2018–2019 UK DRUMLINE INFORMATION

Thank you for your interest in the 2018 – 2019 Wildcat Marching Band Drumline! We are very excited about this fall’s line and are looking forward to a great marching season. Since competition is looking to be quite rigid, we encourage you to prepare accordingly. Attached you will find details regarding the audition, basic technique concepts, and other general information concerning the upcoming season – we look forward to working with you. In order to receive updates to the packet and other drumline-specific information, please make sure you have filled out the WMB 2018 Registration Form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdvaYy0KEdTyi5P-r6xz7Zq92dzuLDg0GXAxQcmV2koLsOn8w/viewform

If you have any other questions, feel free to contact drumline instructor Jamie Vilseck (james.vilseck@uky.edu).

AUDITIONS

Drumline/band camp will be held Friday, August 10 with final auditions in Fine Arts Room 22, time TBA. All drumline members are expected to attend all band camp rehearsals – please plan accordingly for your availability during August 10-21 (all day, including evenings). Specific camp schedules will be provided once you arrive.

Regarding audition preparation, we strongly urge members to be confident in their individual playing (timing, clarity, approach, overall sound, etc.) in order to set a strong foundation within the ensemble setting of the drumline. Your ability to play the basics well is more important than your ability to perform stick tricks, etc. Please note: no spot is guaranteed – all members must go through the same audition process.

Though not required, you are STRONGLY encouraged to memorize all music for the audition. Members of the Wildcat Marching Band will learn 4-5 different shows throughout the fall as well as several stand tunes, pregame arrangements, cadences and cheers. The skill of quickly learning and memorizing new music every week is crucial once the season starts. In addition to the playing audition, auditionees will also be evaluated on marching fundamentals and responsiveness as band camp progresses.

Drums and cymbals will be provided; however, all members of the drumline are required to supply their own sticks and mallets for the year – please show up to auditions with something to play with. The UK Drumline uses Innovative Percussion at all times. Appropriate sticks/mallets include: snares (FS-MM), tenors (TS-MM), bass (FBX series). Those making the bassline will be provided with one new pair of mallets to start the season, then must supply their own for the remainder of the year.
SNARE & TENOR AUDITION MATERIALS

Prospective members wishing to audition for snare or tenors will be required to submit a pre-screening audition video prior to the live audition. This short video should be uploaded to YouTube (unlisted) and submitted to Jamie Vilseck (james.vilseck@uky.edu) no later than August 1, 2018. Though playing on a drum is preferred, a practice pad will suffice. The required exercises for both snares and tenors include:

16th Note Grid- 112bpm

Triplet Diddle- 160bpm

Double Beat 2004- 144bpm (to be included in a separate e-mail)

These exercises cover a basic range of skills essential for success. Please submit these exercises while marking time and with an audible metronome. It is possible for more assignments to be added at a later date. This information will be sent by e-mail to all members who have filled out the registration form (see link above).

ON CAMPUS AUDITIONS
The final audition will take place in both a group and individual environment. Be prepared to play anything in the exercises packet, along with any material that will be sent out during the summer.

SNARES/TENORS
The UK snareline plays with traditional grip – creating consistent sounds hand to hand is key. As the main melodic voices of the drumline, great rhythmic timing and confidence within the snare and tenor sections are crucial. Tenors: be able to play all warm-up exercises on drum 2. Additionally, the hands should always reset to drum 1 & 2 when not playing.

BASSES
In addition to preparing the “unison” parts of the exercises, please be familiar will all splits. Playing on a bassline, where you are virtually a soloist within a section, requires individual mental strength and precise timing. You may be asked to perform exercise splits by yourself. Always practice with a metronome while marking time.

CYMBALS
As perhaps the most noticeable instrument on the field (both visually and aurally), upper body strength and timing are of utmost importance. In the audition, you will be asked to demonstrate the attached standard crashes in variety of rhythms with a metronome while marking time.
Though the individual audition will factor into the results, we will also evaluate how well you work and learn in sectionals.

