The University of Central Florida

MARCHING KNIGHTS DRUMLINE



2024 AUDITION PACKET

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the 2024 Marching Knights Drumline. We are looking forward to a great season and hope to make the audition process as educational and enjoyable as possible for all students. This packet is a guide as we approach the audition camps so that each student arrives as informed as possible of our expectations, approach, and core values.

We will be holding two audition camps in order for our staff to get an opportunity to evaluate all interested students, as well as for the students to be able to take the information given to them and apply it before the next camp. It is very important that students attend as many camps as possible. If you are unable to attend one or both camps then a video audition is acceptable. All video auditions will receive feedback and it is encouraged that students submit a follow-up video showing improvements and adjustments.

The exercises included will only be one portion of the audition. At each camp we will also be passing out Audition Etudes to sightread as a group. We will use these etudes to better evaluate members skill sets in a "real-world" scenerio. We will be rotating students through their instrument choices so that each student can get experience and feedback on as many instruments as they wish. It is strongly encouraged that all students have a second choice instrument in mind.

All auditions will be evaluated in a group setting, but students should be prepared to play individually if needed. Students should prepare the best they can on the material provided and any questions or concerns will be addressed at the camps or by email.

The three things we are looking for most are ATTITUDE, WORK ETHIC, and ABILITY.

A great attitude is paramount; we want to see confident, friendly, and responsible students. This includes being able to adapt quickly, getting along with others, being attentive, responding well to instruction, and staying positive despite challenges.

Your ability is a direct result of your attitude and work ethic. Talent, without those things, will never be enough. This includes staying healthy, being on time, and always being prepared.

Students should have the following items at all audition camps and future rehearsals:

- Three-Ring Binder with Plastic Sleeves
- Sticks and Mallets
- Practice Pad

- Music / Audition Materials
- Pencil / Highlighter
- Athletic clothing and shoes

Thank you again for your interest in the ensemble!

GOOD LUCK!!

- Marching Knights Percussion Staff

INCLUDED IN THIS PACKET

The materials included in this packet are not meant to be taken only at face value. You should evaluate and understand the skill sets behind each exercise and then come up with as many variations or new exercises as possible. The goal of these exercises is not just to play them as fast as possible, but to have exquisite quality at ALL tempos.

Legatos: We've listed 4 different basic variations on this 16 on a Hand exercise. Modify and come up with as many different new ways of practicing these as possible. Examples of variations on Exercise #1 can include all different heights, adding crescendos and decrescendos, practicing with different rhythms (quarter note triplets, 5's, etc., instead of only eighth notes).

Exercise #2 should be practiced not just with groupings of 4 eighth notes and 3 eighth notes, but any combination from 1-8. Always play 16 notes before switching hands no matter the grouping. (Ex. Groupings of Six: 6 + 6 + 4. Groupings of Five: 5 + 5 + 5 + 1). Other variations can include adding diddles from Exercise 3 on all unaccented notes, or flams on the accented notes, etc.

Roll Speed: This exercise works on the subtle differences and pressure changes of double stroke rolls when applied to different rhythms. It is important to execute all rolled rhythms with as much rhythmic accuracy and clarity as possible. Possible variations include: modifying the check pattern, playing with buzzes, etc.

Triplet Diddle: There should be no triplet inflection in the sound of this exercise. We are looking for square, open rhythms throughout. This is also a group listening exercise as much as it is an individual one. No dynamics or heights are given for crescendos, you should strive to listen and adjust to others to match roll quality and dynamics.

Past Audition Etude: The last part of this packet includes one of the Audition Etudes from last year's audition camps. This was given out the day of the audition and was used to better observe and evaluate members' skillsets when put into musical context. Each audition day will have its own unique etude used for sight-reading. The one in this packet is included to help give an idea of the musical level and execution requirements at the auditions. Members should also be able to mark time while playing, as well as execute at slower tempos.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Quality of Sound: A full and open sound is only achieved by staying relaxed, controlling the stick, and playing with velocity at all times. In order to achieve maximum resonance from the instrument, you must maintain full contact in each hand while striving for the least amount of pressure on the stick.

