

Melody Maker

3d INCORPORATING "RHYTHM"

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JAZZ JAMBOREE: FULL DETAILS

THE regular seasonal excitement among fans all over Britain regarding that great annual event for swing lovers, the Jazz Jamboree, is approaching its climax, with the big day only a bare month away.

AS ALREADY ANNOUNCED, THE 1944 JAZZ JAMBOREE—THE SIXTH IN THE ANNUAL SERIES—IS BEING HELD ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, AT THE STOLL THEATRE, KINGSWAY, LONDON, AND THIS WEEK THE "MELODY MAKER" CAN DISCLOSE DETAILS OF SOME OF THE BIG ATTRACTIONS OF THIS YEAR'S JAMBOREE, AND ALSO GIVE ITS READERS THE ALL-IMPORTANT DETAILS OF HOW TO OBTAIN TICKETS FOR THIS BIGGEST OF SWING SHOWS.

But first of all, the bands. As usual, the organising body—the Musicians' Social and Benevolent Council—is lining up a really super programme of the finest available dance band talent in this country, and here are some of that have so far accepted.

First and foremost, the super R.A.F. Squadrons, led by Sgt. Jimmy Miller, whose selection is a compliment to the readers of the MELODY MAKER who voted that fine aggregation of leading swing stars into first place in the great "M.M." 1944 Dance Band Poll.

Second, and by only quite a narrow margin in order of popularity, is the next big band attraction of the 1944 Jazz Jamboree, the ultra-musically and stylishly R.A.F. "Skyrockets," under the experienced baton of Cpl. Paul Fenoujhet.

BAND ATTRACTIONS

In the small-band section, two very exciting combinations are so far lined up. They are the new and most successful recording and broadcasting outfit, the Vic Lewis-Jack Parnell "Jazzmen"; and the recently formed and already enormously popular little swing combo, Frank Deniz and his "Spirits of Rhythm," who will be remembered as one of the great successes of the Francis, Day and Hunter Swing Concert held some few months ago in London.

Now we come to the comparatively new dance idiom of the rumba. In this respect fans at the Jazz Jamboree have been given a wonderfully good show on each of the past three annual occasions by famous rumba stalwart, Edmundo Ros.

On this occasion, the promoters, gratefully appreciating Edmundo's fine work in the past, feel that they cannot trespass again upon his generosity and have accordingly decided to give a break to one of the new up-and-coming rumba combinations of the Metropolis.

This is Roberto Inglis and his new rumba band, currently playing at Harry Roy's Millroy niterie in Mayfair. Inglis, for several years pianist with Edmundo Ros, is building up a polished rumba outfit which should be certain to tickle the ears of the fans.

These, it must be clearly understood, are attractions booked up to

the moment. By this time next week it is likely that we shall be in a position to give further details of big new Jamboree features, and it is almost certain that there will be several exciting surprises when the complete list of star bands for this year's event is published.

In the meanwhile the question uppermost in every fan's mind will be the one of securing tickets.

Once again the M.S.B.C. Committee have been racking their brains to devise a method of allocation that will be perfectly fair to every fan, in whatever part of the country he or she may happen to reside. In drawing up this year's plans considerable attention has been given to the opinions of MELODY MAKER readers, and the following procedure has been decided upon.

In brief, if you want to be sure of a seat for this great Jazz Jamboree of 1944, you must write AT ONCE, mentioning the number of tickets you require. At the latest your letter of application must be received by FIRST POST next Tuesday (September 19).

With even such a short time for application, past experience has proved that far more applications will be received than there are seats to cover them, so the M.S.B.C. is adopting the completely new and thoroughly fair precedent of putting all the letters received into a drum and drawing them out, so that every single applicant who applies up to Tuesday will have a sporting chance to get seats.

SEND NO MONEY

In past years London readers who managed to get their "M.M." early have had an advantage over the provincial readers who did not receive their "M.M." until the week-end. Now all readers will have an equal chance of getting tickets.

DO NOT SEND ANY CASH with the initial application for the tickets, as this will cause endless confusion, and you also take a slight risk of your money being lost in the post. Below you will find the prices of the seats.

What you have to do is to write (sending NO money) to Charles Taggart, M.S.B.C., Egmont House, 115, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.1. State clearly in application your name and address and what seats you desire to be reserved in your name—also what seats you will be prepared to accept if the ones you choose first are not available by the time your letter is received. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU ENCLOSE A STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.

Details of the tickets are as follows: Box seats, £1; tier seats, £1; Stalls, £1, 15s., and 10s.; Grand Circle, 15s. and 10s.; Family Circle, 6s.; and Balcony, 3s.

