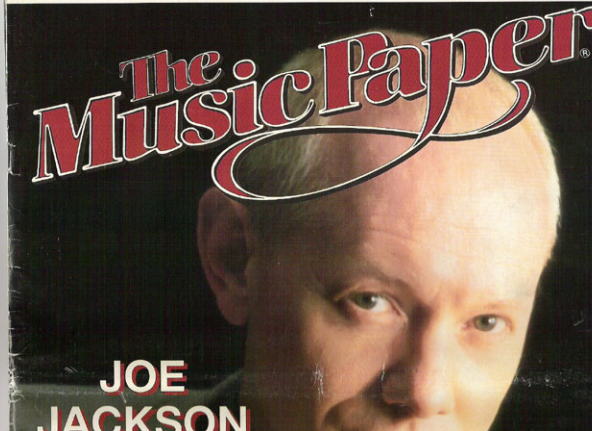


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Can A Pop Icon Put To

ing music, who believe that playing music should be fun and exciting. If I am not playing with people who are positive about the art of playing, it affects me and everyone else involved. Finding the right group of musicians is a process, and even when things do not work, you can come out of every situation having learned something as long as you are determined to remain positive about yourself and your playing.

This type of mental preparation has helped me in other areas of my life as well. Staying positive is the key to being successful as both a player and a person.

BEYOND BASS-ICS



Pivot Notes

by Beaver Felton

This month I'm going to focus on a bass line/exercise/concept that I've recently rediscovered and found to be fun as well as functional. It involves — and is actually reliant upon — the use of a "pivot note." For your information, this "pivot note" (or "pedal note," as some refer to it) is a single note which is played repeatedly while other tones are moving about, usually in some various type of alternation with it. Even if you don't have a clue as to what I'm talking about (trust me, you've heard pivot notes used even though you may be unaware of what they were called), you will know by the end of this month's lesson.

The example here is designed to show you that, by using pivot notes, some very interesting musical ideas can be created. In addition, especially with the pattern here, you'll see that this approach can also serve as a really good technique exercise. There are two reasons for this: 1) The pattern calls for non-stop eighth notes (modification to sixteenth is optional), single picked, and 2) string switching is constant throughout the pat-

tern, making it much more difficult to execute than if you were to play the same line on a single string (which could, in fact, be done). Some rhythmic displacement also comes into play during the pattern, making it a bit more intriguing while also providing somewhat more of a challenge technically. As such, I use this exact pattern as part of my daily chops maintenance routine (when I can find the time!).

Basically if I come across a pattern that gives me a hard time, I'll analyze it, determine where the problem is and then create an exercise focusing on the difficulty. This month I'd like to "invert" the process and start by showing three effective preparatory exercises.

Figure 1 shows a simple line consisting of eighth notes arranged in four-note groupings, with the first one played on the D string, followed by three on the open A string. The open A acts as the pivot note throughout the lesson. This will probably be the easiest exercise.



Figure 2 shows eighth notes played in three-note groupings (one on the D string, followed by two on the A string), displacing the accent so to speak.



Figure 3 will get you accustomed to even more frequent string changing, as every other note is played alternately on the D string and A string.



As a footnote, let me suggest picking with the middle finger on the D string and the index finger on the A string exclusively for this particular exercise and its corresponding part of the bass line. As written, the fretted note is stationary on all exercises, as we're concentrating

on the rhythmic and string-changing aspects of the upcoming pattern. Speaking of which, let's proceed. The pattern, shown in Figure 4, combines the rhythmic elements from the previous exercises with a melody that I think you'll find interesting (actually, it's part of one of my originals). The notes employed are all from the A Dorian mode and therefore written conveniently in the key of G major. As you'll see, I start with the root note and simply bounce around through other degrees of the scale to create some harmonic movement. As the pattern progresses, I also go through the aforementioned rhythmic variations.



Have fun with it, experiment with your own ideas and I'll see you next month!

BEAVER FELTON was featured in Mike Varney's "Spotlight" column. He is an instructor for Institute Vibe, Vocal Method and The Leonard, and has his own instruction course as well, "Superchops 4 Dicks." Beeman currently uses GHS strings, ART effects and Carvin basses and amps.

ON KEYS



Wacky Programming

by Sam S. Mims

Have you ever noticed how sometimes the silliest musical mistakes end up being the coolest part of one of your tunes? Perhaps you had a digital delay set wrong so that successive vocal delays got horribly grungy, yet it turned out in the end to be a major attention grabber in the song. Or maybe an accidentally

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