Baylor University Drumline

2008 Marching Percussion Handbook

The Golden Wave

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY MARCHING BAND

Thank you for your interest in the Baylor University Drumline. This handbook has been carefully designed to equip you with the tools necessary to be fully prepared and aware of the expectations regarding what it takes to be a member of the BDL. The staff and section leaders are eagerly anticipating the season and making plans to ensure that the 2008-2009 BDL is the best yet!

The 2008-2009 section leaders are:

Casey Stoker (snare) - Casey_Stoker@baylor.edu

I would like to encourage you to periodically check the official Baylor Drumline website at: http://www3.baylor.edu/bdl/ All news, music, mp3, and information will be posted on the website.

As questions arise, please do not hesitate to contact me. Working together, we will have a successful season of which we can all be proud.

Sincerely,

Jim Gist
Baylor University Drumline Instructor
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Special Note: Many of the techniques, styles and ideas discussed in this handbook are inspired by various DCI drumlines such as the Cavaliers and the Blue Coats. We recognize and applaud the efforts and talents of all DCI corps that inspire and motivate each of us year after year.

Source:

The Cavalier Percussion Staff. (2005). *Complete Percussion Book 2005*. Rosemont, Illinois: Woodbar Music Press, LLC and The Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps.

2008
Baylor Drumline Handbook

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Preface

Philosophy Statement

The marching percussion program at Baylor University believes in educational and personal growth through experience and musical interpretation while teaching technical precision and consistency. The group is designed to create a learning environment that is conducive to a high level of musical performance, while upholding the tradition of the Baylor University Golden Wave Band and the University in the most dignified manner.

Rehearsal Expectations

Given the heavy time constraints of a normal BUGWB performance season, every effort must be made to maximize the amount of quality, on-task rehearsal time within each rehearsal. As a result, the rehearsal environment must be completely free of extraneous noise, talking, or disruptive behavior. Our work ethic is absolutely vital to our success. Tempo, style and dynamics are all generated from the center snare drummer, who is keenly in touch with the pulse of the metronome at all times during rehearsal. Furthermore, each player is responsible for listening carefully to the player inside of them for all of the elements of performance listed above. This process is known as listening in and, when properly executed, serves as the backbone of precise, clearly articulated section playing.

Performance

The Baylor University Golden Wave Band performs regularly on a national, often televised, stage. As a result, every effort must be taken to ensure that all aspects of the BUGWB presence exude the highest levels of professionalism, musicianship, and maturity. Any public performance, regardless of length or scope, will be approached in complete and total seriousness. As a member of the Baylor Drumline, you will be expected to be alert, focused, on-task at all times during performance, whether that be on the field, in the stands or in parade. Remember, someone is always watching. Assume that every impression is the first.

Check Points

Before you even play a note, there are a number of things you must do to set yourself up for the success you are about to achieve. First, let's discuss posture. As you may already know, it is important for all players to practice correct posture to not only define the uniformity of the line, but to maintain a healthy spinal cord. If you were to look at yourself in a mirror from a side point of view, position your body so that your ears are in line with your shoulders, your shoulders are in line with your hips, and your hips are in line with your ankles. Any incorrect degree will sacrifice your health, uniformity to the other players in the line, and your confident appearance.

After doing this, check to make sure that there is no unwanted tension in your shoulders. Next, we want to make sure that the drum is set at the correct height (stand or carrier height must be the same). To determine the correct height of your drum, the slope of the angle from your upper arm to your forearm should be approximately 95 degrees. Now that this has been established, let's develop a cognitive routine that will help us to realize what true consistency is.

Start the checkpoint at your feet and move up toward your head. Your heels must be together and your feet should be a fist-width apart (roughly 30 degrees). Next, be sure that your knees are relaxed and not locked. From here, execute correct posture with the upper body.

Snare, tenors, and bass drums all play at the flattest angle possible. This is the first step to achieving our sound. It ensures maximum rebound from the drumhead, and a dark, fundamental based tone. The second part of this equation is the use of a heavy, legato stroke. When playing a drum, you should feel as though the sticks or mallets are falling into the head, not crushing it. This analogy should help in avoiding a high velocity, pounding stroke. Let the weight of your hands and sticks do most of the work.

Sticks Out/ Sticks In

The very first note of any piece of music or exercise is the sticks out. Therefore, let's define this so we can achieve maximum success of the actual beats we are about to play. Stick in after a piece of music or exercise is to be known as the last note. It should be an exact reversal of the sticks out. Practice the two back to back to be sure that they are exact opposites in direction, but nothing else.

Both, sticks out and sticks in should be staccato in motion. In order to achieve this, start the initiation of motion as late as possible. Therefore, sticks out should hit exactly on count 7 before you begin playing. Sticks in should create an aggressive sound on the count after the last beat is played. Just as you set up to play the music, your sticks should be perfectly straight with all of the fingers in the correct places.

Do not underestimate the importance of sticks out and sticks in. They serve a large role in the quality of the music you are playing, and the aggressive uniformity of technique we are striving for as a line.

Stroke Types

In rudimental playing, there are four types of strokes. These are defined by the position of the stick before and after a note is played. Each of these stokes utilizes the wrist for the primary pivot point. Use the weight of your hand to produce a full dark sound with each stroke.

The Full Stroke: Starts high and ends high. This stroke should allow the stick to rebound off the head and have it return to the point where the stick began. The full stroke should always be relaxed and smooth. The wrist should aid in the rebound of the stick, but be careful not to "whip" the stick back with the wrist.

The Tap Stroke: Starts low and ends low. This stroke is similar to a full stroke in the fact that it returns to the point where the stick began. The difference is that there is very little rebound used.

The Down Stroke: Starts high and ends low. This stroke is restricted from rebound after striking the drumhead. Here the stick stops low to accommodate the following tap strokes.

The Up Stroke: Starts low and ends high. This stroke is pulled away from the drumhead after striking it. These strokes are found when going from a tap stroke to a full stroke.

Shifting Fulcrum Concepts

In order to understand how to play music correctly the first time with regard to tempo, we must explore the shifting fulcrum concept. For example, if I were to play 16^{th} notes, at 9" and 160 beats per minute, I would focus on using front fulcrum. Everyone uses the shifting fulcrum when they play. It is just that most don't realize the importance of being aware of how to use it.

The concept of the shifting fulcrum is completely dependent on the tempi. There are three such fulcrums involved. They are the back fulcrum, middle fulcrum, and the front fulcrum. We will confront and clarify the efficiency and usage of all three.

Back Fulcrum: used for slow to moderate tempos, this is often referred to as a marcato or deliberate stroke. It consists of a conscious presence of the back fingers of the hand. In this stroke, the fingers are used very minimally with regard to motion, however, they allow for maximum control of the stick. The wrist simply

forms a hinge and performs the work most efficiently on its' own (same for both match and traditional left hand).

Middle Fulcrum: used for moderate to quick tempos, this evolves from a marcato stroke to a legato stroke. Within the match grip, the middle and ring fingers are more prevalent in the control of the stroke when isolating the middle fulcrum. On the left hand traditional grip, the index finger is used with the wrist to gain speed while maintaining control. While performing such a stroke, the fingers are used extensively than in the back fulcrum, and work with the wrist to produce the full sound.