As a section of the WMB, the drumline has the responsibility of keeping time for the rest of the ensemble – timing is key. For this reason, we will be “marking time” virtually anytime we play because great timing starts from the ground up. It is crucial that the feet act as the source of pulse so that the hands line up and “follow” the feet, not the other way around. Always practice with a metronome and always practice with the feet.

Regarding the “mark time,” your feet should form a 45° angle – heels together, toes apart. Make sure the whole foot comes evenly off of the ground about 1/2” and articulates back down on the beat. This should look relaxed but felt “fortissimo.” We will always start off of the left foot.

SOUND
In order to produce the best sound possible on each instrument, several factors regarding approach must be considered. As you play, make sure that you strive to achieve a relaxed yet confident stroke and grip. Your grip should never “choke off” or inhibit the natural resonance of the stick or mallet. Additionally, it is important to utilize the drum’s rebound at all times in order to keep the stick/mallet in motion at all times – any extra pressure in the grip will create an inefficient stroke off of the head. Consistent velocity between all dynamic levels while letting the sticks “breathe” will produce a healthy, full sound. A relaxed forte legato stroke should feel the same in the hands as a relaxed piano legato stroke.
An important note about taps: taps make up the majority of all music the UKDL will be playing. Feel comfortable playing taps at true piano. For height reference, taps should never be higher than “parallel” to the playing surface (aka 3”). Though we will occasionally refer to heights in terms of inches, these are general (and mostly visual) concepts, not exact sciences. Our ears and eyes ultimately define how we blend and balance between/across sections. You are strongly encouraged to practice in front of a mirror in order to monitor consistency of sounds and heights.

OTHER INFO
Extra drumline sectional rehearsal will occur on Monday nights, from 7-30-8:30pm after rehearsal. In addition, the drumline will meet twenty minutes early for each rehearsal in order to properly warm up, beginning promptly at 5:10pm. This includes before game day rehearsals. You must be early enough to ensure all equipment is in order before the downbeat of rehearsal. Because your well-being is important to us, please come to auditions ready for athletic activity. Please wear comfortable athletic attire, athletic shoes, water bottle, sunglasses, sunscreen, and EAR PLUGS. Tinnitus is a serious hearing condition that has emerged through careless marching percussion practices. We highly recommend Etymotic Research ER20 ETY-Plugs ($13, Amazon).
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Introduction

Cymbal technique has always varied greatly from line to line in the marching activity. What separates cymbals from every other instrument is the amount of techniques that can be applied successfully on the instrument. For this reason it can be difficult to argue that one technique, or style, is in some way better than another.

This book is a collection of what I believe to be the simplest and most effective techniques. I will attempt to provide sufficient explanation to set these techniques apart from others. That is not to say that other styles of playing cannot be implemented successfully. Different methods, same madness.

Most of the difficulties that beginning performers encounter come from the physicality of the instrument. This is inevitable due to the fact that many muscles used in cymbal playing are uncommon in daily exercise. Do not let this hinder your ability to get better. Through willpower your body can be pushed much further than you think possible. This is the best approach to cymbals; always give energy to even the smallest motion. We will discuss what is meant by using energy later, for now just realize that you will experience discomfort.

Grip

There are many grips that exist for holding cymbals. The proper one depends on the application whether visual or musical. The fundamental grip detailed in this section will be the assumed starting point for all applications in this book and allow for transition to other styles.

The Garfield Grip

- Hold the cymbal in a vertical position and put your hand through the strap up to the wrist.
- Turn the hand so the palm is facing away from the pad of the cymbal.
- Rotate the entire hand downward and turn the palm toward the cymbal until it touches the pad. The strap should rest at the base of the thumb and forefinger.

