Performance Techniques of the Contemporary Marching Percussion Ensemble

CLINICIANS:

Roland Chavez, Steve Wessels

DEMONSTRATION GROUP:

Cedar Park High School Percussion

Texas Bandmasters Association 2016 Convention/Clinic

JULY 21-24, 2016
HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Performance Techniques of the Contemporary Marching Percussion Ensemble

Cedar Park High School Drumline – Roland Chavez, Director

Assisted by Mike Bishop and Matt Hart

2016 Texas Band Masters Association Convention

Saturday July 23rd, Exhibit Hall 3, 3:30-4:30pm

Today's clinic will discuss different concepts and strategies in building a successful outdoor percussion ensemble.

Topics will include instrumentation, equipment, exercise & technique program, electronics, the "Mix" and developing the musical marching percussionist as an individual. The group will perform various fundamentals and musical excerpts throughout the clinic.

Part 1: Instrumentation and Equipment Selection

1. **The Ensemble**- Setting a balanced sized Battery and Front Ensemble is key.
    a. Balanced Battery options
        - 4 Snares, 2 Tenors, 5 Bass Drums, 2 Cymbals
        - 5 Snares, 3 Tenors, 5 Bass Drums, 4 Cymbals
        - 6 Snares, 4 Tenors, 5 Bass Drums, 6 Cymbals
    b. Balanced Front Ensemble options
        - 3 Marimbas, 3 Vibraphones, Xylophone/Bell, 1-2 Synths, 1-2 Aux
        - 4 Marimbas, 4 Vibraphones, Xylophone, Bells, 2-3 Synths, 2-3 Aux
        - 5 Marimbas, 4 Vibraphones, Xylophone, Bells, 2-4 Synths, 3-4 Aux
2. **Stick & Mallets**- Selecting quality implements for your ensemble is key.
    a. Battery
        - Snares- Innovative Percussion PR2
        - Tenors- Innovative Percussion FT-1AH, TS-TJ2
        - Bass Drums- Innovative Percussion FBX 2, 3, 4 , 5
    b. Front Ensemble
        - Marimbas- IP 1003, FS150, FS250, 2002, 2003
        - Vibraphones- IP 1006, 3006, 3007
        - Xylophone/Bells- IP 903, 904, 1007, ENS460R, OS5
        - Auxiliary- JC-2SC

3. **Heads**- Selecting quality drum heads for your ensemble is key.
    a. Battery
        - Snares- Remo Black Max Snare Top, Falams Snare Bottom
        - Tenors- Remo Pinstripe Crimplock
        - Bass Drums- Remo Ebony Ambassador
    b. Front Ensemble
        - Concert Bass Drums- Remo Fiberskyn 3 and Smooth White Emperor

Part 2: Exercise and Technique Program

1. **Warm-ups-** See examples at end of packet.
    a. Battery
        - 8 on a hand, Tap Accent, Double Beat, Rolls, Advanced Flams
        - Timing Patterns, Accent Patterns, Stick Control, Paradiddles
    b. Front Ensemble
        - Octaves Scales, Green Scales, 4 Mallet Basics, Pop Ensembles
        - Arpeggios, Duple Check Patterns, Tap Accent
2. **Audition Camps**
    a. Spring Schedule
        - 10 Audition rehearsals from April through May (technique only)
        - Set the line at the end of May and begin rehearsing show music.

Part 3: Electronics Setup

1. Microphones- Mounted with boom arms, shock mounts and clamps
    - Marimba (2)- Audix 2 (high end), Audix 4 (low end)
    - Vibraphone (1)- Shure SM57
2. Midi Keyboard Controllers- Less expensive alternative to a workstation synthesizer.
    - M-Audio Keystation 88
3. Audio Interface- Allows digital audio signal to be sent to your mixing board.
    - Focusrite Scarlett 2i2
4. Laptop- Remember to always have a backup computer on hand!
    - 13-inch Apple MacBook Pro with Retina Display and 16GB RAM
5. Mixing Board- Great mixing board with lots of functionality.
    - Yamaha 01V96 with expansion card (allows 16 more inputs!)
6. Speakers- These are passive speakers that require amplifiers.
    - Yamaha CM15V Loud Speaker (4), Yamaha CW118V Subwoofer (2)

Part 4: The Mix

Golden Rule: *Spread out your frequencies and separate your voices.*

1. Battery Tuning- Well tuned drums will help you achieve great balance in your ensemble.
    - Snares- Aim for a true soprano battery voice, medium high tuning, experiment with tape and patches for articulation. Always play with good sticks!
    - Tenors- Avoid tuning too high and producing a choked off tenor voice. Resonance is key. Experiment with different implements for variety and balance.
    - Bass Drums- Use foam on heads or inside of drum on the shell to reduce overtones and gain articulation. Don't be afraid to tune up!
2. Percussion Orchestration- A well written percussion book can save lots of headaches down the road.
    - Avoid overwriting! Less can be more in many cases.
    - Design percussion only windows in your show to feature them and give the wind players some down time!
    - Use mallet changes to help create new sound textures and to help with balancing. (section to section, battery to pit, percussion to winds etc.)
3. Acoustic vs. Electronic Balance
    - 80/20 Rule- Acoustic keyboard players produce 80% of their overall volume through the use of good technique and correct mallet selection. The sound system provides the extra 20% of the volume it takes to balance to the full ensemble and be heard in the larger arenas and noisy football stadiums.
    - The synthesizer should not replace your wind section. Balance to your winds.
4. Overall Ensemble Balance- *Tip: always know what role each voice plays in each musical phrase.*
    - Break up balancing your ensemble into smaller stages.
        - Balance section to section
        - Balance battery and front ensemble
        - Take a step back and balance to the winds

Part 5: Developing the Musical Marching Percussionist

1. Private Lessons
    - Private instruction is highly recommended and encouraged to all percussionists during both school semesters and summer.
2. TMEA All-State
    - Strong emphasis is placed on the TMEA All-State audition process
    - Percussionists attend a 1hr All-State masterclass, 1 per week
    - Percussionists have bi-monthly etude pass-offs and a mock audition.

