

**Harry Edison**  
**SWEETS**—Cat 12" LP MG C-717: *Battering at the Washins; Used to Be Basic; How Deep is the Ocean; Studio Call; Wilton; Weep for Me; Opus 711; Love is Here to Stay; E. M. Blues; Walkin' with Sweetie.*  
 Personnel: Harry Edison, trumpet; Ben Webster, tenor; Barney Kessel, guitar; Jimmy Rowles, piano; Alvin Stoller, drums; Joe Mondragon, bass.

Rating: ★★★★★  
 Here is the essence of the muscular relaxation, the flowing swing, and the natural spontaneous expression of emotion that is the mainstream of jazz. The rhythm section gets a quality of wholly firm yet ball-bearing pulsation that has marked the best of the Basie sections.

The horns are definitions of jazz maturity—each has his own authoritative sound; each has conception that is logical, personal, and thoroughly heated

by inner emotional drive; each lets his statements breathe deeply in a phrasing that is neither rushed nor flaccid.

Each combines virility with sensitivity. I would only have wished for more time for big Ben, who plays some of his most moving horn on recent records here. Sweets is superb. Fine, tasty solos by Rowles and Kessel. An essential LP. (N.H.)

**Johnny Hamlin Quintet**

**'OLKA DOTS AND MOONBEAMS**—RCA Victor 12" LP LPM-1379: *Polka Dots And Moonbeams; Moonlight in Vermont; Cyclone; The Note Is Blue; Play, Fiddle, Play; I Remember April; Dancing on the Ceiling; Mood Indigo; El Gaucho; A Foggy Day; Summer Love; Battle of the Horns.*

Personnel: Hamlin, piano and electric accordion; Leland K. Busha Jr., reeds; Art Mooshagian, Jr., trombone and trumpet; Kenneth Earnes, bass; Donald Hamerath, drums.

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Rating: ★★  
 This is another in what, at times, seems like a series of pleasant, janz-edged combo albums issued regularly by Victor. The tunes are good, the performances tasteful, but there's little depth in the solos. The unison blowing is always interesting, largely because of the group's doubling ability.

Mooshagian sounds more at home on the trumpet, although his solos on trombone displayed a full sound and a tendency to quote, as on *Play, Fiddle, Play*, when he quotes from *That's A Plenty* and *Only a Rose* in the same solo. There's a Mulliganish tone to *Cyclone*. Hamlin, happily, comps and solos on the electric accordion without sounding at all reedish, the way too many accordions always come out. This, I suspect, is a group which could make a few sparks. (D.C.)

**Bobby Henderson**

**HANDFUL OF KEYS**—Vanguard 12" LP VBS 8511: *Keeping out of Mitchie's Naps; Jitterbug Waltz; Squawka Ma; Blue, Turning Gray over You; Ain't Misbehavin'; Handful of Keys; Blues for Fats; Sugar; Sweet Lorraine; Twelfth Street Rag.*

Personnel: Bobby Henderson, piano.

Rating: ★★★★★

John Hammond's most recent find is 46-year-old Bobby Henderson, whom John heard in Albany, N. Y., in the summer of 1956 and whom he had known many years before in New York before Henderson had left the city and devoted two decades of his life to a career as a singer-entertainer under the name of Jody Bolden in upstate New York.

Henderson, in his early years, notes Hammond, was "a disciple and friend" of Fats Waller, an accompanist for Billie Holiday, and began as a Harlem pianist in the '20s. He does not model himself entirely after Waller but "plays the same sort of piano."

On the first side of six tracks, Henderson plays Waller songs with the assurance of having been there. The second side begins with a 10-minute *Blues* that is the peak of the album. It is a distillation of classic blues, a constantly building, enriching self-assertion in the key basic language of jazz. All the interpretations are virile and striding-strong, but several could have displayed more improvisatory originality. Hammond promises further albums by Henderson as singer, trumpet player, and composer as well as pianist. (N.H.)

**Johnny Hodges**

**JOHNNY HODGES AND THE ELLINGTON ALL-STARS**—American Recording Society 12" LP G421: *Meet Mr. Rabbit; Duke's in Bed; Just Squawka Ma; Canfab with Rab; Ah Oodle Oodle; Ballads for Very Sad and Very Tired Lovers; It Had to Be You; Black and Tan Fantasy; Take the "A" Train.*

Personnel: Hodges, alto; Harry Carney, baritone; Billy Strayhorn, piano; Ray Nance, trumpet and violin (on Tracks 7 and 9); Jimmy Hamilton, clarinet; Quentin Jackson, trombone; Clark Terry, trumpet; Sam Woodyard, drums; Jimmy Woods, bass.

Rating: ★★★★★

This is the most consistently rewarding small Ellington unit set of sides since the classic Vocalions and Bluebirds of 1936-41. Rich, rocking, blue-boned relaxation is the mood of the whole set. The blowing is superb with Hodges having most of the solo space. *Rabbit* is one of the unquenchable voices, and there is, if anything, an increase rather than a diminution in his power, latent and overt, in this recent manifestation.

Generally, the other horns don't get as much solo stretching as I would