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As Recorded by the Meters

(From the Sundazed Recording THE METERS)

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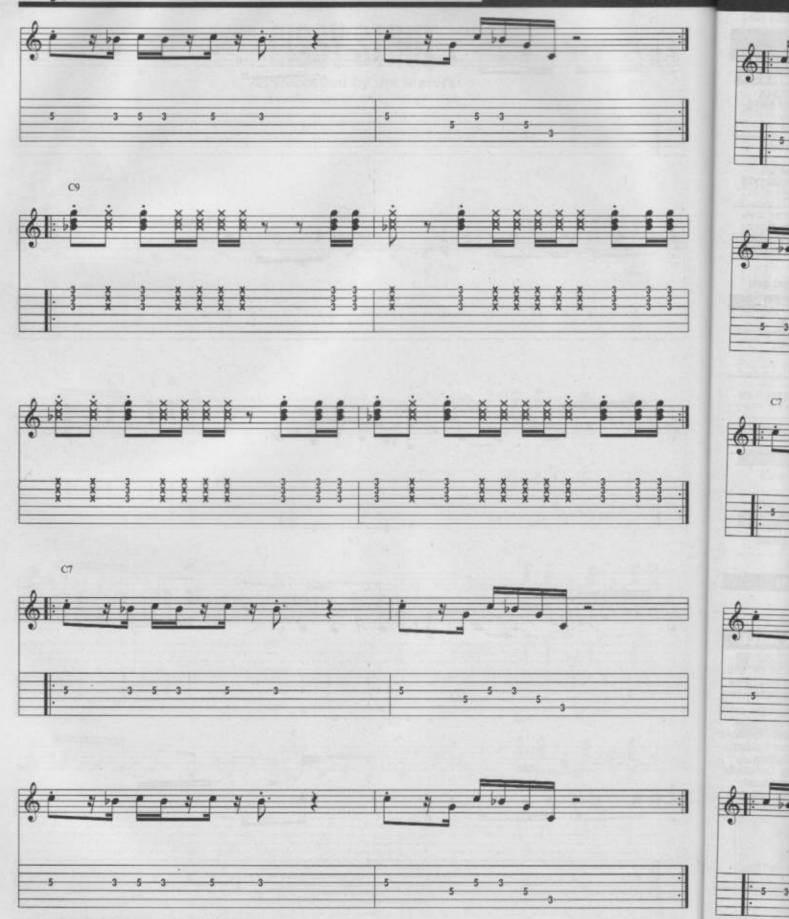


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"Take Your Whiskey Home" Van Halen

KEY NOTES By the time Women and Children Firstwas released in 1980, Van Halen were at the top of their game, yet with "Take Your Whiskey Home" it seemed they were still making an effort to expand on their sound. Eddie Van Halen opens this number-on an acoustic guitar that sounds as if it's strung with super-light strings-with a swinging blues feel and a highly improvisatory approach behind David Lee Roth's vocal. View the first and second full measures as the "riff

template" for the entire acoustic section, playing the partial barres at the 3rd and 5th frets on strings 2, 3, and 4. Whether you pick two or three of these strings (and which two you pick) is of little impor-



tance; your aim should be to give the riff a casual quality.

BIG PICTURE When the band enters, at the interlude (0:45), the first two full measures establish the second primary riff of the song, Keep the string slides here

long and slow, and be

sure not to rush them ahead of the beats on which they occur. Then watch for those cocking-the-shotgun accents in the measure before the 2nd verse starts (1:02); the proper counting for this part appears in Fig. 1, with the resting counts shown in parentheses. The riff that follows (verse 2, 1:05) is a tougher, leaner reading of the acoustic intro. Dig the key changes: G minor and A minor for the verse/chorus sections, B minor for the first solo, B minor and E minor for the second solo, and D minor for the outro. During his solo, Eddie whips out a few of his go-to fills; try Flg. 2 to wrap your head around his tapping-a-bent-string technique.

-- DOUGLAS BALDWIN

"Cissy Strut" The Meters

Children First

(Warner Bros.)

KEY NOTES Put a group of grooveoriented players together in any situation, and before long they're bound to pull out "Cissy Strut"-the undisputed champion of jam-session tunes. Though the key signature of this 1969 classic denotes C major, its tonality leans toward a Dorian/ Mixolydian hybrid (C-D-E-E-F-G-A-B-C). Notice how the first riff has both 67th (Bb) and b3rd (Eb) scale degrees, which indicates Dorian. Beneath this riff, a Hammond organ comps with syncopated C7 chords, which indicates Mixolydian.

Check out the oftenoverlooked C9 vamp [Fig. 1] guitarist Leo Nocentelli throws down at bar 25, for the keyboard solo. For the C9 chord fragment, barre your 1st finger at the



3rd fret, then relieve the tension some for the percussive scratches. Keep a constant 16th-note strumming motion

throughout this part, even when you're not striking the strings, to keep the groove tight.

BIG PICTURE To stay true to the tune's simple genius, and to establish a good pocket, play the riffs lazily—that is, slightly behind the beat—paying close attention to note duration and rests, as well as the staccato markings (introduced in bars 5 and 6). You might try using a slightly harder pick than usual, in order to cut through the mix. Also, try not to anchor your picking hand, instead letting it float just above the guitar's body; this will allow you to

play the single-note riffs with more of a strumming motion. As for Nocentelli's tone, try plugging into a Fender-style amp and dialing in a clean tone seasoned with a touch of old-fashioned spring reverb. Then grab any humbucker-equipped semi-hollow or hollowbody guitar and set the pickup selector to the middle position.

-CHRIS BUONO