3. Solo Performances
    - Each percussionist is required to perform a rudimental snare solo & 4-mallet marimba solo during the spring semester.
4. Percussion Ensemble
    - Each percussionist participates in 2 to 4 percussion ensembles during the spring semester.
    - Spring semester concludes with a percussion ensemble concert.

The Cedar Park High Percussion Ensemble wishes you the best of luck this 2016 marching band season. We hope that you can use the information provided in this clinic to help build a successful outdoor percussion ensemble.

Special thanks to the Texas Bandmasters Association for the opportunity to perform and to share some of what makes Cedar Park High School such an amazing place to teach. Thank you to our awesome percussion staff Mike Bishop, Matt Hart, Nathan Smith and Tim Mabrey, we couldn't do it with you guys! Thanks to the students of the CPHS Drumline, Drumline parents and CPHS band directors Steve Wessels, Evan VanDoren, Jason Robb and Justin Sullivan. We would also like to thank Innovative Percussion, Remo Drum Heads and Yamaha for your support of the Cedar Park Percussion Ensemble.

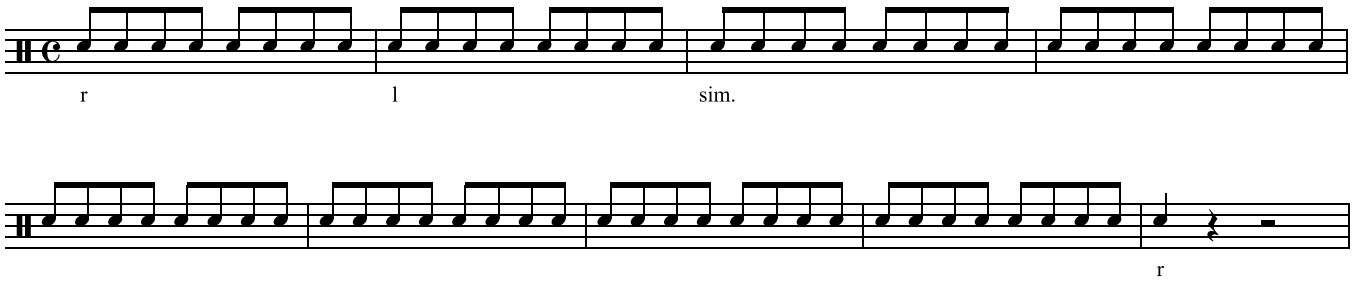
Cedar Park Drumline

Exercise Packet 2013

Snare

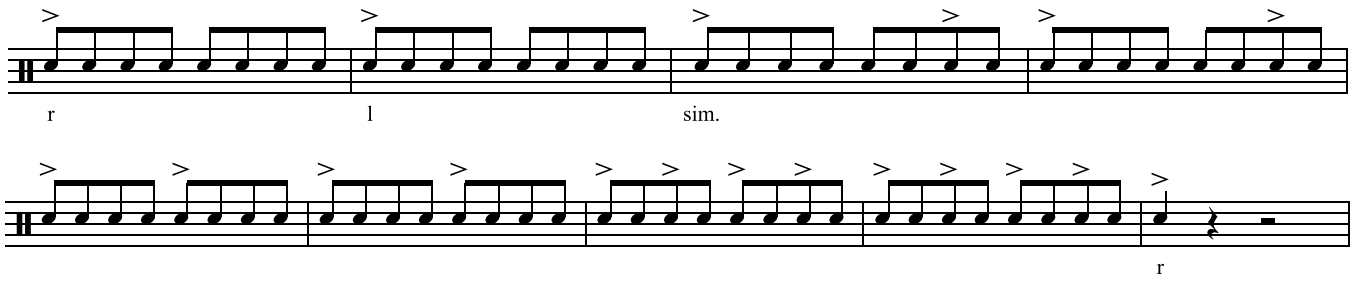
Roland Chavez

8's



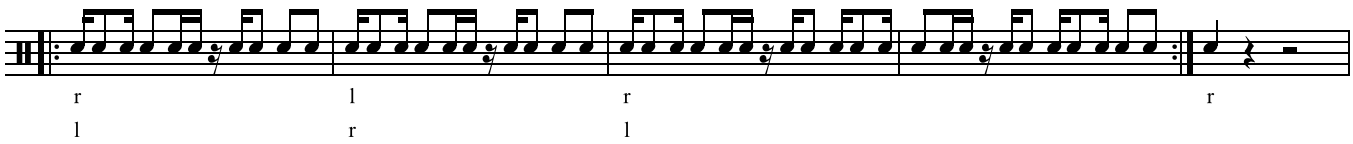
Variations:
1. 3",6",9", full heigths
2. Dynamic- Cresc. & Decres.
3. All Right Hand, All Left

