



## **Cymbal Packet 2022**

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# SMI Cymbal Audition Packet

## 2022

**Thank you for your interest in auditioning for SM Percussion. We hope you are excited for a great season!**

### **Who Can Audition?**

Auditions are open to musicians ages 14 – to the max age required by WGI. Members interested in becoming a part of the indoor percussion activity, we invite you to audition for SM Independent Indoor Percussion.

There are lots of talented people that talk about going to auditions but never do because they are afraid of not making the ensemble. Our team is growing and there will be a lot of opportunities for you to learn and perform at the highest level. Please take every opportunity to ask questions and learn more about playing the instrument of your choice. EVERY spot in the ensemble is open and available each year to the people who audition. Absolutely no spot in the ensemble will be guaranteed to an individual until they have earned it.

### **Exercises / Audition Process**

Included in this packet are several exercises we will be going over during the audition process. Please come to the audition days prepared to play each exercise in a variety of tempos. We will not have time to “spoon-feed” notes throughout the audition weekends or rehearsal weekends, so, **BE PREPARED**. You should strive to have these exercises memorized. Overall, the purpose of the audition process is for you to show off what you are capable of and how well you respond to feedback - we want to see if you will be a good fit for the ensemble. Although we highly value humility, the auditions are your opportunity to show us what you’ve got.

At the first audition, we will spend a majority of our time defining and teaching the foundations of our technique.

This will include:

***Playing positions:*** vertical, horizontal, etc.

***Playing techniques:*** crashes, chokes, taps, sizzles, and other timbres/methods.

***Flips:*** variations, timing, pathways, quality of motion.

***Short visual and musical phrases:*** releases & reloads, simple to complex split patterns, visual sequences.

We will teach a few exercises that we use to break down and reinforce these visual and musical concepts, as well as a brief audition etude.

### **Audition Preparation:**

**Musicality:** While cymbals are often seen as a visual complement to the ensemble, they are in fact an instrument and will be played as such. We always approach cymbal playing with the best sound quality possible, whether it's a crash, a sizzle, or any other timbres you can imagine.

**Strength:** Cymbals are a very physical instrument that requires high levels of arm/shoulder/core control. While we will do plenty of strength training throughout the season, make sure you put in ample preparation before the audition that way you are not struggling with the physical side of the instrument, and can perform to the best of your ability. You should be able to hold the cymbals properly for extended periods of time, while standing still and while moving. You will need to develop and strengthen your arm, shoulder, back, and core muscles to ensure that you are able to achieve excellent posture and performance while holding and playing the cymbals. It is recommended you develop a regular physical workout routine to develop and prepare these muscles as soon as possible.

**Presentation:** What do we mean by presentation? This is how the line is viewed from an outside perspective. From how we rehearse to how we carry ourselves in the lot and in the show, we strive for a confident, stoic mentality that reflects our professionalism. At auditions, you will be presenting yourself to the staff as well as your fellow peers. Things we will be looking for: positive attitude, confident mentality, desire to learn, and how you interact with other auditionees.

**Visual:** For cymbals, the visual package includes the following: our flip ups/downs, playing positions, simple to complex visual sequences, as well as body/cymbal control while on the move. In everything you do visually, we encourage you to think about these concepts: accuracy, explosiveness, and control; these will be further defined at auditions.

**Attitude:** Above all, have a positive attitude and have fun. Come to auditions eager to learn and get better. Ultimately, YOUR efforts will decide how great this ensemble will be this year. This program is designed for you to learn, grow, have fun, and pursue excellence. The staff is here for you. If you have a question, ask us - we want to see you succeed. We are here because you are here, and our goal is to make you greater musicians and human beings by the end of the season.

We use a variety of terms as cymbal technique evolves.

We use the Eddie Capps Cymbal Technique 101 book and website for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWMDR5IC9txBcU2BKMkzmuw/videos>

We have these books for sale at a discount. An amazing resource for all percussionists.

