ABILENE HIGH EAGLE BAND

Fall 2023 Snare Packet

Drew Young, Director

ABILENE HIGH DRUMLINE FALL 2023
AUDITION INFORMATION

THIS PACKET CONTAINS:

Important Dates/Information

Exercises/Audition Music:

Technique Summary

IMPORTANT DATES

- **Clinic and Audition: Thursday, April 13th, 2023**
- **Drum Camp: July 24-28 8 am-1 pm @AHS Band Hall**
- **Band Camp (starts July 31), ALL rehearsals and performances.**

Note: If you cannot make ANY of the required dates, I NEED TO KNOW. Everyone must be at every rehearsal. The Battery has much less flexibility than the Front Ensemble. **If you cannot attend any portion of Band and/or Drum Camp, you will be placed in the Front Ensemble.** Every single person must be here all the time!

Who should audition?

Anyone who wants to be in the AHS Drumline – incoming middle school percussion students, plus all oboe and bassoon players (these instruments are not used on the field). *Returning members must also audition.*

The AHS Drumline has two sections: Battery and Front Ensemble.

The Battery is the marching part of the drumline: Snares, Tenors, Bass drums, and Cymbals. This section will consist of members who audition and will be placed on the Battery. These members will march on the field during Halftime.

The Front Ensemble is the sideline part of the drumline: Marimbas, Xylophones, Vibraphones, Rack Drums, and other accessories. This section will consist of members who audition and will be placed on the Front Ensemble. These members will play an instrument on the front sideline of Halftime performances. (Marimba, Vibraphone, etc.) **They will play their drum/cymbal whenever we are not rehearsing the halftime show.** (Stands, Pep-Rallies, Parades, etc.)

You will only try out for one instrument; however, all students will be placed according to where we feel they can be most successful based on that audition. Previous experience on a specific instrument DOES NOT guarantee a spot. Please prepare the required materials to the best of your ability.

Everyone will be placed on a drum/cymbal. Your audition will determine what position you have in the Battery or Front Ensemble

How do I have a good audition? BE PREPARED! On the day of auditions, you should be comfortable with everything in this packet. PRACTICE! Do not expect to sight-read your way through it. ASK FOR HELP! No one expects you to learn it all alone.

QUESTIONS: If you don't understand something, please ask!

Email Mr. Young, or reach out on Remind: drew.young@abileneisd.org

What do I need to prepare?

You only need to play the music for the instrument you want to audition for. All auditions will be performed live with a metronome.

Battery

Battery Snare: AHS Fight Song, Stick Control, ⅞ Paradiddles.

Battery Tenors: AHS Fight Song, Stick Control, ⅞ Paradiddles.

Battery Basses: AHS Fight Song, Stick Control, ⅞ Paradiddles.

Battery Cymbals: Properly demonstrate Standby, Set, Gumption, Flip-up, Flip-down, Tabletop to Dinner Plate, and Bishop.