Tap Accent

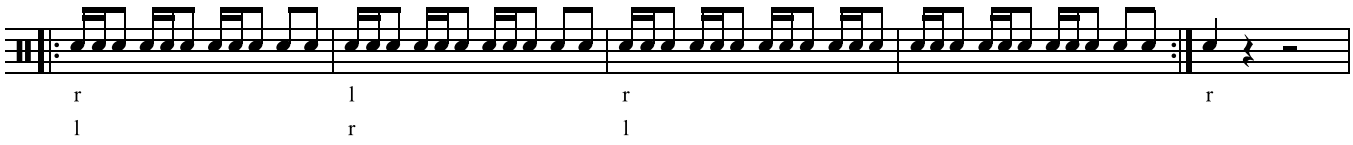


Variations:
1. 6", 9", 12" accent heights
2. All Right Hand, All Left

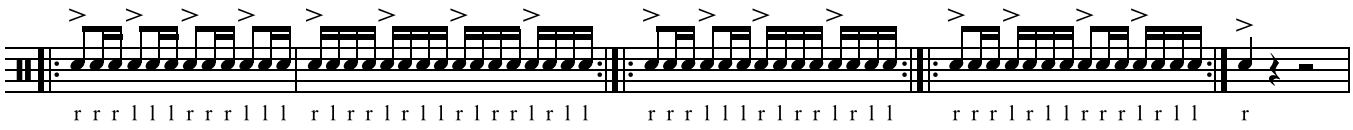
Double Beat



Hugga-dicks

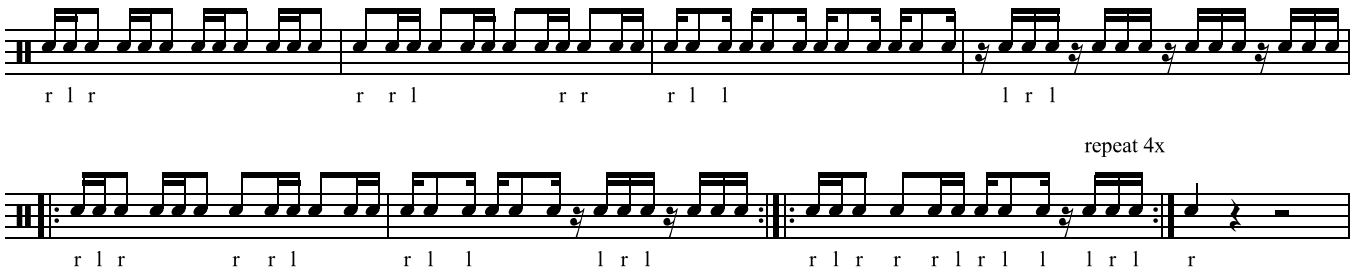


Paradiddle Breakdown



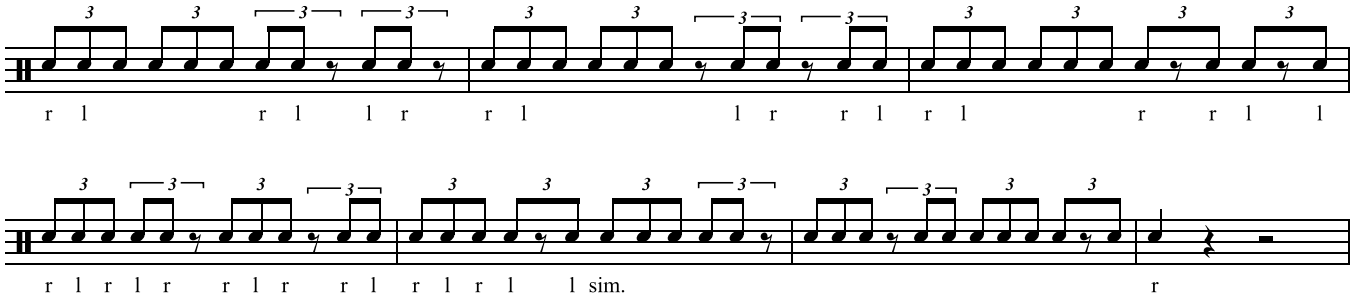
CPHS 2013

16th Timing



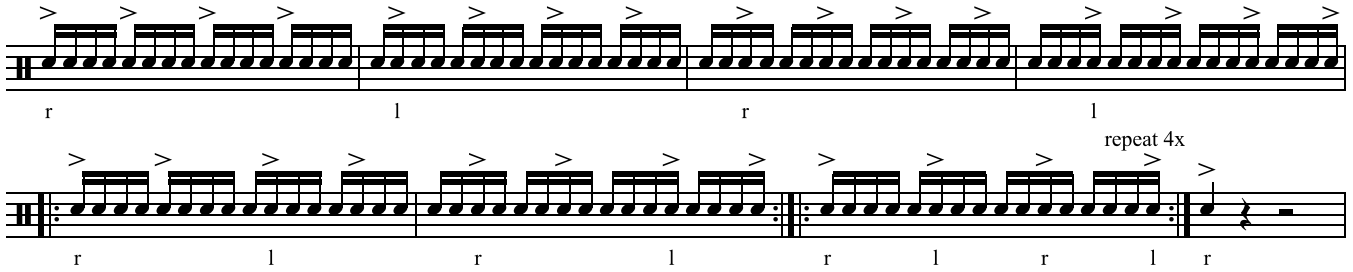
Variations:
1. RH & LH Natural Sticking
2. Alternating sticking
3. Double Sticking RH & LH Leads

