

Accordions Times and Musical Express

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Musical Express

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114-116 Shaftesbury Ave., LONDON, W.1

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1947

No. 51

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GRAND DOUBLE BIRTHDAY NUMBER!

ERIC ROBINSON TO CONDUCT FOR TELEVISION

ERIC ROBINSON, already well known as a conductor of musical programmes at Alexandra Palace will act as conductor for the B.B.C. Television service for an experimental period from October 12.

Robinson takes to his new position an experience of Television dating back to 1936 when he joined the Television Orchestra. He will engage orchestras for particular programmes, rehearsing them and conducting the performances.

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DENNIS ROSE JOINS BURNS SEXTET

Listeners to the popular Accordion Club feature will notice a change in the line-up, for when Johnny Gerson leaves for America this week his place will be taken by well-known trumpeter, Dennis Rose.

GRAPPELLE FILMING

Stephan Grappelly and a quartette of some of the best known names in the world of English jazz have just completed musical sequences of a new fifty-five minute film entitled "Flamingo".

GUY DAINES TO CONDUCT HIPPODROME SHOW

The new show to open at the London Hippodrome in the third week of October will be called "The Starlight Roof". This show, featuring Vic Oliver, Pat Kirkwood, Fred Emney, Wally Boag and his ballroom cartoons, and a young American singer and dancer, Jere McMahon, has music written and arranged by George Melachrino.

DUNCAN WHYTE For SOUTHSEA

Duncan Whyte will be taking an eight-piece band to The Savoy Ballroom, Southsea, for one month, commencing October 13. The line-up of the band is not yet fixed but the vocalist will be Diana Miller late of the "Hippodrome" show.

NO STRAIGHT BAND SESSIONS For RADIOLYMPIA

When Radiolympia commences television will be putting on three bands. These will be Geraldo and his Augmented Orchestra on October 1, 3-3.30 p.m. and 8.30-8.55 p.m.

VIC OLIVER DISCOVERS SCHOOLBOY CONDUCTOR

A WEEK ago Vic Oliver, a famous comedian-conductor, announced that he was inaugurating a scheme for encouraging local musicians whose talents might otherwise remain unknown.

GERALDO'S BENEFIT for family of the late Harry Gerrard

Geraldo is giving his services together with those of his orchestra at a big benefit dance in aid of the family of well-known bandleader Harry Gerrard who was tragically drowned last week.

AMERICAN SINGER HERE Debut at Wigmore

Keva Goff, eighteen-year-old American singer, had her first recital at Wigmore Hall. She is hailed in the United States as "another Deanna Durbin."

AMSTELL ON ORBS AGAIN

Billy Amstell will do yet another recording for ORBS on October 1. The line up of the band will be Mickey Gieves, Teddy Wadmore, Johnny Douglas, Alan Metcalfe, Don Macaffer, Arthur Mouncey, Aubrey Franks and, of course, Amstell himself.

GONELLA For BRIGHTON

Nat Gonella and His Georgians will commence an engagement for an indefinite period at La Martinique, Brighton, previously Duffy's Tavern, commencing October 5.

BOB FARNON TO SCORE AND CONDUCT NEW 'WILLIAM' FILM

Bob Farnon, who terminates his contract with the Geraldo organisation on October 12, will commence his film career when he scores and conducts the new Alliance Studios' production "Just William."

SQUADRONAIRES FOR GREEN'S

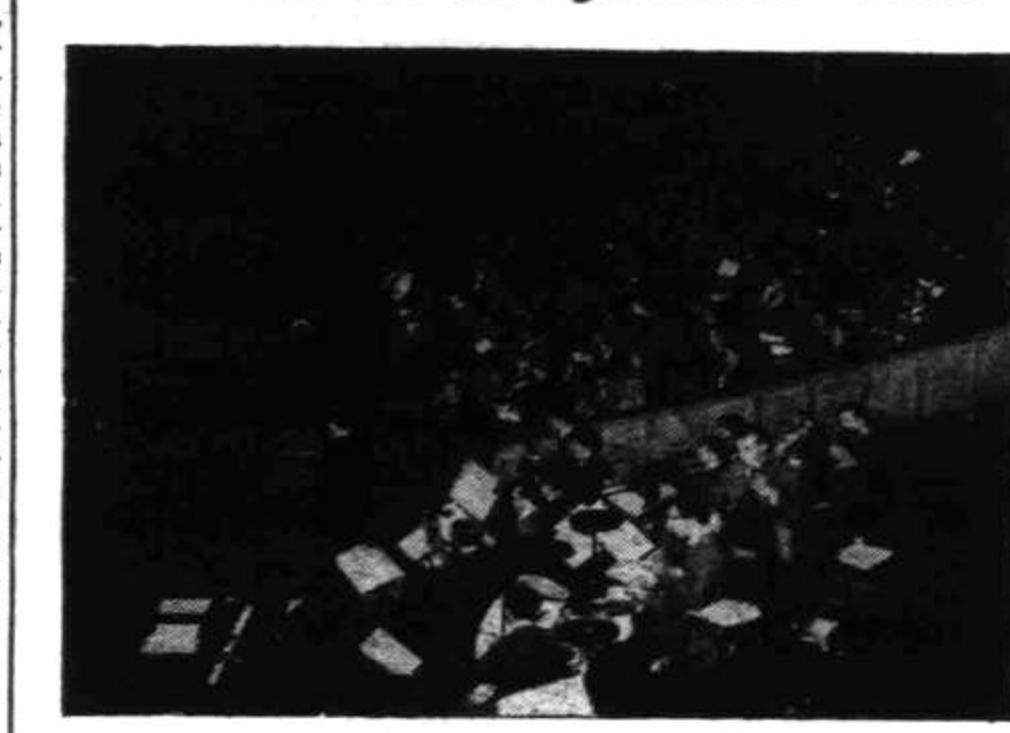
The Squadronaires, who will finish their very successful summer season at Butlin's camp at Clacton on October 5, will have a short holiday prior to appearing at Green's Playhouse Glasgow, for three weeks commencing October 20.

Leslie Kettle Joins Music Artistes

Leslie Kettle who has been associated with Chappell's for approximately eleven years in an exploitation capacity, will leave that firm this week to take over the position of General Manager to Music Artistes Ltd.

VIC LEWIS'S RETURN TO THE ALBERT HALL

Booked Again For October 21st When Their Majesties Will Be Present



Vic Lewis and his orchestra at the Albert Hall last Sunday, where they scored a remarkable success.

GIGLI RETURNS IN NOVEMBER

JACK HYLTON and Harold Fielding have announced the return to this country of Gigli, world-famous tenor. A concert tour has been arranged by Harold Fleming commencing on Sunday November 16, at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and will cover twenty towns and cities in the British Isles between that date and December 21.