Bead Placement: Correct playing zones is critical in achieving a consistent sound. Whether the sticks are set or in motion, proper bead placement and a straight line path away from the playing surface must be observed at all times.

Velocity: No matter the stick height, we want to play with a heavy-hand approach at all times. You should strive to make the bead of the stick feel as heavy as possible while maintaining a smooth, legato motion. Keep in mind it is possible to distort your sound by forcing the velocity and not using a relaxed grip. We do not want to over squeeze or whip the stick into the drum in order to achieve velocity.

Posture: From the feet up through the head, everything should be aligned, straight, and confident. Arms and upper body should be relaxed at all times!

Grip: Hands must stay relaxed, no matter what! Fingers are in contact with the stick at all times. Each stroke should be initiated from the wrist while working together with the arm and fingers.

Timing: USE A METRONOME AT ALL TIMES! Practice slowly at first, Quarter Note = Speed of No Mistakes

Stroke Types:

Legato/Full Stroke

- A relaxed, smooth, 'pendulum'-like motion
- The fingers are relaxed but remain on the stick
- Stick is allowed to rebound fluidly
- The grip serves as a guide as the stick rebounds

Controlled/Down Stroke

- The bead will be stopped down at the drum head
- To stop the bead, do not turn your wrist back up
- The grip remains relaxed

Dynamics:

- 1" Grace notes
- 3" Sticks parallel to the ground and very strict! This is where the "break" in the wrist shows up and should be present in every tap. The back of the hand DOES NOT open up!
- 6" Sticks are the opposite angle of set position. this height is considered part of the accent family, but can be interpreted as a tap for bigger moments.
- 9" Sticks prep up to a 45-degree angle. Most common accent height.
- 12" Lead with the bead, this height is not vertical.

Full Out (15") - Vertical. The arm moves with the rebound of the beads, creating a fluid "bouncing basketball" type motion

SNARE GUIDELINES

Home Base: Setting our hands up correctly will create a home base to reference stick angle and bead placement. The sticks should create a 90-degree angle between themselves at all times. You should always strive to play with a "heavy-hand" which requires whole hand contact on the stick, especially at the higher heights and slower tempos. We strive to have a "break" in the wrist at all heights, especially the low end, with about 10% of the arm involved at most heights and speeds. To achieve this, think about turning the wrist from about 3" back into your forearm (where a watch would sit).

Left Hand: The home base for the left hand revolves around the thumb being on top of the stick, forming a "T" with the first knuckle of the index finger. This is very important because it compensates for where the stick is held compared to the right hand. The right hand has a palm on top of the stick, allowing more weight to contribute to a controlled stroke. More weight on top of the stick = less squeeze and more dead weight to stop the stick. The correct placement of the thumb eliminates bead path problems. The LH thumb should be in a straight line with the elbow, as an extension of the arm.

Right Hand: The home base for the right hand is all about the angle of the palm. Much like the left hand, the right hand is able to relax in a more natural way without adding tension due to a flat surface. The stick acts as a natural extension of the forearm, yet not extending out parallel to the forearm. The butt of the stick should point to the outside of the forearm, not into the forearm.

TENOR GUIDELINES

Home Base: When forming the home position, start with your arms relaxed down at your side; be sure your sticks are parallel and not angled towards your toes. From here, without sticking your elbows out or adding tension in the shoulders, bring your sticks up to drums 1 and 2.

The beads should be between the front two lugs of drums 1 and 2 with a slight downward angle at the drum. Sticks will always be set over drum 1 or 2 when not playing.

Straight Line: While playing, we should think about moving in "straight lines" from point A to B and so on. This means the playing zones on drum 3 and 4 are straight out from the zones on drums 1 and 2, NOT curved back toward your body. This allows us to move efficiently and produce the same quality of sound while playing around the drums. This is also the approach for playing scrapes and crossovers.

