

Shawnlet Bucks

S. Marcinowski

This is not so much a written warm-up or exercise as it is an *approach* to working on accents and taps in a battery setting. The crux of any accent/tap warm-up is for the performers to focus on and listen to the taps, ensuring that they are consistently clean across the whole battery. While accents split between sections may create groovy feels, they do not mean anything unless the underlying *taps* create a solid rhythmic structure between players and between sections.

The *Shawnlet Bucks* approach is as follows:

- Each variation, x (number), consists of a simple string of x notes, played four times with the right hand and four times with the left hand. Examples of these patterns are shown below, but are not limited to the seven shown.
- String together variations in a sequence. For example, “4, 5, 4” would mean to play variation 4, variation 5, variation 4, and then a release, without any breaks in between variations.
- Assign different sequences to each section of the battery. As long as each sequence adds up to the same sum, everyone will release at the same time. For example, if the snares are on “4, 5, 4,” then the tenors and bass drums can be on any sequence that adds up to 13 (e.g., “3, 3, 7” and “2, 8, 3”).

This is a great way to work on accents and taps in a battery setting, because it can be as simple or as complicated as you’d like to make it. You can limit yourself to the most intuitive variations (2, 3, and 4) and alternate between a unison sequence and a split sequence using the same variations (e.g., snares on 2, 3, 4, tenors on 3, 4, 2, and basses on 4, 2, 3). You can also establish some go-to sequences that you use at every rehearsal as a standard warm-up.

But you can also expand the concept to raise the demand for paying attention, counting, and mental fortitude. Unfamiliar combinations, where the performers cannot predict when other sections will be playing accents, will really drive home the point of locking into the taps. Odd variations with many strokes (5, 7, 9, 11, etc.) can be more challenging to count and should bring the focus towards the feet if the performers are marking time. There are limitless possibilities for this exercise, but you will never wander far from what is a universally important priority: quality taps on two-height figures. Many thanks to fellow Athens Drive drumline instructor Shawn Marcinowski for this one!

♩ = 104 – 192

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