The official statement from the Harold Fielding Press Office says that it is believed that this presentation involves more money than that of any other single artist's tour in the British Isles.

SIMONE For The New Jewell And Warriss Programmes



Exclusive "Musical Express" picture of Sidney Simoné conducting his band at the People's Palace last Sunday when they made a trial recording for the new Jewell and Warriss show.

STARDUSTERS THREE WEEKS AT SEABURN

Now nearing the end of their very successful summer season at the Samson and Hercules, the popular Stardusters, rapidly becoming a top-line band under their leader George Birch, are booked for a three-week season at Seaburn Hall, Sunderland, from November 10 to 29.

REVELLERS For The Orchid Room

The Radio Revellers, who completed their 278th performance at the Victoria Palace last Wednesday, will appear in cabaret at the exclusive Orchid Room when they fulfil an engagement there commencing October 13.

THE STORK AGAIN

Congratulations are in order to well-known saxophonist, Derek Neville, who became the proud father of a baby daughter last week. The child is to be called Lorna Avian Heather.

CONCERT OF FRENCH MUSIC By M.E. Critic Malcolm Rayment

The 49th concert of French music took place at the Wigmore Hall, on Monday, September 22, when Camille Maurane (baritone) and the Moyse Trio gave performances of works by Marin Marais, Honegger, Louis-Nicolas Clérambault, Florent Schmitt, Ibert, Debussy, Louis Moyse, Koechlin, Duparc and Maurice Durufé.

Marcel Moyse (flute), his son, Louis Moyse (piano and flute), and his daughter-in-law, Blanche Honegger Moyse (violin and viola). Outstanding in the programme were the Petite Suite for piano, flute and violin by Honegger and the Prelude, Recitative and Variations by Maurice Durufé.

BEECHAM IN GREAT FORM WITH RPO

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra deserved a better fate than that of playing to a half-full house at their opening concert last Thursday. Sir Thomas, who was billed to make an introductory talk, confined himself to a few ironical remarks about the musical dilettantes. It was no new experience for him. I well remember hearing him give some of his finest performances in the early 1930's to audiences of several hundred in the same hall.

On Thursday "Jupiter" was phrased and paraded before an enthusiastic audience in all its glory. When one has heard Beecham's Mozart and a Rossini crescendo under the baton of Toscanini, then one can truly say they have heard genius. The Debussy's "Iberia" suite and the "Dance of the Seven Veils" Beecham showed his uncanny appreciation of rhythm and his intense understanding of orchestral colouring.

SILVESTER DANCING CLUB ON AIR AGAIN

Victor Silvester's popular Dancing Club series will start again on October 17, when it will have reached its 202nd performance. Silvester is introducing "The Magic Way" which will be a very simple system of learning to dance.

Parnell's Gesture to Tony Crombie

When the Ted Heath Orchestra recorded several titles for Decca last week one of the numbers written by Jack Bentley, and entitled "Dickory Dock," called for a special vocal by Jack Parnell.

MILlicent PHILLIPS "MUSIC IN YOUR HOME" SERIES

Millicent Phillips, the well-known soprano, who has now recovered from her illness lasting some three weeks, is to sing in the "Music In Your Home" programme on October 1 at 10.15 a.m.

SKYROCKET'S SERIES EXTENDED

The Skyrockets Orchestra, who have just recently commenced the popular "Rhapsody" series of broadcasts, have had this series extended until the end of the year.

DONT LOOK ANY FURTHER YOUR BARGAIN IS HERE!

- Trumpet, Hawkes' New Century G.L. £30
Tenor Sax, Conn, new, G.L., L.P. £25
Trombone, Conn Cav., new, gold lac. £35
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BOSWORTH Presents THE RUMBA RAGE CHIQUE CHIQUE CHA

By LAZARO QUINTERO Broadcast by EDMUNDO ROS, ROBERTO INGLIZ, FRANCISCO CONDE, JOSE NORMAN, HAROLD GELLER.

NEW P.M. 'HOTS'! JUMP TIME SO WHAT

TWO SENSATIONAL TOMMY DORSEY SPECIALS ARRANGED IN THE INIMITABLE SYLVIA OLIVER STYLE. MIX UP SERENADE TO THE SPOT ANOTHER ONE OF THEM THINGS TAKE IT BLUE BLAZES AT THE FAT MAN'S OPUS ONE SWANEE RIVER SKYLINER

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Accordian Times and Musical Express Editorial and Advertising Offices 33, King Street, London, W.C.2

BAND PARADE OR "HELZAPOPPIN"?

By The Editor of Musical Express



"Grousing—who's grousing? I merely said you should have paid more attention when you took down the address of this provincial gig!"

THE VOICE

MUSICAL ECONOMICS The recent disclosures that the Ink Spots' salaries were paid in dollars came as a surprise to the man in the street at a time when he has been exhorted to tighten his belt further for the purpose of saving dollar payments. We have had the controversy before—"Betty Grable or Dried Eggs?"—and now it will be "The Ink Spots or Basic Petrol?" We must not, however, jump to conclusions until we have analysed the economic set-up of this system of payment to American artists.

FOSTER SPEAKS UP Fortunately the national Press has given adequate space to the economic situation created by this contrivance. In the "News of the World" agent Harry Foster speaks up. In a newspaper with a circulation of over seven millions this is likely to do a lot of good towards dispelling any misconception on the part of the general public. Harry Foster told the "News of the World" the true facts about dollars expended in the U.S.A. for American talent playing here and the dollars earned by British artists and shows in America. The statistics are very enlightening. I congratulate Harry Foster on the horse-sense of his statement, and I congratulate the "News of the World" on publishing it in so prominent a position.

BRITISH SHOWS ARE DOLLAR-EARNERS Foster says that rumours of a dollar drainage are damaging to the show business which is pulling in lots of dollars for Britain. He says, quite rightly, that there is only one all-American show in Britain, that being "Oklahoma"; that there are only two American artists in "Annie Get Your Gun"; that there are only three Americans in the new "Diamond Lil" show amongst about forty featured artists; that in all the five other American shows in Britain there are only two American players—one having been here twenty years. These artists cost Britain dollars. But Foster sets against this the large dollar-earning potentialities of British talent in the U.S.A. For instance, the entire Old Vic Company, John Gielgud Company, Donald Wolfit Company, the entire "Under the Counter" cast including the chorus; "The Winslow Boy" with Frank Cellier, opening in Washington shortly; and negotiations are pending for the whole "Piccadilly Hayride" show with Sid Field and "Sweetest and Lowest" to go over to New York. Harry Foster asserts that the balance is in our favour.

