

# When Swing Was the Thing

## Peanuts Hucko Septet

**PERSONNEL:** Hucko (clarinet), Butterfield (trumpet), Richman (tenor), Jones (piano), Lowe (guitar), Lesberg (bass), Feld (drums).

**Items:** "Seven Come Eleven," "On the Alamo," "Soft Winds," "Poor Butterfly," and "Avalon."

This programme harks back to the days when Benny was King and swing was the thing. Maybe it was because swing was fairly simple; maybe it was because it tried to appeal to public taste; maybe it was because it had such a swinging beat—whatever the reason, this type of light subtle, driving swing with its fresh and interesting sounds took charge in the mid-thirties and early forties, ousting most of the earlier and less polished forms of jazz.

The Peanuts Hucko Septet recreates the mood set originally by the Benny Goodman Septet which featured such musicians as Georgie Auld, Cootie Williams, Charlie Christian, Johnny Guarneri and Davey Tough. The result is relaxed and tasty, with Butterfield sounding very much like Cootie Williams in places, Richman blowing in grand style, and the rhythm section in admirable form.

"Seven Come Eleven" is the pick of the tracks. It opens with great drive, mainly provided by Feld's sizzling cymbals, and maintains this fine beat throughout. Listen especially for the trumpet work here—it's beautiful.

Richman opens on "On the Alamo," playing in the Georgie Auld vein and

Butterfield suggests "Pennies from Heaven" in his statement of the theme.

Butterfield (à la Cootie) is again audible in "Soft Winds," leading the ensemble in this medium paced version. Both Butterfield and Richman have solo spots and make the very most of them. I was always thrilled by the Cootie Williams growl, which Butterfield emulates here so convincingly, and Richman's tenor contribution is rich and swinging. The only drawback on the track, if not on the whole programme, is Hucko's rather thin tone.

Hucko starts "Butterfly" off with just rhythm backing and Lowe follows in with a slightly belaboured solo compared with those on other tracks. Jones has a larger solo spot here and makes the most of it. Butterfield and Richman are also featured, extremely melodious and pleasant jazz resulting.

There is rather an unusual opening to "Avalon," which creates the mood for Butterfield's entry on this occasion without the growl. Richman follows and then Jones and Lowe vie for solos. This is a more modern approach than that employed on previous tracks, but Hucko recreates the mood with two Goodman-like choruses, the last half-chorus with instrumental backing winding up the set.

If you are a lover of the better product of the swing era (which, it must be admitted, did subject the listener to some awful rubbish at times), then this is the session for you.

**First Playing:** Station 2YA, July 15, 10.44 p.m.

## Here's Joe Burton

**Personnel:** Burton (piano), Compo (bass), Marks (drums).

Joe Burton is not a top name in the realms of jazz, but in this album entitled *Joe Burton Session*, he offers a collection of listenable and swinging standards to both jazz fan and less sophisticated listener. One side of this LP constitutes this programme, and at a later date the other side will receive national airing.

Burton worked in his teens as accompanist for vocalists Jane Russell and Anita O'Day, but it was not until Al "Jazzbo" Collins established him in New York that the public began to take notice of what he had to offer.

In his music there are traces of Bud Powell, Lennie Tristano and Erroll Garner, and the faintest suggestion of Johnny Guarneri.

There are 12 tracks on the disc, and I found three particularly enjoyable. "Sometimes I'm Happy," with its different harmonic approach, using major sevenths on the main phrase of the melody and quite a lot of single note work. "Please Don't Talk About Me" is played gently and sweetly with the occasional Guarneri touch.

Joe's is a new name on the jazz scene, but don't let that put you off. His style is one that should appeal to most, especially that employed on the three titles mentioned.

**First Playing:** Station 2YA, July 15, 10.30 p.m.

## Jazz at the Philharmonic

**Personnel:** (a) Oscar Peterson Trio—Peterson (piano), Ellis (guitar), Brown (bass); (b) Gene Krupa Quartet—Shu (tenor, alto, trumpet, clarinet), Scott (piano), Mitchell (bass), Krupa (drums).

These tracks constitute the best offerings made by the two groups during their 1955 national tour with JATP (I doubt the accuracy of this album note).

We hear five items from the Peterson trio, ranging from the relaxed "Easy Does It" to the frantic "Budo." The musicians demonstrate their teamwork and individual artistry, but all are apt to go in for pyrotechnics for their own sake. This is understandable for jazz concert presentations, but can be rather wearing on the radio listener. The musical substance of some of the compositions is too weak for their drawn-out exposition, and here is one case where more and shorter tracks would have made the record more acceptable.

The less said about the Krupa quartet, the better. This sort of thing can kill jazz, and Norman Granz is doing irreparable harm by releasing such rubbish under the guise of jazz.

Krupa makes two offerings here, neither musical. "Sleepy Lagoon," a composition most unsuitable for jazz presentation, is subjected to one of the corniest arrangements ever. We don't hear anything from Krupa on this one and it is just as well, because we get it all in the second offering, "Sing, Sing, Sing."

This is the ultimate in tastelessness and meaningless noise. Scott turns on a meaningless piano solo and then Krupa takes over. I put up with proceedings for another five minutes and then turned the machine off—I just couldn't stand any more.

This Krupa set will surely qualify as the worst programme in 1957.

**First Playing:** Station 2YD, July 11, 9.0 p.m.

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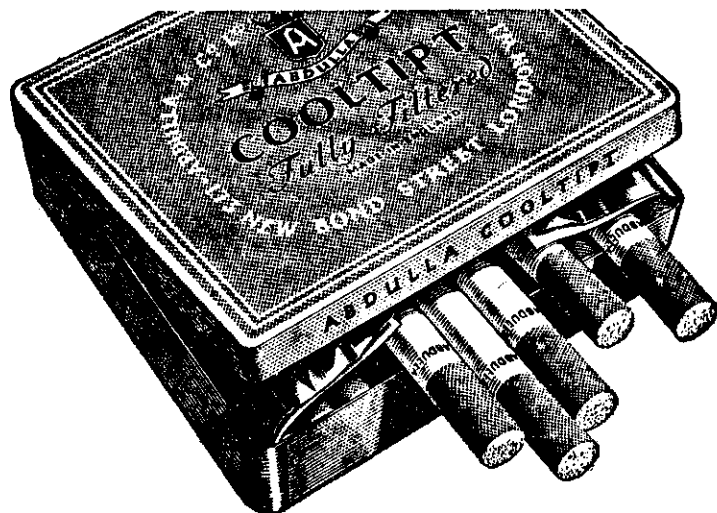
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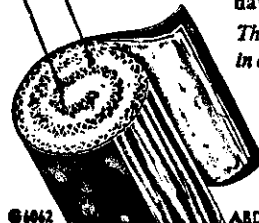


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