"MELODY MAKER" OFFICES WERE BLITZED BY FLY-BOMB

NOW THAT THE FLYING-BOMB MENACE HAS BEEN MASTERED, WE ARE ABLE TO REVEAL THAT IN A RECENT RAID ON LONDON THE "MELODY MAKER" OFFICES WERE BLITZED AND BADLY DAMAGED. BY A LUCKY SERIES OF COINCIDENCES, NO ONE OF THE "MELODY MAKER" STAFF WAS HURT AND, DESPITE EXTREME DIFFICULTIES—A FULL ACCOUNT OF WHICH CAN ONLY BE GIVEN AFTER THE WAR—WE FEEL RATHER PROUD TO RECORD THAT THE REGULAR ISSUE OF THIS PAPER WAS IN NO WAY HELD UP OR OTHERWISE AFFECTED.

We understand, incidentally, that regular subscribers have not been getting their recent issues to time—or, in some cases, at all.

This is no fault of the "M.M." editorial or publishing departments; nor of the bombing.

Every issue has been despatched in the usual way on the usual day, and the proud record of the "M.M."—that we have never missed an issue despite all that Hitler has tried to do—has been fully maintained.

THANKS!

The reason, we understand, is that the initially heavy posts to and from our troops on the Continent caused some temporary delay in the handling of civilian mail.

This is the Editor writing, and I would like to thank my very loyal and indefatigable staff, and all ranks of printing and publishing personnel, whose grand work under most trying circumstances made the uninterrupted issue of the "M.M." possible.

To those readers who have been kept

waiting for replies to their letters... who have had difficulty in telephoning us... who have had difficulty in finding our new offices... or who have in any way found the traditionally smooth service of the "M.M." at fault—this explanation is our apology.

And to those readers who heard of our hit of bad luck and sent sympathetic messages and offers of help—we say, thank you!

DAVID MILLER FOR HAMMERSMITH

DAVID MILLER and his Dance Orchestra, with their new vocalist, Dorothy Clinton, are booked for a week's special engagement at Hammersmith Palais, commencing on September 24.

After this band's run of successful engagements in Provincial dance halls, Variety, and one-night stands, fans in Town have been awaiting their chance to size it up and to see how excellently the famous ex-B.B.C. compère has taken to the job of band-leading. This Hammersmith date will give them their opportunity.

The David Miller Ork has now been established for 13 weeks, playing all types of engagements up and down the country. Last Saturday it finished its biggest week so far at Belle Vue, Manchester, having made a host of friends and won first-class opinions among the dancers up there.

For this dance hall engagements nowadays David splits his eleven-piece band up, at certain times during the evening, into two separate units—the five-piece "Jolly Millers," and the six-piece "Dusty Millers."

Former unit is a swing quintet with xylophone, clarinet, doubling tenor, piano, bass, and drums. The performers are, respectively, Roy Davery (leader), George Bayton, Billy Brown, Maurice Reed, and Noel Webb.

The "Dusty Millers" unit is used chiefly to play rumbas, tangos, old-time waltzes, and other out-of-the-rut dance numbers. They consist of Syd Cottam (first sax); Pete Rose (tenor sax); Johnnie Green (trumpet); Jimmy Power (tenor sax doubling drums); Tommy Marshall (trombone doubling bass); Alf Reece (trombone); and Billy Brown (piano).

STOP PRESS

Edmundo Ros and Rumba Band in London Variety. Start at Chiswick Empire next week (commencing Monday, 18th).

DEREK HAWKINS LEAVES THE "JAZZMEN"

WHEN the sensational new recording-broadcasting combination, Vic Lewis-Jack Parnell "Jazzmen," next come on the air (September 27, 7.15-7.45 p.m., Forces) fans who have studied the combination closely will notice a slight variation in its front line style.

Famous alto-clarinet star Derek Hawkins has decided to give up membership of the combo. The reason for this is that the "Jazzmen" are becoming increasingly busy with one-night stands, broadcasting and recording, and Derek is still determined to retain his status as a semi-pro despite his interesting prospects with the "Jazzmen" and the many other offers which he is constantly receiving to step into big-time.

In the circumstances, his resignation from the new outfit has been reluctantly accepted.

His successor in the "Jazzmen" is the well-known alto and clarinetist from the new R.A.F. Bomber Command Dance Orchestra, Cliff Townshend, whose outstanding work with the latter band is sufficient indication of his complete suitability to carry on the "Jazzmen" tradition.

Also permanently with the Lewis-Parnell group nowadays is well-known West End bassist Bert Howard, who has already appeared with the combo on many of its recent dates.