Front Fulcrum: used for quick tempi, referred to as a legato stroke. The front fulcrum is efficient for playing quicker speeds between 6 and 9 inches and medium-quick to extreme speeds when the player is playing 12" to vertical.

As an exercise to isolate the shifting fulcrum concept, simply play 8th notes, staring slowly and gradually getting quicker. Within the match grip, notice how the space between the pinky finger and the palm increases as the tempo does. This is the shifting fulcrum concept at work. Be aware and analyze the seamless transitions between the fulcrums. A complex understanding of this is helpful in the development of chops and control.

Smoothness

What is "Smoothness"? To me, it means a drummer has fluidity about their appearance when he/she plays. This fluidity comes from not over-restricting the rebound during any stroke that they play. Any such restriction can also be referred to as tension. Holding on to the stick tightly while I play should cause tension and restrict the rebound. As a result, I would lack flow.

When you use all the concepts that have been discussed in this handbook, please focus on achieving and maintaining smoothness. Use your understanding of the playing area and the shifting fulcrums to do so. You can have that fluidity that is defined as smoothness, if you use these concepts correctly.

Contrary to some schools of thought, the technique is not "forced" or "hard." The technique is very relaxed. Strive to stay completely relaxed from the shoulder to the fingers. We feel playing relaxed (i.e. no tension in the shoulders, forearms, wrists, or fingers) is conducive to a dark warm sound. In playing tenors the concept of relaxation and sound needs to be applied and mastered on one drum, and then maintained as you add lateral motion around the drums.

The Height/ Dynamic System

pp - 1"

p - 3"

mp - 6"

mf - 9"

f - 12"

ff - 15"

A dynamic marking such as this: *f-p*, simply means that accents will be played at forte (12") while taps will be at piano (3").

10 Tips for Practicing Efficiently

1. Always practice performance.
2. Be a "patient perfectionist".
3. Always play with proper technique and approach (minimize bad habits/maximize good habits).
4. When using a metronome, work exercises in two beat increments. This reduces extreme tempo fluctuations while performing due to the fact that you developed the understanding of such minimal changes in tempo.
5. Be aware of the idea/concept of space (i.e. – the "rests") and understand its' importance and role that it plays within your music.
6. Realize that a great drummer is not to be determined by how much they can play or how fast they can play; but, it *is* to be determined by how **"smart"** they truly are. Think about what that means and how it applies to you.
7. Do your best to not only understand the "correct" ways to execute with regards to interpretation, musicality, and technique, but understand the "incorrect" ways so that you know how to change your mistakes should they ever occur. And, do your best to not only assess **what** is incorrect but, importantly, **why** it is incorrect.
8. Know that you are different. Just because someone else does something a certain way doesn't mean it may necessarily work for you. Be open to yourself. Learn at the pace in which you are satisfied with your own progression. Take your time.
9. When practicing music, be sure to take it within context. For example, if there is a phrase before "the snare break", play that phrase and the break sequentially. The reason being that your hands will be able to gather the flow the music is to create, thus practicing performance.
10. Play in a mirror so that you do not have to look down to assesses your playing and technique. In addition, you will get used to keeping your eyes ahead and forward, just like the fearless, confident player that you want to be.

Snare

Grip

Right Hand: Divide the stick into thirds and place your fulcrum (thumb and first-finger) on the division between the first and second sections. To create the fulcrum, place the thumb in line with the shaft of the stick and close any space between the thumb and first-fingers wrapped comfortably around the stick.

Left Hand: To create the fulcrum, make a tear drop with your thumb and index finger by placing the thumb pad on the side of the first joint of the index finger, forming a "t". Divide the stick into thirds and place your fulcrum (first joint of the index finger) on the division between the first and second sections. Next, place the stick in the pocket between the thumb and index finger; be sure that the stick is firmly planted there and not rolled forward to the knuckle. Support the stick on the cuticle of the ring finger, shape the pinky finger to duplicate the "c" shape of the ring finger, and position the middle finger beside the index finger while resting it against the stick. There should only be space between the middle and ring fingers.

Playing Position

Bring your hands/arms up from your sides and position both sticks one finger width above the rim. Be sure that the sticks are parallel to the surface of the head, and form a symmetrical "V" shape (80 degrees) with beads 1" apart and 1" from the playing surface.

Right Hand: The crease between the thumb and first finger should be at a 40 degree angle in relationship to the playing surface and the hand position should create a straight line between the forearm and the knuckle of the index finger.

Left Hand: The hand position should create a straight line from the elbow to the tip of the thumb. From a side perspective, the middle finger should be in line with the forearm or slightly angled upward depending on drum height. As you rotate, these straight lines must remain intact.

The Stroke

The basic overall stroke is referred to as WRIST LEGATO. All strokes are initiated from the wrist. The wrist acts like a well-oiled hinge and through practice, coordinates the use of gravity and rebound to produce a warm, dark, full-bodied sound. When playing a true wrist legato stroke, the fulcrum is all the way in the back of the hand (wrist). As tempos increase, the fulcrum moves or "Shifts" to the front where the thumb and first finger contact the stick. As speed increases, fingers are increasingly utilized. For traditional, the left bicep and shoulder are completely relaxed allowing for a relaxed wrist turn and maximum rebound. The left wrist should rotate as if turning a doorknob.

Approaching Doubles, Diddles, and Drags

The initial stroke in a double, diddle, or drag is initiated by the wrist. After the stroke a combination of relaxed wrist motion and finger pressure allow the stick to rebound to the original height. The second stroke is achieved by a mixture of wrist and finger motion pulling the stick back toward the head.

Tenors

Grip

The tenor mallet is held comfortably between the thumb and first finger. The mallet follows the natural inside crease of the hand and the remaining fingers are wrapped comfortably around the stick. There should be no daylight visible between the thumb and first fingers, ever. Playing position for both hands should be as low to the drums as possible, so that when at rest the mallets are parallel to the floor and the beads are one half inch above the surface of the drums. When in playing position, the crease of the thumb and first finger should be at a 40 degree in relationship to the playing surface. Arms should hang naturally down either side of your body. They should not be tight against the body, nor pushed out away from the body. Both of these scenarios create tension and thus reduce efficiency. Shoulders need to be low and relaxed at all times.

Stroke

All strokes are initiated from the wrist. The wrist acts like a well-oiled hinge and through practice, coordinates the use of gravity and rebound to produce the dark, warm, full-bodied sound. This technique shifts towards the use of the fingers gradually as we increase speed. When playing a true 'wrist legato' stroke, the fulcrum (or point of rotation) is in the back of the hand. As tempos increase, the fulcrum moves to the front of the hand where the thumb and first finger contact the mallet. Emphasis should be on developing this shifting fulcrum as a gradual transition and at no time should go from all-wrist to all-finger. The result would be a drastic reduction in sound quality and control. A great way to develop this transition is with rudiments rehearsed "Slow-Fast-Slow."

Motion

All strokes are vertical. Basic strokes must be mastered on one drum before one is to move around the drums. The forearms provide lateral movement around the drums. When playing a grouping of two, three, or even four notes that move around the drums, all notes must be played vertically. We do this for a number of reasons. The first one is that the technique in the hands does not need to change to move around the drums.