Front Ensemble

Front Ensemble Snare: AHS Fight Song

Front Ensemble Tenors: AHS Fight Song

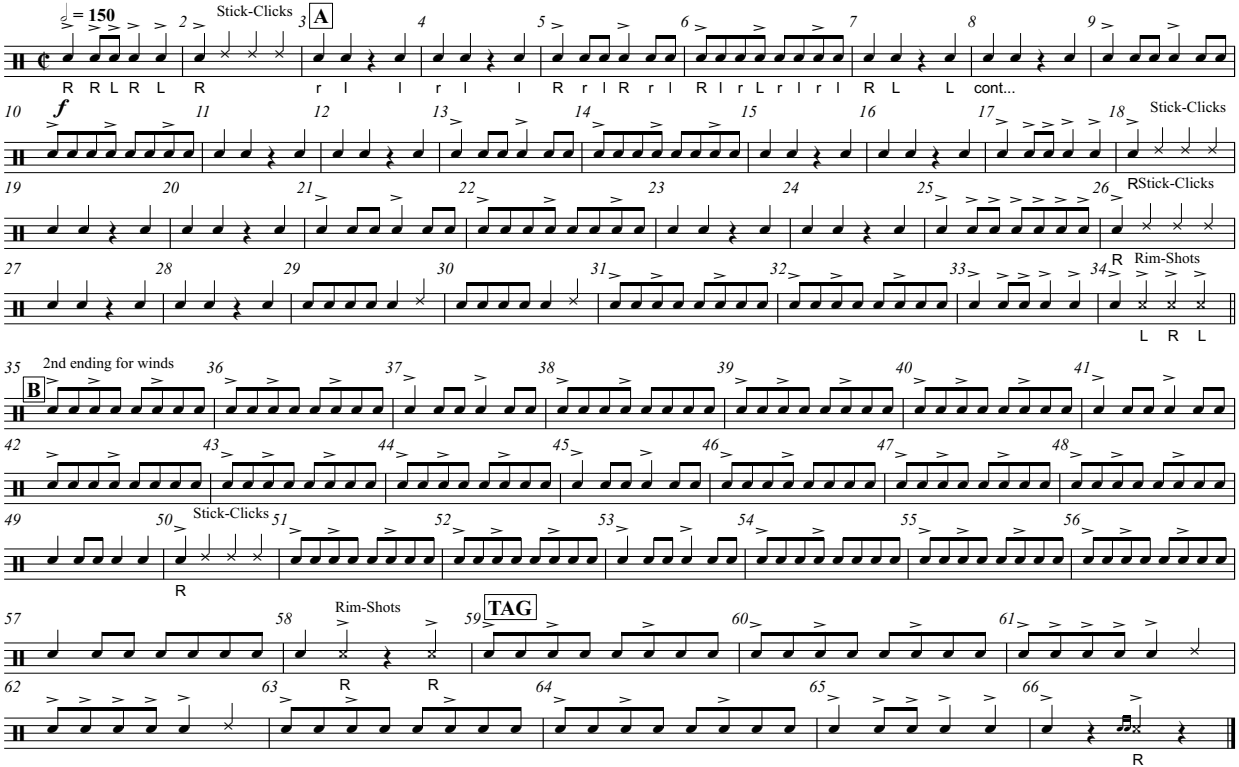
Front Ensemble Basses: AHS Fight Song

Front Ensemble Cymbals: AHS Fight Song

There are practice recordings on the AHS Percussion website.
Please utilize this resource: http://www.eagleband.com/percussion.html