Efficiency of Movement: The sticks should feel like a natural extension of your arms. Be relaxed at all times with the as little tension as possible in your upper body.

BASS DRUM GUIDELINES

Grip: The mallets should be held similar to matched grip on the snare drum, with only a few slight changes. The back three fingers of each hand should wrap around the mallet shaft so that the mallet is even with the base of your hand; no extra mallet will extend past your hand. The pad of your thumb and the middle portion of your index finger should connect to form a 't' shape and the mallet should be placed between those fingers so that your thumb is in line with the mallet shaft. Lastly, when in the playing position, your thumb should rest on top of the mallet and your thumbnail will face up toward the ceiling.

Playing Position: When forming the playing position, start with your arms relaxed down at your side. Bend your elbows and raise your forearms until they are parallel to the ground. The mallet should form a 60-degree angle when compared to your forearms from the side. Slightly angle your mallets in toward the drum head; they should rest about 1 inch away from the head. The mallet should rest in the center of the head when viewed from the side.

Prep: As you prep for each stroke, your thumb should remain on top of the mallet. Turn your wrist to achieve height away from the head and only involve the forearm as the dynamics require.

Velocity: Avoid overusing velocity and over-squeezing the mallet, which both result in a harsh, pounding sound. Keeping the back fingers relaxed while moving the mallet with good speed will allow the stick and drum to resonate and create a full and balanced sound.

Rim Clicks: The purpose of rim clicks is only to aid in timing, not to be heard as a color. We will approach all rim clicks at 6" unless otherwise stated.

CYMBAL GUIDELINES

Attention to detail, persistence, enthusiasm, and a positive attitude are all components at the center of every good cymbal ensemble.

Mental Flexibility: Flexibility is about being able to take in new information, execute technique based on that information, adapt, and then recall those changes with consistency. The demand on modern cymbal players to adapt on-the-move outweighs the importance of any other learned skill.

Use a mirror: While using a full-length mirror, observe yourself in a given position and compare the image that you see with the definitions given in the reference photos. Learn to associate what you see with how itfeels in your muscles.

Get strong: Lack of physical strength translates into bad form, inconsistency within the line, and poor execution. Do what you know to do to be fit and healthy every day. Remember to breathe. Cymbals are heavy; build a habit of breathing through fatigue.

Go to your happy place: No, really. For each position defined in this packet, duplicate the form with great attention to detail and hold it for extended periods of time to increase endurance and your ability to adapt to muscle fatigue. Condition yourself to make each position more "comfortable" than relaxing.

CYMBAL POSITIONS

Standby: Interlock the cymbals, right over left, with the right cymbal tucked behind the pad of left cymbal. The knot of the cymbals should be held at waist level with a natural bend at the elbow with feet shoulder-width apart. This position is all about uniform presentation - be sure to line up the logos so they are readable to the audience.

Set: Hands should be down at your side with the knot of the strap lining up with the inseam of your pants with a slight bend in the elbow and the cymbals parallel to each other. There should be a small amount of contact between the cymbal and your side, but the cymbals should not rest against your body.

Flat: This is our most common playing position. The plates are centered with your body with about 2 inches between the cymbals. The knots of the straps should be at sternum level and the angle of the cymbals should draw a line from the left shoulder to the right hip - about a 45-degree angle. Elbows will be slightly out, not tucked into the body and the fingers should be spread open for extra control. Keep the wrist in a straight line from the elbow through the middle finger.

Port: The only other position other than FLAT that is used to play crashes. Cymbals should be held parallel to each other and perpendicular to the ground, with about 2 inches between the cymbals. Keep the knot of cymbals at nose level, looking through the cymbals and far enough from your face that they won't hit your hat (roughly 6" between your face and the cymbals). Elbows should be slightly out, keeping in mind not to collapse them inward. Keep your hands relaxed with the fingers spread open for extra control, and the wrist in a straight line from the elbow through the middle finger.