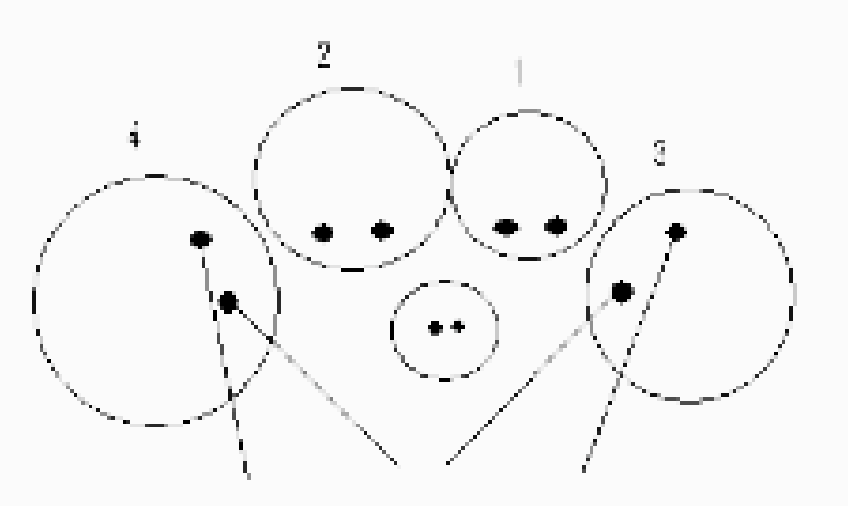
Everything should feel the same to your hands on one drum as it does around the drums. The second reason is that the sound will be different if the drum is hit at an angle. A slicing or sweeping motion will lessen both

quality of sound and rebound of the drum. The last reason is that you are going to have less control of where the notes are being placed if the motion is not straight down into the drum. This causes bad playing areas as well as hitting lots of rims.

To master this approach one must create a separation of vertical and lateral motion. To best achieve this, the forearms must glide on an imaginary "glass surface" which rests about one inch off the surface of the drum. This imaginary surface is called the "Playing Plane." Forearms should carry the wrist from drum to drum while the upper arms rotate around creating a "windshield wiper" motion that will naturally place the beads in the correct playing areas on each drum. Moving the upper arm while playing around patterns is discouraged.

Playing Areas

Each mallet has its own zone on each drum; therefore there are two small zones on each drum. The zones are mapped out on the diagram below. The path of the right hand is straight between drums 3, 1, and 2, and then comes in toward the body as it reaches drum 4. The left hand mirrors this path by traveling straight between drums 4, 2, and 1, and then in to reach drum 3. It is extremely important that you practice around patterns SLOWLY at first, striving for accuracy, and then gradually working up the speed.



Bass

Grip

The bass mallet is held comfortably between the thumb, middle finger, and ring finger. The index finger is resting on the stick with minimal pressure. The soft/fleshy part of the thumb should make contact with the mallet and should "point" to the head of the mallet (very similar to holding a golf club). There should be no visible daylight between the thumb and first finger, EVER! However, it is essential that no tension is created between the thumb and first-finger with the exception of high speed rolls and rudiments.

Begin with both arms hanging down by your sides with the thumbs on the top of the mallets and your hands by your legs. The mallets should point forward and down at a 45-degree angle. Next, bring your arms up (bending at the elbows) until the forearms are parallel to the ground. The position of the hand, wrist, and mallet should not change. This playing position should feel very relaxed and natural. From this position, we will adjust the carrier and stand so the center of the bass head is lined up with the head of the mallet. It is important to adjust the drum to the player, not the player to the drum. Once the drum has been positioned to fit the player, bring your forearms in so they touch the bass drum rim. Memorize what part of your arm touches the rim so you will be able to always find the center of the bass head. The size of the drum will determine whether your forearm, wrist, or fingers make contact with the hoop.

In playing position, the mallets should be parallel to the drum head. Your arms should hang naturally on both sides of your body. The amount of space between your elbows and ribs depends on the size of your body frame. Your upper body needs to remain relaxed and free of tension at all times.

Rotation

The bass drum stroke consists of a LEGATO rotation. All strokes are initiated from a simple rotation of the forearm. Let the weight of the mallet help with the rotation. As bass drummers, we play against gravity. You can practice this by sitting with your arms resting on a table, as if in playing position. The motion we use for bass drumming is almost always legato. However, there are instances in which the music calls for a different type of sound and, accordingly, a different stroke style. We have found that playing with a legato stroke style gives us the strongest, fullest sound with the clearest articulation and tone. Although some of the bass drum sound comes from muffling and tuning, there is no substitute for consistent technique from player to player.

The stick height system established for the snares and tenors has a somewhat different definition for bass drum because of the orientation of the playing surface. When in playing position, with the mallets parallel to the bass

head, the mallets are actually set at the 1" stick height. Rotate the forearms out (90 degrees) so the mallets are perpendicular to the head to establish the 9" stick height (the palm of the hand should be facing the ceiling). The 3" height can be achieved with a one-third rotation from the playing surface. The 6" height can be achieved with a two-thirds rotation from the playing surface. The 12" stick height is rotated past the some amount of distance as was 6" to 9" (horizontal). Heights beyond 12" on bass drum are often accompanied by either a change of technique to a more visual style or by a change in stroke style to a more staccato approach. These decisions are based on a specific musical context or desired visual effect.

Timing

Good timing starts from the ground up. Quite literally, the feet are the most important asset to success in this competitive activity (regardless of the instrument played). It is important that the feet are the source of pulse and the hands "line up" with the feet, not the other way around. Having a good, strong sense of time in the feet may be the deciding factor in the audition process. Always practice with a metronome and moving your feet.

The evolution of tonal bass drums as an instrument and "split" parts require a new set of skills for the aspiring percussionist. Each player is responsible for his piece of the puzzle: lose a piece, and the puzzle makes no sense. Before this concept can be introduced, it is essential that all of the players in the bass line understand their individual part, how it relates to their feet, how their part relates to other parts, and have the same interpretation of the space between all the notes. Thus, grip, rotation, and timing are prerequisite skills to having a bass line that can "flow."

Smoothness

Smoothness is a crucial part of playing in the bass drum line. But, it cannot happen until everyone knows the notes on the page. Also, each player must have the same concept of time. Drumset players can change the feel of a tune by altering the placement of their notes from behind the beat, to right on the beat, to driving in front of the beat. Once everyone knows "the notes" and has committed to the same concept of tempo, when we can talk about developing consistent space between the notes.

On bass drum, all split parts can be simplified to some sort of "check" pattern. Before we can play two's, three's, and four's, we must be able to play the check pattern in time, with the feet. Once the check pattern is well established, any subsequent notes added must be evenly spaced (relative to the first note on each drum). It is imperative that bass drummers understand basic note groupings and are able to play any partial (with either hand) comfortably. Remember, music is neither hard, nor easy: it is either "familiar" or "not familiar." If it is not familiar, work on it until it is familiar.