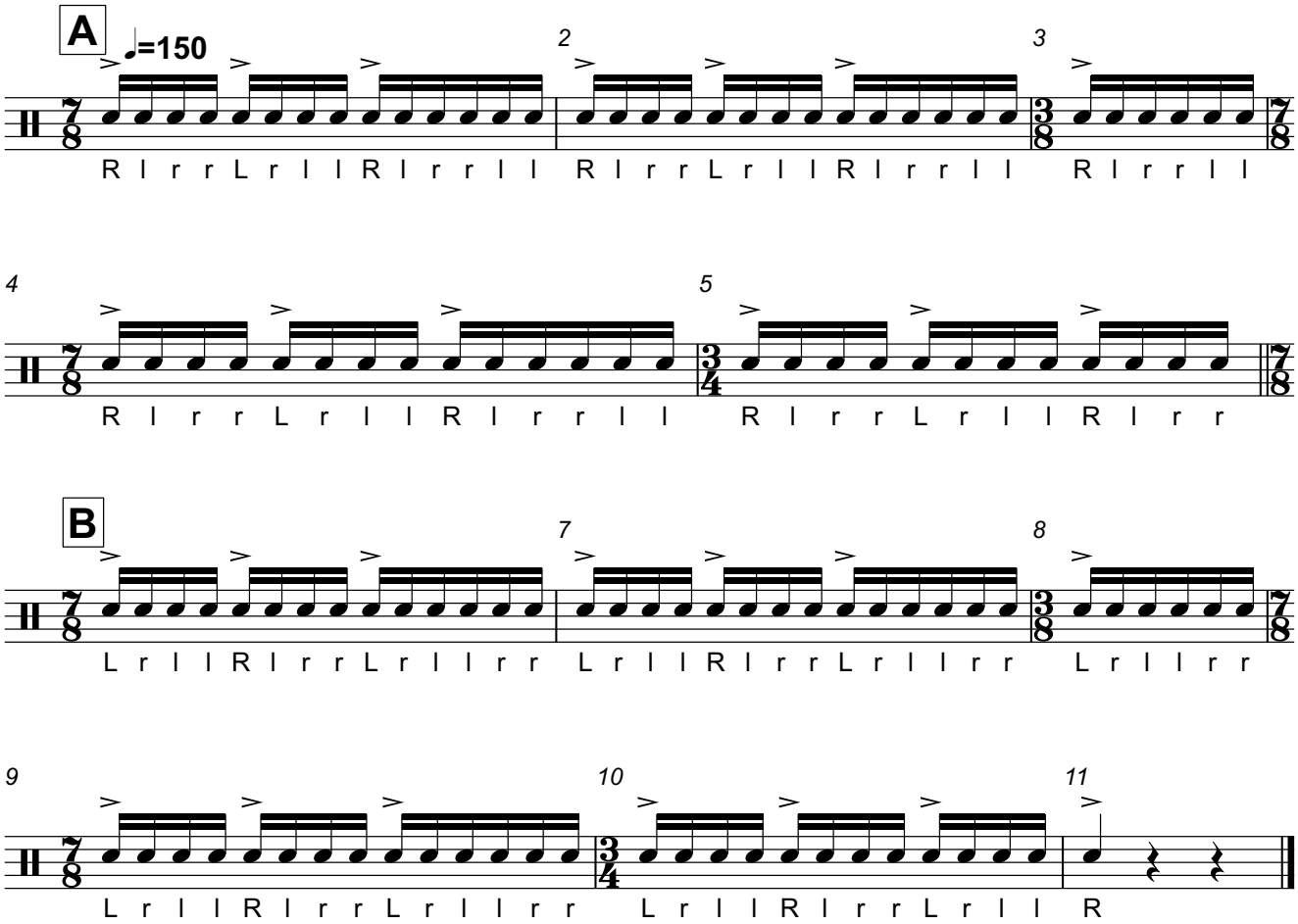
SnareLine

AHS Fight Song



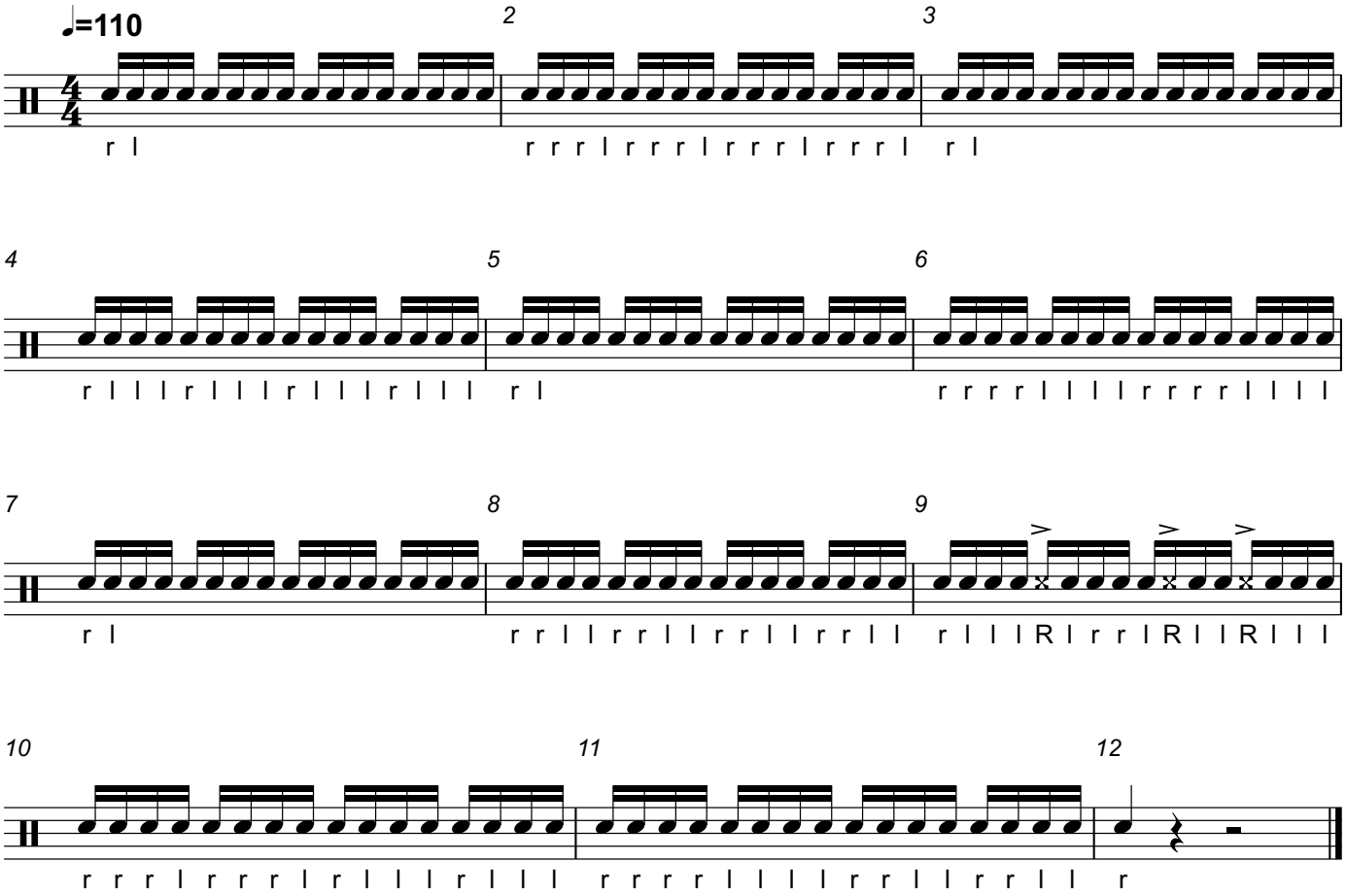
SnareLine

7/8 Paradiddles



SnareLine

Stick Control



III: SNARE DRUM

This section serves as an outline to the fundamentals of The Cavaliers' technique. In order to achieve our goals of being the absolute best in the activity, we must simultaneously achieve exact uniformity in technique, touch, sound quality, rhythmic clarity, and dynamic clarity.

Each individual in the line must be accountable for their individual performance and be aware of the accompanying responsibilities with regard to the percussion ensemble and full ensemble.

This information, combined with the exercises, will help you achieve the highest degree of performance possible.

HOW YOU FEEL WHEN YOU DRUM

As you play, you should always strive for a relaxed physical sensation. The stronger a player you are and the more chops you possess, the more efficient you become, hence, the more relaxed you are.

A relaxed hand allows the stick to "resonate" and produce a pitch conducive to a relaxed, open sound. Physical relaxation also pertains to your brain and state of mind.