CYMBAL CRASHES

FLAT CRASH

- Created from a flam the basic element of any crash we play
- When the cymbals come together, the first contact point (with the front of cymbals) will have the right cymbal contacting at 2" inside the left cymbal. Once the front of the cymbals has made contact, the backs of the cymbals come together. This happens quickly to create one crash sound.
- The default prep will start one count before the crash, followed by crashing with a quick motion, ending with the right arm fully extended. Stay extended until quickly locking back to position (usually on the beat after the crash).
- Prep: As the right elbow pulls back for the prep, the left hand will tilt slightly from the wrist (without actually moving, as we don't want a moving target for the right cymbal). As the right-hand pulls back, the right forearm is kept level, only moving the elbow back (as if someone is pulling a string attached to your elbow). Neither cymbal should make contact with the forearm.
- The size of the prep corresponds with the dynamic of the crash a bigger prep creates a bigger sound.
- When crashing from the prep position, imagine shooting the right hand forward, not in, while the left hand stays stationary. It is not about the amount of force you crash with, but rather the speed at which you crash.

CRASH CHOKE

- When approaching a choke, don't change the prep at all. The prep between a Flat Crash and a Crash Choke are all the same. The only difference happens immediately after the cymbals come into contact whether you extend out for a full crash or come into the body to mute the cymbals.
- The pathway between FLAT position and a choke needs to be as short as possible, bringing the cymbals in towards your body in a straight path with no excess motion.
- When coming into mute position, make sure that the body is coming into as much contact with cymbals as possible for a quick and efficient mute. Bring cymbals into the torso, using the torso, upper and lower arms, and hands on the cymbal to choke off any resonance.
- Stay in choke position ("hugging" cymbals into the body) until coming back to FLAT position for next sound.
- The choke is as quick as possible immediately following the crash. Speed is key the quicker it is, the better it will sound.

A/V CRASH

- An A/V crash is a series of predetermined check points, used at the PORT position, that starts with opening up the cymbals to an "A" shape and then a "V" shape. Following the "V" position is the crash itself that brings you back into the "A" position, followed by the "V" position, finally back to the PORT position.
- "A" Position: Cymbals out in front of you at the same height as PORT position, create an "A" shape no wider than face width. The hands shouldn't go wider than shoulder width (from a front view). Naturally, elbows will slightly move outward.
- "V" Position: Inverse of "A" position. Hands and elbows will naturally move inward.
- Moment of Impact: Right cymbal attacks the left by touching the bottom edge 2 inches into the left. Crash follow through passes through "A" position, then "V" position, then back into PORT position. Let the fingers come slightly off the cymbals upon impact to allow the cymbals to resonate.

TAP

- This position is similar to the PORT position except with the top edges of the the cymbals at eye level.
- The angle between the plates should be 90 degrees (each hand tilting cymbal in at 45 degrees), and about two inches apart.
- The tap sound is created by the right cymbal edge tapping the left cymbal (the left hand stays stationary). The right cymbal should make contact with the left at about an inch inside the right cymbal, then return to tap position.
- The prep should only move from the right wrist, with cymbal no further than vertical, then bring the cymbal down and move in just enough to make proper contact.

HI-HAT

- Hold cymbals together, parallel to the ground with the right cymbal on top.
- The cymbal stack should be positioned just above the belly button, making contact with the stomach. While the cymbals do make contact against the stomach, your body is not meant to support the cymbals' weight. The hands should be pointing in opposite directions and elbows out from the body. This will be the closed position.
- To execute, keep the back edges of the cymbals together and lift the front edge of the right cymbal open about 2 inches and then forcefully close it back down again. This motion should be performed as quickly as possible, while also making sure not to open the cymbals too far apart.