Triplet Timing



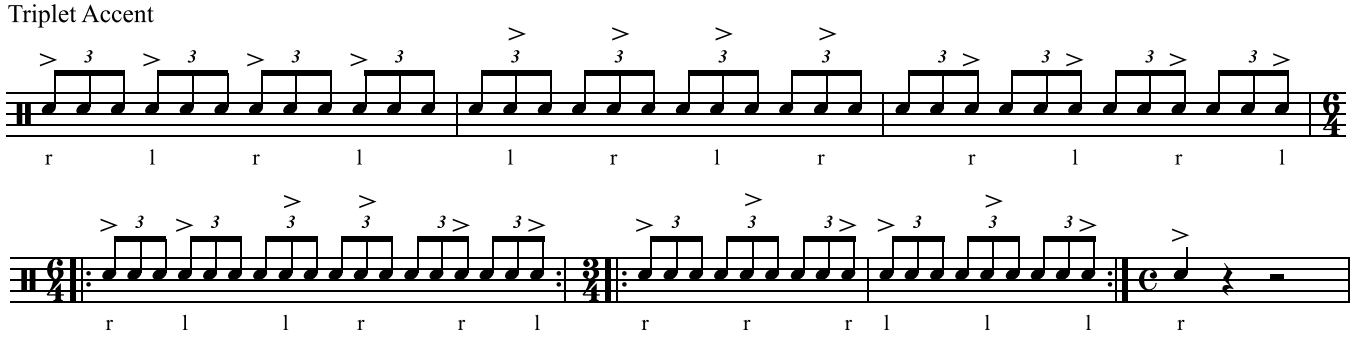
Variations:
1. RH & LH Natural Sticking

16th Accent



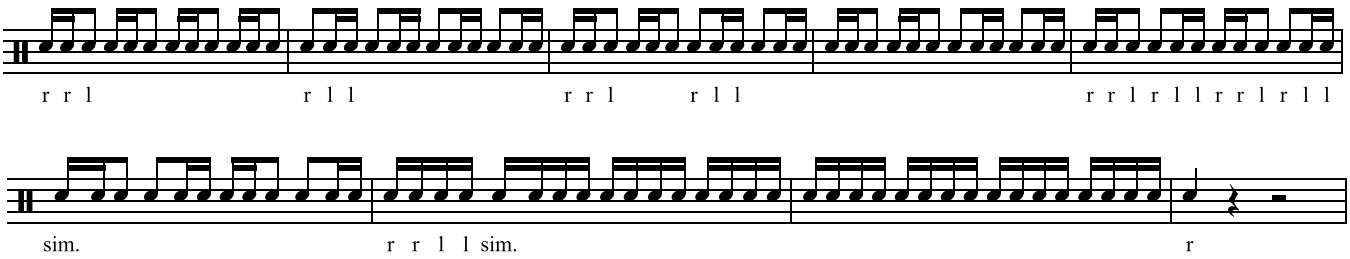
Variations:
1. RH & LH Natural Sticking
2. Flam, Diddle & Drag Accents
3. "Grid" Flams and Diddles on all partials
4. Backwards

Triplet Accent



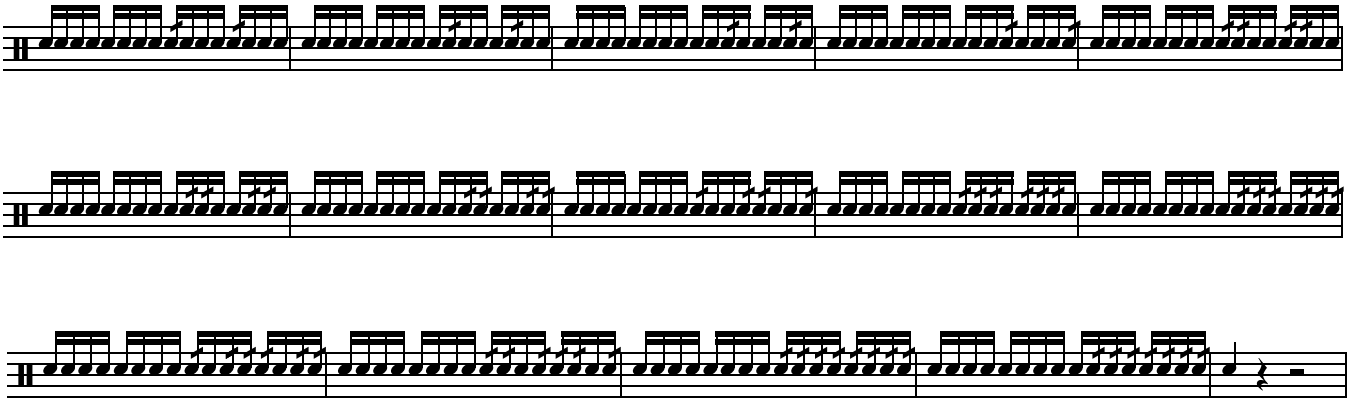
Variations:
1. RH & LH Natural Sticking
2. Flam, Diddle & Drag Accents
3. "Grid" Flams and Diddles on all partials
4. Backwards

Diddle Builder



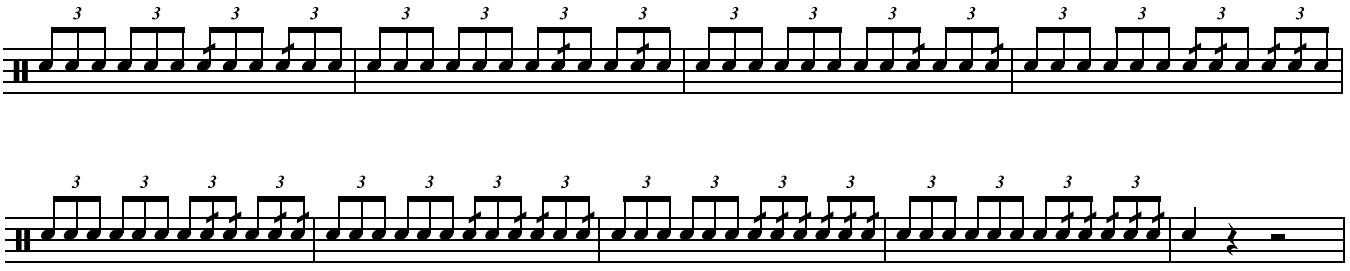
Variations:
1. RH & LH Leads
2. Invert Sticking

16th Diddle



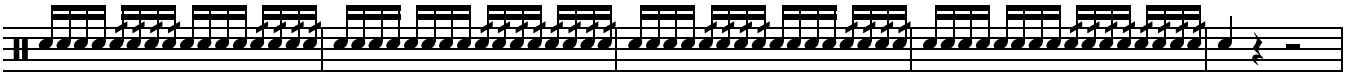
Variations:
1. RH & LH Leads
2. No Check
3. Singles