Cymbals

Check Points

- Always strive for good tone rather than a banging sound.
- Play with intensity, but don't play beyond 80% of the cymbals' volume capacity. The overplaying of cymbals produces unmusical sounds and damages cymbals.
- Visual projection and uniformity should always be a priority.
- Every technical transition (such as crash to hi-hat) is an opportunity for a visual effect.

Grip

The Baylor Cymbal line uses a modified "Garfield" Grip. This grip fits our demands since the weight of the cymbal is distributed over the entire surface of the palm. This grip is the most effective means of controlling the cymbals while at the same time reducing hand tension.

Step 1: Hold the cymbal in a vertical position and put the entire hand through the strap to the wrist.

Step 2: Turn the hand so the palm is facing away from the pad of the cymbal.

Step 3: Rotate the entire hand downward and turn the palm toward the cymbal until it touches the pad. The strap should rest at the base of the thumb and forefinger.

Note: The strap may have to be loosened if the grip is too tight. It is important to keep the fingertips off the surface of the cymbal in order to allow the instrument to vibrate freely.

Cymbal Holding Positions

The Baylor Cymbal line is not only concerned with sound production but visual effects, rest positions, and instrumental carriage during performance. In each case, the way the cymbals are held is as important as how they are played. The vertical position and horizontal position are the two formations in which all sounds are produced on the cymbals. These positions were devised for two reasons:

- To create a means of ensuring visual uniformity.
- To improve the consistency of sound production by utilizing predetermined starting and stopping points.

Cymbal Rudiments

The cymbals have the opportunity to express a wide variety of sounds. The main cymbal rudiments used are:

Crash: Crashes are by far the most common cymbal rudiment. With the cymbals held in the vertical position, the cymbals move slightly away from each other, not away from the body. The bottom edges move first, followed by the top edges. This is known as the prep motion. As the cymbals move towards each other, the bottom edge (closest to the floor) should strike slightly before the top edge in a flam-like effect. Too open of a flam will cause almost two distinct crashes, whereas too tight of a flam causes the crash to pop. Following the crash the cymbals move outward from each other and make the same motion as the prep, only not crashing. Following the rebound, the cymbals return to playing position.

Crash Choke: To play a choke, begin with the same prep and motion as a crash. Execute the correct crash, but instead of following through the rebound, the cymbals are pulled into the stomach or the shoulders. The key to playing a good choke is to allow the cymbals to ring long enough to produce enough sound, but to cut them off so they are shorter than crashes. When the cymbals are pulled into the body, it should be down with enough force to completely and immediately stop them from ringing.

Smash Crash: To play a smash crash, the cymbals must not prep like a crash. All of the edges must come in contact at the same time. Execute the correct crash, but instead of following through the rebound, leave the cymbals together. The objective is to produce a very short accented sound. There should be no vibrating of the cymbals. Smash crashes are played in the vertical and horizontal positions.

Hi-Hat Choke: This effect is created by bracing one cymbal in a stationary position and playing the second cymbal against it in a "hinged" motion. The sound that is desired is a short, accented popping sound, similar to the hi-hat on a drum set. The cymbals can be held in a horizontal or vertical position, or cradled in one arm, similar to the way the Statue of Liberty holds her tablet. The two cymbals are normally aligned exactly, producing the choked sound by trapping much of the air between them. Offsetting the top cymbal a bit, allowing some of the air to vent, can create a louder effect.

Sizzle: Sizzles can be played in the vertical and horizontal positions. The prep is similar to the smash crash in the way that all of the edges must come in contact at the same time. The difference between a smash crash and a sizzle is the length of sound. A sizzle lets the edges of the cymbals vibrate together. The different lengths of sound are produced by the amount of pressure that is applied.

Fusion Crash: Producing an open hi-hat sound, this is also referred to as a slide. The right cymbal will drive into the left, where the outer edge hits 1/2 way between the bell and the edge of the left cymbal. After the right cymbal slides up on the left, it is brought back straight into the body. Catching the air pocket inside of the cymbals stops the cymbal. The cymbals maintain contact at all times. The desired sound is a "sizzle then choke" effect.

Tap: Taps can be performed only in the vertical position. The right cymbal should be held slightly higher so that the bow is at a 90-degree angle to the edge of the left cymbal forming a ‘T’. By bending the right wrist the right cymbal should “tap” the left cymbal. Taps are generally soft in volume, and are used in split parts from player to player.

Tong: Tongs are similar to taps in the fact that they can only be performed in the vertical position. The left cymbal should be held slightly lower so that the edge is at a 90-degree angle to the bell of the right cymbal forming a ‘T’. The right arm should bend at the elbow and strike the left cymbal. The right cymbal bells come in contact with the left cymbal edge. Tongs are generally soft in volume, and are used mainly in split parts from player to player.

Zing: To produce a zing the cymbals must be in the vertical position. This position is similar to the tongs, except the cymbals are reversed. The right cymbal should be held slightly lower so that the edge is at a 90-degree angle to the bell of the left cymbal forming a ‘T’. To produce a zing scrape the edge of the right cymbal along the inside bow of the left cymbal from the bell to the edge. This is the softest sound produced on cymbals and is used to add color to the ensemble.

Wash: A wash is performed only in the vertical position. By rotating both wrists the edges of the cymbals should touch in a circular motion. This motion causes the cymbals to vibrate. The purpose of a wash is to sustain the cymbal sound for long periods of time.

Holding for Snares: Often times, the cymbal players will hold for the snares. Different songs require either a closed hi-hat effect or ride cymbal pattern. All of the different sounds will most likely be used to emulate the sounds of a drum set. For hi-hat effects, hold the cymbals horizontally, with the right hand over the left. Hold the cymbals slightly offset, to allow for more of a sizzle sound. When holding for cymbal ride, the cymbals can be held either over or under hand. Always hold the cymbals in a position as to allow the snare drummers to reach them easily without bending or stretching.

Physical Conditioning

Cymbals are possibly the most physically taxing instruments to play in marching percussion. While all marching instruments require a certain amount of physical exertion, it is necessary to be in very good shape to play cymbals well. You will be required to hold up your cymbals for long periods of time, and you must be able to march with outstanding fundamentals. It is important that you prepare physically if you plan to take cymbal playing seriously. It is a good idea to run daily in addition to building your arm muscles. Remember that although push-ups will help, nothing is more beneficial than actually holding up cymbals or the equivalent weight (approximately eight pounds per arm) for extended periods of time. It is also important to stretch before playing cymbals to prevent muscle cramps, wrist sprains, and other injuries.

Instrument Care

Resting Instrument:

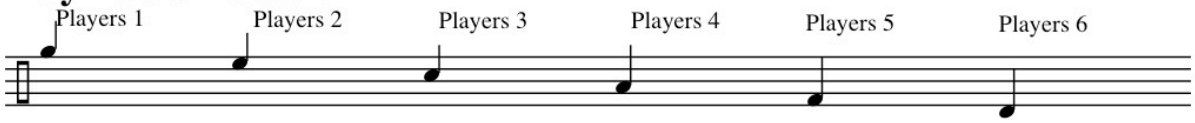
Carefully rest one cymbal down on a clean, dry and NON-ABRASIVE surface. Rest the second cymbal directly on top of the first. Lift the instruments straight off of the surface without sliding. Avoid high traffic areas to eliminate the chance of someone stepping on the instrument. When transporting cymbals they must always be in their assigned cymbal bag. NEVER leave the instrument out in the direct sunlight.