—Thom Hannum - Marching Concepts
Knots and Strap Maintenance

Strapping material can vary greatly from leather, to cotton, to various plastic fibers. The program and type of visual applications will dictate what strap works best. The current best all around strap is made of 1 inch flat nylon webbing. This material is cheap, durable, comfortable, and resists sticking to wrists. Nylon is also resistant to any stretching that will lead to fraying. The drawback is no company currently manufactures nylon straps to these specifications. Therefore they must be handmade.

The knot that ties the strap through the hole in the bell is almost always the same. Below are the basics:

**Strap size adjustment**

![Diagram of strap size adjustment]

This simple weave is important for comfort while holding cymbals. It prevents some bunching of the strap and makes certain visuals easier. If the tails do not form a tight weave between thumb and forefinger then cut down the middle to make the tails longer. Remember to keep both sides even.

**The Cymbal Knot**

To start the knot take the four tails through the grommet hole to the underside of the cymbal. It is very important to keep the strap tightly tied, especially for beginning performers who do not have the finger strength and dexterity to firmly control the cymbal. After tying you should be able to hold the cymbal in the “ride” position and have the pad and bell firmly touching the palm of the hand.

*Give me a place to stand, and I will move the earth.*

—Archimedes
How a cymbal player looks is usually a reflection of how they feel as a performer. Having correct posture and putting energy into each rep creates fatigue, but a great performer will always be able to show their respect and enjoyment of the instrument through body language. The audience will instantly be affected by how the performer looks before they ever play a note or begin a visual. A relaxed, confident approach must be maintained at all times before ever picking up the cymbals.

Starting from the feet and working your way up: two thirds of the body weight should be centered over the platforms of the feet, ankles should be steady over the feet (this entails not favoring weight towards the outside or the inside of the platforms), knees are centered over the ankles, flex the quadriceps to lift and support the knee-cap. Legs are straight with no knee bend (take care to note that this does not mean locking out the knee), hips are centered over the knees and tucked under to keep the spine aligned; Core muscles (glutes, quadriceps, hamstrings, lower, middle and upper abdomen) should be flexed to control any initiation with the upper body; The chest is open (this is achieved by pulling the shoulders back and feeling a pinch between the shoulder blades,) The shoulders are rolled back and down away from the ears for a relaxed but aggressive presence. Pull the elbows up very slightly and roll them outwards, keeping the hands relaxed. Place the chin 10 degrees above parallel. This posture creates the ability for potential energy to be used to explode into any visual application.

—Danielle Cunning, Gateway Indoor

Positions

Set

Now that the posture is correct, pick up the cymbals. Set position is the basic “attention” for a cymbal player. The cymbals will be parallel to each other 1-inch from the thighs. Arms will be almost straight down with the exception of the elbows being slightly pulled up and back. The wrists, forearms, fingers and elbows hold the weight of the cymbals in Set position.

Vertical

Vertical is defined by knots at the eyes and parallel cymbals, 1-inch apart. The bicep in most cases will be parallel to the ground, with a 135 degree angle in the elbow, maintaining knots at the eyes. Pinkies will be away from the face and should be pushed in slightly. This will counter the tunnel vision that occurs from having the cymbals close to the center of vision. Keep the chest open and elbows in the same plane as the shoulders.
From Vertical pull the bottom edge of the cymbals apart until they are just inside the shoulders. The top edge will still be 1-inch apart and the knots will both be at eye level, making an “A.”

From Vertical pull the top edge of the cymbals apart until they are inside the shoulders. The bottom edge will be 1-inch apart and the knots will be at eye level, making a “V.”

Gumption
Cymbals should be slightly below sternum level and parallel, with 1-inch between the knots. From here tilt the cymbals to a 45 degree angle the same way a seat belt would rest from the left shoulder across the body. There will be a 135 degree bend in the elbows and the chest will be open. This creates a strong presence in the arms and upper body.