Triplet Diddle



Variations:
1. RH & LH Leads
2. No Check
3. Singles

16th Rolls

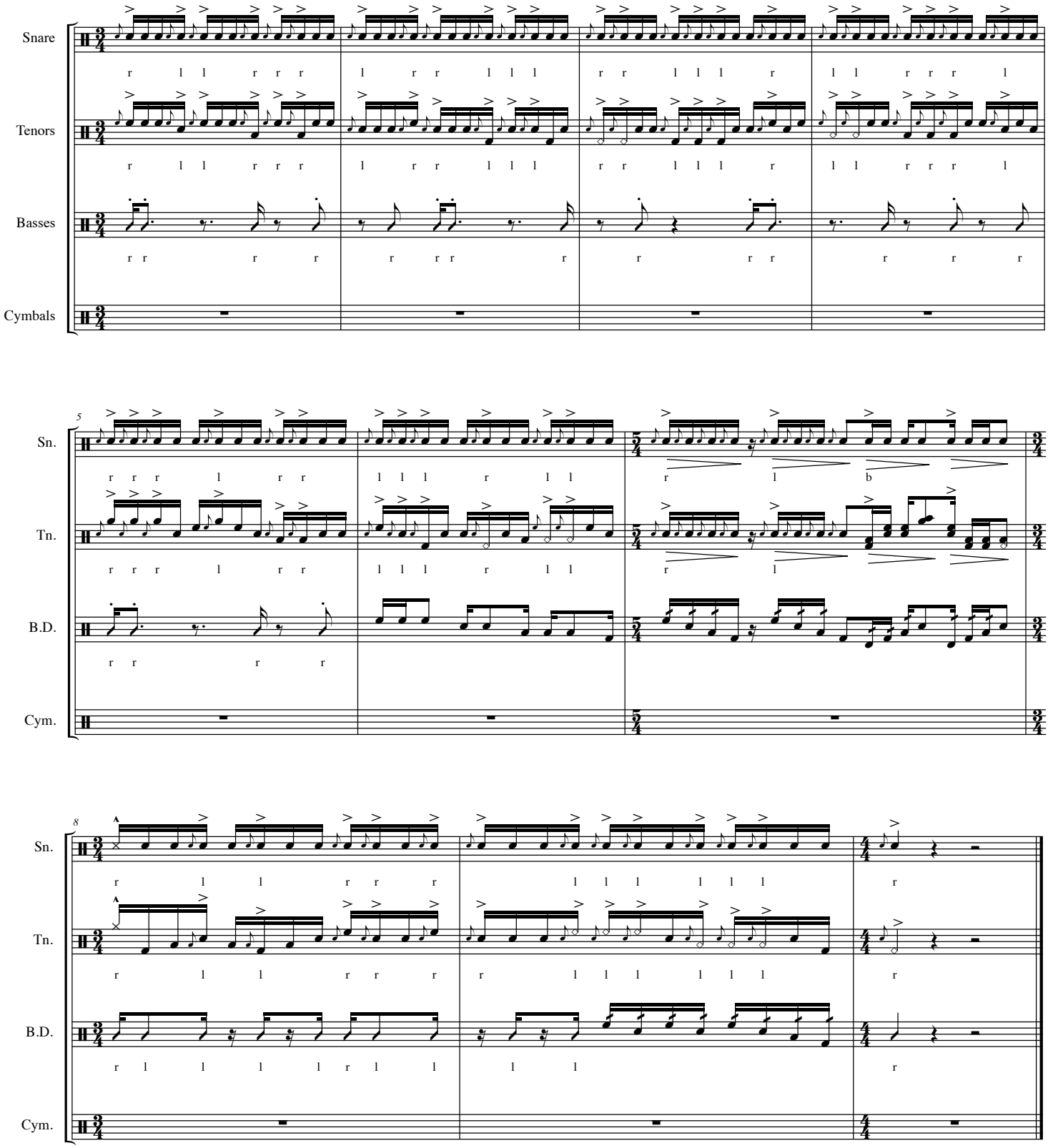


Variations:
1. RH & LH Leads
2. Dynamics
3. No Check Dynamics
4. Singles

Flams 1-2-3

Cedar Park H.S. Drumline

Bluecoats 2009

