

**CYPRESS RANCH MUSTANG BAND**

**BATTERY PERCUSSION PACKET**



Developing a consistent practice routine will improve your quality of sound and the control needed to play advanced material. Make sure you use a metronome and start slow. Keep the following things in mind as you prepare the material from this point forward and you should be well on your way to becoming a better player.

## **STROKES**

Below are the basic strokes we will use to unify our sound and detail the music. The touch and feel of each stroke will vary according to the musical intent, tempo and dynamic. Besides these basic strokes, other types of strokes will be taught to achieve the integrity and style of the music.

### **LEGATO STROKE**

Legato Stroke or Rebound Stroke: This stroke will start at any height, after impact, the stick will return to its original height. It has a constant motion and never stops. This stroke incorporates the natural **REBOUND** of the stick. All fingers should be relaxed around the stick as it travels both up and down.

### **STACCATO STROKE OR DOWN STROKE**

Staccato Stroke or Down Stroke: This stroke starts at any height, after impact the stick is stopped as close to the surface of the drum as possible. Basically, you are controlling the stick, preventing it from rebounding up. This stroke is usually used keep taps down after accents. All fingers should be relaxed around the stick as it travels both up and down, after impact fingers will remain closed and prevent the stick from bouncing up.

## **TAPS**

Tap: This is usually a 3/6" legato stroke. Taps are used to bring out the

accents. The technique used to play the taps will be dictated by the tempo and difficulty of the music.

## **UP STROKE OR GRACE NOTES**

Up Stroke: Grace notes are used to play flams as well as to make faster accented patterns seem easier. Grace notes differ from all other stroke types in that they start down and go up. An example would be grace notes from alternating flams, or every tap before an accent.

### **Dynamics**

These dynamic levels and heights are used to unify the sound and look of the ensemble. The heights will correspond to the height the stick is to come off the drum. The dynamic will be dictated by the amount of velocity used at the various heights to achieve the desired volume.

*pp pianissimo = less than an 1"1/2 off the drum head*

*p piano = 1"1/2 off the drum head*

*mp mezzo-piano = 3" off the drum head*

*mf mezzo-forte = 6" off the drum head*

*f forte = 9" off the drum head*

*ff fortissimo = 12" off the drum head*

(Note: Anything above fortissimo will be defined as the music dictates.)

Also, the intensity of the stroke for each dynamic level or height may change depending on what is needed to achieve the musical intent of a particular pattern or musical phrase.

For example, a group of forte accents may need to sound less intense because:

1. The tempo is too fast.
2. An individual or the ensemble is out of balance.
3. A certain touch is needed to achieve a better *FEEL*.
4. It is affecting the quality of sound.

*All these concepts will be considered as the music is being taught.*

## **PLAYING AREAS OR ZONES**

In addition to using dynamic levels and different strokes to achieve the musical intent, different playing areas or zones on the drumhead will also be used to achieve the following:

1. Balance and blend of the total ensemble.
2. Create different timbres and colors.
3. Achieve a variety of touch/feel.

## **THE 3 BASIC ZONES**

**Center** – This zone is achieved as both sticks are played in the center of the head. This zone produces the loudest most resonant sound from the drum.

**Half Way** – This zone is achieved by playing halfway between the center of the head and the edge of the drum, above the line of the gut strings. This can either be further away from, or closer to the body of the player.

**Edge** – This zone is achieved by playing on the edge of the drumhead closest to the rim.

## **FULCRUM AND GRIP**

Fulcrum is defined as the point where an object rest as well as the point of pivot for any object, al. This is the point that should have the most pressure while playing, it is also the point where the stick pivots from.

**RIGHT HAND** = Fulcrum for the right hand is between the bottom part of the thumb and the side of index finger on the 2nd knuckle groove. The

motion in the right hand should be a natural bend of the wrist, as if waving up and down.

**LEFT HAND** *traditional grip only*, the fulcrum for the left hand is inside the crease between the thumb and index finger, make sure the stick is down at the bottom part or base of the thumb. It is very important to keep the fulcrum intact at all times to ensure control. The motion for the left hand should imitate opening a door by turning a door-knob.

**Fingers:** The back fingers on your right hand should be relaxed naturally around the stick. For the left hand, if playing traditional grip, the stick should be placed on the first knuckle of the ring finger. Like the right hand, the other fingers should be relaxed and curved in a natural fashion. Also, it is very important to develop your fingers through various exercises.

**Wrist, Fingers and Forearm:** The wrist, fingers and forearm should work hand-in-hand to achieve a natural relaxed approach to playing. There should be almost no tension in your upper body as you execute the music.

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