START THE FLAG-WAVING He omits, however, many other artists like Noel Coward, who are constantly playing on Broadway, and the shows they have written which are now earning dollars for Britain. These artists, it is maintained, do not receive the dollars they earn but are credited by the British Treasury in sterling. It would appear, from this rosy picture, that the British entertainment industry is netting dollars for Britain in a manner commensurate with some of the largest export manufacturing firms. If this is the case it is high time somebody got up and shouted about it and that is why I commend Harry Foster and the "News of the World" for starting the flag-waving. It is not a moment too soon. But where is the reciprocal exchange of bands, musicians and orchestras? Is it too much to hope that we might exchange Ted Heath for Stan Kenton, Tito Burns for Joe Mooney, Harry Roy for Spike Jones, and a few others just for a few weeks? Such events would prove a stimulating impetus to the profession over here and would keep alive public interest in entertainment.

BAND PARADE, high spot of the dance music broadcasts from the B.B.C., is a D. H. Nelson production. Helzapoppin is an Olsen and Johnson production. Vastly different to the ear—until you happen, actually, to see a Band Parade broadcast. Then you begin to think they are vastly similar to the eye. You who sit back and listen to the Band Parade transmissions would hardly believe these broadcasts could have any similarity to the Olsen and Johnson crazy shows, but you have to see it to believe it.

I have yet to see Red Indians dashing across the stage during the Band Parade broadcasts, but I did expect any minute that somebody would bring on a giant tree for all present to climb up. Even a performing duck would hardly cause more amusement than that experienced by the audience in Band Parade—an amusement that is showing itself in chuckles and grins not yet heard over the microphone. If the comedy procedure of these transmissions continues at the pace it has already achieved, then I am certain Band Parade will develop into one of our contestants for the Itma crown.

For the enlightenment of those who have never been present at a broadcast of Band Parade I will describe the set-up. Two bands are arranged, according to their own particular line-ups, on each side of the stage. The B.B.C. announcer and the vocalists walk on from the wings as they would in an ordinary stage presentation. The balance is controlled from a special box at the side of the stage. The broadcasting bands and artists rehearse from about three o'clock in the afternoon until just before they go on the air. Before the broadcast they have had a complete run-through of the show for timing and cues. According to all other standards this arrangement should be sufficient to guarantee a perfect performance, timed to the split second including allowances for audience reaction.

Correspondence reaching these offices drew my attention to the comedy element not apparent to the listener at home and war-

ranted my visit on one or two occasions to these broadcasts. Imagine my surprise and amusement, shared in no small manner by members of the audience, when I saw Mrs. Neilson dashing backwards and forwards on the Band Parade broadcast. Then you begin to think they are vastly similar to the eye. You who sit back and listen to the Band Parade transmissions would hardly believe these broadcasts could have any similarity to the Olsen and Johnson crazy shows, but you have to see it to believe it.

Now as the show is supposed to be rehearsed, produced and timed before it goes on the air, I must ask the question "Is Mrs. Neilson's Journey Really Necessary?" Surely there is no conceivable reason why excited messages should be conveyed to bandleaders, musicians or singers during the actual transmission? In any other normal studio broadcast you never see the producer dashing out of the balance room every few minutes to deliver urgent messages. In Vaudeville you never see the stage manager dashing out on the stage to alter a performer's lines while the show is running. So why is Mrs. Neilson indulging in these "tick-tack" methods that are causing so much merriment? I have heard certain elements in the audience laugh as she runs back and forth during these broadcasts and I fear that one of these nights she will get a really big laugh at the wrong psychological moment.

We do not see Mark White—able producer of the show—who never leaves the box during the performance. But Mrs. Neilson, who "presents" the show is doing a great deal of conspicuous presenting that may well prove to be unnecessary. I wonder what the reactions of the musicians and singers is like to this distracting activity? A performer would need cast-iron nerves to stand up to it.

If on the other hand, Mrs. Neilson has some secret desire to turn Band Parade into another Helzapoppin, that is another matter. I am all for a bit of slapstick myself.

KITCHENS Strike the High Note for Value R.P. Kitchen Ltd. 27-29-31 QUEEN VICTORIA ST. LEEDS 1

CAMPBELL CONNELLY 10, DENMARK ST. LONDON W.C.2 Temple Bar 1653 THE HOUSE OF HITS! A GARDEN IN THE RAIN

K.P. 41st STAR PARCEL THE NATION'S NUMBER ONE SONG NOW IS THE HOUR NO GREATER LOVE TOMORROW

Accordian Times Edited by J. J. BLACK

THE success of any club is due in no small measure to the energy and enterprise of the secretary and musical director. The Reigate Piano Accordian Society is fortunate in this respect. The Founder and Musical Director, Mr. G. Romani, is untiring in work and enthusiasm, and he is ably assisted by the Honorary Secretary, Mrs. Talbott.

This go-ahead organisation has just celebrated its first anniversary at the St. Mark's Hall, Reigate, and about fifty people were present, including friends and relations of the members. The Guest of the evening was Mr. H. J. Bridger, representing Messrs. Hohner Concessionaires Ltd., accompanied by his wife. Festivities, brightened by an amazing array of good things that commenced at about 7 p.m.

Mrs. Talbott, Hon. Sec., then made the first cut in a birthday cake made in the form of a piano accordion. Afterwards the floor was cleared for general entertainment. The band played several numbers, and Mr. Romani played two of his own compositions. One of these was an intriguing Sonata in three movements, based on Eighteenth Century Mozartian style exemplifying the intrinsic simplicity of musical form propagated by Mr. Bridger, to whom the composition was dedicated.

An interesting Hawaiian dance exhibition by one of the younger members of the Society, accompanied by Mr. Romani, gave further colour to an interesting evening promising of a big future for this enterprising society. During the entertainment, the loyal and talented supporter, Mr. Cecil Ramsey, gave three pianoforte items, the principal being Chopin's Fantasy Impromptu in C sharp minor. A reader who feels an urge to compete in a "Write a Tune" competition, sends a request to the effect that I should run some form of service to enable "composers" to get into touch with "music writers". Pointing out that she has a "very scanty knowledge of the staff", she adds that she can

Tin Pan Alley "The Troubadour" DRINKING my pint quietly in the Grosvenor Arms—overheard a very interesting conversation (alright, call me an eavesdropper) it would seem that WILLIAMSONS—or some name that sounds like that (if only I had ears like Japanese fans!) are opening up in this country very soon! No remarks right now!

What a difference when a vocalist is allowed to INTERPRET a song. Sorry, boys, but I MUST mention the Peggy Reid again—have heard her recently on one or two programmes and frankly I have been very disappointed—BUT—heard her on QUIET RHYTHM, and this girl CAN sing. Why is it that the B.B.C. try to kill EVERYTHING that has a "popular" appeal—'tis well known that any vocalist who sings with bands must just sing in tempo. They are even told they mustn't create a STYLE—and Peggy Reid has a style—if you've heard her records, you'll know what I mean.

