Laker Drumline

Marching Tenor Drum Technique

This packet is intended to define a base framework of knowledge to adequately play a set of tenor drums at the collegiate level. We understand that every high school drumline has its own approach to technique, so it's crucial that ALL prospective members approach their hands with a fresh mind and a clean slate. Mastery of the following concepts & terminology will dramatically improve your experience during the audition process and beyond. Happy drumming!

APPROACH

The technique outlined in this packet is designed to maximize efficiency of motion and sound quality. It is necessary to use a high velocity stroke while keeping your grip and your muscles relaxed. Keep these key points in mind as you work to refine the music in this packet. Tension in your upper body, lack of oxygen to your muscles, and squeezing the stick are good examples of technique errors that will hinder your ability to achieve the sound quality, efficiency, and control that we strive for.

GRIP

- **Fulcrum**
  - Right hand – about 1/3rd up from the butt end of the stick, point of pressure should be between the first knuckle on your index finger (the one closest to the tip of the finger) and the pad of the thumb.
- **Back Fingers**
  - Right hand – the remaining three fingers should wrap comfortably around the stick, with the shaft of the stick sitting toward the cup of your fingers.
- **Common Mistakes**
  - Losing the fulcrum. If it is in the correct place, there should be little to no space visible between your thumb and index finger.
  - Stick angled more down the middle of the palm rather than in the cup of the fingers.

PLAYING POSITION

- **Arms**
  - With both sticks in hand, begin by relaxing both arms at your side.
  - Keeping your upper arms and shoulders relaxed, rotate from the elbow until you reach a height where your sticks and forearms are angled slightly down toward the drum head.
  - Elbows should hang comfortably at your sides, not too far from your body and not too close.
- **Hands**
  - Rotate each hand slightly so the back of your hand is pointing a few degrees out rather than straight up, almost like a matched grip/French grip hybrid. This is to get rid of a potential source of tension as well as to allow you to keep your elbow relaxed at your side.
- **Common Mistakes**
  - Holding elbows too far from your body, a “chicken wing” look.
  - Holding elbows too close to your body, restricting mobility and range of motion.
  - Setting playing surface too high or too low, likely resulting in one of the above errors.

STROKE TYPES

These basic stroke breakdowns are the most barebones skeleton for breaking down all of your music. Every stroke you play is a combination of your arms, wrists, and fingers working together. We will never go in depth defining every stroke for every note you play, however, it is essential to have an understanding of the mechanics of your stroke. To easily define them without visuals, we will use points A, B, and C. The starting point of the stroke is “point A”, whatever the stick height is before the bead starts moving down at the head. “Point B” is your bead striking the drum in the center of the head. “Point C” is wherever your stick rebounds to after striking the drum and before beginning the next stroke.

- **Upstroke**
  - Low to high. Most commonly a tap followed by an accent. Point A is a lower dynamic (usually 3”), followed by point B, and point C is some dynamic higher than point A.
- **Downstroke**
  - High to low. Most commonly an accent followed by a tap. Point A is a higher dynamic, followed by point B, and point C is some dynamic lower than point A (usually 3”).
- **Full stroke**
  - Also called legato stroke. In a sequence of full strokes, every stroke should look exactly the same and be smooth and connected. Point A is whatever the given dynamic may be, followed by point B, and point C is the same as point A.

DYNAMICS

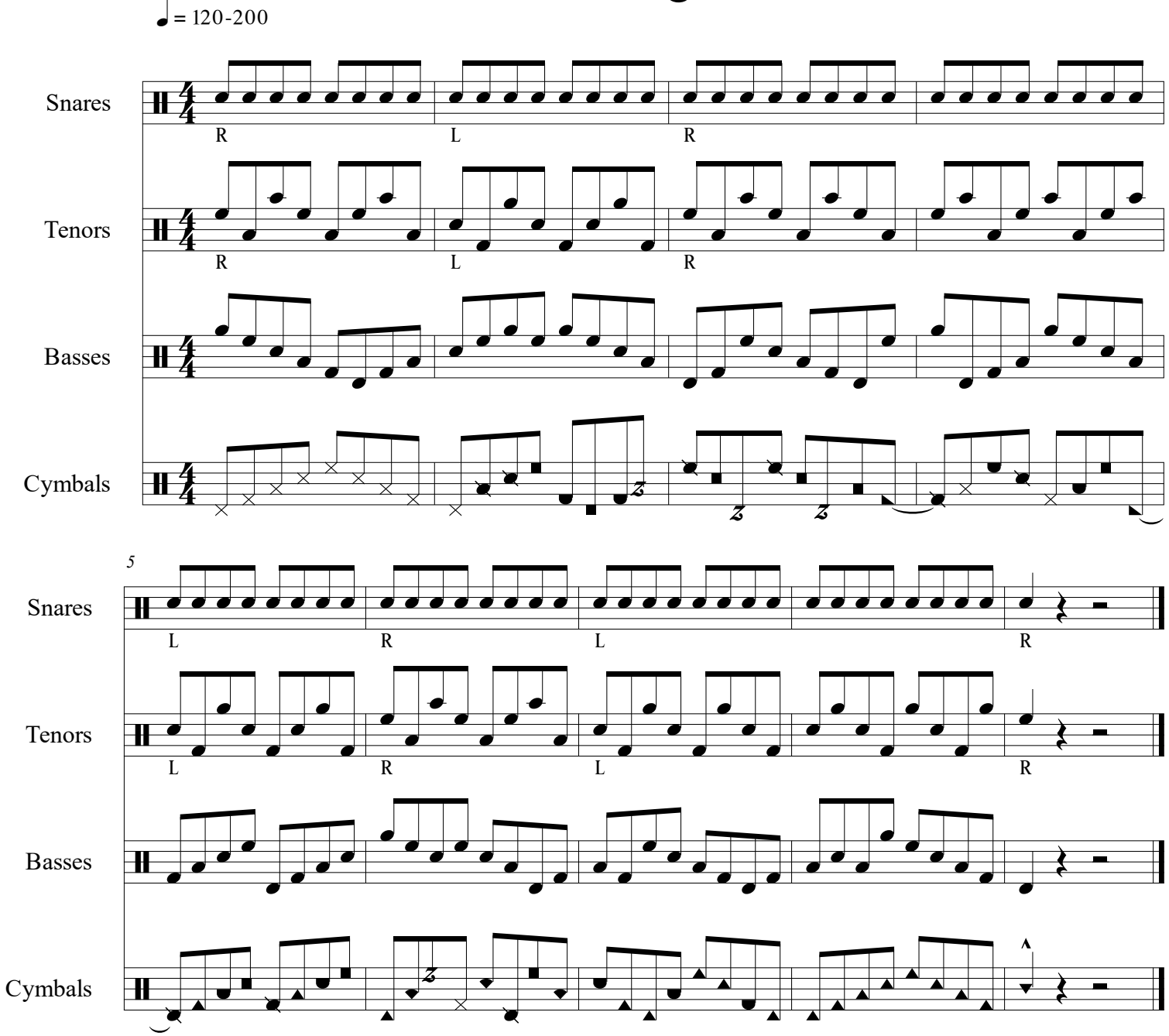
We will use dynamics and heights to define all music. We will also use stick angles to help everyone agree on what these dynamics should look like.

- **Tacet** – sticks angled slightly down toward drum head, beads 1” above center of head
- ***1” / pp*** – from tacet height.
- ***3” / p*** – sticks parallel to the ground (0 degrees). Tap height can be given leeway sparingly, depending on around parts.
- ***6” / mp*** – sticks at 22.5 degrees (halfway between 0 and 45 degrees)
- ***9” / mf*** – sticks at 45 degrees (halfway between 0 and 90 degrees)
- ***12” / f*** – sticks slightly below vertical
- ***15” / ff*** – vertical sticks (90 degrees)
- ***RFL! / fff*** – as loud as possible (Really Freakin’ Loud!)