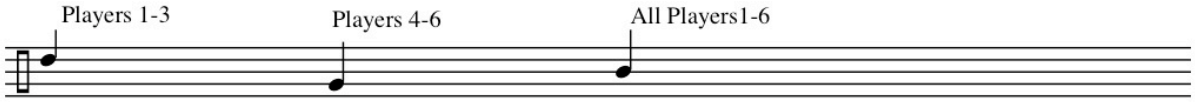
Cleaning the Instrument:

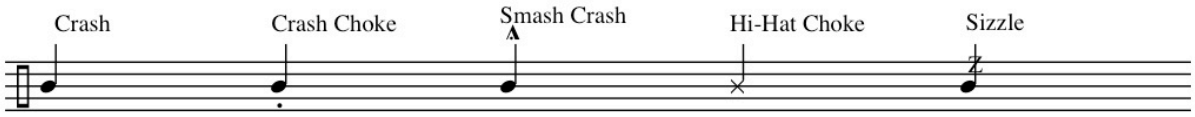
Before each performance, cymbals should be polished to a high luster so that there is an absence of fingerprints on both sides of the cymbal. To make this easier, use gloves when handling the instruments. Polish the cymbals with a non-abrasive brass cleaner.

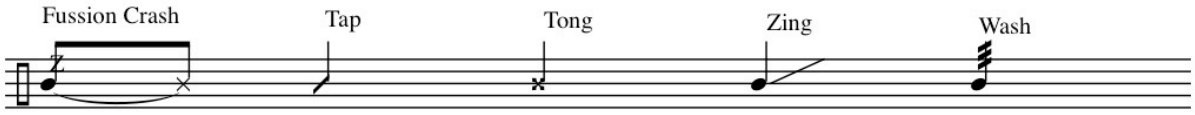
BDL's 2008 Music Notation

Cymbals Notation

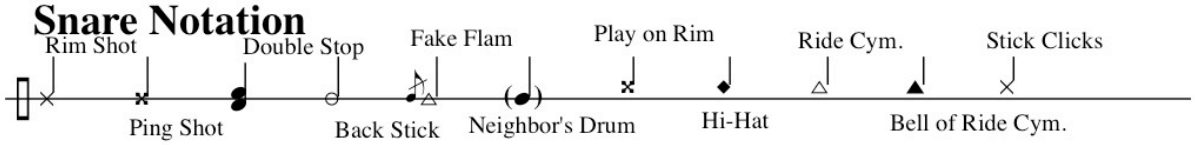




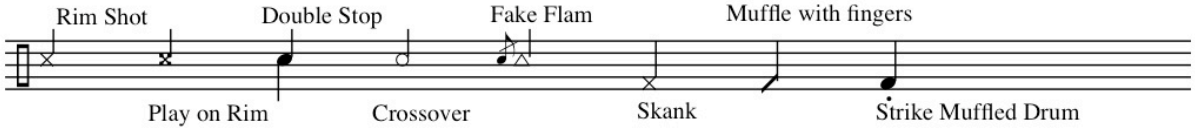




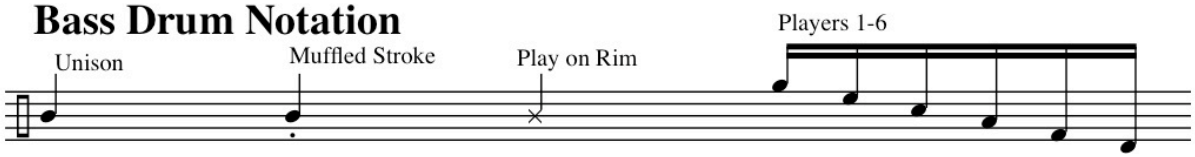
Snare Notation



Tenors Notation



Bass Drum Notation



Warm-up Sequence

This year the Baylor Drumline is exploring a new warm-up procedure. The goal is to connect all of the typical exercises into one continuous sequence. We feel that a move in this direction will help in our time constraints of warming up, and will allow us the opportunity to focus on larger sections of music. This sequence will incorporate repeating different sections and tempo changes. The process and procedures of this sequence will be explained at the first camp.

Below are some aspects of each section that need to be understood. These points of interest explain the purpose of each section, and define what is important from a technical point of view.

Section A

This is **by** far the most important exercise. You CANNOT expect to play anything else well if you can't play this exercise PERFECTLY.

- This exercise is approached with a "Legato" motion.
- Start the exercise out at *f* dynamic level.
- Play with a confident sound at all times.
- Make sure your hand-to-hand transitions are seamless; think of this warm-up as a grouping of 64 straight notes.
- Your fingers should not lose contact with the stick at anytime during this exercise.
- At slower tempos, make sure your hands remain closed but not squeezed. Tension is your enemy, confidence your friend.
- As the tempo increases, gradually incorporate the use of fingers without drastically altering the wrist motion.
- Practice at all heights and dynamic levels.

Section B

This section takes a typical accent-tap exercise and inverts it to allow for a more relaxed approach to the accent portion of the exercise. The beginning passage of multiple same-hand accents allow for a phrase that feels much like section A. As this section progresses, the amount of 'legato accents' diminish, and the responsibility of maintaining a relaxed and balanced approach to the remaining accents is the key focus of section B.

- Work to relax the legato accents while still keeping great definition of the stopping point (freeze height) of the down stroke, or final accent before the hand transition.
- Although the legato accent should be relaxed, they should not be placed weakly, nor should the lower notes be placed weakly.
- The tempo range and feel of this section should relate closely to that of section A.
- Rehearse this section at a variety of musical levels (adjusting heights of both the high and low notes to fit the various musical settings you might encounter).

Section C

This section incorporates a moving accent pattern through a single 16th note check. Make sure that the accents do not affect the rhythm of the steady 16th notes.

- Make sure sound and flow are consistent throughout this section.
- Use the same sound and approach of the accent tap in section B.
- Be creative with the sequence of accents. Turn the accents into rest, flams, diddles, etc…
- Rehearse this section at a variety of musical levels (adjusting heights of both the high and low notes to fit the various musical settings you might encounter).

Section D

This section works multiple note groupings, which primes you for playing rolls. The check in the beginning was implemented to not only give you a foundation for the subdivision for the exercise, but, also offers the ability to start by playing relaxed (legato) 8th notes before encountering the first double. The hand-to-hand transitions in this section are built from the consecutive double and triple strokes that come before them. Much attention should be paid to transferring successfully WITHOUT disturbing the flow or feel of the preceding double or triple stroke. Vertical support from the arm is implemented during the double and triple strokes, but not at the expense of the wrist turn.

- Always initiate from the wrist.
- Don't pull extraneously with the fingers. During consecutive double and triple strokes, let the stick move your fingers as needed. This will assure that your fingers don't leave the stick while allowing for maximum cooperation between stick and drum head.
- Stay relaxed, USE THE DRUM.
- Aside from practicing this specific section, be sure to practice the techniques and concepts in the section.
- Play this section at one height as well as two heights.
- Be creative when working your doubles. Fill the exercise in with the opposite hand… add flams to work Swiss passages.