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U.S. HIT PARADE

- HERE is the latest available list of the nine most popular tunes in America, as assessed by the weekly nation-wide ballot conducted by the American Tobacco Co., and broadcast in their "Your Hit Parade" programme over the C.B.S. network:— 1. AMOR, AMOR (4-2-3-6-5-7-8-9). 2. I'LL BE SEEING YOU (4-1-2-2-3-5-7-7-5). 3. LONG AGO AND FAR AWAY (3-2-3-2-3-1-1-1-1-1-3-3-8-9). 4. SWINGING ON A STAR (2-5-9-6-7-0-9). 5. I'LL GET BY (5-4-4-7-2-3-3-2-2-3-5-2-5-7-0-7). 6. TIME WAITS FOR NO ONE (0-7-8-8-8). 7. GOOD-NIGHT WHEREVER YOU ARE (6-9-7-5-4-5-5-6-5-9-0-8). 8. MILKMAN KEEP THOSE BOTTLES QUIET (9-6-5). 9. IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU. Figures in parentheses indicate previous placings. 130.—Bexley Heath and District R.C. meets Muns., 7.30. Red Barn, Barnehurst, Retts. J.S. and raffle, etc. Thanks last month's musicians and recitalists, among whom were Billy Woodon Quartette, Joss Froghart Quartette and Bill Jenner, Ray White and Joss Froghart. 131.—Oldham R.C. reopens Sun. next (17th). Programme includes all-star J.S. and swing rcti by Fred Dickinson.

HIGH BAND STANDARD AT SUPER "NORTH BRITAIN"

ONCE again Blackpool has been the venue of a major event in an "M.M." dance-band contesting season, and once again it has seen a brilliant success. In spite of the difficulties and discomforts of war-time travelling in the North, which has gone from bad to worse and has now reached a stage which can barely be called civilised, just on 2,500 people from all parts of the Northern Counties packed the huge Empress Ballroom in the Winter Gardens last Sunday afternoon (10th) to witness the 1944 North Britain (Area) Dance Band Championship Final presented by Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Buckley.

The gathering was a couple of hundred or so less than last year, but in view of the greater demand for the higher-priced seats, the box-office returns were within a shilling of the 1943 takings. Another sign of the great enthusiasm which this first-of-the-three semi-finals for next month's Britain aroused was that all eleven of the bands which had qualified to take part in it not only managed to appear, but to put up such a keen fight that it was not until the results were announced that anyone could say what the placings would be.

POPULAR RESULT

Judges for the occasion were Claude Bampton, Joe Kirkham and Bram Martin (both of whom have permanent resident jobs in Blackpool for the season), and well-known London broadcasting bandleader Harry Leader. At his own request Edgar Jackson was not judging because, as he points out, he has judged practically every contest this season, and he feels it is fairer to the bands that his pre-conceived knowledge of their abilities should not have any chance of influencing the results of any of the finals. Of the results—full list of which will be found in column 3—met with general approval was proved conclusively by the manner in which they were received. The only placing which appeared to create any argument was that of Edgar Harrison as fourth. The band, which, drawn to play first, had the rather nerve-racking task of opening the afternoon, was not up to its usual form, and many people felt it was not quite up to the standard of such smaller swing groups as the New Style Swingtette or the Ronnie Price Sextette, which were placed below it. However, the fourth place makes little difference anyway, because only the first three bands go forward to the "All-Britain," and all round the judges may congratulate themselves on having undertaken a most difficult task with conspicuous brilliance. The general standard of the contest inspired the most unstinted praise from all quarters. One has only to cast one's mind back to pre-war contests to realise the astonishing strides which semi-pro. bands have made in the past few years. The best of them compare more than favourably with many of the London pro. bands which are more or less regularly

POPULAR RESULT

(Please turn to page 9)

MORE BANDS ELIGIBLE FOR "ALL-BRITAIN"

THE bands placed third, as well as the winners and runners-up, at each of the three Area Finals—the North, "Mid," and South Britain—are to be eligible for the "All-Britain" Dance Band Championship Final at Manchester on Sunday, October 8 next. This decision has been come to at the request of the organisers, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Buckley. Because it has been arranged that all bands taking part in the "All-Britain" shall have their rail fares paid, the three additional bands will add considerably to the expenses of staging the "All-Britain." "But," says Lew Buckley with his usual generosity and enterprise, "we don't mind."

A SECOND CHANCE

There were so many good bands at the North and South Britain, and an almost equally high standard is likely to be seen at the Mid-Britain, that my wife and I feel that it is in the interests of the semi-pro dance band movement generally that as many of these fine bands as possible should be heard by all the people (there will be literally thousands) who are expected to attend the "All-Britain."

Moreover, the first three bands at both the North and South Britain Finals were obviously so close that we feel it would be downright unfair not to give all of them a chance to fight it out again at Manchester. Therefore, we are prepared to stand the added expense. "What with the fees of the star professional band we are negotiating for as added attraction at this grand Dance Band Festival, cost of transporting the competing bands and all the heavy overheads, our expenses will be terrific, anyway, and although the King's Hall at Belle Vue, Manchester, in which the Festival will be held, holds 6,000, and we expect to sell out, we can hardly hope to make any money. "But we do hope to put on a show and achieve a success which will be a fitting finish to this all-time record contesting season, worthy of the Melody Maker and the bands which have helped the people to achieve this record, and a credit to ourselves. "If we manage to do this—and we are all out for it—we shall be satisfied."