**Musicality:** The purpose of good technique is to service producing good sounds. Tone quality is an essential consideration for every musician. In percussion playing tone quality is a factor of several factors, the most important of these factors being velocity and zone. While these are not the only factors, they will help us to begin our discussion of what constitutes a good sound. Great care should be taken to play in the exact center. Practice in front of a mirror can help you solidify your muscle memory but listening to your sound can be very helpful as well. Always listen to your sound.

Two of the most important ensemble sound concepts are those of balance and blend. Balance is essentially playing the same volume as the people you are playing with. An unbalanced sound is an immature sound. When your staff is making corrections to your volume, take care to remember the correction as this affects the overall sound of the ensemble. Blend comes from everyone in a section playing with the same tone quality at the same dynamic level. Always listen to your sound.

The concept of phrasing in an ensemble activity is quite different than phrasing in solo playing, although one informs the other. If the student does not have a solid concept of musicality, it will be very difficult to match this phrasing to other players and maintain a balanced sound. As a member of the cymbal line you should focus on developing a confident and consistent sound at each dynamic level and be able to perform crescendos and decrescendos of varying lengths. Once you are able to do that consistently as an individual, you should have the control to apply the levels of listening. The other challenge is knowing where your particular volume will fit into the overall shape of a phrase. Playing musically as an individual will inform your choices in the ensemble setting. Always listen to your sound.

As a performer you will be called upon to elicit different emotions through your sound. These different emotions will be conveyed through the style and interpretation of the music. In the drum corps world style is much narrower than in other areas of performance, but it is no less important. If you try to play the ballad with the same approach as the closer it will lack authenticity, and it will fail to connect to your audience. The use of touch in your playing will facilitate the communication of intent to your audience. Solo playing can help you to understand these concepts. Always listen to your sound.

***Do I need to bring my own cymbals?*** While we will have a couple pairs of cymbals available, it is highly recommended that you bring your own cymbals to the audition.

***I don't think I'm ready...I don't know if I should come to the audition.*** Yes, you are! The worst thing you can do is cut yourself from the audition, you never know what the possibilities are if you don't take that first step.

***How can I get stronger before the audition?*** Anything and everything, you can lift weights, go running, work on core strength exercises (sit ups, crunches, etc..). But the best way to get better at holding your cymbals is simply that; holding your cymbals. Try holding your cymbals up for a minute, then 2 minutes, and keep building from there.

***I've never played cymbals before, can I still come to auditions?*** We will be teaching all of our fundamentals at auditions. Experience is helpful, but by no means required; we still encourage you to come for a great learning experience!

## Ensemble Etiquette

**-Standby:** The “ready” posture. Sticks will be in the hands, down at your side, and feet together. One should be at this posture if called and/or if the directions have been stated.

**-Set:** The last posture before the rep starts. Sticks will move to the appropriate position (based on the chunk), and feet will move to a minus one if a visual phrase is involved.

**-Relax:** after all checking, adjusting, and comments have been given, a designated member will give the signal to go to a relaxed position to receive more information/instructions. -

**-Reset:** after all relevant comments to the previous rep have been given, reset will be called. At this point, no more talking should occur, and everyone should be fully focused on the next rep at hand.

**-Sticks Down:** Our standard is sticks up on beat 7 of the count-off, down on the following beat 3 after the last note. Scenarios will be varied and unique. There will be different scenarios defined and it is expected that this definition be executed as a part of each exercise/show chunk.

**-Mark Time:** A natural 45° turn out in music only scenarios. The whole foot (as opposed to heel only) strikes the ground percussively at the designated rhythm/tempo. “Play the earth drum.” Although the foot does not make a sound intended to be in the score, you should approach it as if it does. **A “Ski-Line” (both feet 0°) foot position will be used for tracking** to simulate visual rep foot positions. Foot timing should be thought about first and foremost, as it sets up the music to be correct and consistent.