No matter what the musical or physical responsibility at any given time, through practicing GOOD habits and utilizing the descriptors above, you are setting yourself up for success by having peace of mind and a strong mental approach to your playing.

This approach allows you to be more consistent as a player and musician. When you play, try and breathe comfortably. By learning to breathe naturally while playing, you will achieve a more relaxed, healthy sound and approach, regardless of the difficulty level.

IMPLEMENT GRIP

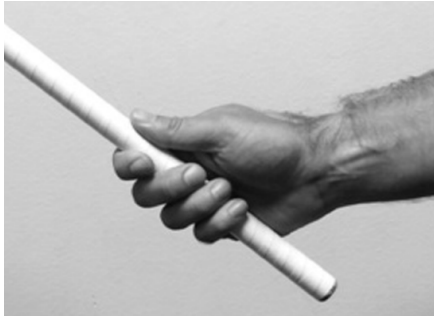
We know that sound from a snare drum is created by the movement of air through the shell which then vibrates the snares on the bottom head. By knowing this, it is our goal to move as much air through the drum as possible but still allowing ourselves to be as relaxed as possible.

How do we accomplish this?

First and foremost the hands must stay relaxed while gripping the stick. All fingers will always be in constant contact with the stick but will never be squeezing or choking off the resonance of the stick. A good way to test this is to take two sticks and hit them together while squeezing as hard as you can.