WINSTONE BACK AT BENTALL'S

THE question as to whether the public appreciate bright music has been strikingly answered by the patrons of Bentall's Restaurant (Kingston-on-Thames) with the return by popular demand of Eric Winstone and his String Wing, who have been booked to play there again during the afternoons of the month of September.

Making his first visit to this famous South London store last July, Eric took with him the string and swing section of his large orchestra, featuring the usual Winstone corner men, Roy Marsh, Joe Durriz and Alan Kane, and proceeded to provide a brand of restaurant music that made even the most hardened tea-drinker sit up and take notice. The fact that quality in music is a paying proposition is shown by his quick return, and with him this time for the first two weeks is Hazel Bray, a young Warner Brothers' singing starlet, who has recently joined the Winstone Organisation. Hazel at the moment is in two pictures that are running in the West End—"The Hundred Pound Window," at the Astoria Cinema, Charing Cross Road, and a new film, "Two Thousand Women," at the Marble Arch Pavilion.

Ivy's One-Nighters

FOLLOWING the success of Ivy Benson and her Girls' Band's recent first week of one-night stands in the Midlands and the North, the band is undertaking a second tour next week: Dates will be: Monday (18th)—Grafton Rooms, Liverpool (7.11 p.m.). Tuesday (19th)—Tower Ballroom, New Brighton (7.11.30 p.m.). Wednesday (20th)—Albert Hall, Bolton (7.11 p.m.). Thursday (21st)—King's Hall, Stoke-on-Trent (7.30 p.m.-midnight). Friday (22nd)—De Montfort Hall, Leicester (7.11 p.m.). Saturday (23rd)—St. George's Hall, Salford (Leics) (7.45 p.m.-midnight). All the appearances are dances, presented by Arthur Kimbrell.

BRITAIN

Replies to . . .

Pte. David Bittan, of the U.S. Army, certainly started something with his article on British jazz fans in our issue of Sept. 2. Here is a selection of letters from our readers in reply. Bittan has already penned an article commenting on Milton Buckley's answer to him. We shall publish it in our next 12-page issue.

BITTAN

I SHOULD like to say a few words in answer to Pte. Bittan's no doubt sincere but misinformed article. His comments on British jazz mags are, of course, just a matter of opinion and call for no comment, but with respect to recitals at rhythm clubs, he is grossly misinformed. I infer that he does not object to old-timers being praised, but that he thinks men like Hodges, Butterfield, and Shaw are neglected. Taking these men in order, Hodges' "Daydream" is extremely popular, while Ellington, with whom the bulk of his work has been recorded, is the most popular band on Spike Hughes' "Swing Club." Butterfield is well and enough represented with "South Rampart Street Parade" and "Washington And Lee Swing," etc. (the former, by the way, being exceptionally popular). Shaw's "The Blues" was reissued by popular demand. These facts surely speak for themselves. I now pass to Pte. Bittan's remarks on jam sessions. Surely he doesn't expect young musicians of 1944 to play like Jelly Roll Morton? I do claim, however, that they play truer to a spirit represented by Morton than by modern swing bands. Without defending Mr. Beaumont's taste with regard to Tatum, I might point out that it is neither here nor there to pick on "Junkshopping"; it is the only way to get rare discs at reasonable prices. Finally, of course, we should enjoy listening to a jam session with Lou McGarity, etc., but being blasted by Mr. Goodman's loud band is not sufficient compensation for a couple of good choruses here and there. Can I just add one word in defence of our national taste? We had heard of Albert Ammon long before he went to Carnegie Hall. We also knew "Concerto for Cootie" before it became "Do Nothing Till You Hear from Me." G. T. WESTCOTT.

might learn something about music by doing a little haunting of the junk shops he seemingly scorns. How, other than by records, does he think one can hear dead people play? Caruso is dead; Rembrandt also; and Shakespeare. But their work is still regarded as pretty fair in some quarters, though Bittan must consider it antiquated. To end everything according to his formula, Bittan expresses the wish that the English jazz fan will become more broad-minded. This, following his insulting and narrow blarney concerning "antiquated musicians" and "characters who set themselves up as critics"—(look who's talking!)—strikes me as a very unfunny joke. PTE. RICHARD 'OXTOT. U.S. Army.

