

# TBA Convention/Clinic 2003

## Beginning tuba By Jesse Q. Lotspeich July 29, 2003

This clinic will cover the recruitment of beginning tuba players and establishing a foundation of good tone and technique.

### I Recruitment: Do the obvious

- a. Have a good instrument
- b. Demonstrate the instrument
- c. Don't focus on size or weight

### II Student selection

- a. Desire to be a tuba player trumps almost all considerations
- b. High brass players that have trouble with upper range
- c. Braces
- d. Sax or flute players
- e. Draft from 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> bands
- f. Adequate size
  1. Strength
  2. Facial features
- g. Students with low maintenance.

### III Equipment

- a. Full size vs.  $\frac{3}{4}$  Size
- b. Tuba vs. Sousaphone
- c. Tuba stands, chairs
- d. Mouthpieces

### IV First Class

- a. Take time to fit each student
  1. How to sit in the chair, stool
  2. Proper angle of mouthpiece

### V Tone Production, Setting the mouthpiece

- a. Embouchure formation, corners in, teeth apart, center of lips soft.
  1. Blow out the candle
  2. Bite little finger to set distance of teeth separation
  3. Say poo aloud then whisper
  4. No puffed cheeks
  5. No pinched or crinkled lips
  6. No collapsed jaw.
- b. To buzz or not to buzz

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### VI Mouthpiece placement

- a. Teacher sets mouthpiece the first time while student blows out candle
  1. Lips/jaw doesn't change
  2. Stress how light the mouthpiece feels
- b. Student sets mouthpiece with just thumb and first finger then release first finger
- c. Angle of mp. Slightly downward
- d. Even placement on top and bottom lip
- e. Use mirror to aid consistency of placement
- f. Inhale 4 counts, exhale 4, 6, 8 etc. Counts

### VII First note.

- a. Practice "landing the rocket ship" several times with mp held in the thumb and first finger.
- b. Place mp. In horn and repeat "landing" listen for fast air through the horn
  1. Don't worry if no note the first couple of times
  2. Close lips slightly if having trouble producing a note
  3. Don't worry about which note plays
- c. First note will probably be a B-flat or D in the staff

### VIII Lowering the pitch

- a. Do not horse whinny
- b. Drop jaw and soften center of embouchure
  1. Use Chromatic scale
  2. Say "yo-yo"
  3. Mouth full of water to feel teeth apart
  4. Vocalize ee-oh
  5. Focus air on soft part of lips
  6. Don't lose "set" in the corners
- c. Don't rush this

### IX Expanding the range upward

- a. Avoid excessive pressure, look for red ring on top lip
- b. Stress air speed, not lip to mp pressure
- c. Keep teeth apart
- d. Corners stay in and not stretched out
  1. Buzz an expanding roller coaster
  2. Contest with air vs. lips
  3. Candy cane
  4. Blow air through a large straw then pinch end to feel the increase of air pressure
  5. "Golf ball" of air in the mouth

### X Flexibility and Facility

- a. Daily warm up to push range extremes
  1. Use a numbered chromatic scale
  2. Expanding intervals
- b. "Hand pipe" for establishing lip slurs
- c. Technical passages from other instruments

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### XI Tonguing

- a. Only introduced after a good tone can be started and sustained
- b. Stress keeping teeth apart and corners firm
  - 1. Bite finger, say too, too, too and slide finger back and forth
- c. Lower register lower the tongue
  - 1. Shift from too – thoo with the tongue just under the top teeth
- d. Correct a heavy tongue by saying hot, hot, hot