If the publishers of "Sons of the Sea" were to publish a version of "Bobbing Up and Down Like This" I am sure they would sell thousands of copies—and without any help from the B.B.C. In my opinion and in that of all the Low Taverns—it is one of THE Songs.

THE BEST SELLERS LIST: As we all know, the present list is compiled by the courtesy of the Trade dealers—BUT Woolworth's and the British Home Stores don't stock 2/- editions! And Woolworth's don't issue a best-selling list. Without woolworth's it is impossible to be 100 per cent. sure of what is TOP SONG—why don't the M.P.A. prevail upon Mr. Baxter to co-operate in this matter—it would be good for the whole business if we could have a really true picture of the best sellers.

THIS WEEK'S QUOTATION (HIPPOCRATES) To would-be songwriters. The life, so short; the craft, so long to learn.

I wonder who will be the lucky winner of the prize offered by Len Daniels, of Mastercraft, for the solution to his "chaotic"?

THE TIN-PAN ALPHABET ARTISTS—With a few more broadcasts—Len Young could be the greatest singer of pops on the E.B.C.

BRAND NEW—The Four Monarchs—very good too! CHAD—Wot! No broadcasts for Arthur Tracy. DAIRY TALK—"I had that title years ago, and they said it wasn't commercial—but now that it's come from America—WELL!

EASY ON THE EAR—Altho' it's hardly Tin Pan Alley—Leni Lynn's performance on Friday night was what "Variety" and "Billboard" would call "socko" and "bofo". FUNNY MEN—Max Bacon—has a line that makes me laugh. In fact it's a laugh a line. GRACIOUS ME—Dick Bentley back at the B.B.C.

ABUSE OF PRIVILEGE By Reg. Imeson THERE must be some reason for the belief generally held by people spending their holidays in hotels, that the band's kit is mainly for their private use after the band has finished for the evening. They don't do it anywhere else, I mean, you never see a crowd surge up to the rostrum after a promenade concert, buttonhole the third oboe player and badger him to "leave your doings behind so we can have a bash." But in hotels, as soon as the performance is ended, there is a rush. On refusal the patrons retire ungracefully, but as soon as the shiny-seated rear of the drummer disappears through the ballroom door there is a mad rush to mount his steed.

My summer season this year has been quite inspired for its events in this direction. One gentleman in his cups not managing to get the same sort of sound from the string-bass as its player (M.U. 15, Bolton Branch) pushed his fist through the belly of the instrument, completely wrecking it. Quite honourably he left a cheque for £45 to put things right, but it's really very disheartening.

Another young lady wanted all the equipment left on the bandstand because her party wanted to dance a bit longer ("they all played"). I pointed out to this aspirant to the musical profession that she wouldn't lend me her car to play with and I had "got a licence" to drive it! Finally there was the mother who introduced her son (apparently hot stuff on the recorder). He wanted to borrow half the library so that he didn't let himself down when he sat in with us! How can we put down these abuses? I suggest combined action to rid these people of their misconceptions of privileges. Either by making up with spots giving a general measles effect, foaming at the mouth with some chemical, or finally (and most drastically) playing in cages! I do feel that shouting "seram" at the customers is not only degrading but damaging to our prestige and painful to our delicate artistic temperaments.

TEN BEST SELLERS The following list of TEN BEST SELLERS, irrespective of price, for week ending 18 September, 1947, has been compiled from lists supplied by members of the WHOLESALE MUSIC DISTRIBUTORS' ASSOCIATION in London and the Provinces. 1. Now Is The Hour—Keith Prowse, 1/-.

Needs for REEDS Jiffy Sax Sling Jiffy Reed Cutter and Scraper SAX REPAIR KIT Selmer Alto 27/6 Tenor 30/6

Premier ANNOUNCEMENT LONDON (DRUMMERS!) As from September 29th, 1947 we have appointed as our Sole Agents for London: SELMER (Musical Instruments) Limited, 114, Charing X Rd., W.C.2. TEM 0444

THE FIRST PUBLICATION DEVOTED TO DANCE BAND CONTESTS



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SEPTEMBER, 1947 PRICE ONE PENNY

EDITORIAL

This is the first issue of the first publication devoted to Dance Band Contests. Paper restrictions make it impossible to publish it every week, but it will appear from time to time as paper becomes available. Since the editorial policy of this publication is in the interests of the National Dance Band Championship...

NEW CONTEST SCHEME WILL BE STARTLING IN ITS ORIGINALITY

Says JACK FALLON Official "Musical Express" Organiser (By Courtesy of Jack Hylton)

IMMEDIATELY "Musical Express" paid me the compliment of suggesting that I organise this "National Dance Band Championship" I felt a nostalgic surge of old memories and associations which decided my answer. It was going to be a pleasure to get right into the middle of a thing like this—a real pleasure—despite the fact that my spare time is already occupied with eating and sleeping only. I have always contemplated with awe and wonder the spectacle of my Chief doing successfully ten men's work and remaining very human—but then he's Jack Hylton. Having obtained Jack Hylton's kind permission to undertake this important task I accepted the "Musical Express" proposition.

JACK FALLON is a rare combination of business man, organiser and showman. Has come up the whole way through dancing, ballroom management, publicity, catering, band management, impresario and agent. Now directing the important Jack Hylton Theatrical Agency and giving management and personal representation to many of the biggest stars in the country.

purpose of earning greater zest and interest from all those who participate in band contests—that a more enlightened and original method of contest structure is due for a birthday! Here is my big chance and I will take it with both hands. Upon the seriousness of this great venture are staked the reputations of "Musical Express," The Association of Ballrooms and my own. We shall not disappoint you. In conclusion I am in a position to disclose the following important innovations: Competing bands will not be subjected to any unnecessary restrictions. For instance, they may, if they so desire, enter for any other contests outside our own scheme—more power to their elbow! There will be no entrance fees whatever for bands competing in The National Dance Band Championship. Making such a levy on the good nature of competitors would be utterly inconsistent with our promise that every one of these inspiring events shall serve your interests first.