Section E

This section deals with two specifics: note value changes and diddle interpretation.

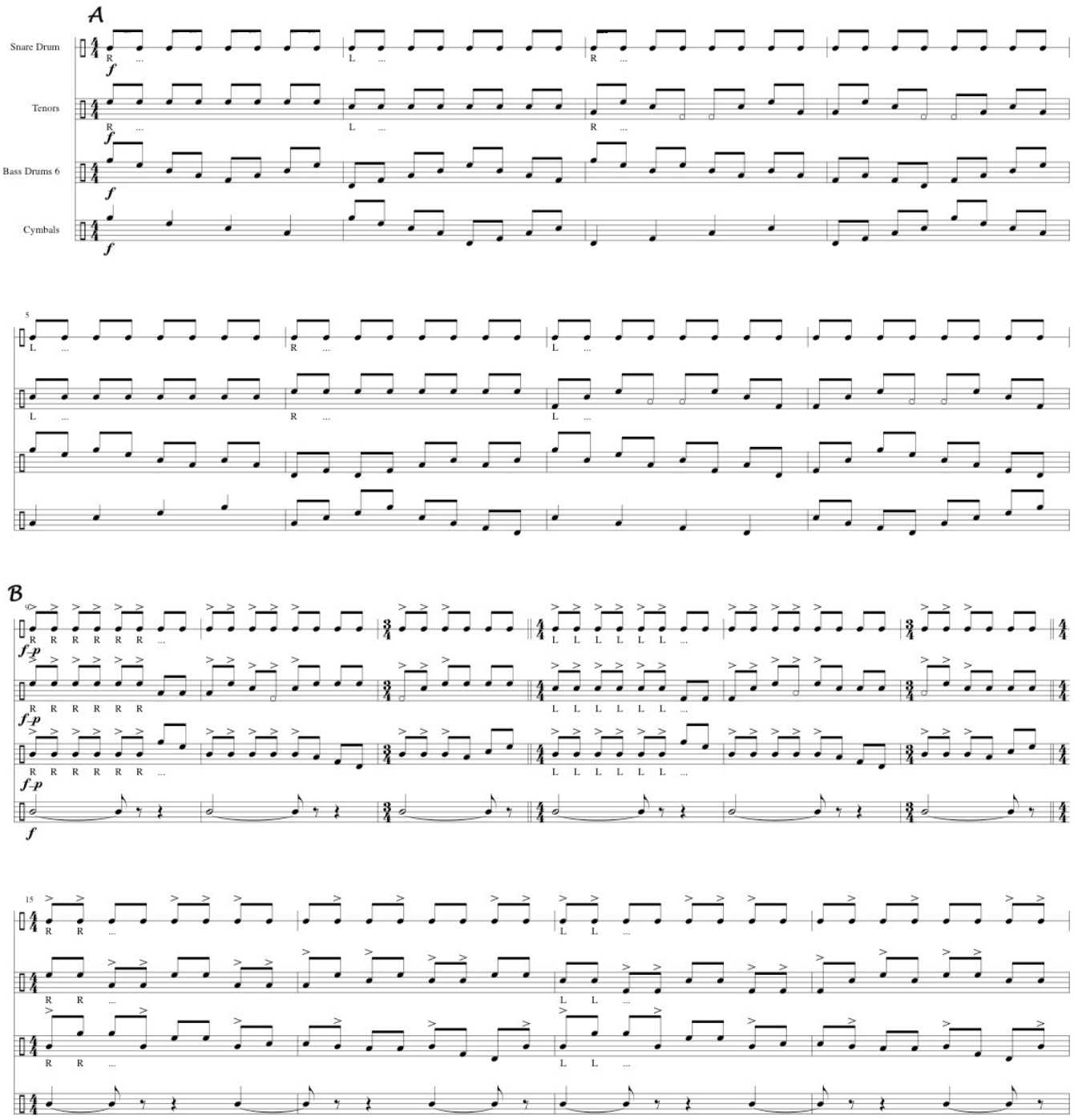
- Make sure sound and flow are consistent throughout this section.
- Use the double concepts introduced in section D.
- Utilize the triplet check in the correct way. It should help with the interpretation of the diddles (or 24th notes). Don't use it to catch up tempo-wise because you bogged down on the diddle passages.

Tag

The tag is a summation of the preceding sections. It will only be played one time at the closing of the sequence. Make sure to work the hemiola of the last four measures with your feet.