** *Unless otherwise specified, the notated dynamic will refer to the stick height of the accents, with the inner beats remaining at 3”.*

Score

GV Eights



Variations:

- Any accent pattern/dynamic
- Crescendo/Decrescendo (each hand exchange, or entire exercise)
- Double Beat (1e, a2, &a, e&, 4 &)
- Triple Beat (1e&, 2e&, 3e&, 4e&)

Tenors:

- More around patterns will be added over time

Bass:

- Unison
- Split 1s, 2s, 3s, 4s (8th notes, 16th notes, Sixtuplets, 32nd Notes)

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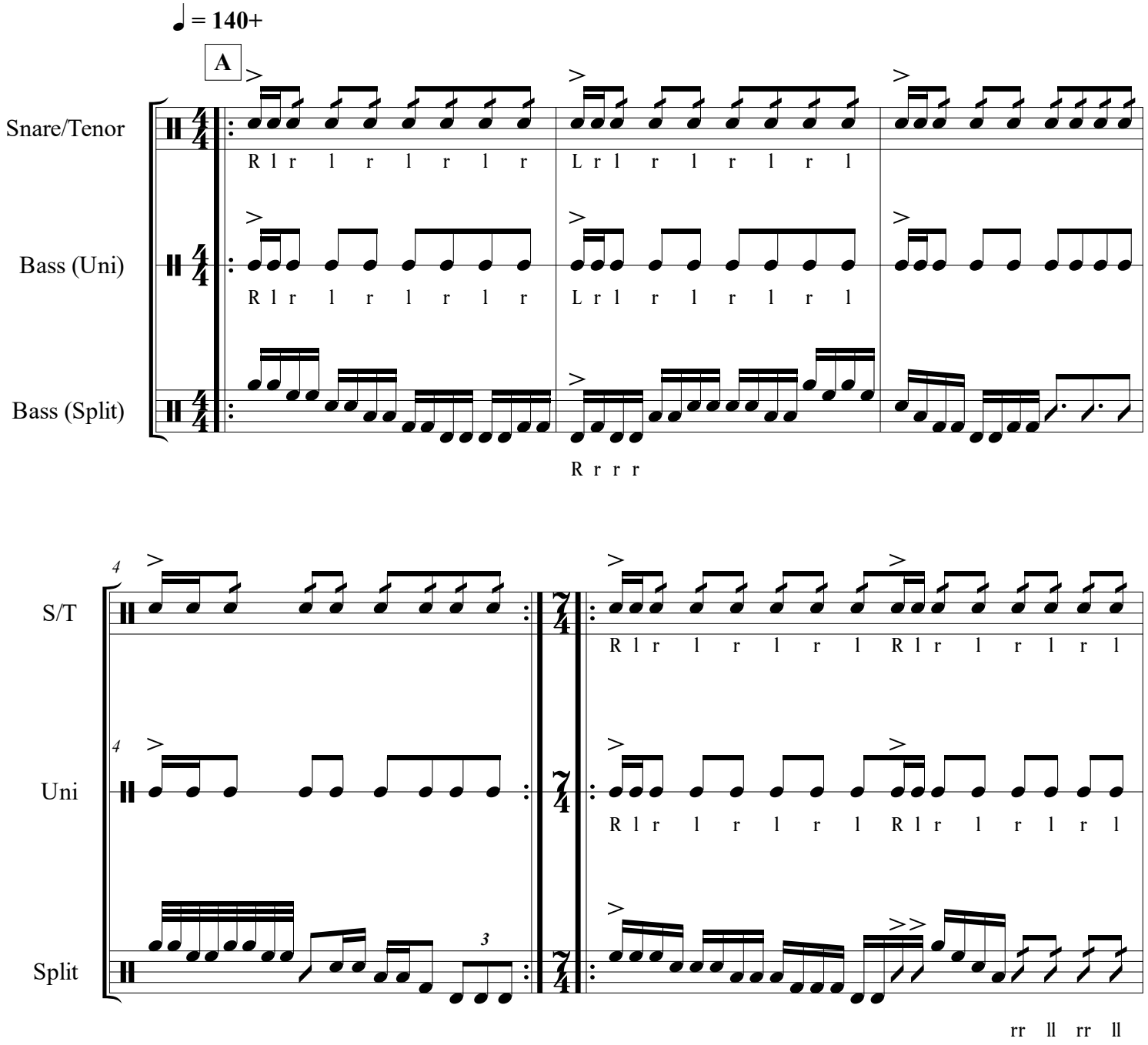
Score