Reproduction in miniature from the latest Carlton Accessories List



Free Carlton POCKET REFERENCE DRUM ACCESSORIES. Mail me a copy of the Carlton Pocket Reference for Drum Accessories. Name: Address: Dallas CLIFTON STREET LONDON W.C.2

WHAT A MUSICAL DIRECTOR LOOKS FOR IN A DANCE BAND

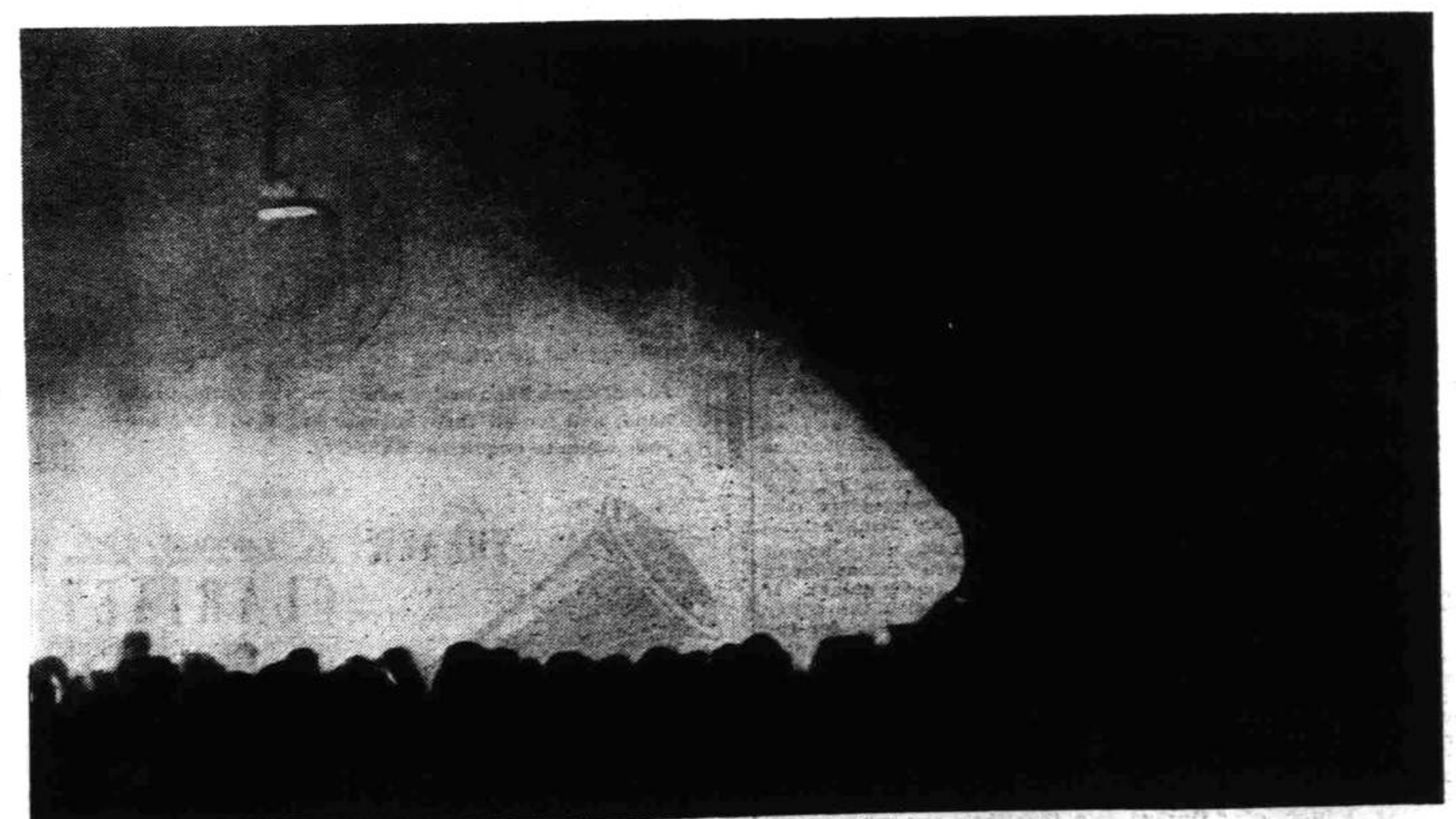
AS Musical Director to such a large organisation as Butlin's, who give engagements to hundreds of musicians every year, I write this article with the sincere hope that it will be a guide to the many bands who give auditions and who inevitably get disappointed and never know the reason why.

leader and requested that they should play any commercial or orchestration. If it was a large outfit I would ask them to play the full orchestration or in the case of a small outfit just the introduction, two choruses, a modulation and the last chorus, and this is where they usually failed. They make a hopeless mess of commercials, and after all unless they are in the big-time class when their reputation is sufficient to obviate any audition, I know that they

By AL BERLIN Musical Director for Butlin's and Member of the National Championship Organisation Committee.

cannot possibly afford to find the time while working to rehearse and have a complete library of special arrangements, the arrangement of which usually forgets that "melody is the main thing." As you can appreciate, bands from all over the country and the Continent offer, to give me auditions and I sincerely endeavour to listen to as many outfits in London and the provinces as possible, with the hope that I may find the type of outfit on which I have set my mind. I always give the band leader a few days' notice, realising that he would like to rehearse his boys and here is one of the pitfalls. Unless they are a set combination, I have recognised the same faces time after time under different leaders. Many times when this occurred I have been compelled to say to the leader, "I'm sorry, I've heard these boys before"; which is a waste of time for both myself and the musicians.

PICTURE OF A BAND CHAMPIONSHIP



This remarkable photograph shows Pathe newsreel cameras filming the events at the last all-England Championship staged many years ago by the (now) Managing Editor of "Musical Express." This picture was taken by well-known Trombonist Bernard Tipping, who is a distinguished Press Cameraman. The Movie Cameras will roll once again on championship events in the very near future.