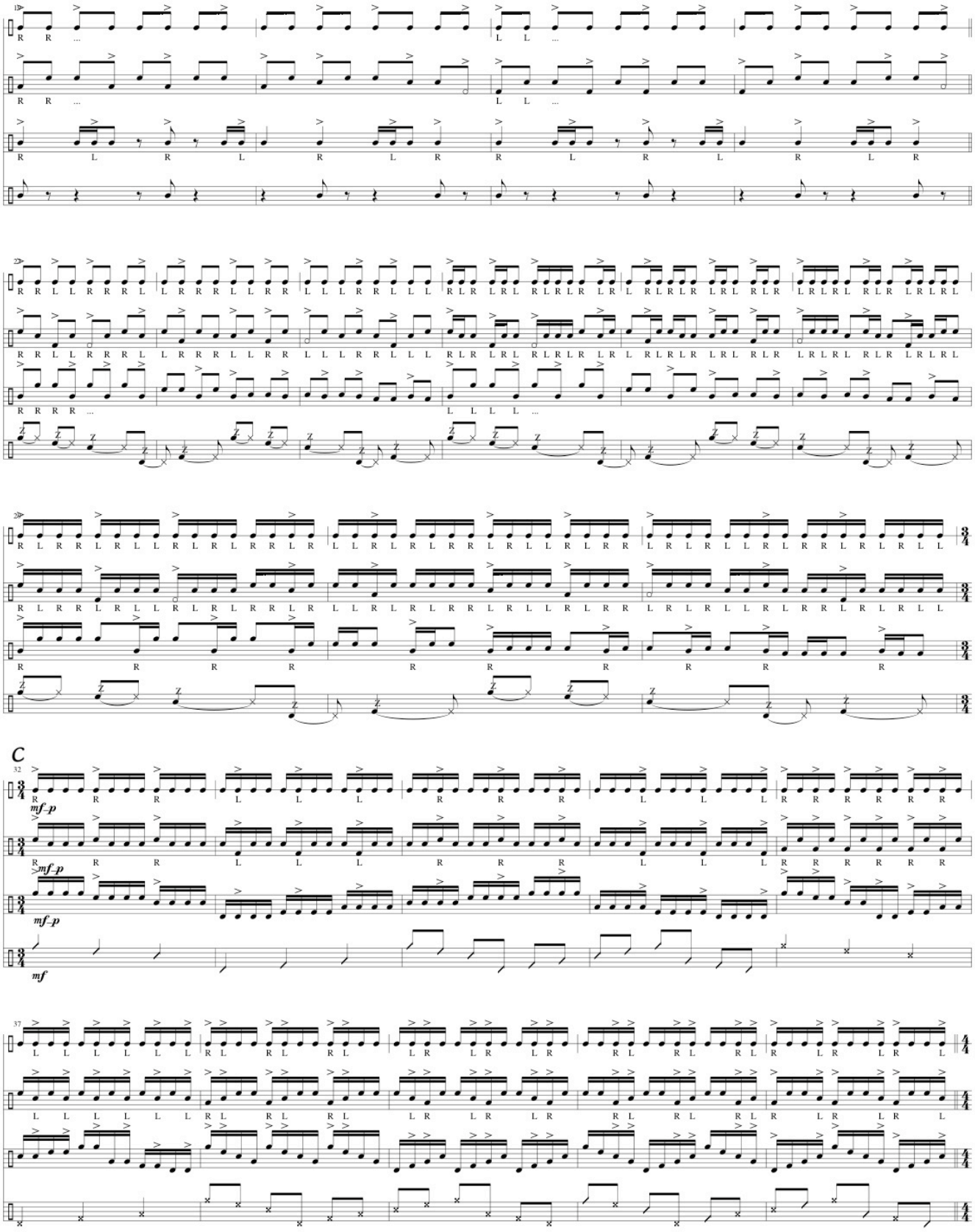
Baylor Warm-Up 08

Jim Gist
4/9/08



Baylor Warm-Up 08

4/9/08



Baylor Warm-Up 08

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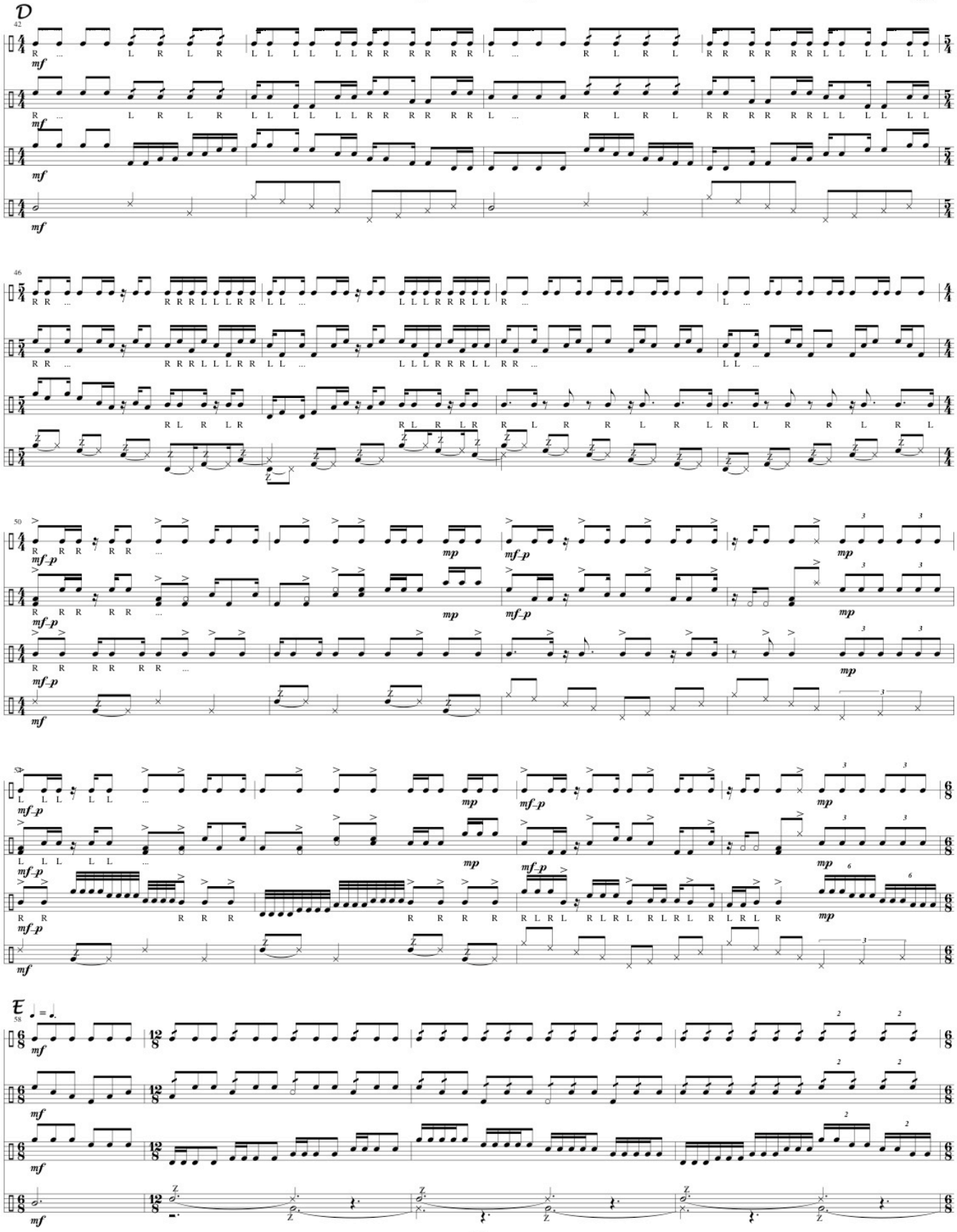

Baylor Warm-Up 08

4/9/08

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Audition Music

This year the Baylor Drumline Audition is set for Saturday, August 9, 2008. Within this one-day camp the drumline will be set for the 2008 marching season.

Both new and returning members will audition for a spot on the drumline. We will work on the warm-up sequence, cadences, and possibly the music for the first show. Please begin preparing for the audition weekend by practicing the warm-up sequence and the audition music.

Focus on technique, tempo, dynamics, and clarity of sound. Throughout the audition weekend, the staff will not only be watching for quality playing, but qualities like a good attitude, your interaction with other members of the drumline, and how you respond to constructive criticism. I cannot emphasize enough how important a good attitude and strong work ethic are to the success of the program.

Those of you planning to audition for snare, tenors, or cymbals should be prepared to play the warm-up sequence as well as the audition piece. The expectation will be that each person mark time throughout the audition piece. Snare will be played with traditional grip technique. If you are planning to audition for bass drum, be prepared to play the warm-up sequence. Those students will not have an individual audition but will be observed during the full drumline rehearsal. Remember - if you are planning to audition on more than one instrument, you must be prepared to play all relevant parts. This means that those of you planning to audition on bass drum should be prepared to play all bass drum parts.

Come to the camp in August ready to work hard and make the 2008 Baylor Drumline the best ever! I am available to you by phone or email at anytime. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or concerns. I will see you on August 9th!