Paradiddle Buildup



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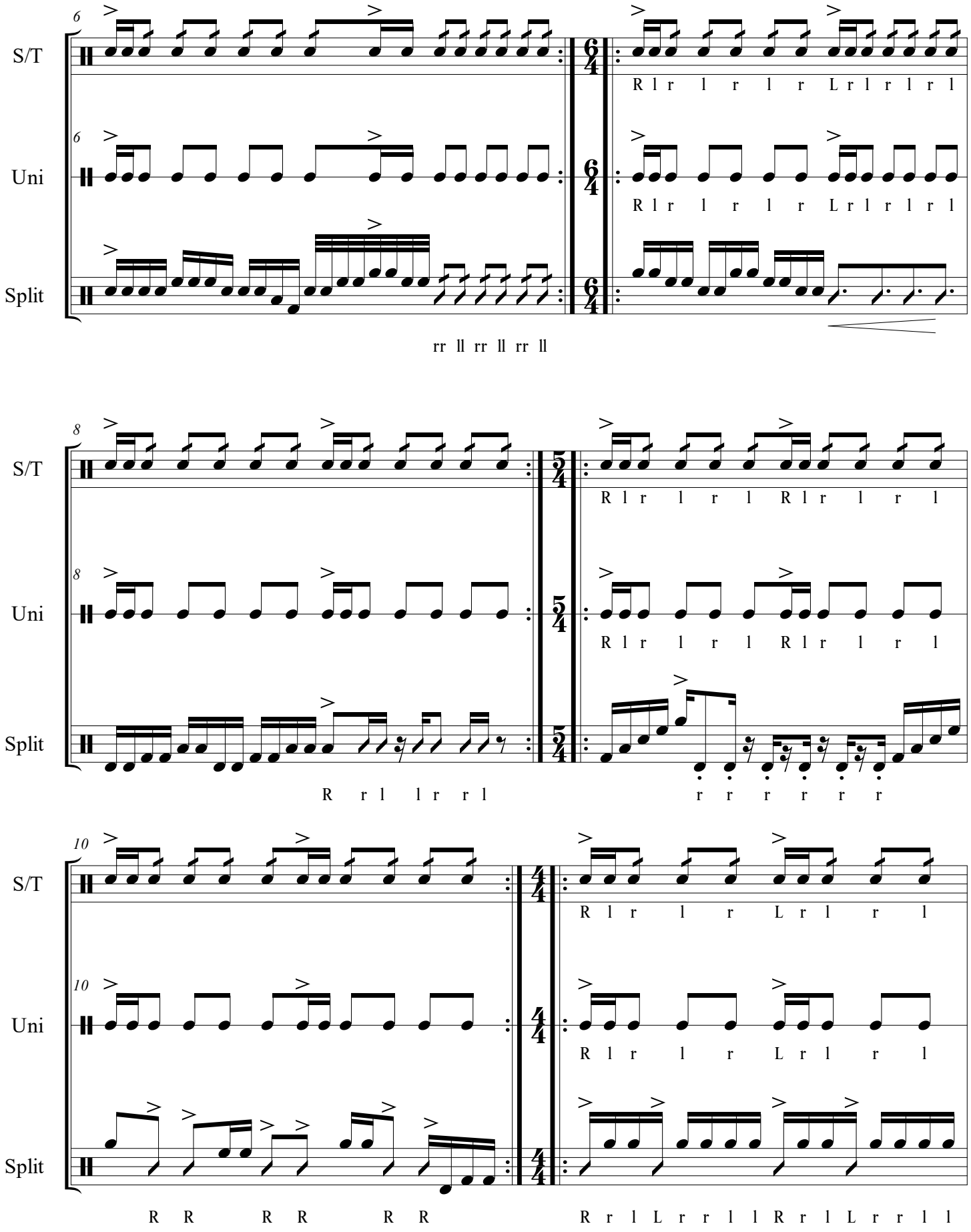
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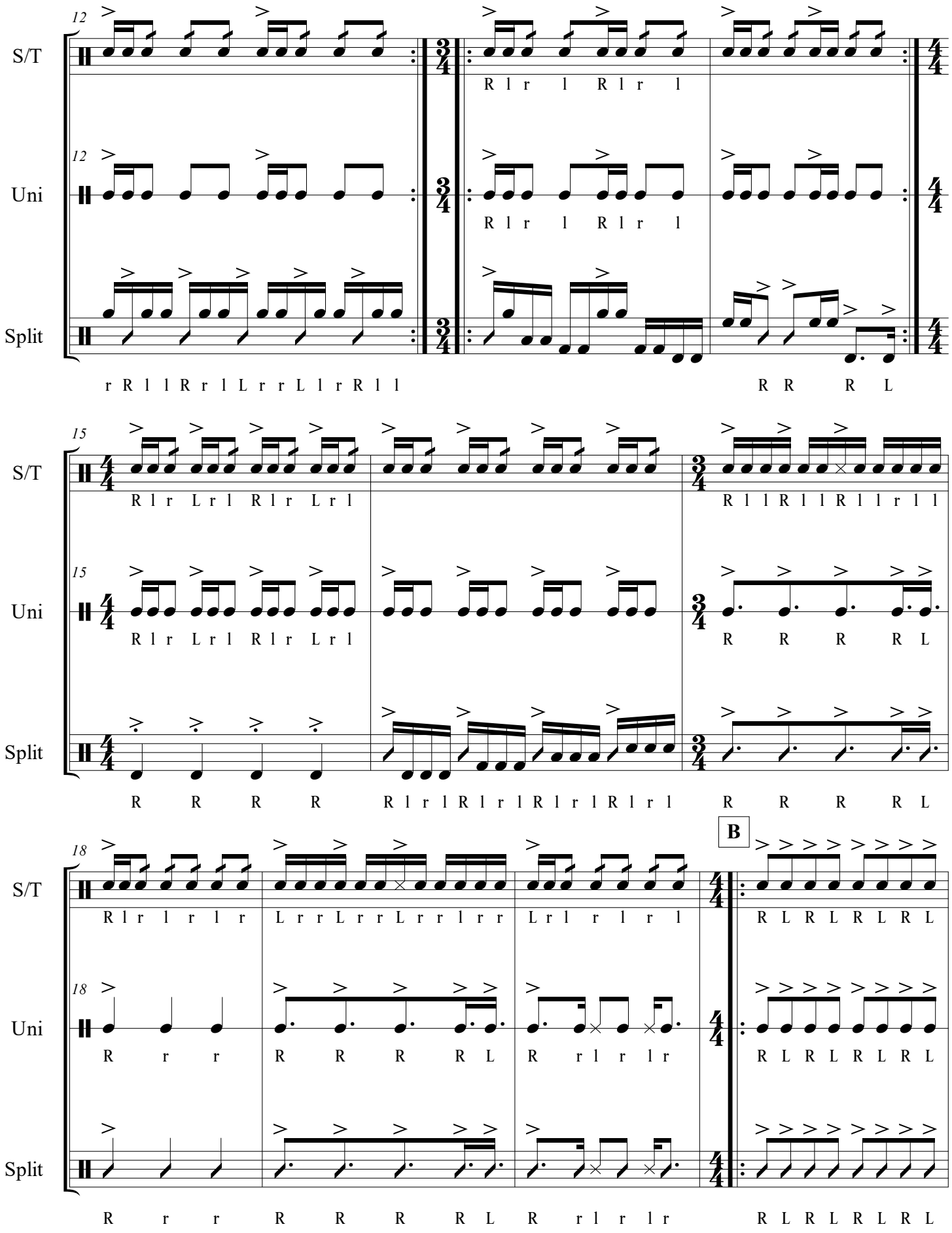
S/T
Uni
Split
R l r l r l r L r l r l r l
rr ll rr ll rr ll
8
R l r l r l R l r l r l
R r l l r r l
r r r r r r
10
R l r l r L r l r l
R R R R R R
R r l L r r l l R r l L r r l l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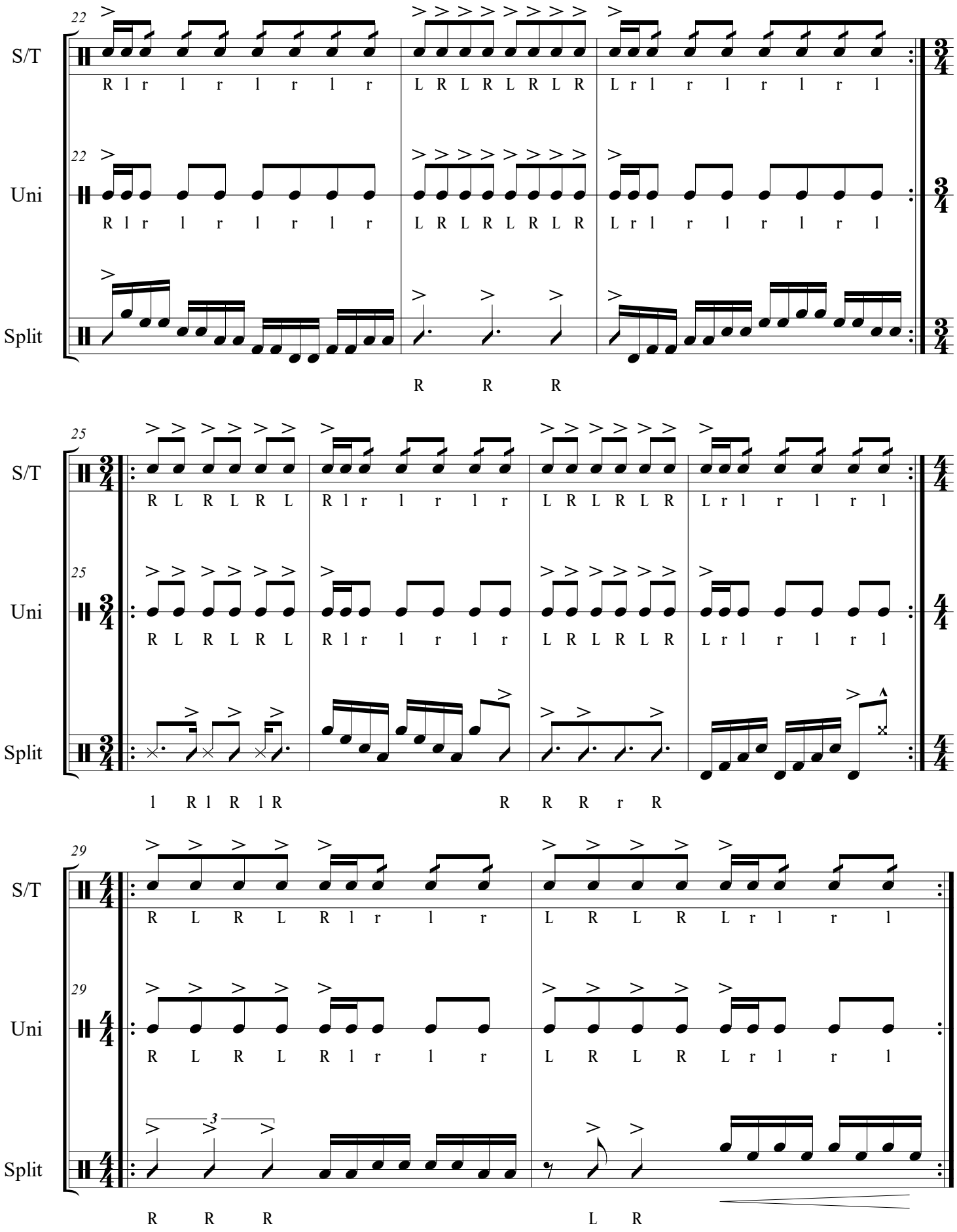
S/T
Uni
Split
r R l l R r l L r r L l r R l l