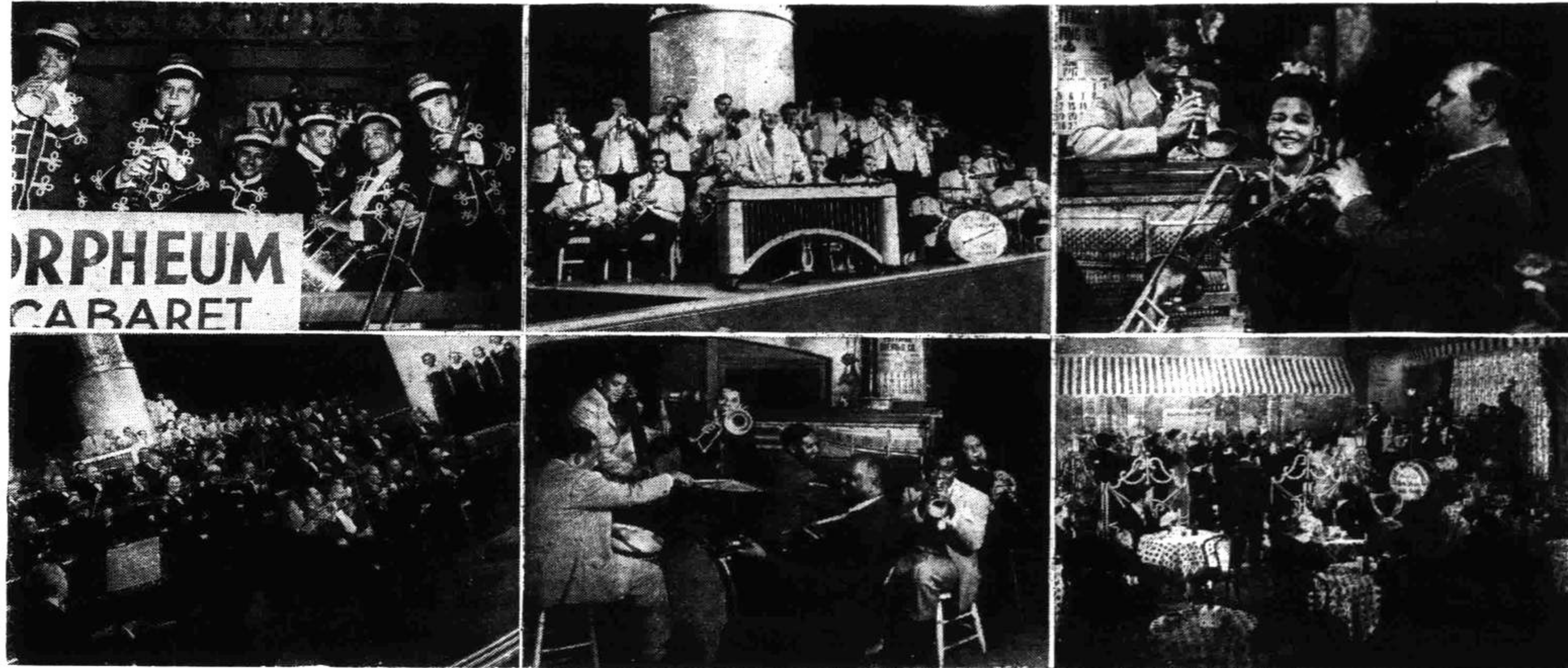
BATTLE OF THE BANDS

Competitive Spirit is the Motive Force in Jazz

"WE SHOULD KNOW WHAT COMPETITORS EXPECT FROM THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP"

By Rowland Powell

Famous bandleader, now Managing Director of the Astoria Ballroom, Leeds, and Member of the National Championship Committee)



Early Pioneers of the Competitive Spirit in Jazz, as seen in the film "New Orleans." TOP LEFT: (left to right) Louis Armstrong, Barney Bigard, Charlie Beal, Red Callendar, Zutty Singleton and Kid Ory. TOP CENTRE: Woody Herman and his Orchestra, with Red Norvo. TOP RIGHT: Billie Holiday, Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong and Barney Bigard. BOTTOM LEFT: Climax of the "New Orleans" film. Manhattan's Symphony Hall, with full Symphony Orchestra, Woody Herman's Orchestra and a choir of twenty voices. BOTTOM CENTRE: "Name Your Poison Blues" are born, with their creators reunited, Zutty Singleton (drums), Kid Ory (trombone), Bud Scott (guitar), Barney Bigard (clarinet), Louis Armstrong (trumpet), Charlie Beal (piano), and Red Callendar. BOTTOM RIGHT: Louis Armstrong and his New Orleans Jazz Band in Chicago, after having been forced to leave the Southern city. Meade Lux Lewis is also featured

IT was, without doubt, my membership in the Association of Ballrooms (as managing director and proprietor of the Astoria Ballroom, Leeds) that first brought me in contact with "Musical Express" on the Organising Committee set up by my Association and that newspaper. But it is perhaps a happy augury that I take my place on this Committee not only as a ballroom proprietor, but with a life-time's practical experience as a musician and a bandleader. Al Berlin, another active member of the Organising Committee, has the advantage over me in that he is still engaged in the profession as a musical director for Butlin's. But I do feel that we both have a very intimate knowledge of music and the business in general and that jointly we should know what competitors expect from this big contest scheme. We hope to bring all this wealth of practical musical experience into the proceedings. I mention this so that all those interested in competing shall be assured that we understand their psychology, their feelings, and that we share their enthusiasm for good music, well played, under the best possible playing conditions.

ROLAND POWELL began music at the age of eight, when he studied violin and piano. At sixteen he was playing professionally in theatres, cinemas and at concerts. He then took over ownership and management with a deeply-rooted knowledge of how to get the best out of the musicians and bands serving me. Was I not one of them? A life-time of professional music taught me that musicians can only give of their best in surroundings and conditions conducive to playing well. This goes for all jobs, and it is my firm belief that it goes more so than ever for Band Contestants.

Yes, I think we should know what competitors expect from this big contest scheme. We hope to bring all this wealth of practical musical experience into the proceedings. I mention this so that all those interested in competing shall be assured that we understand their psychology, their feelings, and that we share their enthusiasm for good music, well played, under the best possible playing conditions.

But let me forget, for a moment, my life-time's work as a musician and bandleader. There is another side to my career as a ballroom proprietor. I took over ownership and management with a deeply-rooted knowledge of how to get the best out of the musicians and bands serving me. Was I not one of them? A life-time of professional music taught me that musicians can only give of their best in surroundings and conditions conducive to playing well. This goes for all jobs, and it is my firm belief that it goes more so than ever for Band Contestants.

When a band is settled in a job, first-night nerves are forgotten. But when a band plays in open competition with others, before a large audience, before the critical board of adjudicators, when the moment for distinguishing themselves is dangerously in the balance, I say that the readers become familiar with the qualifications of the members of our Organising Committee. I see the wisdom in that. But we ourselves are not alone in the scheme of organisation. We have decided to call upon and put to the most practical use other musical brains. We know that every heat, final and the eventual Championship itself can only be successful by placing the intelligentia of the musical profession at the disposal of the contestants. That is one decision amongst many which will be a valuable contribution to the musical profession at large.

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By DENIS PRESTON

Jazz Editor of "Musical Express"

I WONDER how many entrants to our nationally organised dance band contests appreciate that they, in their own way, are perpetuating what might be called the motive spirit of jazz—the competitive spirit.

The competitive spirit isn't, of course, peculiar to jazz; it flourishes to a degree in every art and craft of mankind—certainly upon the opposite side of the musical fence in the concert world. But whilst the concert musician works on a secure foundation of musical standards proven by usage, and competes with his fellows only out of artistic enterprise, active competition has always been, and is still the sole means of sustaining and carrying forward standards of performance in jazz, least academic of all the arts.

When jazz was still in its teething stage, when the multiplicity of folk strains which went into the making of the music had barely hardened into a unified form, the competitive spirit among its followers was at its liveliest. The coveted title of "King" was by no means a sinecure; the New Orleans trumpeter who won it did so by outblowing and outplaying his rivals.