Flips
Cymbal flips are wrist rotations used to add flash when moving to various positions. There are two types of flips, inside and outside, referring to the two directions the wrist can rotate. The definitions below will explain an “In Flip” from Set to Vertical and an “Out Flip” from Vertical to Set. Practice these slowly to turn pathways into muscle memory. Eventually a flip will happen instantaneously.

In Flips
Start at Set. Practice the pathway by moving the cymbals in a straight path to Vertical. This is the path the arms will always take. The flip happens in the wrists only. Begin by pushing the thumb in towards the center of body and rotating the wrist around so the cymbal flashes frontwards. From there the cymbals should be at the chest finishing the rotation by closing into Vertical from thumbs to pinkies. The rotation will last from the initiation of the arm to the resolution and should not involve the elbows.

Out Flips
From Vertical pull the cymbals down to the sternum maintaining 1-inch separation. From here the arms will move straight to Set. The sternum is where the flip begins. The pinky will push in towards the center of body so the cymbals lie upside down, then continue the rotation to allow the cymbals to flash frontwards. Continue rotating into Set. This rotation is smaller than an in rotation because of the pull down at the initiation.

It’s not daily increase but daily decrease - hack away the unessentials!

—Bruce Lee - Tao of Jeet Kune Do
Musical Implements

Vertical Crash

This crash utilizes the A, V, and Vertical positions. When playing a crash on beat one after an eight beat count off the sequence is as follows:

A V A V reset(at Vertical)

7 8 1 2 3

Pop to A on seven then pop to V on eight, these are the prep counts where no contact will be made. The crash is a flam from the bottom then top edge making contact all on count one. The A is then held with tension until the upbeat of two when the cymbals pop back to V, finally resetting back to Vertical on beat three. This sequence serves two purposes. First, it adds a visual sequence to all crashes giving real motion to the sound and also giving the performers visual cues to stay together. Second, and more importantly, using the AV technique sets the performer up to play a flam on the cymbals resulting in a warm, full sound quality. If the edges are pushed together simultaneously then an air pocket will be made, sucking up sound production and making an effect similar to a slamming door.

Key concepts:

• There will be an instant on count one where the cymbals will be at vertical while passing between the prep V and A.

• The A where tension is held after count one should be pulled apart as if a rubber band were between them. They will not pull past 1-inch apart at any point.

• Fingers should come off the cymbals after the crash and not return until the last V.

• The arm should move as little as possible during the sequence.

• Keep the motions simple, but explosive. Pop and lock.

To stay relaxed is not to be passive, but rather to be ready to expend whatever efforts are necessary to meet the demands of a particular situation. To concentrate on the task at hand is to be able to supply the information the brain needs to activate the parts of the body required to produce the desired sounds.

—Keith Johnson - The Art of Trumpet Playing
**Vertical Crash Choke**

A crash choke follows the exact same sequence as a Vertical crash except it stops at the second A. After the bottom top contact is made choke off the A at the edges between the shoulders and the pectoral muscles. The finger tips and forearms all contribute to dampening the sound as the cymbals move into the body. Lastly, on count three push back out to Vertical.

\[
\text{A V A reset (at Vertical)}
\]

7 8 1 3

Key concepts:

- The crash choke should be approached no different then a normal crash. First there is a crash, then a dampening of sound.

- The choke must always be aggressive for visual clarity and to ensure the sound does not ring after the choke.

**Gumption Crash**

Crashing from Gumption is slightly less complicated. The sequence is as follows:

\[
\text{prep out reset (at Gumption)}
\]

8 1 3

The prep for a Gumption crash pulls the cymbals apart from a hinge point at the front edge of the cymbals. Push in with the wrists and fingers and allow the elbows to open slightly wider. The back edge of the cymbals closest to the body can touch the forearms. The right cymbal will be at a steeper angle than the left at this point. To crash, push the right cymbal front first into the left and let the left cymbal react by moving back to Gumption. At this point the edge close to the body will make contact for the second part of the flam. Push with the right until the arm is fully extended in front, but still parallel to the left cymbal at Gumption. On count three, pull the right back into Gumption.