**-Stick Etiquette:** Sticks will start where they are within that chunk before the rep begins. If we start a chunk sticks down, they will be there when set is called. If we are in the middle of a phrase, sticks will assume that position (in/out, up/down) when set is called.

**-Listening:** Our brains and ears automatically hear anything within range of being interpreted. Listening is the second conscious step of “repeating to one’s self” or evaluation of what the heard instructions mean. It takes a mental rep to go from hearing to listening. It may seem trivial, but the actual conscious reputation of this is very significant. The times that you don’t consciously make the decision are left up to chance. **Listening and receiving information and instructions is critical to the safety and success of the ensemble.**

**Positions:**

For the first audition, we would like for you to have a general understanding of the following positions:

- **Set**
- **Hip Rest**
- **Horizontal**
- **Vertical**

**Set**

The set position is our home base, or "attention" position. For set, your cymbals will be slightly behind the seam of your pants and about 2 fingers distance away from your body. You'll want to keep the elbows out and away from our body, with a slight bend. The goal with our set position is to look as strong as possible, while also being as relaxed as possible. This can only be maximized by standing with tall, lifted posture; the ribcage is lifted upwards and out of the hips by engaging the core muscles, body weight is presented slightly forward and not in the heels.



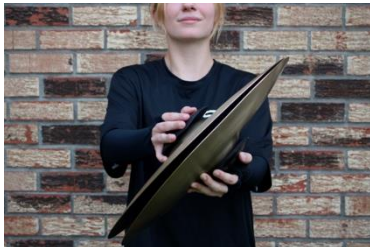
## Hip Rest

Hip Rest is not used as often as our other positions but is still an important position to be comfortable with for visual purposes. At hip rest, we look for a V shape with the cymbals in front of our body. The same 2 finger displacement from the set position will be the distance between the bottom edges of our cymbals. We use the wrists and fingertips to manipulate the cymbals in order to prevent the knots from flaring out forwards or angling too deeply inwards. Much like the set position, the goal is to have strong elbows while also remaining as relaxed as possible.



## Horizontal

Horizontal is the position that we generally spend the majority of our time using. It is not quite a true "horizontal" angle, but instead you want the cymbals to be in line with your body as if you were wearing a seat belt in a car. This angle should be just slightly more than a 45-degree angle, as well as maintaining a 2 fingers distance between the cymbals. Your cymbals will be in line with the center of your chest and should be a nice comfortable distance away from your body (not too close, not fully extended). Much like all of our other positions, the goal is to look big and strong, while also staying as relaxed as possible.



## **Vertical**

Vertical is our other most commonly used position; unlike horizontal, this position is much truer to its name. The knots of the cymbals should be in line with your eyes, whereas the common tendency is to hold this position slightly lower than necessary. Much like Horizontal, you want to be a comfortable distance away from your body. The cymbals should be 2 fingers distance apart all the way around at vertical as well.



## **Audition Materials:**

As part of the audition process, we would like for you to come prepared with the following exercises to the first audition:

- **Flip Exercise A**
- **Flip Exercise B**
- **Horizontal Crash Breakdown**
- **Ladder (Vertical Crash Breakdown)**
- **Horizontal Crash Choke Breakdown**
- **Vertical Crash Choke Breakdown**

We will go over each of these exercises briefly at auditions, but again, the expectation will be that you come prepared to perform each exercise to the best of your ability. Along with instructions for each exercise there is a YouTube video accompanying each description, to help give you a better idea of how exactly to perform each assignment.

## Flip Exercise A

This exercise breaks down our normal flips, starting slow and then building up speed to our regular "fast" flips. This exercise is composed of four parts: 3 count flips, 2 count flips, fast flips every 4 beats, and fast flips every 2 beats). No matter the count structure, the pattern you will follow will always be as such:

1. **Hip Rest**
2. **Horizontal**
3. **Vertical**
4. **Set**
5. **Vertical**
6. **Set**

The "3 count" flips are actually 2 full beats, so you can think about starting the motion on 1 and ending on 3.