R l r l R l r l
R R R L
15
R l r L r l R l r L r l
R l l R l l R l l r l l
R R R R L
R R R R
R l r l R l r l R l r l R l r l
18
B
R l r l r l r
L r r L r r L r r l r r
L r l r l r l
R L R L R L R L
R r r
R r l r l r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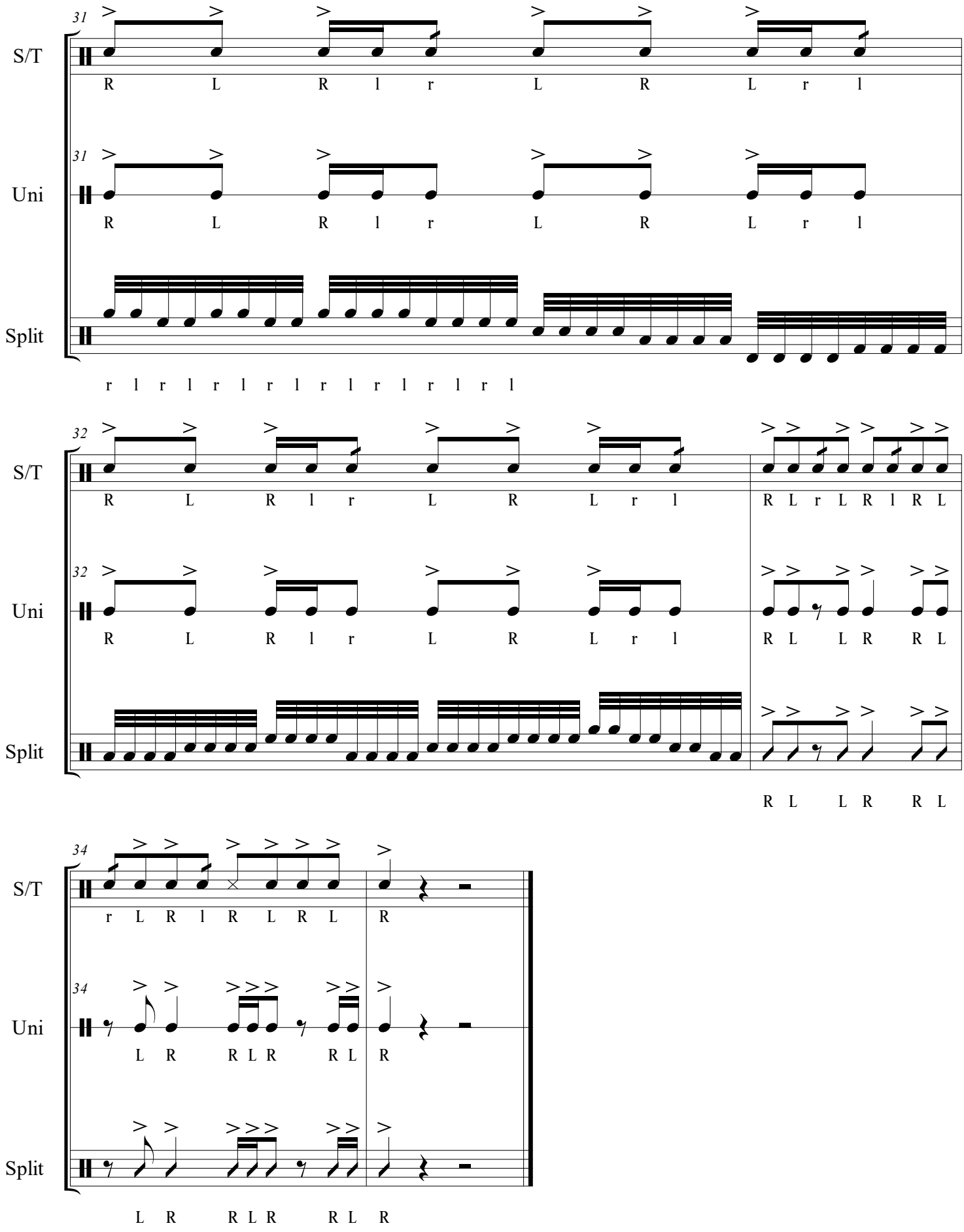
S/T
R l r l r l r l r L R L R L R L R L r l r l r l r l
22
Uni
R l r l r l r l r L R L R L R L R L r l r l r l r l
Split
R R R
25
S/T
R L R L R L R l r l r l r L R L R L R L r l r l r l
25
Uni
R L R L R L R l r l r l r L R L R L R L r l r l r l