Key concepts:

- The cymbals should never pull back towards the body, only opening laterally.

- Keep the fingers off through the crash until the reset to allow full sound production.

**Gumption Crash Choke**

The Gumption crash choke only differs after the crash is made. As soon as contact is made with both front and back edges of the cymbals, the right hand will stop moving out. Now the cymbals will be pulled into a dampened position against the body. The top edge will be under the armpits and the bottom edge will stay attached at the waist, with forearm and finger contact. Push out on count 3 to Gumption.

- Remember to always move with energy in and back out.

- Get a quality crash sound before moving into the body choke.
Taps

**A-tap**
- Start at A with the right cymbal overlapping the top of the left by about 1-inch.
- Open the right fingers and tap down on the edge of the left cymbal.

**Tap Choke**
- Start at the Gumption choke position and push the cymbals about 1 inch off the body.
- Break the right wrist to make the right parallel to the left cymbal. This is the prep.
- Use the right to tap the leading edge of the left and immediately choke back into the body.
- This can also be done as the Vertical choke from A.

**Dampened Tap**
- Start at the Gumption choke position.
- Keeping both cymbals in contact with the body, pull the front edge of the right cymbal out and tap on the leading edge of the left cymbal.

**Bell Tap**
- Start at Gumption, but make the right cymbal perpendicular to the left with the knots in line still.
- Using a soft “hand-bell” approach, tap the front side of the left bell with the bottom edge of the right cymbal.

Hi-Hat/Crunches
- At Vertical, firmly press the cymbals together with no prep motion.
- If a sequence of hi-hats will be played, keep the cymbals pressed together and hinge from the bottom edge only after the first hi-hat. This technique is called slam/clam.

**Suck**
- At Vertical, move the right cymbal up at a 45 degree angle from the body, then press the right into the left cymbal.
- This should feel like the right palm is moving into the left and will result in a metallic suction sound when done correctly.

**Sizzle**
- At Vertical, press the cymbals together like a hi-hat, but release the fingertips. Slowly use less pressure to keep the vibration.
- A sizzle can have a long decay with the right combination of initial pressure and finesse.
Zing

- At Vertical, drop the right cymbal into A and down so that its edge is just above the left cymbal bell (inside the left.)
- Scrape the right cymbal up, maintaining the angle of attack past the top edge of the left cymbal.

Penny Roll

Penny rolls are one of the most difficult implementations on the cymbals. They produce a continuous sound by rolling the edges together like a penny rolling to flat. A penny roll, like a stroked out roll on a snare drum, will have a meter or pulse. The most basic meters are a duplet or triplet feel. Before picking up cymbals, with palms together, move between A and V with just the hands. Make a pattern of slow eighth notes by the clapping of fingers and palms. Now try a pattern of slow triplets with the AV clapping. These patterns mimic the motion of the hands to control the penny roll. Now pick up the cymbals, start from the thumbs and rolls the edges together towards the pinkies using the same pressure in both hands. Keep the motion going around the cymbal through the palms and repeat from the thumbs.

- Penny rolls should be practiced very slow to get the muscles working with the brain on this new skill.
- When done properly, the pulse heard by the cymbals opening and closing will sound double time of the hand speed meter.
- The performer must always be in control to allow change in tempo, dynamic, and meter.

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*A golden rule is never to use more complex movements than are necessary to achieve the desired result. Start with simple movements and only introduce compound ones when you can not otherwise succeed. To hit a worthy opponent with a complex movement is satisfying and shows one’s mastery of technique; to hit the same opponent by a simple movement is a sign of greatness.*

—Bruce Lee — *Tao of Jeet Kune Do*
Release and Reload

This section will cover a beginners approach to R&R (release and reload) visual applications. R&Rs can be defined as any visual that takes the cymbal out of a secure grip and moves the strap around the wrist, ending in a new grip or position. Many characterize this visual as a modern method of cymbal playing and it has begun to work its way into the building blocks of even a beginner line. Though R&R can look very impressive, it must be done with control at all times and is not an instant to sacrifice clarity across a line. The method explained below can be easily attained, but I urge every cymbal performer to work this skill after all the previous skills have been achieved.

