellier.

Peggy d'Almain, who is flying to Australia to marry a prominent business man, has appeared with great success at the Aldwych Brasserie for the past six years. Following over four years' training at the Royal Academy of Music, she carried out a great deal of symphony work before obtaining the Aldwych appointment.

Until just before Christmas, Peggy specialised in "Palm Court"-styled music. Lately, however, she changed the instrumentation of her group to feature a policy of evening dance music.

The personnel now comprises: Syd Hellier (leader, accordion); Sid ("Smiler") Miles (pno.); Bill Etherington (cello, clar.); Carole Brooke (gtr., vocals, cabaret); Eric Webb (electric gtr.); and Mel Powell (bass). Afternoon sessions, which still feature "Palm Court" music, bring in Harry Phillips (vin.).

Three 'Downbeats' a week

Harry Morris's "Downbeat Club," which has been meeting every Sunday evening, is to extend its activities to bring in two more sessions a week. These will be on Sunday afternoons (3-6 p.m.) and on Thursday evenings (7 p.m.).

All three meetings will be at the same premises—12, Little Newport Street, W. Resident group on all occasions will be that led by Laurie Morgan, and comprising: Derek Neville (saxes); Terry Brown (tpt.); Tommy Pollard (pno.); and Lennie Bush (bass).

Club Eleven at midnight

Starting tonight (Friday, 3rd), the Club Eleven is inaugurating a new series of meetings—in addition to those on Wednesdays and Saturdays—to be held every Friday. Unusual aspect of this is that the meetings will commence at midnight, continuing until 4 a.m. on the Saturday morning.

The usual Club Eleven groups, led by Ronnie Scott and Johnny Dankworth, will be in attendance, in addition to which there will be guest artists and cabaret.

WOOLWICH JAM STARS

An ambitious series of jazz concerts for S. London fans starts this Sunday (5th) at the Woolwich Empire (3 p.m.). Teddy Foster and his orchestra will be featured, with, in addition, a jam group including such stars as Kenny Baker, Johnny Dankworth, and Alan Dean—all winners, in their own respective sections, in the recent "MM" Poll.

...and TV takes over Palais for special Allen show

So that televiewers may receive an authentic picture of a Palais de danse in operation, the BBC is completely taking over Wimbledon Palais for an on-the-spot telecast on February 17.

No effort is being spared to ensure the authenticity of atmosphere on this occasion. On the stand, playing for a normal crowd of dancers, will be one of the Palais' two resident bands—that led by certainly our most televised dance band leader, Nat Allen.

Nat will be leading his usual Palais band, augmented to a 20-piece. Exhibition dancers Pat Eaton and Arthur Norton, bop dancers from the Palais, and cabaret acts will complete the programme, "From Lancers to Bebop."

Preparations for the 55-minute transmission, which commences at 9.30 p.m., will begin as soon as the previous evening dance session comes to an end.

Tickets are being distributed for the BBC by the management, who, after catering for members of clubs associated with them, expect to have some 300 spare. Application should be made to Mr. E. Lardner, at the Palais, High Street, Merton, S.W.19.

SHARON 6 FIXED FOR ONE-NIGHTS

With the official cessation of the "bottle party" régime, the Stork Club has temporarily closed. The result is that fans of the slick and modernistic Ralph Sharon Sextet will be able to hear and see the outfit on a number of one-night stands it is undertaking before returning to the Stork in four weeks' time.

The first of these is tonight (Friday, 3rd) at the Royal Forest Hotel, Chingford, and another on February 11 at the Pavilion, Gillingham.

In addition, the Sextet has four Sunday concerts lined-up at the London Casino. These are all for different promoters, and are on February 5 and 26, and March 19 and 26.

Exclusively handling the Sharon groups is Alfred Praeger.

Lorna for Continent

Thanks to the generosity of Gerald, who has agreed to release her for three weeks, accordionist Lorna Martin will be making a brief visit to Austria and Northern Italy this month to entertain the troops for CSE.

Leaving London on February 7, Lorna will be away till March 2.

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Technical Page



Bass queries

answered by

CHARLIE SHORT and GEORGE GIBBS

Q. I find that I get a slapping sound in loud passages. How can I avoid this?
A. This is probably caused by pulling the strings away from the fingerboard instead of pulling them across. Other possible causes are too low a bridge, or a fingerboard which has become frayed through wear and needs re-shooting.