WITH reference to David Bittan's article in a recent MELODY MAKER, many haphazard statements have been written. The success of our own particular club has been due to the tolerance shown towards all eras of jazz. Our aim has always been to provide facilities for the study and appreciation of jazz from all angles in as friendly an authentic an environment as possible. Taking the last ten weeks' meetings at the club, most of the recitalists have been anything but the long-haired men of jazz, and, in fact, on four occasions the recitals have been given by our own musicians. Included have been Hodges, Johnson, Traditional Blues, Chicago Jazz, and even Ted Lewis and James. I invite Bittan to give us a recital at his own convenience, and he can be sure of a hearty welcome and a good listening. He will not, of course, hear a jam group playing eternal riff music or even any exhibition instrumentalists played by this country's top-liners. Our group, although it seldom varies, is every week enthusiastically received, and always features both the new and old jazz numbers. GEOFF. ARMSTRONG. Sec., West London Rhythm Club.

IT is extremely difficult to reply fully to Private David Bittan within the narrow limits of a letter; but I have been asked to do so on behalf of the West London Rhythm Club, and so here I go. First—"Fanatics!" In our magazine (referred to by David) no fewer than nine articles were devoted exclusively to debunking the long-haired gentlemen of jazz. Our recitals only rarely feature "critics." Space does not permit details, but we are willing to show David the names of our recitalists and their subjects of discussion from 1942 onwards. He will be surprised. As a matter of fact, he was in our club a couple of weeks back. The session that night was given by the regular club group, and included "Jazz Me Blues," "219 Blues," "Tin Roof Blues," "Rebecca," "Yellow Dog Blues," etc.—hardly the music of the "modern American musicians" to which he refers. The aim of our club is 100 per cent. jazz. Our recitals are controlled by Peter Tanner, and our sessions are strictly supervised. Exhibitionism (drum breaks, riffs and all the stunts of the large bands which David seems to admire) is not tolerated. We do not know, according to David, that "jazz" and "swing" are "one and the same thing." It would be more accurate to say that we do know they are not; and it is to be deplored that one who has lived with the best of both on his doorstep is unable to make the obvious distinctions. One can do so he is singularly unqualified to criticise jazz wherever it may be played. RON SOMERS. West London Rhythm Club.

AFTER reading Private Bittan's article I said to myself: "Just another swing-fevered Yank." I don't accuse the Yanks of this without

HIS MASTER'S VOICE logo with names of jazz musicians: ★BUDDY FEATHERSTONHAUGH and the Radio Rhythm Club Sextet I wish I were Tuxedo How am I to know? B 9384 ★SIDNEY BECHET and his New Orleans Feetwarmers I know that you know Baby, won't you please come home? B 9385 ★DUKE ELLINGTON and his Famous Orchestra Main stem; After 'all B 9386 ★ARTIE SHAW and his Orchestra This is romance Any old time B 9382

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NORTHERN NEWS NOTES

by JERRY DAWSON

LAST Saturday week was a Gala Night indeed at the Higher Broughton Assembly Rooms, Manchester, where the big attraction was Leslie "Jiver", Hutchinson and his All-Coloured Band, working for the week under the aegis of H. Newton Lane.

This brought along to the ballroom not only the expected hundreds of dancers and fans—who most certainly had their money's worth—but it also attracted quite a number of musicians and other interested parties to such an extent that at one time the lounge resembled the balcony café at the Ritz on a Monday afternoon in peace time—which, for the benefit of the uninitiated, was the time and place for Manchester and district musicians to get together and talk "shop."

Ralph Burns (trumpet) was the first to show up—home for a while after his embouchure in working order after having had some trouble with his teeth—followed closely by one-time Nat Bookbinder trombonist Harry Simons. Harry, who is on an A.A. gunsite, was enjoying his first leave for many months.

Next came Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Buckley, intent on seeing "Jiver" and getting all the details fixed for the band's appearance at last Sunday's North Britain Finals at Blackpool, and almost on their heels came Johnny Claes—in Manchester for a concert the following day at the Broadway. Eccles, and taking a busman's holiday.

Immediately the news got around that Johnny was in the building he was besieged by autograph hunters whose demands seemed insatiable, this "feist" being renewed with vigour when Cyril Sharp—who had been appearing that night at the magnificent N.A.A.F.I. Club in Manchester—dropped in with pianist-maestro Alfie Franks, currently at Lewis's Restaurant.

Altoist Barney Kyta, taking a respite from his police duties—War Reserve—looked in with his good lady to say "hullo," whilst another trumpet man in Arnold Briggs telephoned to say that he was home on embarkation leave, but thought—and was sorry he couldn't get along.

No one could possibly have been disappointed with the show put over by "Jiver" and the boys. This was my first hearing of the outfit, and to say that it was an occasion for bouquets is to put it mildly.

The first thing that struck me about the band was its remarkable balance, something which to me has always been the prerogative of the best American bands.

Strong though the brass was—strengthened by the recent inclusion of trombonist Jack Phillips—never once did it overblow or overshadow the clean-cut incisive work of the saxes—for the night included tenor man Alfie Kahn, deputising for Freddy Grant, whilst the rhythm section had that one thing that most sections never seem to attain—a beat.