Jim Gist
Baylor University Drumline Instructor
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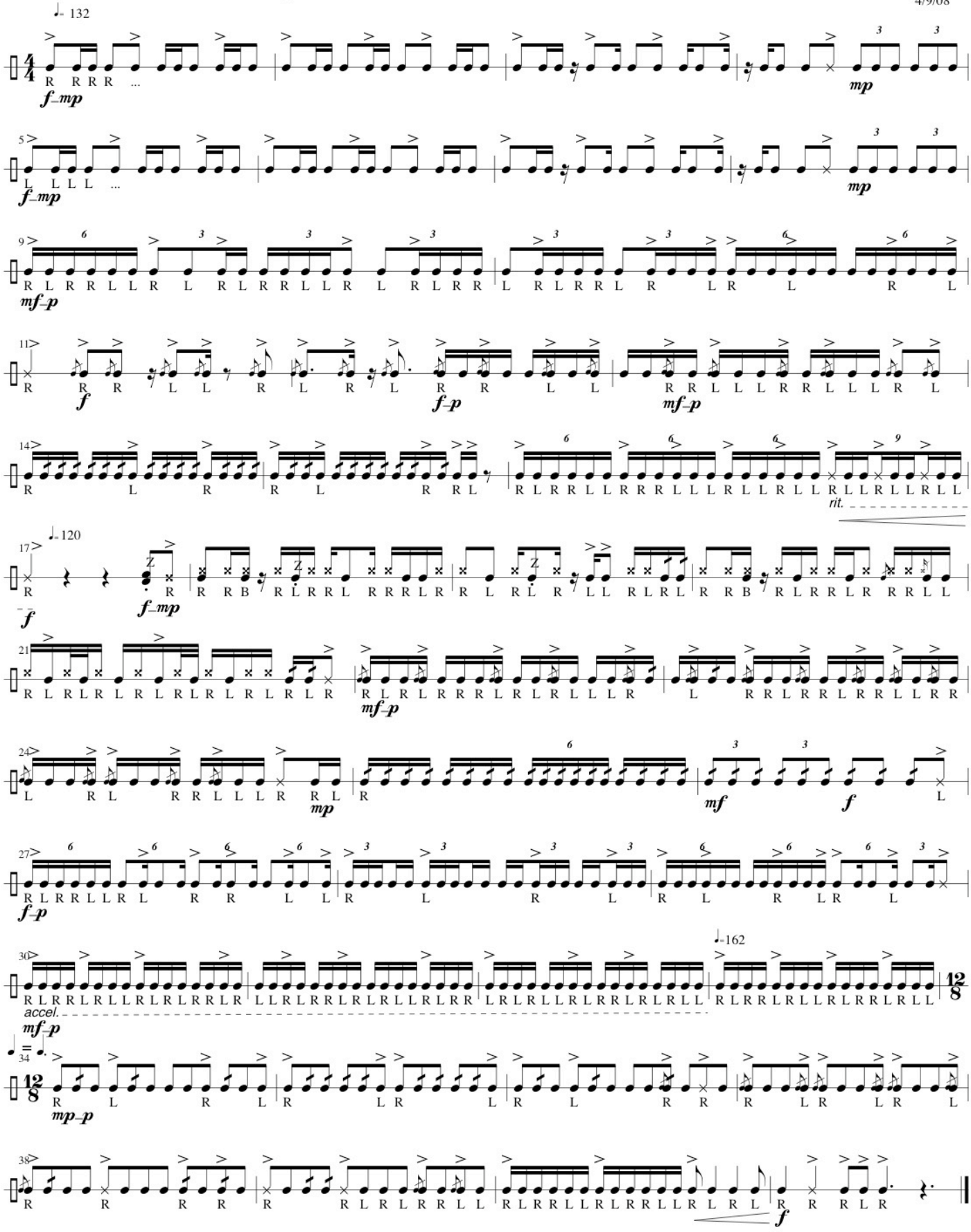
jimegist@sbcglobal.net

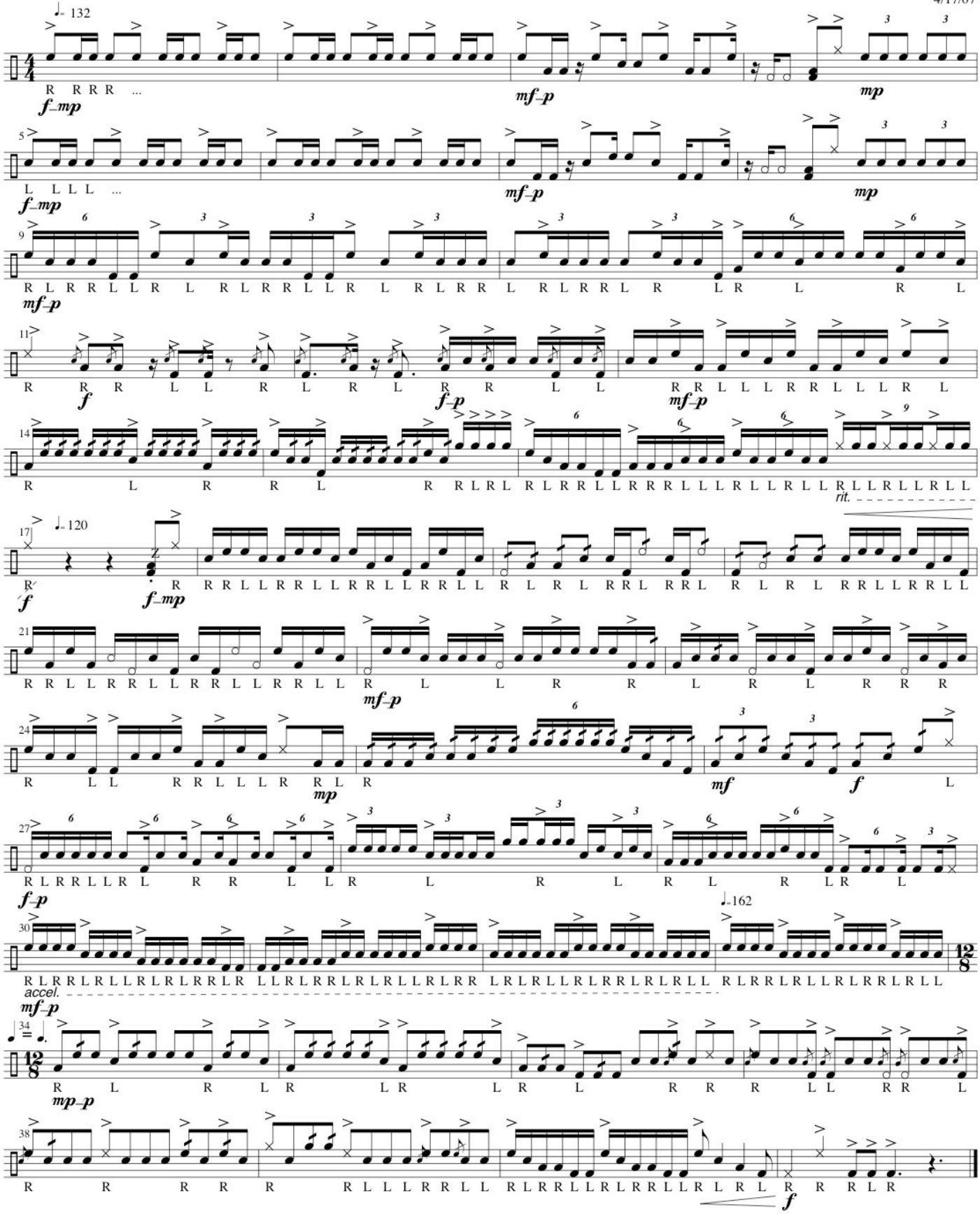
Baylor Snare Auditions 2008

Jim Gist
4/9/08



Baylor Tenor Audition 2008

Jim Gist
4/17/07



Baylor Cymbal Audition 2008

Jim Gist
4/9/08