Split
l R l R l R R R r R
29
S/T
R L R L R l r l r L R L R L r l r l
29
Uni
R L R L R l r l r L R L R L r l r l
3
Split
R R R L R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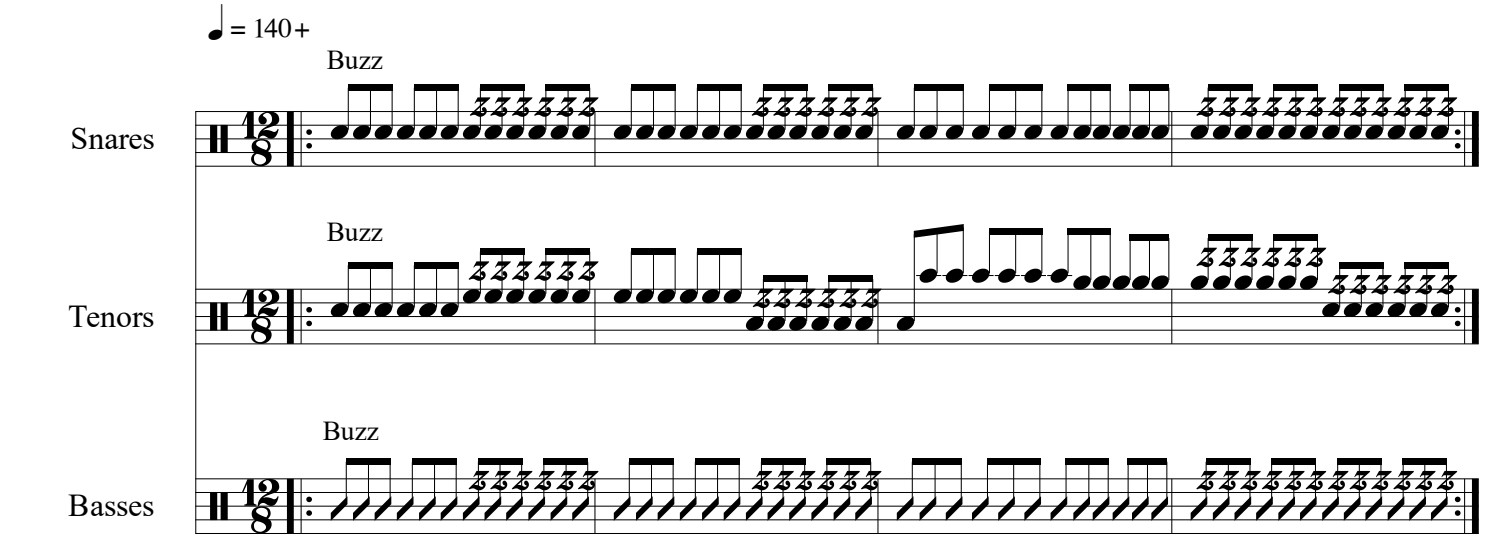
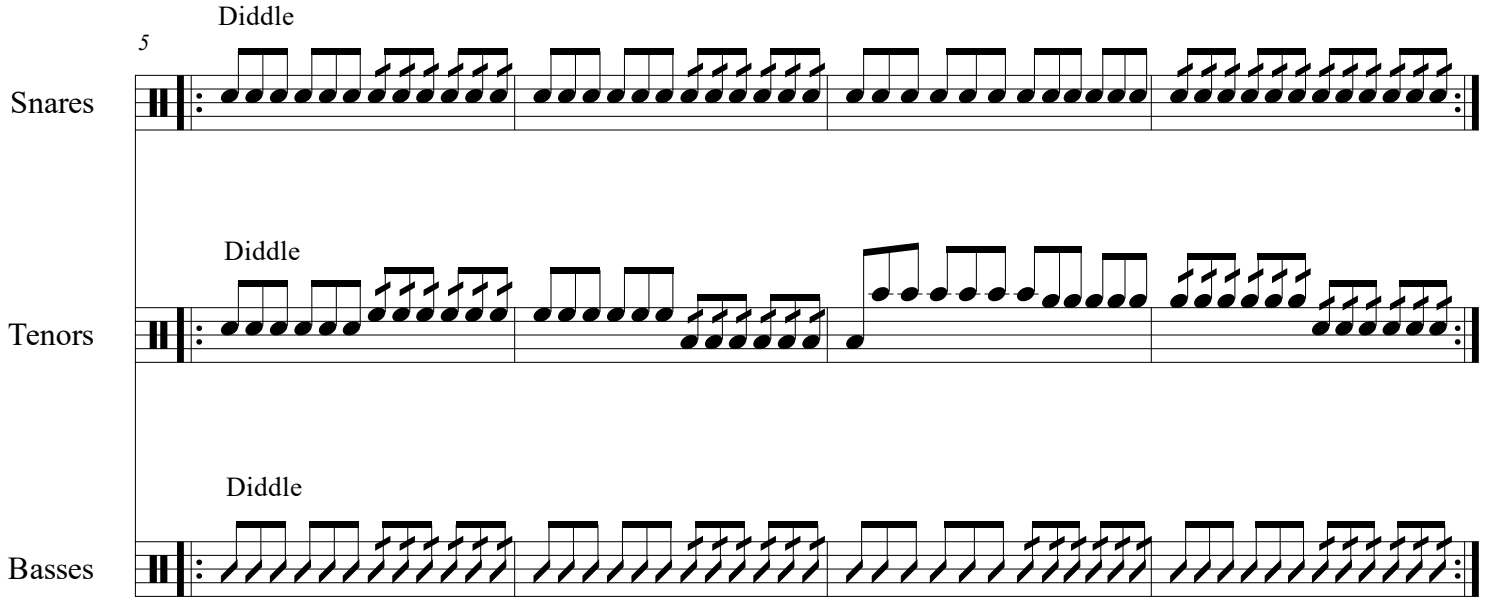
S/T
R L R l r L R L r l
31
Uni
R L R l r L R L r l
Split
r l r l r l r l r l r l r l r l
32
S/T
R L R l r L R L r l R L r L R l R L
32
Uni
R L R l r L R L r l R L L R R L
Split
R L L R R L
34
S/T
r L R l R L R L R
34
Uni
L R R L R R L R
Split
L R R L R R L R