Start at a table top position with either hand, the cymbal will be in a “ride” position. Turn the wrist over to put the thumb outside the body. Push with the pinky and open the gap between the thumb and forefinger to allow the cymbal to fall out and under the wrist. Control the momentum with the wrist only, not the arm, and catch the bell in the upturned palm of the hand. The cymbal should have completed 1 revolution around the wrist.

From this position, a basic reload can be learned. The wrist will turn in the opposite direction of the release. Push the thumb over to be pointing back at the body. Again, control the momentum of the cymbal with the wrist only and allow it to keep revolving until it gets above the hand. Spread the thumb and forefinger wide to allow the strap to return to Garfield grip. This is the catch point of the strap. As the catch happens, keep turning the wrist to return to the table top position.

- Keep the movement and speed constant and smooth throughout.
- Practice slow and controlled, keeping the arm out of the motion.
- Like flips, R&R can be used to get to a wide variety of positions and grips.

To conserve energy by using the least possible amount of energy to achieve a given result, eliminate the unnecessary motions and muscle contractions which fatigue without accomplishing any useful purpose.

—Bruce Lee - Tao of Jeet Kune Do

Physicality

Cymbals are an extremely demanding instrument for the body. All movements must be simple, smart and done with proper training. A great performer will always push and use energy, but many muscles used by a cymbal performer have never been used that way, or are small and delicate. Each performer must take it upon themselves to train and condition to be able to push through a rehearsal or practice session. If this mentality is achieved, the performer will never have an easy rehearsal, but will constantly improve.

There is such a thing as too much as a member of a cymbal line. The body is adapting to having pounds of weight added to the wrists, and not all individuals will be physically ready for certain exercises. Train carefully, push through the pain of getting stronger, but listen to the body.
Etiquette

A proper rehearsal etiquette is the best way for a line to improve and get the most out of the time spent as a whole, which for many programs is a precious commodity. Many methods can be used to achieve this, but I will show examples of what has worked best in my experience.

• A relaxed Standby is a must to keep minds engaged, reduce muscle fatigue and look professional. The performer should never go to Standby until they are physically and mentally prepared to perform whatever is asked. The feet should be shoulder width apart and the cymbals will rest on the side of the legs with the cymbals both parallel to the ground. This helps stretch the shoulders and wrist muscles. At no point will the proper posture be disengaged.

• A unison “SET” command is also important for professionalism and instructor to student communication. From Standby, the “SET” command signals the performer to move to Set with cymbals and feet on count three. “SET” “2” “3” is the sequence. With practice this command will take no counting to be clean and should be practiced at a 130bpm tempo.

• A designated section leader should be in control of releasing the line after a rep is completed. Following the same counting as the “SET” command, the section leader will aggressively tap their cymbals together and on count three the whole line will go to Standby. “tap” “2” “3” is the sequence again at 130bpm.

Performance

The vibe of a cymbal line can set the vibe for an entire percussion section. The attitude will differ from line to line, depending on the personalities of the members and the show. In the posture section, the importance of how a performer looks was addressed. Performance is a whole body experience, but the face communicates your emotion to the audience. This performance face must be practiced at all times to make a habit every time the instrument is approached. A baseline concept every cymbal line can adopt is confidence, an air about the performers that they have supreme control over the audience’s attention for the length of the performance. Due to the nature of cymbals, an aggressive edge is almost inevitable with any performance. Done appropriately, this will command respect from all audiences, however, some situations will demand a finer, more nuanced, emotional contribution. This vibe should be a defined look for the line.
Cymbal Line

Euphistic
WMB Drumline 2018
Casey
Ed. by Vilseck