Do you hear a thin choked off sound? Now, start hitting the sticks together and gradually start to loosen your grip. Did you hear the sticks start to resonate within your hands? This is the sound we are looking for.

RIGHT HAND



The fulcrum is located between the thumb and the index finger. This is the point from which the stick pivots in your hand. This pivot point should be located at the optimal balance point of the stick and is generally located about 1/3 up the length of the stick from the butt end.

At The Cavaliers we use different fulcrums for different roll speeds.

When playing a moderate roll (typically a triplet roll 132bpm-180bpm) we use what we call the middle of the hand. Here you will apply pressure between the thumb, pointer, and middle finger. We also call this the "power trio."

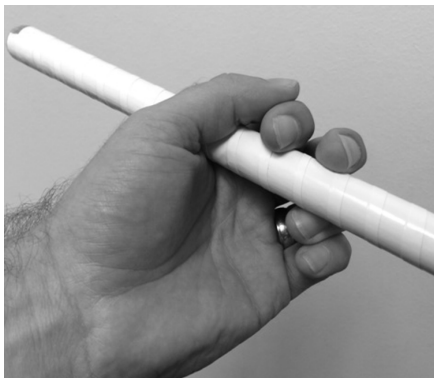
This allows for a warmer, more open sound. When playing extreme roll speeds we will go to a front fulcrum only. Here you will apply pressure between the thumb and pointer finger only. This is typically reserved for sixteenth rolls or extremely fast triplet rolls (180bpm +).

The palm of your hand should not be flat to the drum (German Grip) nor should the thumb be completely on the top of the stick (French Grip). The crease created between the thumb and the index finger should be turned to an approximate 45-degree angle. This offers the best benefits from both the German Grip (full wrist turn) and the French grip (easy engagement of the fingers).

LEFT HAND

The fulcrum point is again located between the thumb and index finger, with the thumb sitting on top of the index finger and touching the first knuckle. The connection must always be maintained. They must also always remained relaxed. When resting the thumb on the index finger make sure the thumb is not creating any tension by pointing up.

The stick will rest on the fourth finger just past the first knuckle and near the cuticle. The important fingers in the left hand are the thumb, pointer, and ring fingers. Your pinky finger should simply mirror the natural curve of your ring finger. The middle finger shares a similar role and simply mirrors the natural curve of the pointer finger. A straightened middle or pinky finger will cause unwanted tension. Remember, relaxation throughout the hand is the key to a full, warm sound.

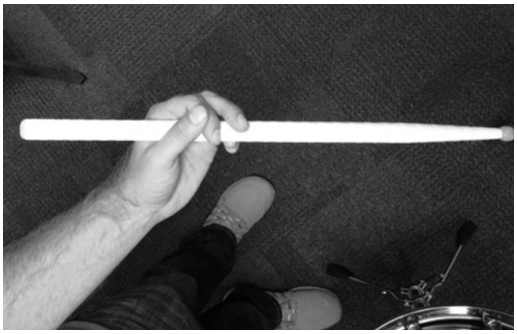


All fingers remain relaxed and in a curved position at all times. Think about your hand being in the shape of a "C". The palm should be turned at a slight angle. Here is a good analogy: your palm should be turned enough that if it were raining, water would hit your palm and drain off. If your palm is turned up too much, the water would collect – not being able to drain off.

If your palm is not turned up enough, your thumb would block the water from access to your palm.

A great way to build your left hand would be to place the stick the thumb and the top of the left hand. All other fingers should be relaxed while doing this. Start playing legato strokes at a moderate tempo. Make sure that the thumb is rotating from left to right and is not prohibiting the stick from its natural rebound.

Once this feels comfortable add the point finger. Once again check that the addition of this finger is not a.) choking off the sound, or b.) keeping the stick from a natural rebound.



Repeat this process adding the middle, ring, and pinky fingers. Each time it is important to make sure to check that the stick is still resonating inside the hand. The ring finger is typically the worst culprit of this.

When playing a full stroke, the ring finger will separate slightly from the stick. When playing a 3-inch stroke, the ring finger will not separate from the stick. This is similar to the right hand opening up more during a full stroke but also being more closed on a 3-inch stroke.