The "2 count" flips are actually 1 full beat, so you can think about starting the motion on 4 and ending on 1.

The fast flips are thought of as instantaneous. While physically impossible, the goal is to start and stop the motion on beat 1. For these flips, you may find it helpful to *wait longer, move faster, hit harder*.



## Flip Exercise B

This exercise breaks down our flips that use contrary motion, where the hands perform different tasks simultaneously (often referred to as Sones/Jones /Bones flips). Flip Exercise B comprises of the same exact count structure as Flip Exercise A, however the pattern that you will follow for each part is different.

1. **Horizontal**
2. **Vertical**
3. **Horizontal**
4. **Set**

The first flip from Set to Horizontal is a normal flip every time you encounter it. All of the following flips will always be contrary motion (left hand does an inward flip, whereas the right hand will do an outward flip).

## Horizontal Crash Breakdown

The Horizontal Crash Breakdown, much like the Flip Exercises, starts slowly and eventually builds up to our normal crash technique. The pattern you will follow for this exercise is as follows:

1. **Prep** Cymbals will open from a bend in each wrist, maintaining the same "seatbelt" horizontal angle. Your right bicep should come back to parallel with your upper body. Imagine a clamshell opening towards you.
2. **Hit** Point of contact, right cymbal touches down into the left, roughly at a 3-4 cm displacement.
3. **Crash** The right cymbal motivates the crash by pushing through the left cymbal and extending straight forward, this will reset the left cymbal to horizontal.
4. **Set** Right cymbal sharply resets to horizontal position.



Throughout this exercise, you will repeat the pattern twice for each count structure.

Every 4 counts (2x)

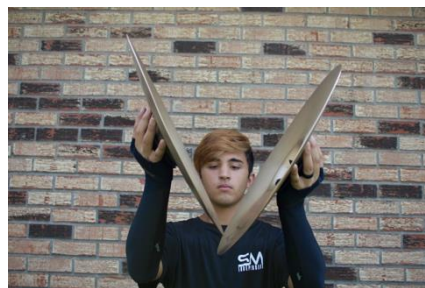
Every 2 counts (2x)

Every count (2x)

After going through each set twice, you will then rest for 4 beats, prep on beat 4, play a horizontal crash on 1, and reset back to horizontal on the following beat 3. You'll repeat this one more time before finishing the exercise.

### **Ladder (Vertical Crash Breakdown)**

The Ladder Exercise establishes our preps for vertical crashes, and then eventually ends with finally playing a crash. The vertical crash pattern we use at Atlanta Quest is an "AV" prep and follow through. Before playing a crash, you will open up from the bottom to an "A", then switch to a "V" with a "right over left" displacement. The crash begins with contact at the bottom of the cymbal that "rolls" through to the top, which will reset you to an "A". You'll then follow through the crash motion back into a "V" before finally resetting to Vertical. After going through this pattern (without a crash) every 4 counts, every 2 counts, and then every count, you'll then practice our standard vertical crash prep with a "liquid tension" follow through, and finally go through the "liquid tension" prep one last time actually playing a crash. The only difference in the "liquid tension" preps is that there is a legato follow through after the crash to the "A", followed by a staccato reset to the "V" and back to Vertical.



## Horizontal Crash Choke Breakdown

For the Horizontal Crash Choke Breakdown, you will play a normal crash, but the choke will be offset to count 3, then count 2, then on one. The goal of offsetting the choke is to establish a quality crash sound, that is unaffected by moving to the choke. The pattern for this exercise is as follows :



1. Prep on 8, Crash on 1, Choke on 3, Reset on 5 (x2)
2. Prep on 8, Crash on 1, Choke on 2, Reset on 5 (x2)
3. Prep on 8, Crash on 1, Choke on 1, Reset on 5 (x2)

Generally, our reset after a crash choke will be on count 3, but for the sake of the exercise, it will always fall on count 5. After playing the final crash choke, you will push down back to set, instead of resetting back to horizontal.