SIZZLE

- Can be done in FLAT or PORT position.
- Drop the right hand onto the left and let the cymbals rattle together.
- Think about two contact points the front and back of the cymbals.
- There is no prep for this type of crash, just a heavy drop from the right hand while the left hand stays stable. As soon as you drop in, go to a two inch separation.
- Hold the right cymbal loosely on the left to keep sizzle sound going. Keep fingers off the cymbals during sizzle.
- Might see sizzles written as a certain rhythm, which will end in a hard pop to next position, separating cymbals. Other times, sizzles may be allowed to decay naturally.

SIZZ-SUCK

- In the FLAT position, start with a regular sizzle, while pushing the front edge of the right cymbal slightly past the front edge of the left. Then pull the right hand back in line/against the left cymbal to stop sound and create sucking sound.
- Based on how long the rhythm is, change how far out you go on the cymbal. The longer the sizzle lasts, the futher out the cymbal will go. However, never let the right hand pass the left bell.
- Key to good suck-sound is to think about pulling very hard with the right hand while keeping the left hand stable. Do not worry about pressing the cymbals together.

EXERCISES

- 1. All exercises should be practiced at a wide range of tempos and heights.
- 2. We will be using the exercises as a foundation and will modify them to add different concepts and difficulty.
- 3. You must be able to mark time (to the quarter note and half note) through all exercises.
- 4. Students auditioning for Bass Drum should prepare ALL split parts as well as the snare part to each exercise.
- 5. Students auditioning for Tenors should be able to play all exercises on one drum as well as the split part.

AT THE AUDITION

Timing, confidence, chops, and touch are all necessary elements to display at any marching percussion audition. Students often forget that rudiments are RHYTHMS FIRST, stickings second. Remember that portraying positive body language is vital to your success - stand tall, relax your shoulders, and keep your eyes up.

Memorize all music whenever possible (even bass drum splits). Use music only as a guide. Be prepared to play all music individually, as well as with a section or full ensemble. It's always a good idea to have a prepared solo/etude/piece of music that is not included in the audition packet, but that demonstrates your ability and command of the instrument.

A large part of the college drumline experience is learning music quickly and adapting on the fly. At each audition, you will be asked to learn new exercises and music quickly in order for our staff further evaluate your ability and responsiveness to new situations.

Do:

- Be overly prepared
- Maintain open communication w/staff
- Be confident
- Have positive body language
- Listen
- Go with the flow
- Adapt quickly
- Memorize all music
- Be organized, responsible, and professional at all times
- Have fun while working hard!

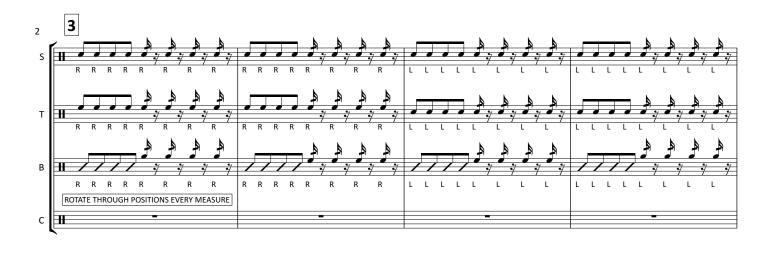
Don't:

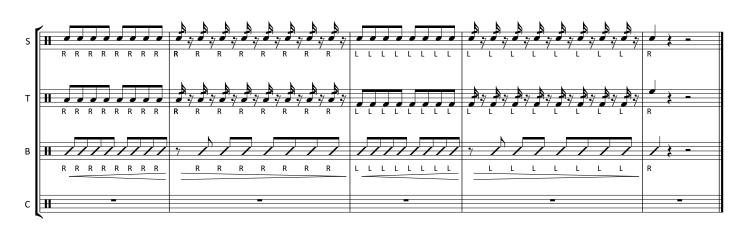
- Ask to use a music stand
- Ask what kind of sticks to bring
- Ask to borrow sticks/pencil
- Make excuses
- Talk excessively
- Be arrogant
- Play music that is not part of your audition
- Text/be on your phone during the audition
- Look disinterested, be negative or disrespectful
- Get frustrated and quit