Solos—and they were legion—were vociferously received, and Leslie made a great personal hit with the manner in which he intimately carried the band into the hearts of the assembled crowd.

This Saturday (16th) should be another red-letter day at the Assembly Rooms, as Carl Barreiteau and Band are paying a return visit.

Passing thoughts—what a grand guy is Bertie King, star alto and clarinetist, who is also the band's business manager for Leslie. White or coloured—he's just about one of the nicest guys I've ever met in this business.

Note from Cpl. Eric Moorcroft (R.A.O.C.), better known perhaps in the North as Erik Moore, peace-time chairman and later secretary of the Southport Dance Band Control, and one of that resort's leading entertainment organisers.

Eric is now stationed in the Midlands, and was married a week ago (9th) to a Leicester girl, Miss Rita Heawood.

He is hoping to produce—for his unit—his fourth Christmas pantomime, this coming season.

Congratulations all round are indicated.

Note to hand from Cpl. Stan Line, who was responsible for the organisation—for the Cairo Rhythm Club—of the startlingly successful Jazz Jamboree mentioned last week.

Stan tells me that he intends to repeat this effort in the very near future and promises details later, and at the same time gives me the "dope" on still another R.A.F. outfit in the Middle East which appears to have "shaken" quite a lot of folk with its high standard of playing.

Little wonder when we learn that its leader and first alto is none other than George Colborn, whose Navy Players was one of the best bands ever to tour the Mecca halls. It was with this outfit that Harry Parry served his apprenticeship to jazz.

With George nowadays are Cliff Newton (alto); Ted Baldoek (tenor); Charlie "Wag" Willis and Jimmy Douglas (tpnts.); Frank Newby (trombone); Stan Simpson (guitar); Bill Hessing (drums); Tam Gorrie (sax); Jimmy James (bass); and another tenor in Jack Croft.

The boys have been together for close on a couple of years now, and have been featured at one time or another at most of the leading night spots in Cairo, including the Heliopolis House Hotel, Heliopolis Sporting Club, Auberge des Pyramids, Gezira des Pyramids, etc., and claim to have had the honour of playing before H.M. King Farouk of Egypt on more occasions than any other Service band.

All this is some achievement for George and the boys when one considers that all their playing is done in their spare time from duties. If they had the facilities for rehearsal like the Command bands, there's no telling how far they might go.

Lots of luck, George, boy.

From the Central Mediterranean area (Italy) comes an appreciation of a bunch of "Toy Soldiers" (?) who have carried their instruments from Alamein to North Africa, on to Sicily, and are still beating it out "in the land of olive groves."

Craftsman Jack Lee, of R.E.M.E., is my informer, and he tells me what a kick he got out of the playing of this bunch at a recent dance.

Under the leadership of percussionist Cyril Houldsworth, late of Margate's "Dreamland," the rest of the boys are Cliss Lawler and Pop White (saxes, etc.); Len Bryn (fiddle); Eric Ebel (trumpet); Brian Parish (bass); Les Young (guitar); Jock Peters (piano).

They, too, are only spare-time musicians, and obviously it is only on rare occasions that the whole bunch is able to get together for a bash—which they are only too happy to do on every possible occasion.

From the same area comes a chatty note from tenor man Len Royle, who at the time of writing was impatiently awaiting the arrival of the train, which was en route from the homeland.

He recently saw and heard the band in which Nat Gonella is featured, and after the show he, along with Nat and the clarinet and trombone players from the band, went along to the Fleet Club—where he doesn't say—to have a blow.

"Haven't enjoyed myself as much since I had my last leave in London," says Len—and I can quite believe him.

In passing, Len tells me how much he and all the musicians around have enjoyed the broadcast and that Major Glenn Miller and his bunch, Haven't we all?

Finally on to Leslie and to a letter from Cpl. George Turner, of Peshawar Signals, with further news of the R.A.F. Swingtette which consists these days of himself on alto, with Taffy Thomas (piano), Kenn Jubb (bass), and Roy Finlayson (drums).

The last time I mentioned this bunch the drummer was Warrington's Ron Davenport, but Ron is now on the way to a commission and has to leave skin-beating out of his curriculum, for the time being anyway.

In addition to a regular three gigs per week, these boys also constitute the house band for the Forces programme, broadcast weekly from All-India Radio, Peshawar.

Pianist Taffy Thomas wishes to be remembered to pianist-accordionist Ken Volkin.

Swing Bands At Wembley

IF anything more were needed after the Kodak Swing Band Championship last June to prove the great popularity of Swing Band Contests, it was found at the Greater London Swing Band Championship presented last Wednesday week at the Wembley Town Hall, under the auspices of the MELODY MAKER, by the Wembley Borough Council as part of their "Holidays-at-Home" programme.