## Vertical Crash Choke Breakdown

The Vertical Crash Choke Breakdown follows the exact same pattern and count structure as the Horizontal version, just at the vertical position.



**Orchestra Crash** - The most common of the crashes, this technique is made by moving the right and left hand in opposite vertical directions after impact. For example: After the impact, bring the right hand up and the left hand down. The original impact should occur about shoulder or chest level with cymbals in the vertical position (|| like this). All cymbal crashes, with the exception of the crash choke, should be left to ring until the next note is played. These crash notations are what the composers suggest, meaning other crash techniques can be interchanged.

**Flat Crash** - Begin with the cymbals at waist level at the horizontal position (= like this). The left or bottom hand should remain stationary. Cock the right hand back towards the shoulder in preparation for the impact. Slam the right hand down to meet the left, slightly overshooting the edge in order to not produce a vacuum or air pocket. After the impact, follow through by fully extending the right arm forward, letting both cymbals ring.

**Port Crash** - This is a variation of the orchestra crash (described above). It follows the same attributes with the exception of the impact position, which is at eye level. This technique often begins with the hand either in the V or upside-down V (like this") position. This crash is mainly used for big impact points with a more aggressive attack and more exaggerated follow through.

**Crash-Choke** - The basic concept of a crash choke is to perform a crash (as described above) and then choke the cymbals by pressing them against the body in order to stop the ring. Depending on the original crash technique will determine how and where the cymbals are choked. The choke should occur instantly after the crash. No matter the duration of the note (1/4, 8th or 16th) the choke should happen on the next 16th note. For example, if you executed this technique on beat 1, the choke would occur on the E (1, E, & a) of the beat same beat.

**Hi- Hat** - Also referred to as the choke or hinge choke, this technique is similar to the closing of a drum set hi-hat. The cymbals should start at the horizontal position, (= like this or this//) about waist level. The bottom hand, usually the left, remains stationary as the front of the top cymbal is lifted vertically. The back of the top cymbal should remain in contact with the back of the bottom cymbal and in contact with the player's mid- section. Slap the top cymbal down and immediately follow through by bringing it back up. Hi-hats are usually played sequentially, meaning a group of more than 1 so, the follow through is also used as the prep for the next.

**Crunch** - Slam or crush as it is also referred to as this technique commonly starts out in the horizontal position (= like this or this//). Preparation includes raising the right or top hand up about 3 inches from the left or bottom hand. Keeping the cymbals aligned slam the top cymbal onto the bottom. The cymbals should remain pressed together allowing for a crisp staccato impact and no follow through or ring.

**Sizzle** - Sometimes called slide, this is a difficult one to explain without getting too technical. Start off in the horizontal position (=like this or this//) about waist level. Bring the right hand or top hand back towards the shoulder, as a preparatory motion. Bring the top hand forward sliding it against the stationary bottom hand. Relax the top or right hand so the sizzle sound is sustained. If the sizzle notation is not tied to a suck (explained below) it should be allowed to ring until it has fizzled out or until the next note needs to be played.

**Sizzle-Suck** - The basis of this method is to simply apply the sizzle and then the hi-hat "suck" technique. The sound it produces should be reminiscent of the opening and closing of a drum set hi-hat.

**Tap** - Begin by placing the hands in the " (upside down V) position. Tap the inside edge of the right cymbal on the tip of the left cymbal. This technique is usually executed at eye level.

**Tap-Choke** - Performed the same as a tap, simply apply a choke by pressing the cymbals against the body after the tap. Duration before the choke follows the same concept as the crash-choke. No matter the duration of the note (1/4, 8th or 16th) the choke should happen on the next 16th note. For example, if you executed this technique on beat 1, the choke would occur on the E (1, E, & a) of the beat.

**Scrape** - Begin by placing the left-hand cymbal in a vertical position. Place right cymbal at edge of bell inside left cymbal at a 45-degree angle. Press right cymbal into left as you lift right cymbal scraping right cymbal edge against left cymbal inner side. This technique is usually executed at eye level.