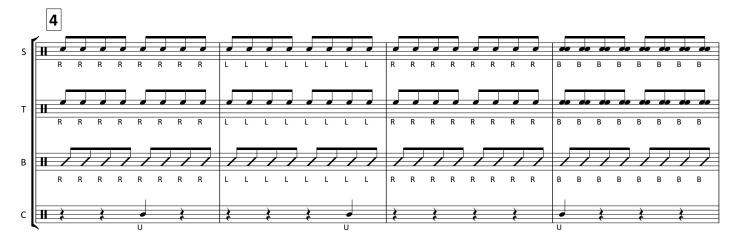
EXERCISES

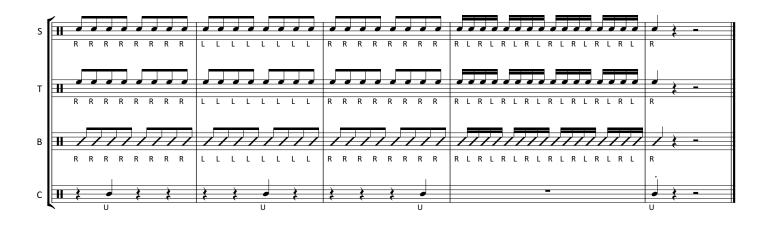
LEGATOS





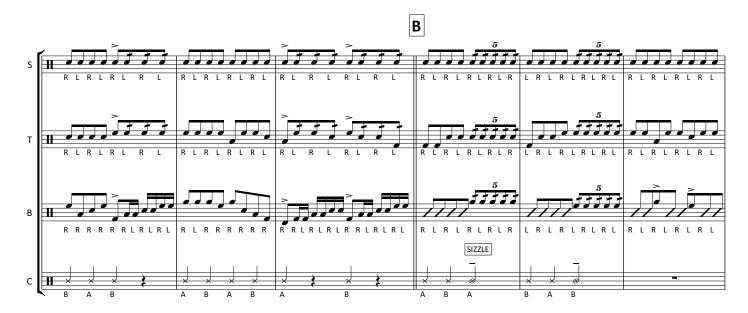




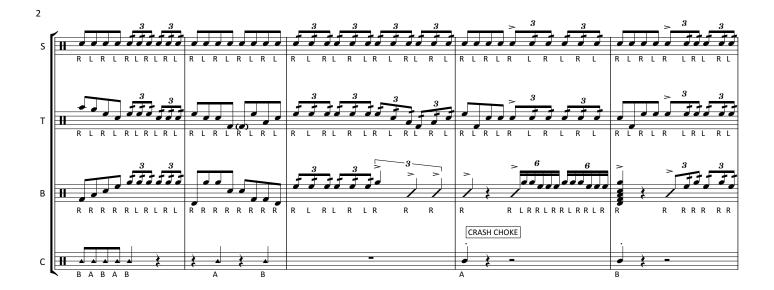


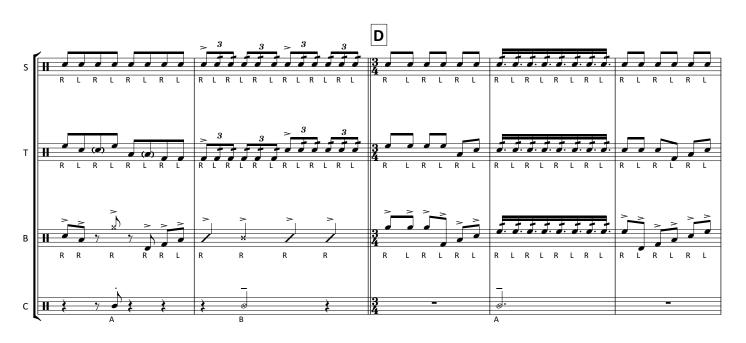
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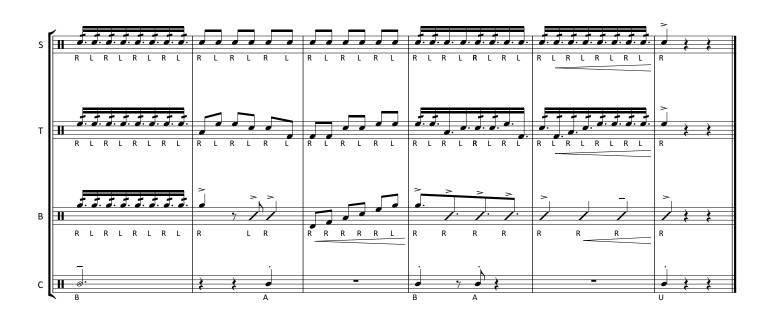