Score

GV Triplet Rolls





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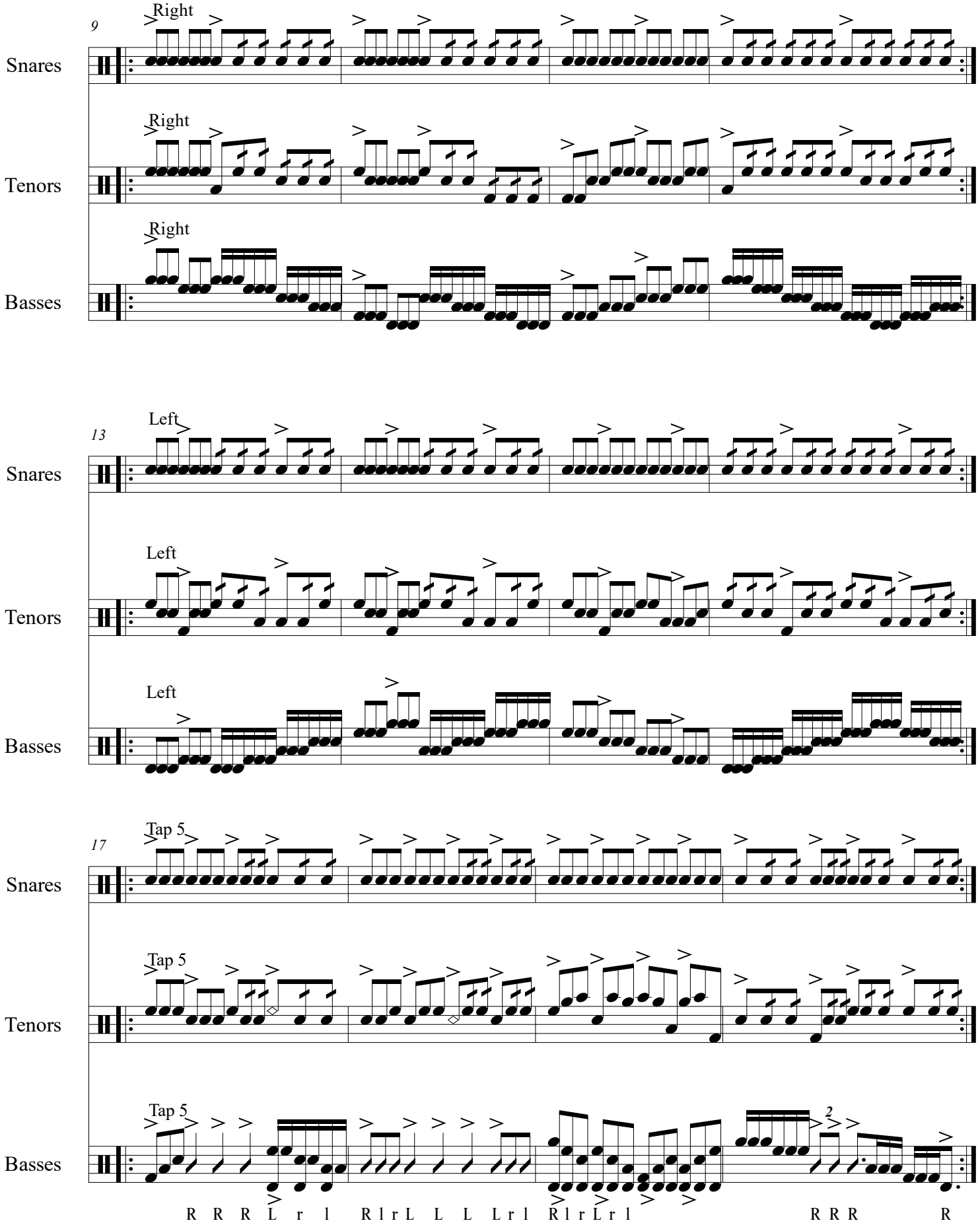
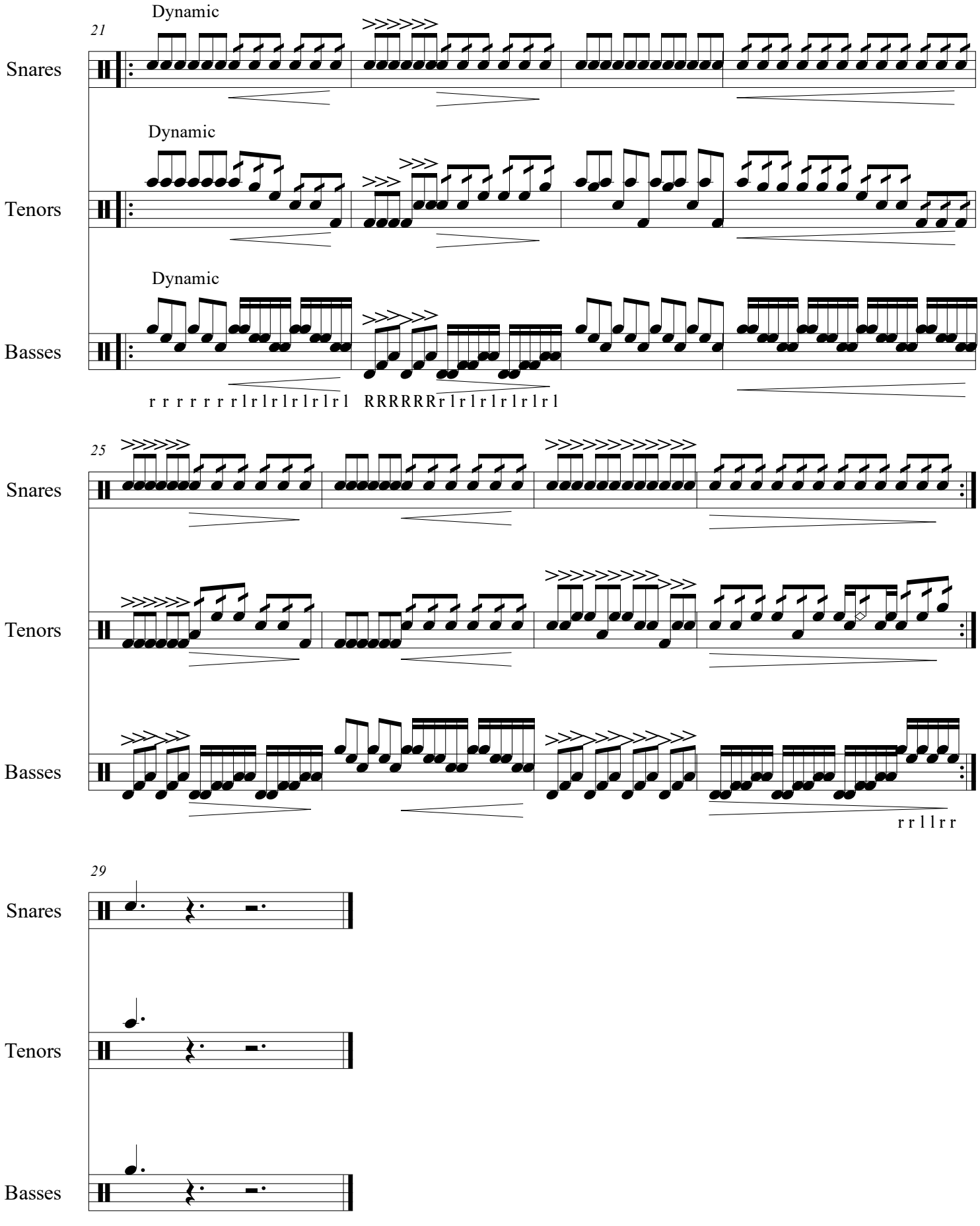
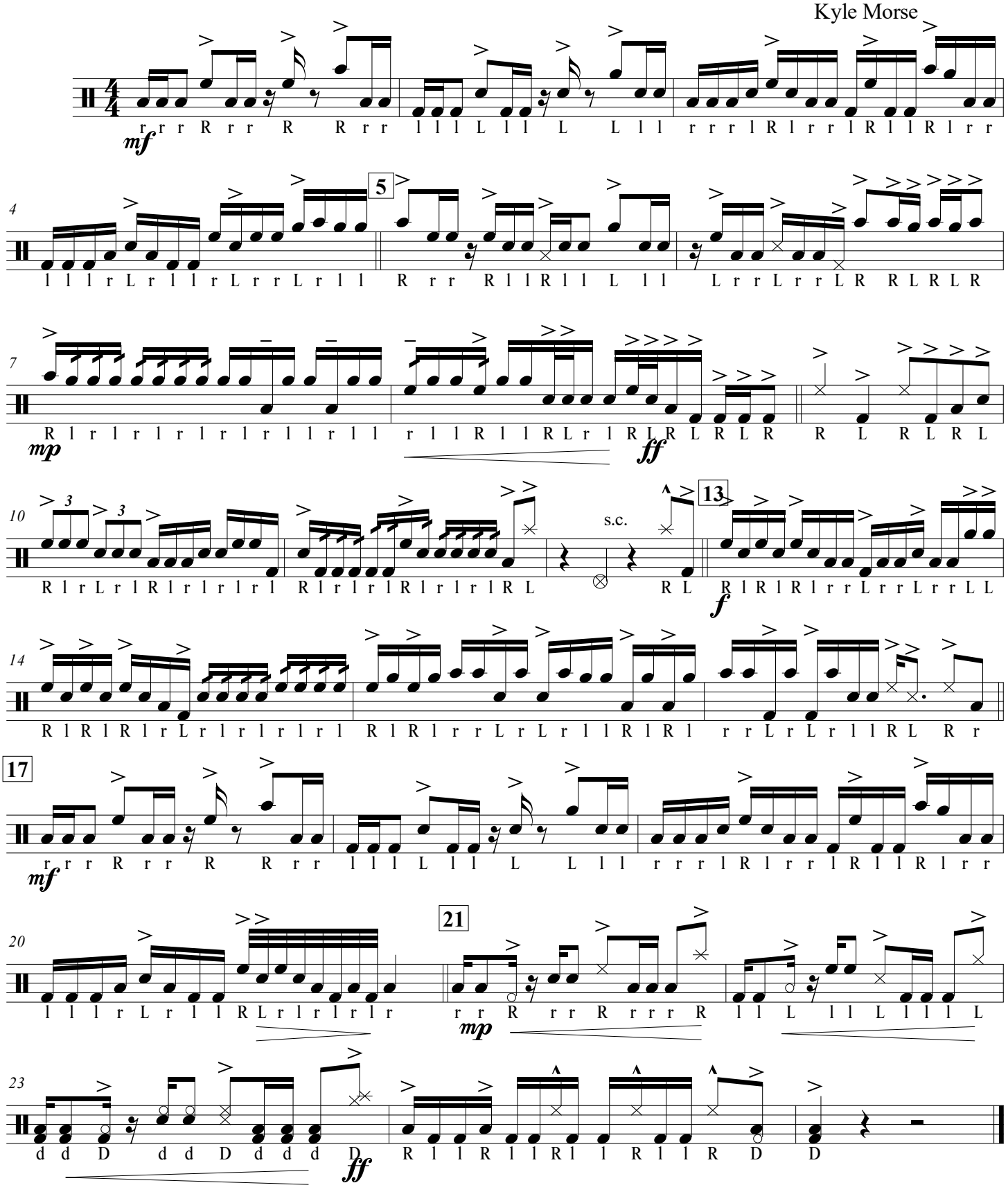