There is an A.R.P. limit of 800 on the hall, so it would be indiscreet to suggest that the gathering looked more like 1,000.

But we can say that nearly 300 had to be turned away at the doors because it just wasn't possible to accommodate them.

Inside, the scenes of enthusiasm at least equalled any ever seen at a contest before.

Judging were Ivor Mairants, Maurice Burman, Bill Elliott, well-known bandleader Harry Leader and Sinclair Traill, and the fans packed so solidly round their table in an endeavour to see them and get as near as possible to the competing bands that the judges could hardly breathe and the hundreds of guests seated at the tables round the dance floor couldn't see their feet.

In the end, Edgar Jackson—who was taking a night off from judging to act as compere, because, as he put it, "There are five others stooping for me, so why should I work"—solved the problem by getting the fans to sit on the dance floor so that they at the back could see over their heads.

The standard of the contest, in which five bands took part, was surprisingly high, and Freddie Mirfield's Garbage Men, who won, had the toughest of struggles to beat the excellent Capitol Sextet that had come all the way from Cardiff.

Billy Minton, and his first-class resident band were also in attendance, and the event was honoured by the presence of his Worship the Mayor of Wembley, Councillor Dr. George H. Plymen, and his wife, Miss Plymen, who graciously presented the £40 worth of National Savings Certificates which were divided among the various prize winners.

JUDGES' REPORT

Adjudicators: Maurice Burman, Bill Elliott, Harry Leader, Ivor Mairants, Sinclair Traill.

Winners: **FRED MIRFIELD AND HIS GARBAGE MEN** (clarinet, tenor, trumpet, trombone, piano, guitar, bass, drums). 82, Sewardstone Road, South Chingford, London, E.4. (Phon: Silverthorne 1622).

Individualists' awards for clarinet (Johnny Danworth); trumpet (Freddy Randol); trombone (Dennis Croker).

THE thing about this band is its approach to a contest. It enters as much for the fun of it as anything else. If it wins, so much the better. If it doesn't, well, the boys have still had a good ride.

This spirit is the right one. It breeds spontaneity and brightness, and those qualities were very much in evidence.

Behind them, however, was good, sound musicianship—and it was at least as much on this that the band won quite convincingly. Playing in a pure Dixieland manner, the opening number, "Muskrat Ramble," contained fine solos by clarinet, trombone and trumpet, while the all-in at the end was perfectly blended. Incidentally, this was about the only band in the contest that took the trouble to keep the judges waiting a moment or two while it tuned up—other bands in future please note.

Its second number, "Mood Indigo," was perhaps the greatest surprise of the evening, for on the last occasion that Freddie Mirfield had announced that he was going to play the Ellington classic it had turned out to be a somewhat hilarious version of the old Washboard Rhythm Kings number, "Call of the Freaks," which starts off with an apt vocal beginning "Stick out your can, here comes the garbage-man." This time, however, "Mood Indigo" was seriously played in a subdued and delightfully musical manner, and credit must be given to the young clarinet player for a very original solo, no attempt being made to copy any of the well-known Ellington solos.

"Jazz Me Blues," the band's last number, was perhaps the worst of the three, for their enthusiasm started to run away with them, with the result that the ensemble was a little ragged and the rhythm section inclined to hurry and thump more than was necessary, the pianist being the chief

offender in this respect. However, around this, too, was a very creditable performance.

Second: **CAPITOL SEXTETTE** (clarinet, alto trumpet, piano, bass, drums). All coms.: Jack Evans, "Ohio," Manor Way, Whitechurch, Cardiff. (Phone: Cardiff 5098).

Individualists' awards for alto (Jack Evans); drums (Ossie Meredith). Hon. mention for clarinet (Tom Marriott); trumpet (Garfield Ireland).

THIS band was a good second, inasmuch as the musicianship was probably quite equal to that of the Mirfield group. But, whereas the latter played jazz as if they meant it, the Capitol Sextet played more from the head than from the heart. This was particularly noticeable in its first two numbers, "Undecided," which was a carbon-copy of John Kirby's arrangement complete with solos, and "Queen Bess," another copy of the small Ellington group, where the clarinet player played Barney Bigard's solo note for note extremely well. The quickstep, "I Found A New Baby," was a trifle more relaxed than the other two numbers, due chiefly to the work of the rhythm section, who had the outstanding drummer of the contest.

To sum up, this band should try to think a bit more for itself. The trumpet player, who fluffed badly on several occasions, should not attempt to run before he can walk. The alto player, whose style is excellent, should try to cultivate a better tone. A final

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DRAW FOR MID-BRITAIN FINALS

WITH the North and South Britain Finals over, next stage in the "M.M." contesting scheme, on which attention is rapidly being focussed, is the Mid-Britain Area Final, to be presented on Friday, September 29, by Mr. Arthur Kimbrell at the de Montfort Hall, Leicester.

