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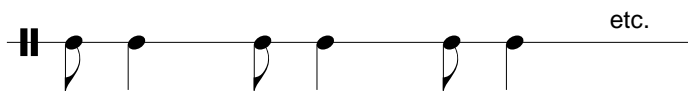
Hear the music examples marked  in the Members Only section of the PAS Web site at www.pas.org

New Ways to Use Old Exercises

BY SAM RUTTENBERG

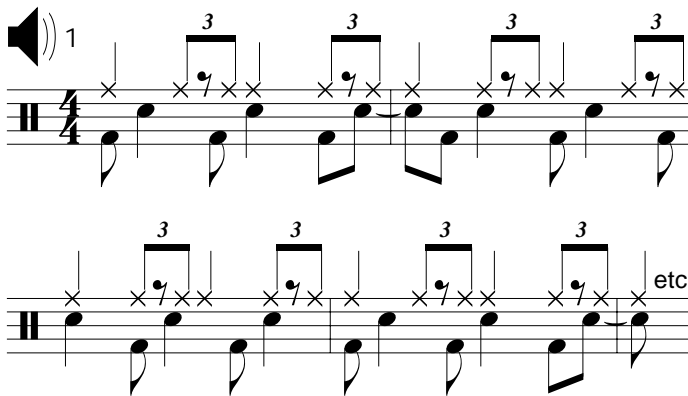
Studying with Joe Morello for the past few years has been a wonderful experience. Not only has my snare drum technique and drumset coordination improved, my mallet and timpani playing are better as well. Joe is always giving me new exercises on the drums that challenge me, and I find them to be quite fun. Many times, an exercise will spark a new approach of my own design. Here are a few.

Look at page 5 in the *Stick Control* book by George Lawrence Stone. Play all notes marked R with the bass drum and all the notes marked L on the snare drum. Next, instead of playing straight eighth notes as written, substitute a continuous pattern of an eighth note followed by a quarter note, and play with a swing feel.

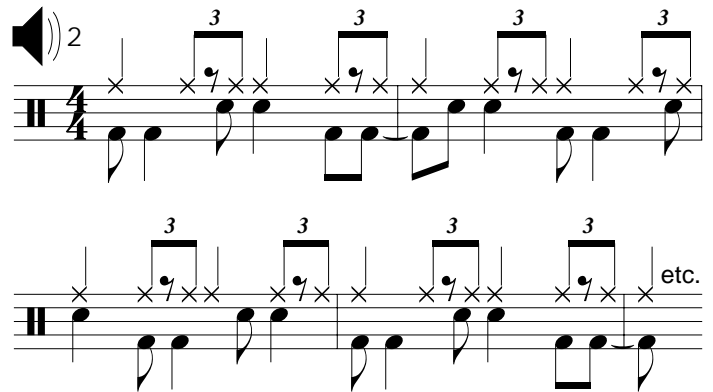


Now play that figure between the bass drum and snare drum (as explained above) while playing a swing pattern on the ride cymbal. This gets to be fun because as you apply the stickings from *Stick Control*, you'll be playing over the barline with the snare and bass, while maintaining a 4/4 pattern on the ride cymbal. You can also play hi-hat on beats 2 and 4 (or on all four beats, if you like).

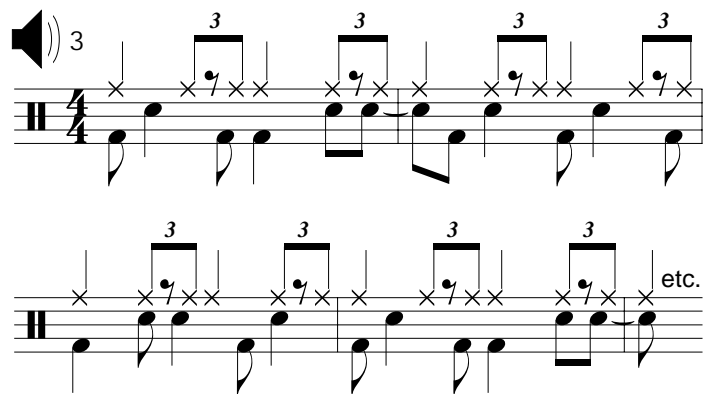
Applying all of this to *Stick Control*, pattern 1 (RLRL) would be:



Pattern 3 (RRLL) would be:



Pattern 5 (RLRR LLRL) would be:



Another exercise can also be developed from page 5 in *Stick Control*. This time, all rights are bass drum and all lefts are hi-hat. Swing the eighth notes so each pair of eighth notes sounds like the first and third notes of a triplet. Now put a snare drum ghost note inside the triplet with the left hand while playing the jazz ride pattern with the right hand.

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Pattern 1 (RLRL) would be:

Pattern 3 (RRL) would be:

Pattern 5 (RLRR LLRL) would be:

Finally, a great section on ostinatos in Joe's *Master Studies* book inspired this exercise. Play a triplet ostinato alternating between the bass drum and the floor tom. Now, from page 37 of Ted Reed's *Syncopation* book, play the top line on the snare drum with your left hand (with a swing interpretation). Play the hi-hat on all four beats or on 2 and 4.

Creating your own drumming exercises is fun. Let your imagination run wild. The possibilities are endless. And remember that practicing anything that is challenging will make you a better drummer, no matter what style you play.

Sam Ruttenberg teaches at the Settlement Music School in Philadelphia and Camden County College in New Jersey. He is also an active performer and clinician.

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