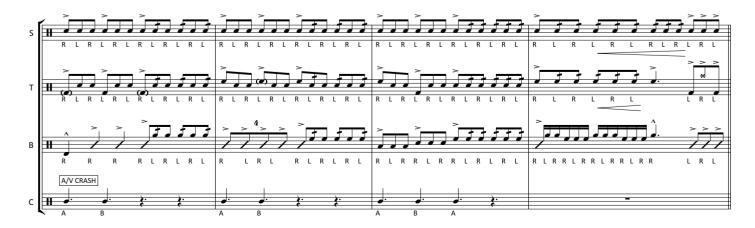


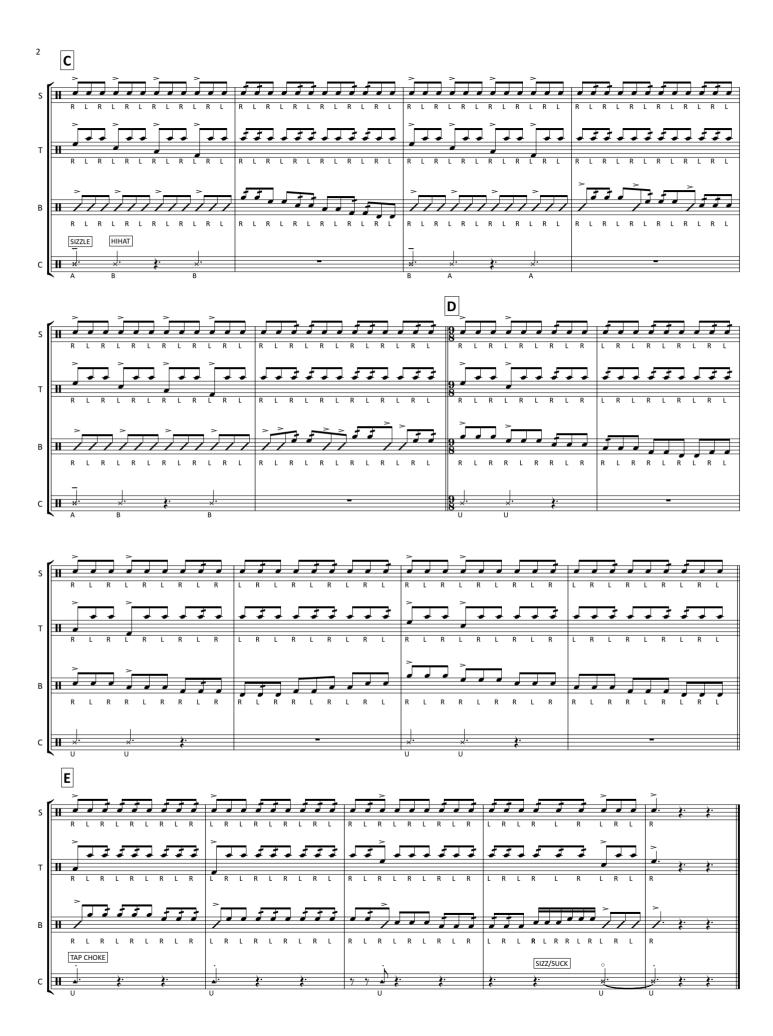
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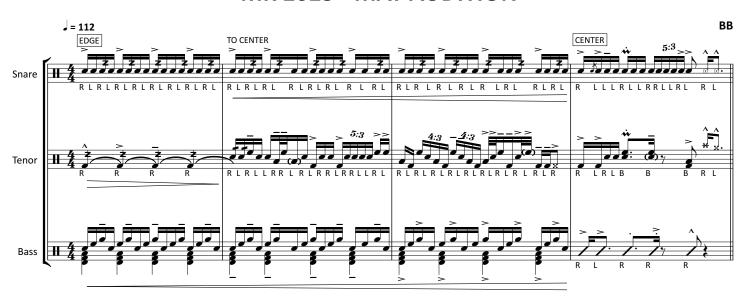