PLAYING POSITION

A proper playing position begins with finding an appropriate drum height. This can be done using the left hand as a starting point.

With your arms relaxed by your sides, raise your left hand from the elbow until your forearm is parallel to the ground. With the stick in your left hand and the bead of the stick in the center of the drum, put the width of two fingers between the rim of the drum and the stick to establish the proper drum height.

Next, simply raise your right hand to the drum, matching the fulcrum point of the right hand to the fulcrum point of the left hand, making sure the stick angles down to the drum are the same.

Be careful to match the actual fulcrum points and not the hands in elevation. When playing traditional grip, most of the right hand is on top of the stick and most of the left hand
is under the stick, so you will actually hold your right hand higher than your left to match the fulcrum points. Simply put, to generate the same sound from each hand, each stick must strike the drum from the same pivot point.

The beads will always remain in the center of the head, resting 1/2 inch apart and 1/2 inch off of the head. It is absolutely essential for the beads to remain in the exact center of the drum at all times. If the sticks are not striking the drum in the same location, then they will not produce the same sound.

Looking down at the drum, the angle created by the sticks (the "V" shape) should be slightly less than a 90 degree angle.

Again, the left hand makes a good starting point. Think of your left hand as a natural extension of your arm by keeping a straight line from the tip of your thumb through to your elbow, with your elbow hanging a few inches from your side. The half of the "V" your left stick creates should be mirrored by the right stick. Avoid any awkward bends in your right wrist by keeping your fulcrum point on a straight line through to your elbow as well.

Please note that matching the right stick angle to the left will push your elbow farther out from your body than your left elbow.

Don't take this too far, however. You don't want unnecessary tension in your shoulder and/or upper arm. This will give the stick as light downward angle (with your wrist being higher than the bead), yet still allow the meaty part of the bead to make contact with the drum.

STROKE

At The Cavaliers, there are two common stroke types we employ: rebound and controlled rebound. Before we define the specifics of each, there are some key points that apply to both of these strokes.

Every stroke will initiate from a wrist turn with the bead of the stick moving first. Even when playing 18-inch, a wrist turn will lift the bead before the arm rises. This wrist turn is essential to every stroke played.

However, do not restrict your arms by trying to use only wrist.

As your wrist turns, your arm should naturally move. Use any combination of muscle groups (arms, wrist, and fingers) to your advantage to produce any stroke. Also, there should be a weight to your stroke in order to produce a big, full sound. A relaxed hand will allow the stick to feel heavy in your hands, thereby allowing the stick to fully resonate, producing a BIG sound even at a pianissimo level.

REBOUND STROKE

The rebound stroke is often referred to as the legato stroke. A great analogy for this stroke is the principles of bouncing a basketball.

When your push the ball down the ball should come back to your hand. As with a basketball, the faster you push the ball down the quicker the ball comes back. The same principle is true with your stick. The more velocity used when throwing the stick into the head, the bigger the sound and the quicker the rebound.

The hand should also move with the stick similar to the way your hand moves with the ball. Make sure your fingers openly up slightly (but will always remain in contact with the stick) to allow the stick to bounce back to the starting height. Also make sure the stick is in constant motion – it is always moving *toward* or *away* from the drum head.

CONTROLLED REBOUND STROKE

The controlled rebound stroke is often referred to as the down stroke. When playing the controlled rebound stroke, no extra tension is required.

The beginnings of the stroke are the exact same as the legato stroke, the only difference is after the stick strikes the head your fingers do not allow the stick to rebound back up. It is important not to over squeeze the stick when stopping the stick close to the head. If properly relaxed the skin on your forearm should have a natural jiggle.

It is also important not to add extra velocity to the down stroke. The tone produced by the down stroke should be the same as the tone produced on a legato stroke. A great exercise to test this is to play a measure of legato eighth notes following immediately buy a measure accenting the downbeat only ("bucks").

Did the sound change? If so, you're probably guilty of either adding extra velocity to your controlled rebound stroke or squeezing the stick before it strikes the head.

HEIGHTS

pp	1/2"	(grace notes)
p	3"	(common inner beat height)
mp	6"	
mf	9"	
f	12"	(sticks vertical/full wrist turn)
ff	15"	(additional arm extension)