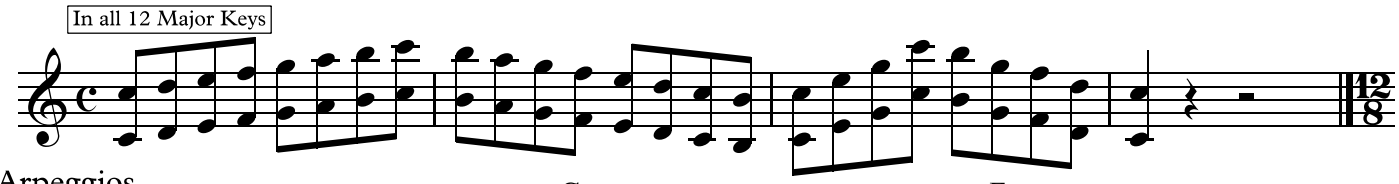


Front Ensemble Audition Material

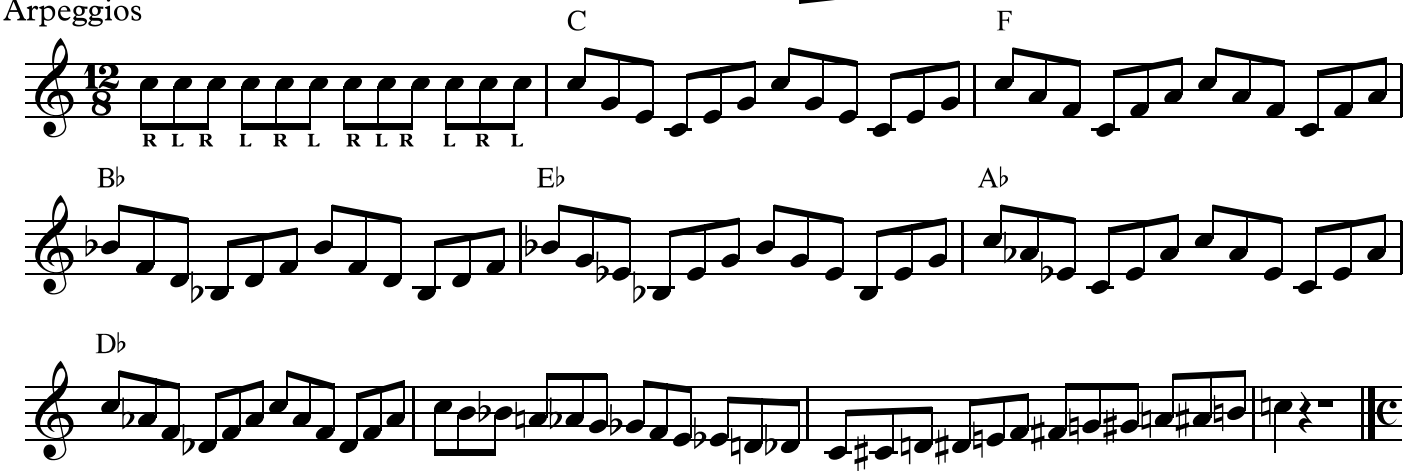
Cedar Park HS 2013

Mike Bishop

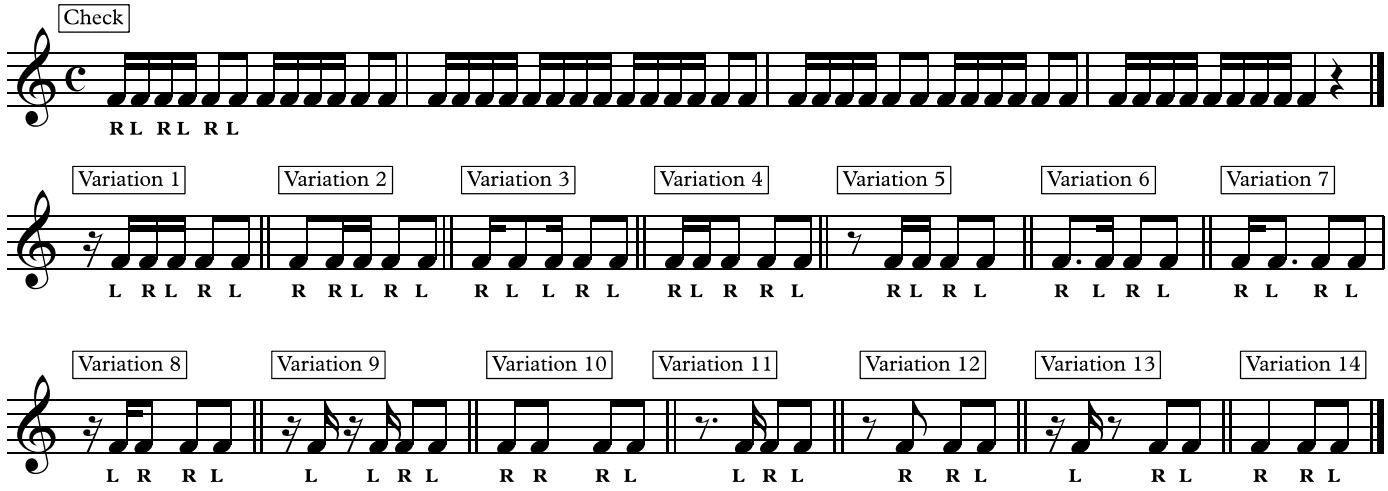
1. Octave Scales



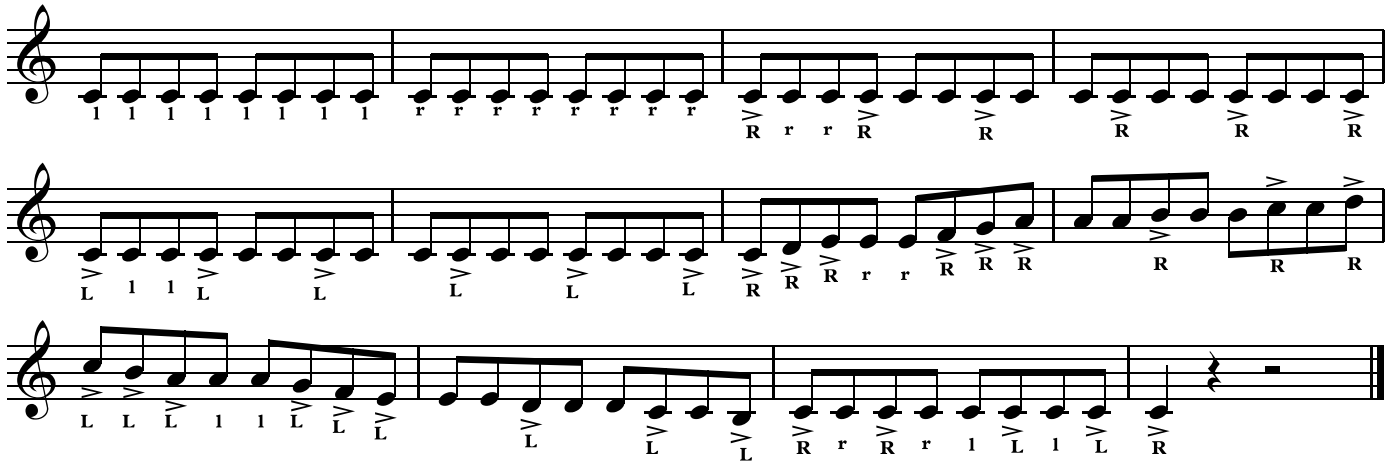
2. Arpeggios



3. Duple Check Patterns