## Background

Every style of crash in this packet has 2 important components to help produce the best sound possible. Those 2 components are the **grace note**, and the **primary note**. In the rudimental drumming community, this is called a **Flam**. There will always be one part of the cymbal that makes contact before the remainder of the cymbal actually hits. A fast and small flam produces a brighter, richer sound. A wide, slow-moving flam produces a dark and dull sound. If you attack with 2 parallel cymbals and there is no flam at all, the cymbals will only release the air that was trapped inside, creating a "**pop**" sound.

Another very important tool to improve your sound quality, minimize finger contact with the cymbal on the crash. When you play your crash, lift your fingers, and get them off the cymbals. Your fingertips cut off more sound than you think. They are a dampening system. Work on keeping your fingers on the cymbals for better control of pictures, but when you play a crash, stretch your fingers and get them off the cymbal.

Unlike the rest of the battery section, the weight of our instrument rests solely on our hands and arms. Though they do not weigh much, the cymbals do start to put on some mass as time goes on. There is a physical demand on this instrument, be mindful of that.

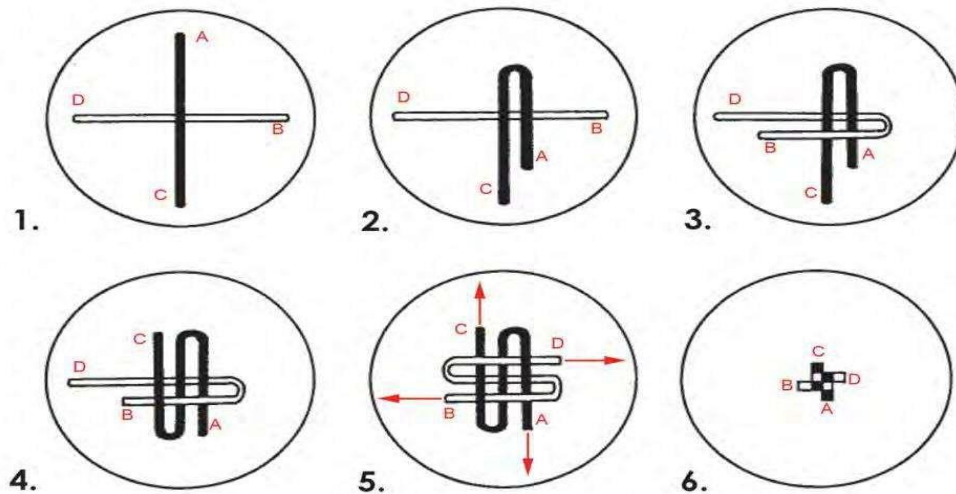
If you have the opportunity to pick up a set of cymbals, know that the images you will see in first-person are different from an outside perspective. What I mean by that, many positions in this packet, from your point-of-view behind the cymbals, they will never be bladed angles. This applies mainly to the Port Set, Drop Crash, Tap Set, and Gong Set. Be sure to practice in front of a mirror to see and feel the difference of first-person perspective, and an outside eye's perspective. You should always see the inside of the cymbal, everyone else should see a blade.

One common misconception about cymbals is that your hands need to be in line with each other, pointed forward, **False**. Be sure, as you will see in the images, to maintain a straight line from your middle finger, all the way down to your elbow. I say this to avoid pain and injury of the wrist. Your fingers should never deviate from the angle your elbow and forearm create. I cannot stress this enough, please, please focus on this as we go on.