Q. My bridge is too low and I would like to know if there is any way in which I can raise it.
A. The only thing to be recommended is to replace the low bridge with a new one. Don't make the mistake of trying to raise the bridge by sanding underneath the feet of the bridge. The feet should sit on the body exactly where the strings are tensioned.

Q. My sound-post has fallen down. Can you tell me the correct position for it?
A. It should be approximately an inch below the foot of the bridge on the G string side of the instrument. If the soundpost fell while the bass was strung, the indications are that it does not fit properly and a new one is needed. If the strings are taken off the bass, the soundpost is very likely to fall. It should be replaced one at a time with at least a week's interval between each change to allow for drying-in.

Q. I wish to study the work of various bassists in order to develop my "ear" and style. Which do you recommend?
A. Bassists for all-round study are Jack Collier, Bob Roberts at home and "Triper" Albert on Glen Miller discs. For modern style, the work of Ray Brown, Oscar Pettiford, Jimmy Mullen, Charles Mingus, Nelson Boyd, early Russell and Stan Kenton will repay study.

IT has been my experience that the youngster who decides to learn trumpet, almost invariably has had his enthusiasm fired by the records of some phenomenal technician. Often the star in question is a high-note specialist, and the overall impression that the enthusiast gains is that trumpet playing is about the most exciting thing in this world to do.

In fact, from the very outset, glamour obscures the unapproachable truth that learning to play the trumpet—or any other instrument, for that matter—is likely to be a long and, for the first few months, a tedious and disheartening process. During the past year I have assessed a veritable mass of queries from trumpet students, most of them from youngsters who were just beginning to play. There is more to trumpet playing than just picking up the instrument and blowing it. Some youngsters from people who hadn't even reached this stage.

Take the following question: "I recently started learning the trumpet and can play two octaves with a little difficulty. I am told that this is not progressive enough. Can you give me some tips?"

This reader had only been studying the instrument for two or three months, and I quote him as a prime example of the person who wishes to run before he can walk. He couldn't reasonably have expected to do more than set the embouchure and produce a reasonable tone on the instrument. The range of two octaves is, I consider, very good progress in the time.

TEACHING

The best thing for this rather over-ambitious student would have been to find a good teacher, because the advice of an experienced man can be invaluable in the early stages.

He obviously had the idea that he should be well on the way towards mastering the trumpet completely in six months—or at the outside a year. If he had consulted a good teacher in the first place, he would have picked up many valuable points, such as how and what to practice, and the different types of mouthpieces one can use. Also he would have learned correct blowing from the start, and been able to avoid developing bad habits.

Another reader asked, "What method should be applied to learning the trumpet," and said that he had "tried the old method" but didn't know if it suited him. Here again it is clear that the inquirer knows very little about the instrument, and his query is not well defined, nor is it very sensible. I summed up the title of a tutor, "Start from the fact that the reader practically gave no credit for possessing second sight. In that he asked me to pick a method which might suit him and give me no real information to work on, this type of question just cannot be dealt with satisfactorily through the post. The answer is once again that he should see a teacher. There are several different methods of playing, and I am of the opinion that a good player is best qualified to suggest a method. Which it is depends to a large extent on physical make-up and the embouchure by actually watching the student play. In the best position to advise him.

During a through the file, I find another question from a beginner: "I am thinking of taking up the trumpet, and should like some advice on tutors. Could you also give me some ideas of the type of mouthpiece I should buy? My lips are fairly thick."

The first part of this question is fairly simple, but the second part isn't. There are no hard and fast rules concerning mouthpieces. About the best thing to

do is to start with a medium type mouthpiece and stick to it for a few months. After that, it is easier to make a decision on suitability. However, more on this subject later.

Another question: "I have decided once and for all to become a trumpeter, but before buying an instrument I should like to know if I need any special qualifications. Also, which trumpet is best—brass, lacquer or silver?"

QUALIFICATIONS

Well, that one about special qualifications is a big question, and a book could be written on the subject. The essence of the matter is whether the student is musical or not. Can he sing in tune? Pitch any note he hears accurately? Distinguish various musical sounds? Tell if a note is in tune? If he can't, then I'm afraid that he will experience a great deal of difficulty in learning any instrument properly. It is possible to play in these circumstances, but the sad truth is that the student cannot go very far.

The actual finish of the instrument doesn't matter. What is important is its musical accuracy and the efficiency of its valve action. Lacquer is in vogue today, and nearly all modern brass instruments have this finish.

I delve into the file again. "I am seventeen years of age and can get up to B and occasionally to C. But I've yet to go higher. After an hour and a half of hard blowing my lips get seriously sore and tired, and I'm lucky if I can get up to G above the stave. Will you give me any tips you can and tell me if two-hour practice a week is enough?"