Whether or not Buddy Bolden's powerful horn could be heard twelve or fourteen miles away on a clear night, as claimed by Jolly-Roll Morton, matters not a jot. For Bolden, reputed first trumpet king of New Orleans, has become a figure of legend, a mythological

"race" hero of the family of Casey Jones, John Henry and Charlie Snyder. He epitomises the spirit of competition in jazz. He it was who first set a standard for others to follow; he was "King," and lesser men battled among themselves to win second place.

It is not unexpected that all the early jazz kings of New Orleans were trumpeters. The trumpet was the dominant instrument in bands whose normal working week included as many parades and outdoor functions as sessions in the dance-hall. But even when the jazz band took to an exclusively indoor life, the trumpeter retained his importance so long as the music followed the pattern laid down by the New Orleans pioneers.

After Bolden there were dozens of trumpeters of high repute in New Orleans between the turn of the century and the Great War years—Freddie Keppard, King Oliver (or Joe Oliver, as he then was), Manuel Perez, Willie Hightower, Buddy Petit, and Mutt Carey are only a few of the names that spring to mind. Jazz history recalls many battles between these famous veterans—between Keppard and Perez, between Perez and Oliver, and later between Lee Collins and Henry Rena. In those days the common practice of hiring bands for advertising, and having them parade the streets of the city in wagons, gave musicians every opportunity of meeting in public contest. Mutt Carey tells an amusing tale of an encounter

with Freddie Keppard at a time when Keppard had New Orleans "all sewed up." "When Freddie got on the streets it was the king on the streets," reminisces Carey. "Keppard was the first man I ran into in a band battle, and it was just my hard luck to run into the king..."

It was after Joe Oliver (or King Oliver, as he'd become) had departed for the North that the youthful Louis Armstrong appeared upon the scene as a challenger for the vacant crown. And when he'd vanquished every rival in open contest he, too, went North to join Oliver, and to carry on the tradition of kingship in Chicago, New York—in fact wherever he played.

Like Buddy Bolden before him, Louis Armstrong became a standard-bearer for jazz, and the standards of performance that he raised became the criteria of instrumental technique and expression. And like Bolden in his time, Armstrong remains unchallenged. At forty-seven, when one might reasonably expect a trumpet king's powers to be in decline, he still wins the unstinted admiration of younger players of the calibre of Roy Eldridge and Harry James. As

Toots Camerata recently remarked: "There may be young players coming up who play a lot of technique, but old Satchmo has still got that wonderful tone, and a wonderful feeling for the music."

American jazzmen of every shade of opinion are unanimous in their devotion to Armstrong and, unchallenged though he may be in his kingship, there have been plenty of musical skirmishes for first place in his shadow. And there is hardly a leading jazz trumpeter of the past twenty odd years who hasn't owed something of his style and his inspiration to Armstrong—for example, George Mitchell, Punch Miller, Henry Allen, Cootie Williams, Jonah Jones, Rex Stewart, Taft Jordan and Roy Eldridge. But his influence doesn't end with trumpeters alone; Earl Hines, Jack Teagarden, and even (in his formative years) Coleman Hawkins, were all influenced by Armstrong. And they, in turn, were guiding lights to many younger players.

In his recent appreciation of Jimmie Lunceford's Orchestra, Panassie recalled a musical battle between Lunceford's and Duke Ellington's Orchestras. Battles

of bands, always a feature at Harlem's famous ballrooms, have a tradition as venerable as the cutting contests of the pioneer New Orleans trumpeters. History tells us of one such battle of music between two famous New York bands at the Coliseum in St. Louis—Fletcher Henderson's and McKinney's Cotton Pickers. When the crowd heard that the riverboat "St. Paul" had just pulled in with Charlie Creath's Orchestra aboard, they insisted that their favourite riverboat musicians should have a chance to show their paces. So Creath and his men went over to the Coliseum and joined in the battle with a will. By the time they'd played "Market Street Stomp" the fight was as good as won.

As important as band battles in maintaining the virility of jazz performances has been the way in which members of the same band have learned to pit their skill one against the other. This is especially true of the finest Negro orchestras. In the late Jimmie Lunceford's Orchestra there was proverbial rivalry between reeds and brass. As Sy Oliver put it: "We brass men have to blow hard not to be outdone by those saxes." A feature

of Lionel Hampton's stage show is his battle of tenors. But for the liveliest competition among landmen we must turn to Duke Ellington's Orchestra.

Ellington's pre-eminence is undoubtedly due largely to the active spirit of competition he has encouraged in his musicians. Ignoring every dictate of changing fashion he has always made full use of the instrumental break (the jazzman's cadenza), and the chase chorus—devices calculated to put his men on their mettle.

There is little doubt that American jazzmen have the advantage over their foreign disciples in the active "social" life they enjoy. Their opportunities of playing not only with each other but against each other are almost unlimited. But it is perhaps their intuitive realisation that jazz can only survive and progress through its most inspired exponents that imbues them with such healthy respect for their fellow players.

Armstrong, Hawkins, Hodges, Tatum, and now Gillespie and Parker, are more than merely fine musicians. They are the men who set the standard of performance to-day—the only academic yardstick so far have in jazz. And it is only by active and healthy competition among themselves that the younger musicians—the unknowns of to-day—will maintain and carry forward those standards tomorrow!

Well, after many meetings came to the conclusion that every contestant must be positively certain that everything possible will be done for his personal comfort; that the atmosphere will be conducive to him giving his best; that he will be getting a fair deal; that nobody but actively engaged professionals will be judging his performance; that no officials of either the Management or "Musical Express" shall have the right to interfere with or influence the adjudication in any way; that the trophies shall have valuable significance and that when a contestant has distinguished himself in one of these Championships he may well consider the effort has been worth while.

Having satisfied ourselves that competition under conditions such as these has taken place, the Association of Ballrooms knows only too well that talent will begin to show itself. Now the Association is always on the lookout for something new, original or talented. Do not forget that our Association is made up of managers and owners of dance halls, ballrooms, etc. Any good band that can be built up into a box-office attraction is always interesting to our members. When you consider the small number of really good band attractions available and the large number of halls represented by my Association, you will begin to appreciate the significance of my remarks.

It is, I am told, the policy of "Musical Express" to encourage the discovery of new talent. If that is so, it is also the policy of my own organisation for the reasons outlined above. So now you have the reason for our joint efforts with Britain's most important entertainment newspaper. Between us we shall make it possible for entrants to compete in the National Dance Band Championship under ideal conditions. We shall make certain that their reward is worth while. The winners shall have nation-wide recognition— you have the guarantee of the Association of Ballrooms and "Musical Express" for this.