**And lastly, in cymbal-land, this instrument requires more of a mental demand than a physical demand. They get heavy yes, but your mind is much stronger than your body.**

## The Turkish Knot

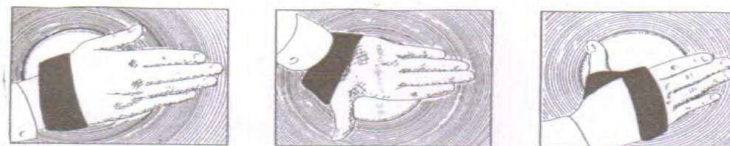
The Turkish Knot will secure the strap, so the cymbal does not fall off. Be sure to place a penny on the center of the strap to help create a perfect square once the knot is complete.



## The Garfield Grip

### *The Garfield Grip*

1. Hold the cymbal in a vertical position and put your hand through the strap up to the wrist.
2. Turn the hand so the palm is facing away from the pad of the cymbal.
3. Rotate the entire hand downward and turn the palm toward the cymbal until it touches the pad. The strap should rest at the base of the thumb and forefinger.



From  
"Marching  
Concepts"  
by Thom  
Hannum

The Garfield Grip gives the best handle of the cymbals. With this, we can treat the cymbals as an extension of our hands and body. We will do a slight adjustment from this grip. Refer to image 3, the strap **will not** be lying parallel to our knuckles, and the strap over the thumb will be closer to the wrist, we **do not** want any stress on any knuckle. Get the strap higher on the wrist to avoid being over the thumb knuckle and get the point of the strap closer to the pointer knuckle.

### Jedi 8ths



### 8NT



Be able to play the Accents of 16<sup>th</sup> note and Triplet Grid

### Triplet Grid



### 16th Note Grid



## *Symbull Thang*

HiHats until m. 15

Cymbals

5 SizSuck

Cym.

9 SizSuck SizSuck Clicks

Cym.

13 Clicks 3 Clicks 3 Crashes Choke Press 17

Cym.

18

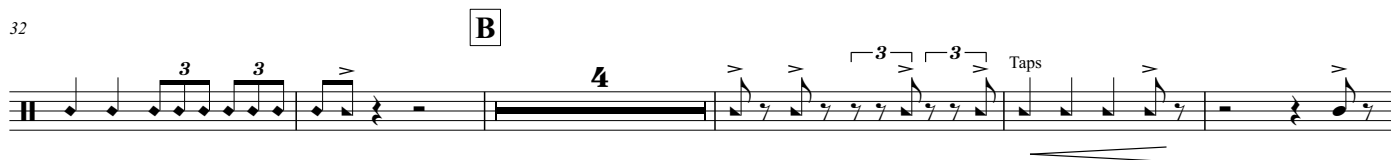
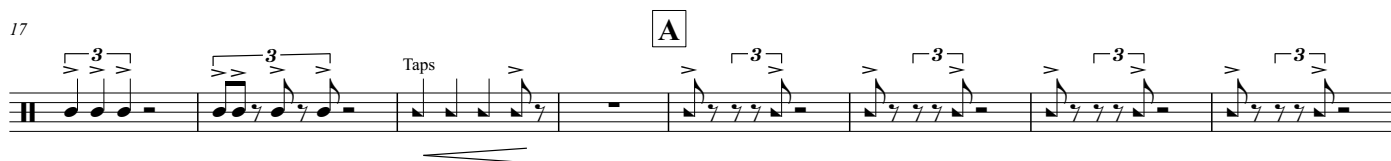
Cym.

# Cymbal Line

## Rollz SMI Rolls

Spencer Davis

♩ = 160 +



SMI 2021  
**Para-Dox****Tempo** ♩ = 180 +

HiHat Sizz - Suck Taps

ALL 1 2 3 4

9

**A**

12 34 4 3 2 1 4 34 12 13 24 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 4 3 2 4 3 2 4

15

1 2 3 1 2 3 4 3 2 4 3 2 14 23 14 2 3 4 2 3 4 2 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 3 4 2 3 4 2 13 24 13

**B**

13 24 13 24

29

**C**

2 13 24 13 24 Vis 3

**D**

**E**

4 3 2 1 4 2 3 4 1 2

**F**

Bell

123 123 4 123 123 123 4 123 123 123 4 1 4 ff