4. Tap-Accent



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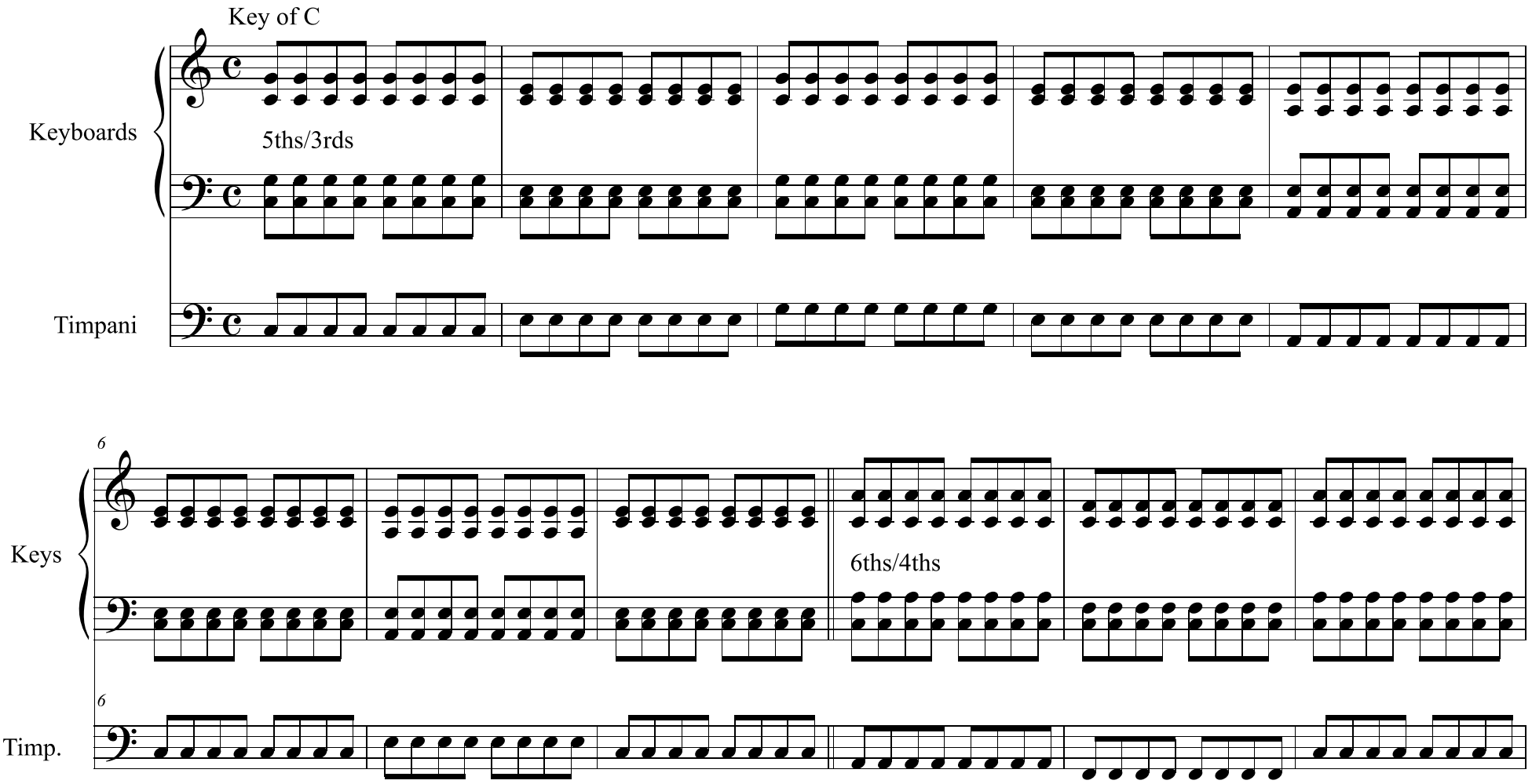
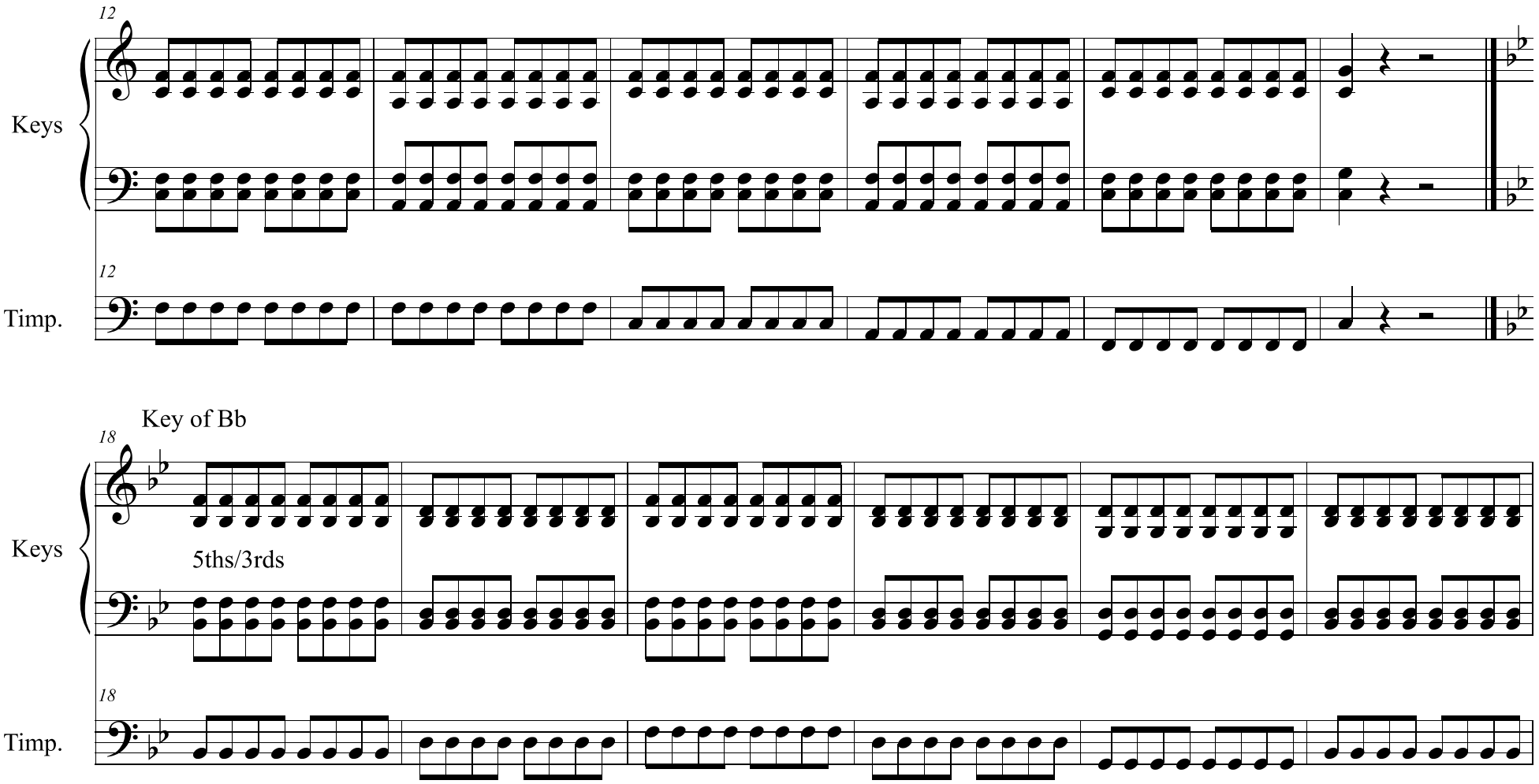
Will be played usuing Doube Vertical strokes as well as other permutations of varying stickings and rhythms