9
Right
Snares
Right
Tenors
Right
Basses
13
Left
Snares
Left
Tenors
Left
Basses
17
Tap 5
Snares
Tap 5
Tenors
Tap 5
Basses
2
R R R L r l R l r L L L L r l R l r L r l R R R R


Dynamic
21
Snares
Dynamic
Tenors
Dynamic
Basses
r r r r r r r l r l r l r l r l r l
R R R R R R r l r l r l r l r l r l
25
Snares
Tenors
Basses
r r l l r r
29
Snares
Tenors
Basses
1

Tenors

GVSU Marching Warmup

Kyle Morse



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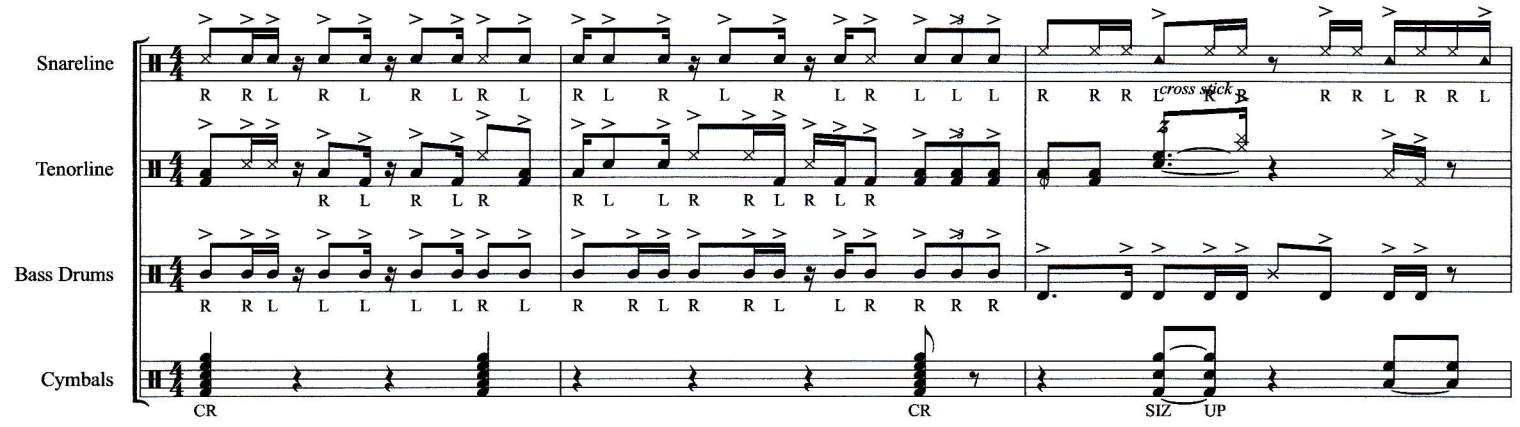
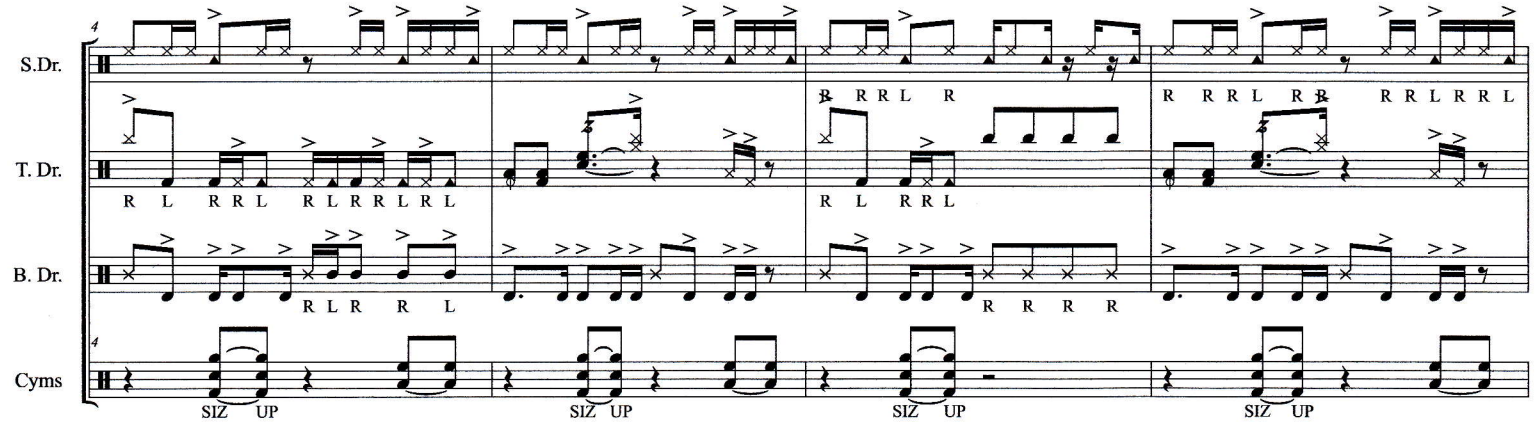
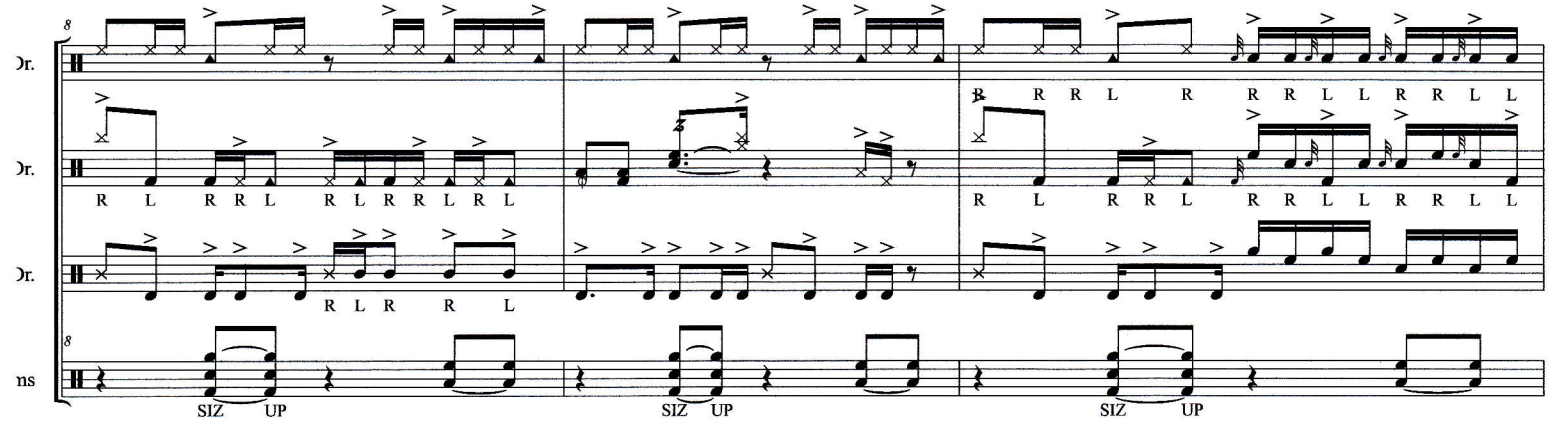
WillG