Including the winners of to-morrow night's (15th) Nottinghamshire Championship at Ilkeston (Derby), no fewer than thirteen bands will have qualified for this Final, and as the dance, which is the form the event will take, is only from 7 to 11 p.m., how to get all the bands in at the available time is causing organiser Arthur Kimbrell a major headache.

One thing certain is that the actual contest will have to commence not a moment later than 7 p.m., and bands which are not in attendance and on the stand at the moment they are required to play risk disqualification (vide Rule 12).

- PLAYING ORDER**
- To give bands some idea of the time they will be required, the draw for playing order has already been undertaken.
- It is as follows:
1. **REG BASSETT**, Stoke-on-Trent (Shropshire Champions).
 2. **MARINA No. 1 BAND**, Lincoln (Lincoln Champions).
 3. **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE** winners.
 4. **BILLY RILEY**, Nuneaton (East Midlands Champions).
 5. **DENNIS HINTON**, Birmingham (Birmingham Champions).
 6. **CAPITOL SEXTETTE**, Cardiff (South Wales Champions).
 7. **STAY WILKINSON**, Sedgley, Wores (Derbyshire Champions).
 8. **BILLY MONK**, Coventry (Warwickshire Champions).
 9. **RAPCATS**, Ladderminster (Worcestershire Champions).
 10. **FRED HOBSON**, Birmingham (All-Staffs Champions).
 11. **GEORGE ALLEN'S Melody Boys**, Nuneaton, Leics (Leicestershire Champions).
 12. **STAN FIELDING**, Wolverhampton (Potteries Champions).
 13. **FRANK PROCTOR**, Nuneaton (Midland Counties Champions).
- Bands should realise, however, that it is no use trying to work out their exact times of appearance from this draw since in the event of scratchings or late arrivals they may have to move up into earlier places.
- The bands drawn for the first four places should all be in the hall by 6.30 p.m., and others in attendance at

NORTH BRITAIN

(Continued from page 2)

broadcast, and the standard set at the 1944 North Britain Final was more than sufficiently high to provide a fine afternoon's entertainment.

Nevertheless it must of course be admitted that the highspot of the afternoon was the special appearance of Leslie ("Jiver") Hutchinson and his All-Star Coloured Band.

This outfit is now without doubt one of the greatest swing bands in the country, and the audience was not slow in realising the fact. The demands for encores were so loud and insistent that it was only with difficulty that the coloured boys could be withdrawn from the stage for the presentation of the prizes, undertaken by the popular "Jiver" himself.

The afternoon was one of the longest in the history of contests. It commenced at 2 p.m. and did not end until 6.0, and if any final proof of its success is needed it is found in the fact that not a soul left the hall until the great Watson Holmes, who had been officiating by filling in while the competing bands changed over, played "The King."

In extending its thanks to all who contributed towards this great afternoon the "M.M." feels it must specially mention Eddie McGarry, three times winner of the "All-Britain," who so capably undertook the duty of compere.

(NOTE.—No Judges' Reports are being published on the playing at any one of this year's three Area Finals. The reason is that the Mid-Britain Area Final takes place too late to enable a report on the playing to appear before the "All-Britain" Final, and to publish reports on the playing at the North or South Britain Area Finals would give the band going forward from these Finals to the "All-Britain" an unfair advantage over those going forward from the Mid-Britain.)

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By Hugh Hinshelwood. GLASGOW.—Carroll Gibbons is back at Green's for a second visit...

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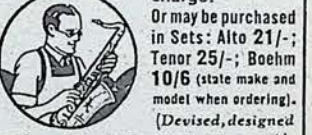
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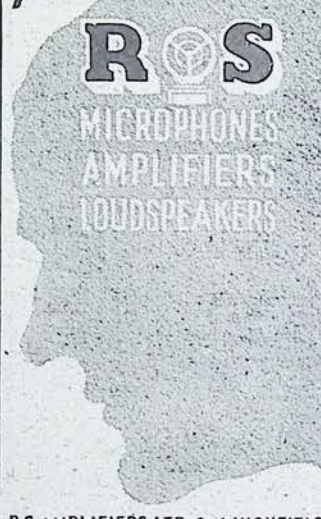
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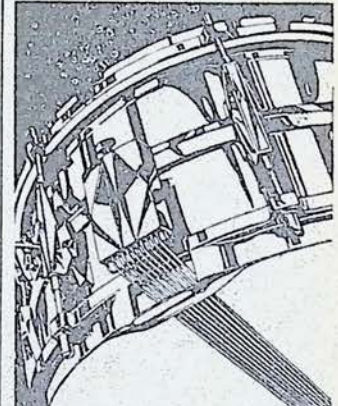
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