PRACTICE

This is, I think, a typical younger player's question. They all expect to play far too much, and can't seem to understand why the lips and lip muscles should tire so quickly.

For their benefit, I would like to say that mine did the same until I remedied the trouble by breaking up my practice time and resting the lip periodically. The length of time one has been playing counts a lot, too. It takes a long time for the average player to achieve a state where the lips and muscles become sufficiently strong to stand up to hard playing. It might take any time up to two and a half to three years.

I started to practice the trumpet when I was thirteen years old. I suppose I must have been a natural player, because I never had embouchure trouble. With regular practice I attained a fair time if I was fifteen. Some players may take considerably longer than this, and during this difficult period may be persistent too hard, showing inability of brushing the lips unsuccessfully.

Practice of any kind is tiring—that is, if one practices correctly. For what is the purpose of practice if it is not to master the difficult technicalities of the instrument?

I am inclined to think that most beginners overlook this point, believing themselves to be instruments and packing their instruments away in disgust because they can't reach top C as easily as at the beginning.

I practiced for an hour and a half daily for the first year, and after that I started to practice more sparingly, increasing the practice time up to three hours daily, and later pushed it up to four hours.

Sax and clarinet embouchure

by **BILLY AMSTELL**

After playing sax for eighteen months, I have started on clarinet. But while my teachers tell me that a different mouthpiece is required for this instrument, I find that I produce a better tone in all registers by using my normal sax embouchure.

THESE is not much difference between the embouchure needed for clarinet and that used for sax, except that the clarinet embouchure should be firmer. Probably your teacher adheres to the old embouchure for clarinet, in which the lips are drawn over the upper and lower teeth. I disagree with this, and advocate placing the teeth on the top of the mouthpiece.

I find that playing the clarinet this way is not only more comfortable, but also affords a better grip and helps with volume.

TECHNICAL PURFAY COUPON

Technical queries should be addressed to Tony Brown (Technical Editor), Room 323, The Melody Maker, 180, High Holborn, W.C.1, for answering by our panel of famous instrumentalists. No query can be dealt with unless this coupon is enclosed together with a stamped addressed envelope.

four hours. I kept this up for a number of years.

Let us go back for a moment to that question about a suitable mouthpiece for fairly thick lips. This reader was only thinking of taking up the trumpet, and so was starting from scratch. Apart from telling this enthusiast to get a medium sized mouthpiece with, perhaps, a cushion rim, I don't think there is much to be said. When he has started to produce a fair tone and can pitch, it would be easier to advise a change if necessary. He will have formed some sort of embouchure, and changes at this stage are not likely to do much harm.

Actually, I started on cornet at the age of twelve, and first played with a brass band. I remember that I started on the battered old mouthpiece that went with the instrument, and played on it for quite a long time before I even thought about changing. I had no embouchure, and it wouldn't have made any difference if I did. My first mouthpiece—I still couldn't have made a better show on cornet than I did at that period.

Later, when I'd learned something about the functioning of the instrument and the principles governing mouthpieces, I decided on a change. But I took the advice of older and more experienced brassmen before making one.

MOUTHPIECE "BUG"

I think every brass player gets bitten by the mouthpiece bug at some time or other, and in certain circumstances it can be quite harmful. Changes of any kind should be gradual—especially where the diameter of the cup or rim is involved. A drastic change here is likely to affect the lip muscles and upset the embouchure, which in turn will take a long time to adjust itself. Depth of cup or a change in the bore or throat doesn't affect the lip as much.

Now about a practice routine. It doesn't matter how long one practices as long as the lips are never strained or over-taxed. The important thing is that the pressure should not be continued when the lips make it obvious that they have had enough.

For myself, I laid down a definite routine which approximated to 15 minutes on long notes with and without vibrato, a short rest, 15 minutes of scales, rest, 15 minutes arpeggios, rest, 15 minutes on pitched tone control, vibrato, etc., rest, 30 minutes on studies, sight-reading and attempts to master various technical difficulties that cropped up from time to time. That the last is important, because I've noticed that so many young players practice all the easy pieces they know and seldom spend much time on the things they can't play.

Every practice session should be regarded as a step forward, and something learned, however small, is an indication of progress. Nothing venture, nothing gain, in fact.

Finally, the right kind of student will not be discouraged to learn that the road is more tedious than he first imagined. Becoming a proficient trumpeter might be a long job, but it is very worth while.

