

SESSIONS

"PIANO" PICKING

BY LENNY BREAU

INCLUDE YOUR PINKY IN FINGERPICKING patterns, and you'll be able to sound each pitch of a five-note voicing simultaneously—like comping on piano. Other techniques don't allow this. When you strum a chord with a pick, it may appear that the notes are being played simultaneously, but in reality each note is separately articulated.

The right-hand pinky is the least used finger, because it's both short and weak. To help compensate for shortness, try keeping its nail about 1/8" longer than the others.

The following exercises will strengthen your pinky and help you adjust your right-hand position if necessary. Practice slowly at first. Pay attention to the right-hand fingering: thumb (p),

p=thumb a=ring
 i=index q=pinky
 m=middle

Souped-Up Blues

BY JOHN STOWELL

SINCE THE LATE 1930S, WHEN EDDIE LANG and Charlie Christian mixed the basic pentatonic blues vocabulary with embellished dominant chords, re-harmonizations and new cadences, jazz guitarists have been expanding 12-bar blues harmony. For instance, Jim Hall souped up his blues "Careful" by adding four bars and *beaucoup* altered-dominant harmony.

Try this jazzy G blues (Herb Ellis's favorite blues key). It features tensions (such as #9, b9, #5, b5) over

dominant chords, a tritone substitution (replacing G13, D**b**13**b**5 moves to C13 in bars 4 and 5), and IIm7-V7-I and II7-V7-I cadences. The last two bars contain a basic I7-VI7-IIIm7-V7 that resolves to I when the progression wraps around to the top.

Bebop blues of the 1940s often built altered-harmony sounds into the melody itself. Learn a few of these tunes and then start spinning your own variations.

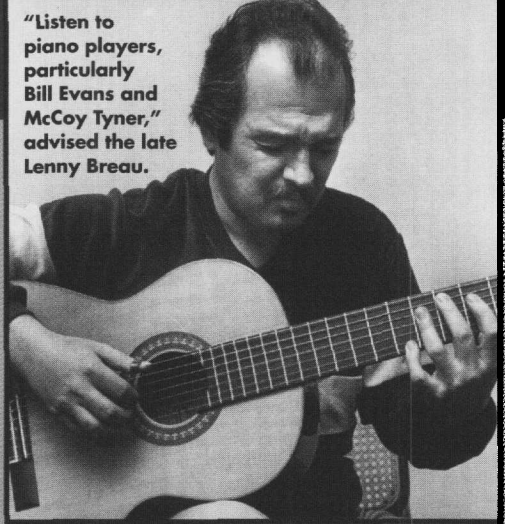


H A N D J I V E

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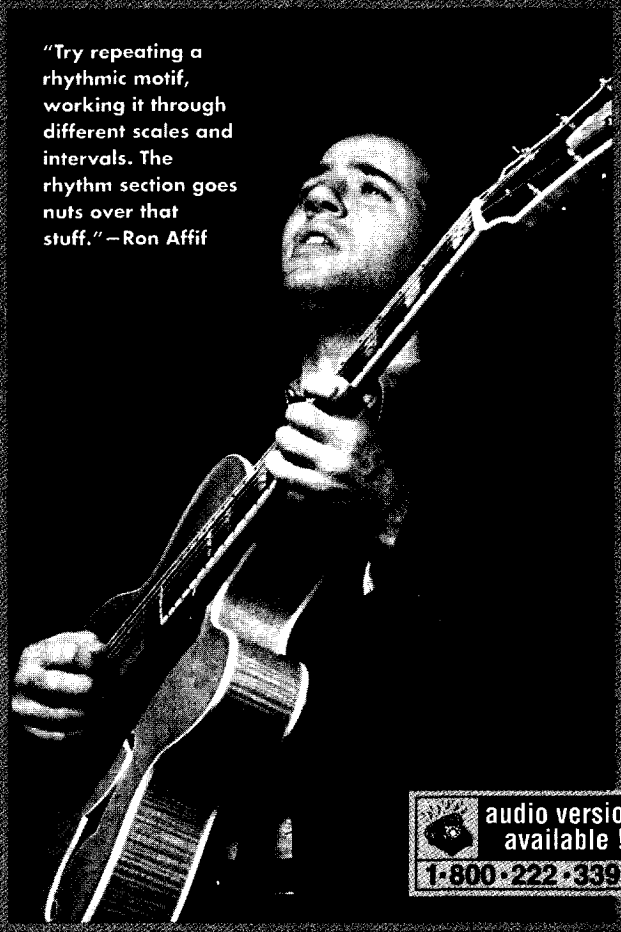
"Never be judgmental when you're playing . . ." see p. 139



"Listen to piano players, particularly Bill Evans and McCoy Tyner," advised the late Lenny Breau.

middle (m), index (i), ring (a), pinky (q).
 Don't stop here. When you find a progression containing five-note chords, convert it into your own pinky-building exercise. Practice it two ways: Simultaneously sound each chord's tones, then quickly arpeggiate the voicings forward and backward.

P A T H W A Y S T O M U S I C I A N S H I P



"Try repeating a rhythmic motif, working it through different scales and intervals. The rhythm section goes nuts over that stuff." — Ron Affif

JAZZ ACE RON AFFIF BELIEVES IN DE-

veloping chops by exploring music, as opposed to simply drilling on exercises. "I practice with a metronome, play tunes at all tempos and work out the heads in different keys," he asserts. "I'll play a head just on the bottom three strings. I learned to do this from Joe Pass. He said, 'Play something for me.' Then he said, 'Okay, play it different now. Okay, now play different changes to the same melody.' He made me turn the tune inside out—that's what his whole thing was.



"It's also good to transcribe II-V-I ideas. I'd write out Charlie Parker's lines and use them to teach myself. I'd experiment with interval patterns: 'Bird would do this. What if I do it like this?' After a while, you start playing what you've written down a little differently, and pretty soon you're making music. It's a great way to move beyond scales and theory."

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