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For smooth legato playing, the fingers should cover the tone holes squarely and without a popping sound. When a note change entails moving two or more fingers, squeeze the fingers before lifting them. If an interval involves lifting many fingers, such as from C5 to C6, push the right thumb up a bit toward the embouchure to set the mouthpiece or the second note will pop out with an accent. The right hand should maintain an arch shape at all times.

Musicianship

Always exaggerate dynamics because what players hear while holding the horn may not be what the audience hears several yards away. As beginning band directors often say, play to the back of the room so the people farthest away can hear without straining.

Staccato notes should normally be short and light but students often accent these too heavily. The tone should sound the same for staccato passages as for slow ones. Too often players only think about making the notes short and forget the importance of a good sound.

When playing dotted eighth-sixteenth notes, hold the dotted eighth for full value. A common mistake is to play it as an eighth note followed by a sixteenth rest before the sixteenth note.

Dotted eighth-sixteenth note figures adjacent to eighth note triplets should be exaggerated to a double dotted eighth-thirty second to clearly distinguish it from the triplets. Otherwise the dotted eighth-sixteenth notes may become lazy and sound like quarter note-eighth note triplets.

Accent upbeat figures slightly to bring out the syncopation.

Avoid accenting grace notes that come before the beat and notes on the downbeat unless an accent is written. However, sometimes emphasizing the bottom note of a fast arpeggio makes it easier to spring through the run.

The second note in a pair of repeated notes should be slightly louder than the first.

Avoid pulsing the air on downbeats during long notes and creating breath accents.

When playing a rising half-step at a cadence, accent the leading tone slightly. Also avoid key noise at the ends of phrases.

Play phrases to sound as though they are moving toward a high point or conclusion. I refer to this as kinetic phras-

ing. Long notes within a phrase should have some subtle combination of crescendo and diminuendo or vibrato to maintain the energy. An exception is that it can be effective to sit on a long note at the high point of a phrase to show that the peak has been reached.

Players should be confident enough with their technique that it does not interfere with making music. Technical skill is no substitute for good musicianship; even phrases that entail advanced technique should be played expressively. □

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Percussion Toy Box

Pearl Percussion has introduced an accessory case and trap table in one. The 12"x12" box is made of hard plastic construction with aluminum reinforced corners. The toy box has a lined interior and aluminum reinforced edges and can attach to any cymbal stand as a trap table. The box comes in black and silver and has a list price of \$149. www.pearldrums.com

Hamilton Contest Winner

In 2010 Hamilton Stands announced "The Band Director Thankless Tasks" contest to let band directors tell about thankless tasks they perform every day. The winner is Michael K., an Illinois middle school director who had to catalog 1000s of separate, disorganized pieces of music after a computer malfunction dumped all the files from the library system. The school will receive two stand carts of Hamilton's KB95E symphonic music stands, a total of 48 in all. For more information, please visit: www.hamiltonstands.com