Atmospheric bass drum

by **ERIC DELANEY**

I bought my 24 by 15 bass drum fairly recently, and at first it seemed all right. Later it has seemed to lose its tone and volume. If I use a hard beater, it gives a high-pitched knocking sound, and with a medium beater it is practically inaudible.

I've experimented with the tension of the heads, but within the time span the improvement by this the volume is still poor. Can you advise me?

YOU seem to be in a spot here, but don't get too upset over it. Every drummer has had this experience. The kit seems so under par that he could almost swear that it is not his own. He goes to work on it, loosens this, tightens that beater. But no; it just doesn't go right. So he leaves it in disgust. When next he picks up the sticks he is dependant, but to his amazement the drums are fine.

Next time you feel dissatisfied, ask the "son" of the "son" in his hand the "son" of the "son" in his hand that the "son" of the "son" in his hand is sticking. That the "son" of the "son" in his hand is sticking. It is, in fact, just the old, damp atmosphere, and nothing else, that affects the performance of the drum.

As for the volume, it all depends on what size group you play with, and how big the hall is. If the hall is crowded, the band itself might sound even softer, your small bass drum even softer.

There's just one point. After you've made your beat, does the beater remain on the head for a fraction of a second too long? If it does, volume will be hindered. And if the Gerardo Orchestra comes your way as any band does, and have a percentage of the volume with me and see if any improvement can be made.

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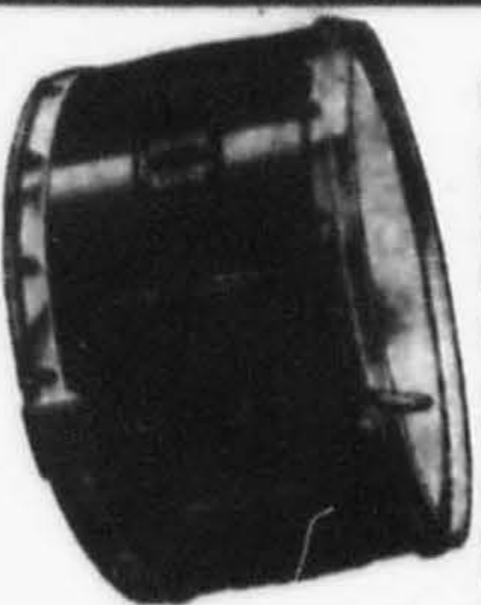


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PERSONAL PREFERENCES . . . FOR THE NEW COLLECTOR

No. 4—WASHBOARD RHYTHM KINGS

WASHBOARD RHYTHM KINGS

Pepper Steak
Shopsy Drunk Blues

(ERRY BASS)

First side recorded March 1, 1927; second, November 23, 1927.

HERE are two sides from a large group of recordings, which, although very popular among collectors, have received very little publicity.

It is strange that none of the discographers has got around to trying to sort out the musicians recorded on these washboard records for most of the records have had most of the records merit. I would humbly suggest, than a bunch of the material turned out by some of the famous groups about which they have been lauded their brains in the past.

Delaney and Blackstone are almost mute about these sides, although the former does mention that Leo Watson and Wilbur Danks are on "Shopsy Drunk Blues" with the kind help of "Hoover" with the kind help of some of our local "experts." I think we can now shine some light on the personnel for these sides.

For "Pepper Steak": Bill Coleman (tr.); Eddie Shine (alto); Cecil Scott (td.); Steve Washington (sb) and vol.; "Whobornell" (bass and vol.); "Washboard" H. Smith (vtd.); unknown piano.

For "Shopsy Drunk Blues": Eddie Shine (alto); Douglas Daniels (tr.); "Toddy Bunn" (tr.); Clarence Froot (pno.); Wilbur Danks (bass and vol.); unknown trumpet and washboard.

The presence of Bill Coleman and Scott on the first side may come as a surprise to some of you, but it has been pointed out to me that this record bears a remarkable resemblance to "Lard, Lard" by Cecil Scott's Bright Boys (Victor 38026).

Here the trumpet is undoubtedly by Coleman, and on careful listening I am quite convinced that it is also by "Pepper Steak."

So much for the personnel, your comments upon which will be welcomed, and now to the records themselves.

These washboard groups have a style and timber all of their own. There is an unbridled gaiety about their recordings; a care-free unconcern which cooks a snoot at commercialism in the most uncompromising fashion. "Pepper Steak" is merely a series of notes against a rousing, rickety rhythm led by Mr. Washboarding washboard of Mr. Smith. If there are any of you who are a little wearying, I cannot trace this gentleman anywhere and although he is known to Southern Fried is a favorite dish amongst the coloured people. I didn't know they cooked steak that way.