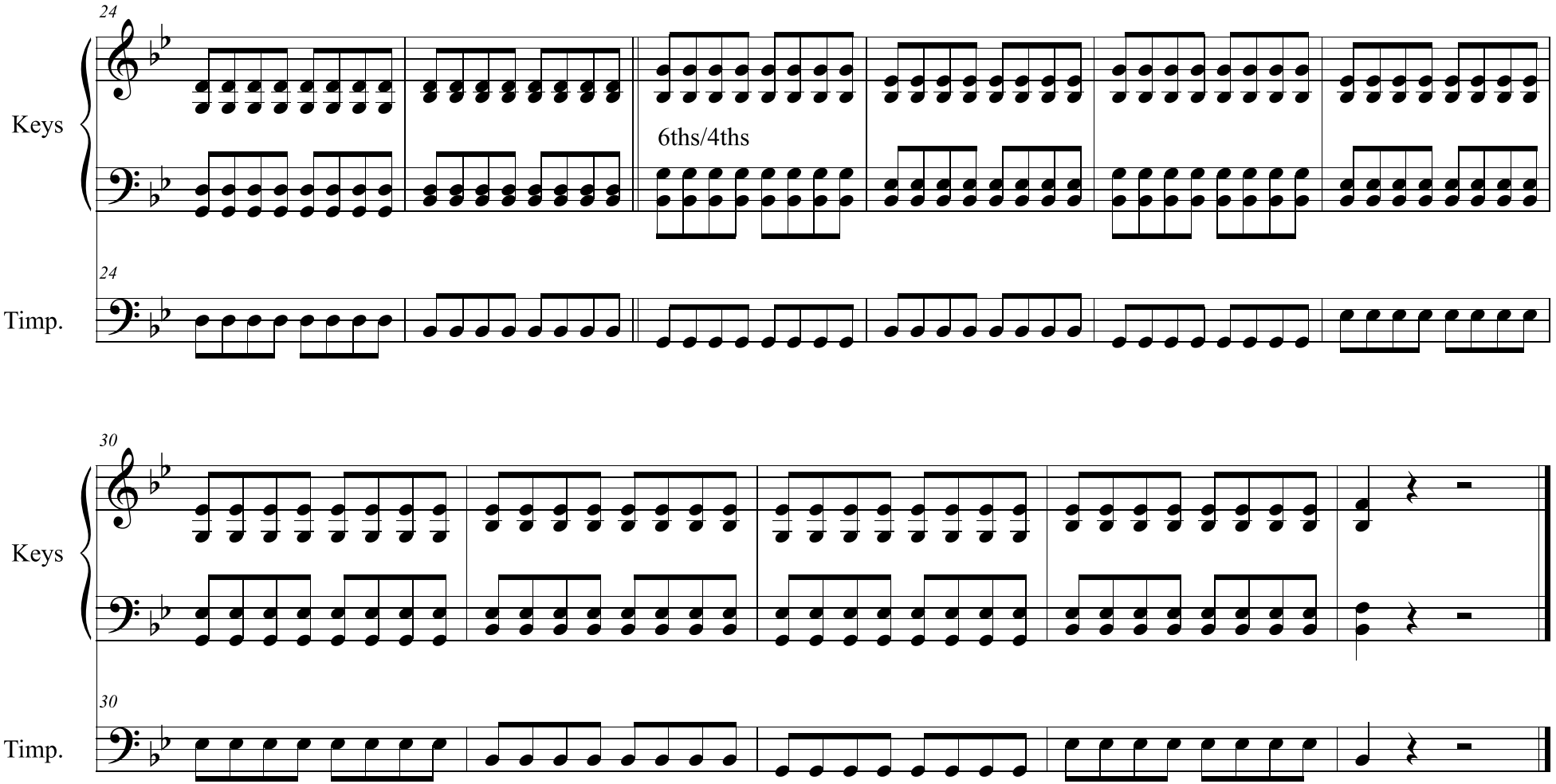
Four Mallet Basics

Stevens Grip Exercises

Mike Bishop




12
Keys
12
Timp.
Key of Bb
18
Keys
5ths/3rds
18
Timp.


24
Keys
6ths/4ths
24
Timp.
30
Keys
30
Timp.