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says
W. C. UDEN

(Member of the National Dance Band Championship Organising Committee)



W. C. Uden

W. C. UDEN is Chairman of the Association of Ballrooms, Ltd. Part organiser of the "Star" and B.B.C. Dancing Club Championships. Also organiser of many Regional amateur and professional championships. Late owner of Ilford Palais de Danse. Managed touring features for C. L. Helmann of the Mecca Circuit. Forty years of practical experience with dance bands and dancing.

As Chairman of the Association of Ballrooms, Ltd. (and a member of the Organising Committee of the National Dance Band Championship) I think it would be fitting for me to explain the practical interest in this Championship shown by the organisation I represent and how we came to associate ourselves with "Musical Express" in this great undertaking. When you consider that we represent practically all the important ballrooms in this country, you will immediately realise that we are better enabled to promote a vast scheme like the National Dance Band Championship on a larger and more ambitious scale than any other organisation in this country, by reason of our size and influential membership.

In the first place the Association of Ballrooms was attracted to the scheme by reason of its national magnitude. Approached by "Musical Express" Official Organiser Jack Fallon, who has accepted that onerous task on behalf of that newspaper, my interest to musicians—were Al Berlin (Musical Director for Butlin's), Rowland Powell (proprietor of the Astoria Ballroom,

Leeds, and until recently a famous bandleader himself), my own secretary, Robert Browne, and Jack Fallon (who is a member of our Association and also the officially appointed "Musical Express" Organiser). This Committee joined up with the Managing Editor of "Musical Express," and from that moment things began to happen fast. You will now ask why the Association of Ballrooms has taken such a practical interest

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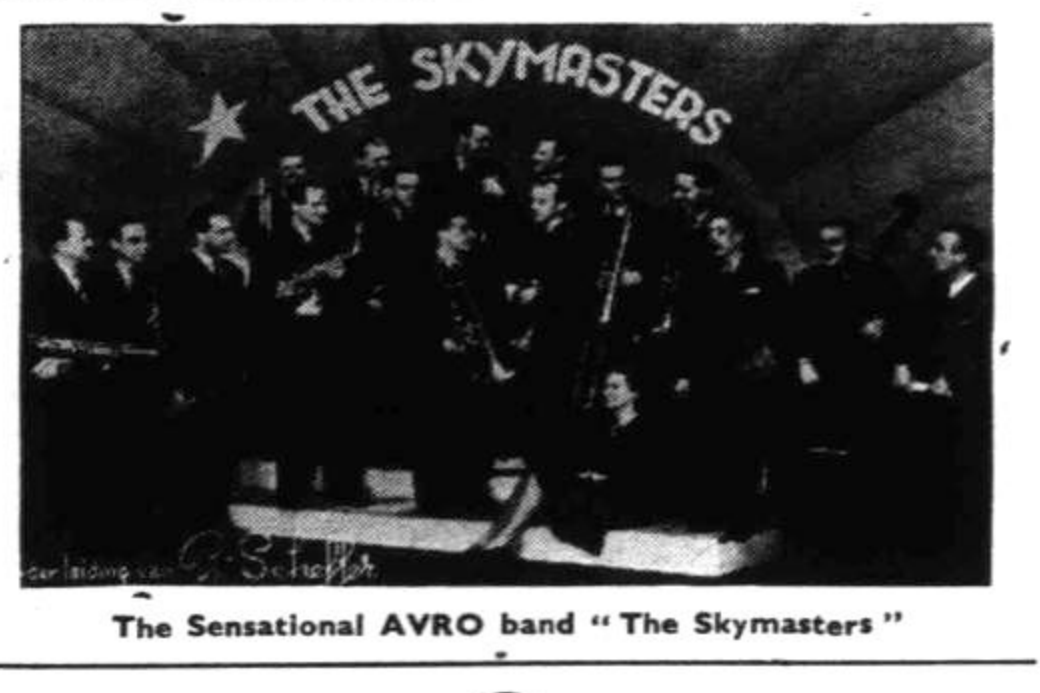
This bizarre but remarkable photograph of a conductor in action is of Alastair Royalt-Kisch who, as announced in these columns last week, has been signed up by Decca.

OPERA AT SADLER'S WELLS (Musical Express Operatic Critic)

At Sadler's Wells on Thursday, September 18, Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro" was given an enchanting performance. This opera is based on the famous Beaumarchais second of a set of three, the first being "The Barber of Seville" and the third "Le Métre Coupable." The Libretto is arranged with great skill by De Ponte, Italian poet (Jewish by birth), who makes Figaro, the hero, the mouthpiece for biting political satire. Ivor Evans plays the part with zest and becoming wit, his movement and gestures delighting the eye and giving points to the character. Rose Hill makes a gay little Susanna, her lovely voice, light in weight, is pure of tone. In Marian Lowes Countess Almaviva we have some good Mozartian singing, with the exception of her recitative in the third act in which there was a noticeable wobble in the voice and tendency to droop the head on one side. Our Cherubino, Anna Pollak, received much applause, living every moment of it. Howell Glynnne makes a most convincing Bartolo and has some lovely quality notes in his voice. But the beauty of the performance lay in the brilliant team-work rather than in any individual artist, for without exception the cast acted, sang and played their parts as though they had always lived in this particular setting. But why James Robertson who conducted the orchestra and cast with such skill and understanding should allow the delightful overture to be marred by such a speedy rendering is a mystery to me.

Den Berry, "Musical Express Special Correspondent" writes on: MUSIC IN HOLLAND

LAST Sunday, September 21, I saw the first Continental performance and broadcast of the Concerto for Piano and Orchestra by Leslie Bridgewater. This took place in Hilversum with Iris Loveridge as soloist, and the composer himself conducting. Accustomed as we are to Bridgewater's efforts in the field of light music, the Concerto, however, shows him in a hitherto unsuspected light. It is a thoroughly constructed composition on classical lines reflecting, perhaps, just a little of the piano concertos of Rachmaninoff, but nevertheless it has character of its own essentially as English as the composer himself. This performance by the Radio Omroep Orchestra was broadcast by one of the large Dutch Radio Societies, the AVRO, and took place in the concert studio of another broadcasting organisation KRO. Miss Loveridge was perfectly at ease in the rôle of soloist and Bridgewater enhanced his already excellent reputation as a musician by his restrained but forceful handling of the orchestra. This was most decidedly an auspicious occasion for British music on the Continent and it is interesting to note that further performances of the work are already scheduled in Stockholm, Oslo, Helsinki and Copenhagen with Iris Loveridge again as soloist and the composer conducting. Veering from the classical to dance music the popular AVRO dance band "The Skymasters" have everything it would take to cause quite a sensation in England. Their arrangements are terrific and they are versatile to the last degree, going from first class swing arrangements to fine commercials and also presenting rumbas and sambas as though they were a Latin American orchestra. The band broadcasts regularly from Hilversum and is easily picked up on approximately 450 metres in England.



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