This picture of Bill Coleman was taken in Bombay in 1937 and last to us by Jimmy Holloway.

who are in doubt as to the rhythmic worth of this domestic item, I am sure you will change your mind when you hear the best as laid down by this gentleman.

Bill Coleman is given plenty to do. He plays three choruses, and provides a good lead to the whole vocal unit.

The backing is in the same vein, although somewhat more restrained in tempo. There is some pleasant piano and good guitar plus more also from Eddie Shine.

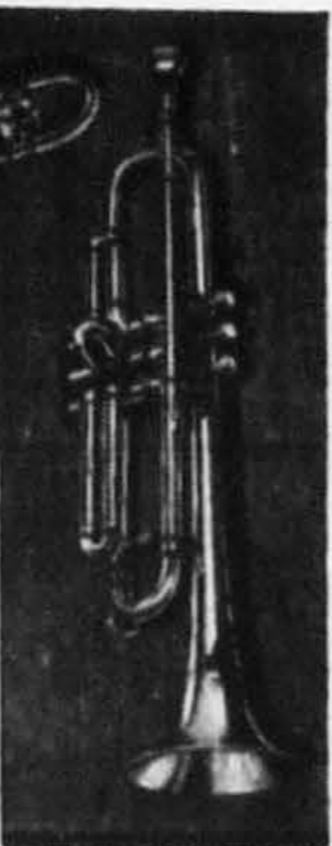
I am not at all certain as to the identity of the trumpet player here. He sounds like a restrained Henry Allen, and he plays a phrase to open his solo which is very familiar to me, but which I cannot at the moment have heard it before somewhere.

Perhaps one of you will know where it comes from; if so, please write in and tell us.

New records

(Mid-January and February 1950)
Dennis Ted Heath O.K. "I'm In The Mood For Love" (NY 5261) (12345)
Brunswick: "Punching Smith" "I'm Sober Now" "Jump Steady Blues" (04251)

Capitol: Stan Kessler O.K. "Southern Scandal" "After You" (CL1343). "Come Back To See Me" (1343). "Machito" (1326). "Milk and Honey" (1326). "There's A New Girl In Town" (1326). "The Rag Doll" (1326). "Red Nichols and His Orchestra" (1326). "If I Had You" (1326). "Wooly Bully" (1326). "Baby Just Carry On" (1326). "Ray Anthony" (1326). "Duke Ellington" (1326). "A New Shade Of Blue" (1326).



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Collectors' Corner

Edited by Max Jones and Sinclair Trail

BRIAN RUST writes to ask if anyone at EMI is aware that the Parlophone R Series is about to encroach on the old purple label R Series?

"Imagine the confusion," says Brian, "in the order collector's mind, caused by having confronted with any B and R series and a Lytelite at 45222, not to mention the discographers, whose job is hard enough already."

Strictly EMI themselves will find it a very interesting thing two Parlophone records with the same number. The famous Keith Brown series from 1939 to 1942 is about to be re-issued upon already. Some of the same number records bearing the same number as Golden Leaf Series is re-issued, though I can hardly imagine any collector possessing both items. From the Parlophone listed below it will be noticed that the

The Dixieland Jamboree Band

by Curtis Suter

I KNOW that I'm going back a little with this note on the broadcast from New Orleans, heard by you on August 20 last year. But it was only while strolling recently through a stack of Max Jones' records that I was reminded of a certain wheezy—that I guess across Maurice Burman's review of the Dixieland Jamboree Band programme.

Naturally, I figured that my duty as a real job per cent. New Orleans Mouldy Fags was to enlarge on the subject and offer some explanations.

The line-up of the band on the particular transcription you heard was: Tony Dalmado (tr.); Charlie Miller (sax); Tony Gell (cl.); Roy Zimmerman (pno.); Frank Federico (electric guitar); Johnny Catano (dr.).

I shall attempt to take each man and speak of his style in relation to what Burman called "understanding of jazz, phrasing and ideas. . . ."
First, though—and let's get this straight—the guys aren't kids. To the best of my knowledge, none of the fellows is below thirty years of age. I'll present them for you.