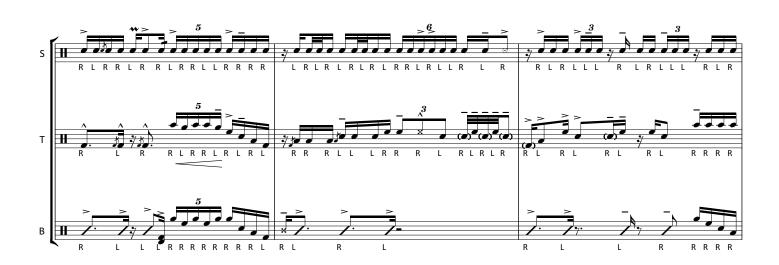


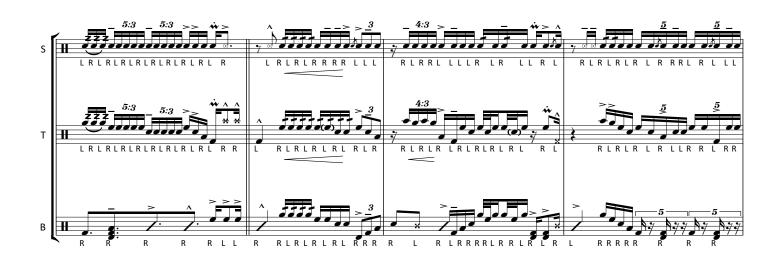


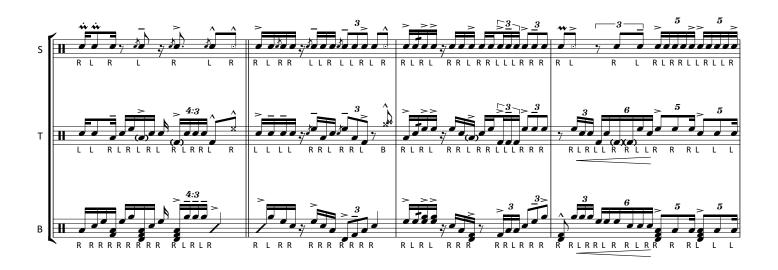
SIGHT READING FROM PREVIOUS AUDITION

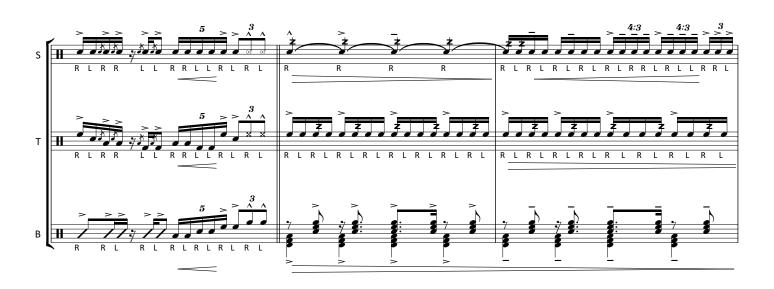
MK 2023 - MAY AUDITION













MK 2023 - JUNE AUDITION