No Lytelite

Tony Dalmado, trumpeter, succeeded Sharkey on horns and is a fine all-round musician with a terrific lip. Tony Dalmado and phrasing are not as clever and not nearly as strict as Sharkey, but in my opinion, he is a better player. Lytelite, who, in my opinion, is one of the greatest cornetists living today.
But Mr. Dalmado does not try to sound strict Dixieland. He is to sound a swinging trumpeter playing a modern style.

Tony Conita, clarinetist with the band, took the place of Irving Parola upon the death of the latter. Tony is also a modernist, and once in a while you'll notice some hop licks in his playing.
He is a fast-fingered fellow with technique that plenty of strict N.O. guys wish they had. But then, again, it just ain't Dixie.

Tram man Charlie Miller joined the outfit when Julian Deger laid out. In my opinion, this is the kid who is the most "Dixielandish" of all the men in the front line. Although he has a "gut-buckin'" it is easy-going, relaxed, and fits in with the band.

I agree with Burman that the electric guitar has no place in a Dixieland band, but Frank Federico (who also displays a modern style) is the "saxman" for the band. He takes vocals and "cuts up," thus putting them over.

Modern Dixie

Platist Roy Zimmerman, bassist Joe Lorocono and drummer Johnny Catano are all very capable musicians who work well together to give out the rhythms for the boys. Joe Lorocono, as you might know, played tram for the old Halfway House Dance Orchestra.
From this little summary of the band, you might gather that I am trying to put across to you that these guys play modern. Well, you're right. Put 'em together and you have a Dixieland band with really an ultra-modern style.
You see, these guys aren't giving to sound like the "Originals" or early Dixieland musicians. In fact, they're trying hard to be "authentic" Dixieland jazz, but this is just coming.

February EMI releases

MSV: André Previn, "Just One Of Those Things" (10877); "I'm Glad I'm A Boy" (10878); "Epitaph" (10879); "Boys" (10880).
Decca: Duke Ellington O.K. "Sally" (10881); "Lady Of The Lane" (10882); "Las Vegas" (10883); "Dawn On 52nd Street" (10884); "Where's Prey?" (10885).
Parlophone: Humphrey Lyttelton O.K. "Mumps Blues" (10886); "Laf Bag" (10887); "Mackintosh" (10888); "Man Of Meane" (10889); "Mia Anna-Mia" (10890); "Joe Davids' Blues" (10891); "Sagittarius" (10892); "Dramatic" (10893); "U2371".

NFJO NOTEBOOK

by Leo Perlin

THE NOTEBOOK opens with news bad and good. On the front page comes the announcement from Stan and Bert Williams that their application for permits to bring Louis Armstrong and the entire Louis Armstrong All-Stars Orchestra has not been approved by the Ministry of Labour.

There is no intention of withdrawing the permit which has since been renewed with the one of two applications for permits we have received has been because the permit was not renewed.
"Not only is there opposition on the part of the American Federation of Musicians to the appearance of British musicians of this class in America, but there is also the feeling that the United States Government would not grant permission to British musicians to take engagements in the States if they have not been approved for American jazz musicians here."

HEARTENING NEWS

It is a relief to hear that the whole copy of the Press Commission's report on the Press Commission (No. 1294, issued March 28, 1950) has been forwarded to the Wilson Organisation. He stresses that the administrative action of the United States Department of Labour referred to in the Commission's report is not the Commission's action on the type now in question.
Then comes the most heartening passage in the letter, which contains a hint of further action:

"I am, however, proposing to ascertain whether there has been, or is likely to be, any change of attitude on the part of the American Government and the American Federation of Musicians, and in the light of reports received to consider whether it is possible to bring about any improvement in the present admittedly unsatisfactory state of affairs."
I feel that not only members of the delegation led by Mr. Marquis of Douglas which met Mr. Dribing at the House of Commons, but all jazz enthusiasts throughout the country, will wish to be associated with the thanks expressed to Mr. Dribing for his interest and intervention on our behalf.

Opened "Jazz at the Oval" by Jack (Shoreless) Jackson last Friday (21st). This week features yet another new group, the Carlo Krumborn band. This Goodman-esque line-up includes Carlo on vib, Billy Arnold on clar, and vocals by Marlene Russell. Dubbed "The Original Dixielanders, Reforming of hand, led by Reg Rieggen, in progress. "Young" the Humphrey Lyttelton Jazz Show, appearing at the Troil Theatre, Wembley, this Sunday (5th). Departing Wembley being Shop personality Sunny Ross, to the States, February 9. Parloville party at the Reg-Node, 13, Little Newport Street, Charing Cross Road, tomorrow, Saturday (5th).

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