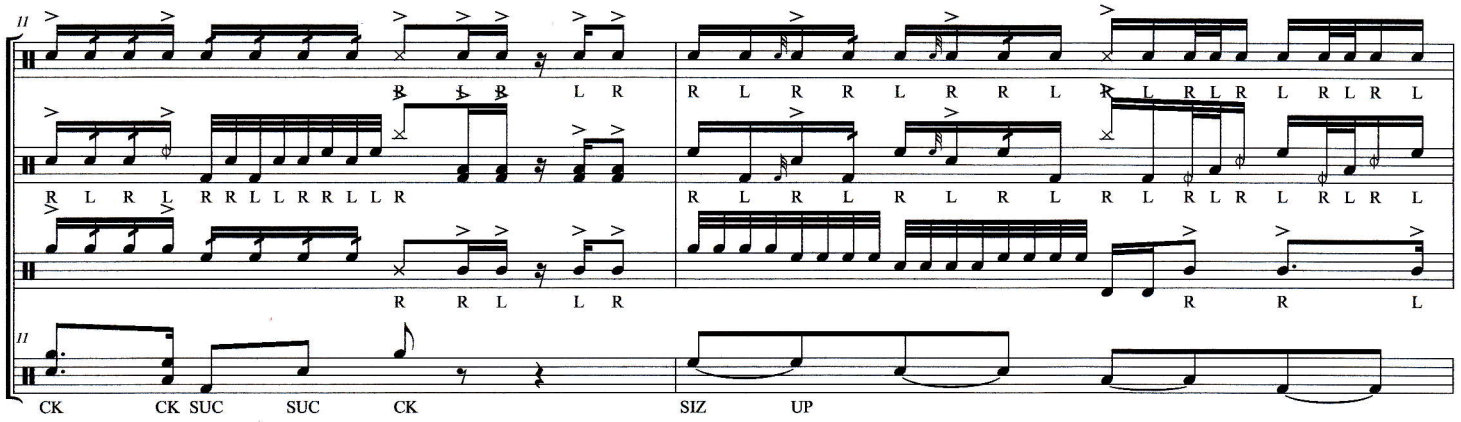
GVSU Street Beat

GVSU





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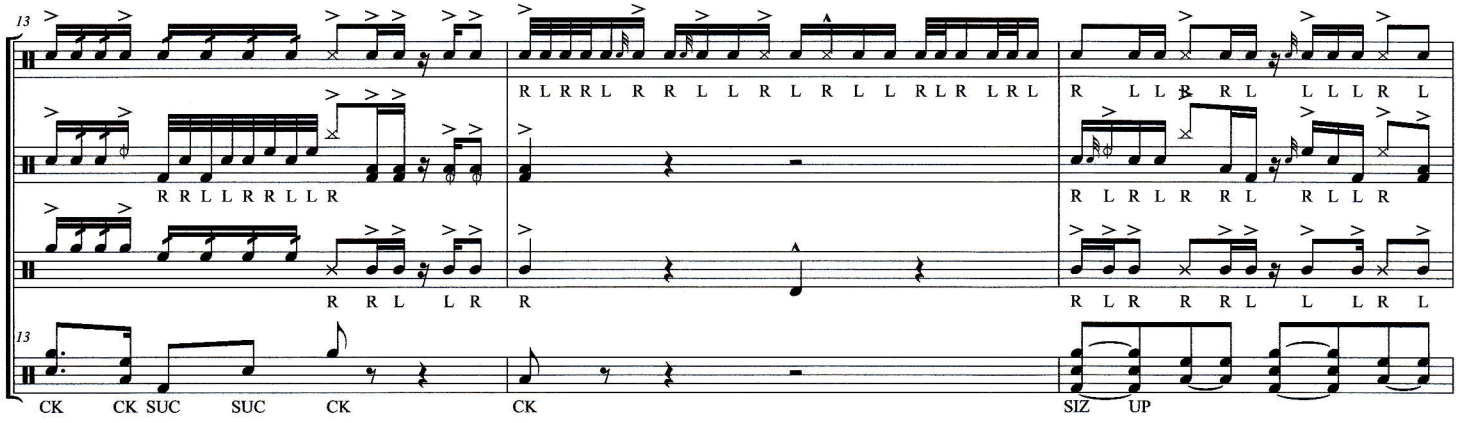
S.Dr.
T. Dr.
B. Dr.
Cyms
CK CK SUC SUC CK SIZ UP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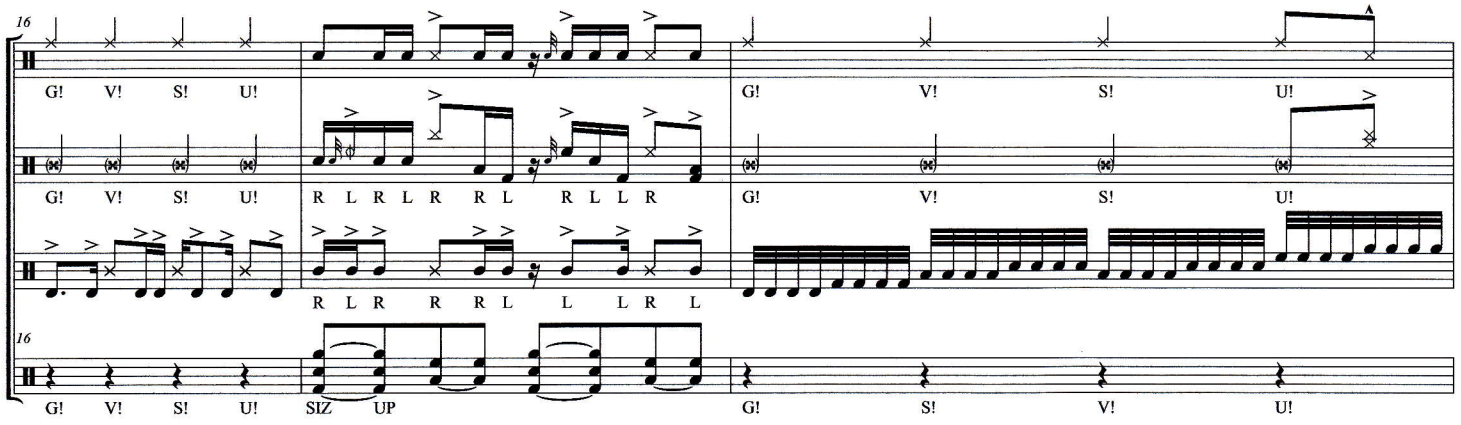
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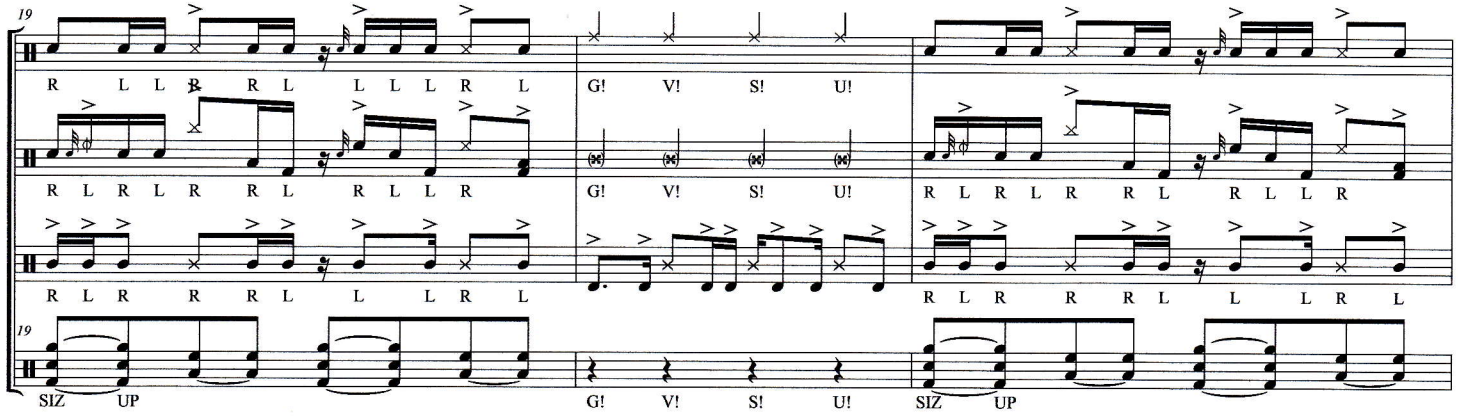
S.Dr.
T. Dr.
B. Dr.
Cyms
G! V! S! U! SIZ UP G! S! V! U!

3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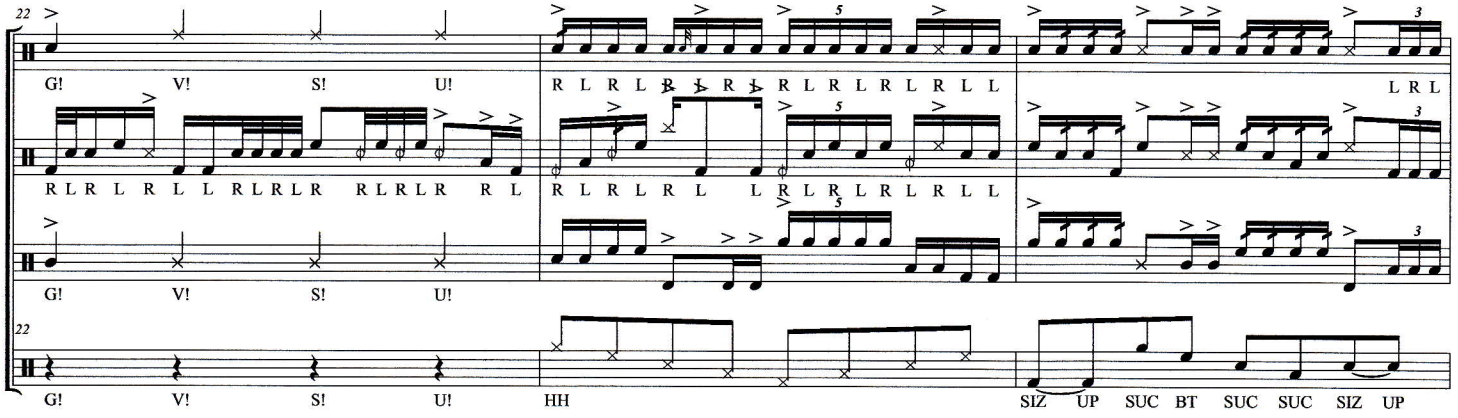
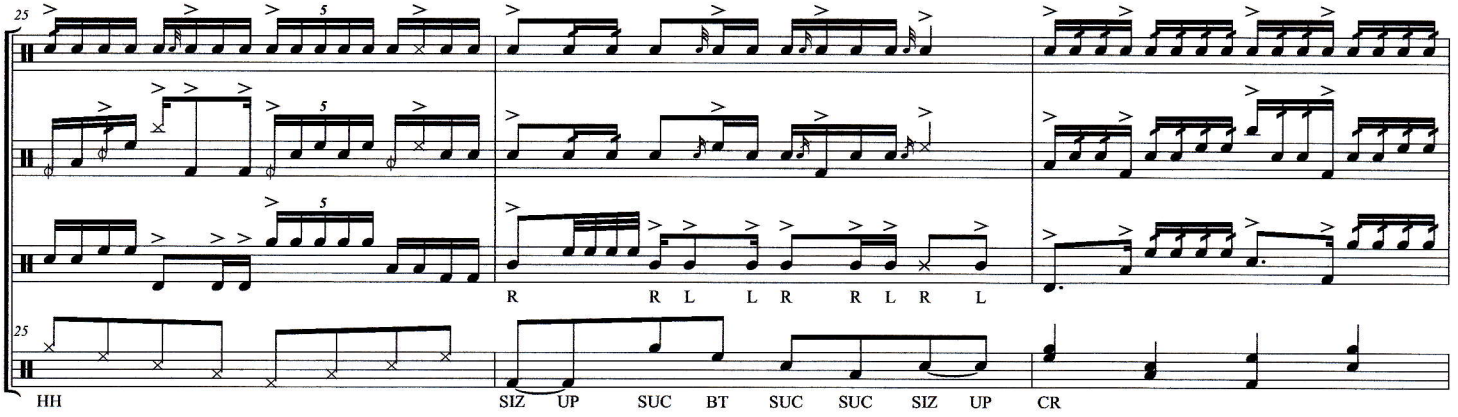
Dr.
Dr.
Dr.
ms
R L L R L L L L R L
G! V! S! U!
R L R L R R L R L L R
G! V! S! U!
R L R L R R L R L L R
R L R R R L L L R L
G! V! S! U!
SIZ UP
G! V! S! U!
SIZ UP


22
Dr.
Dr.
Dr.
ms
G! V! S! U!
R L R L R L L R L R L R R L R L R L R L L
L R L
R L R L R L L R L R L R R L R L R L R L L
G! V! S! U!
G! V! S! U!
HH
SIZ UP SUC BT SUC SUC SIZ UP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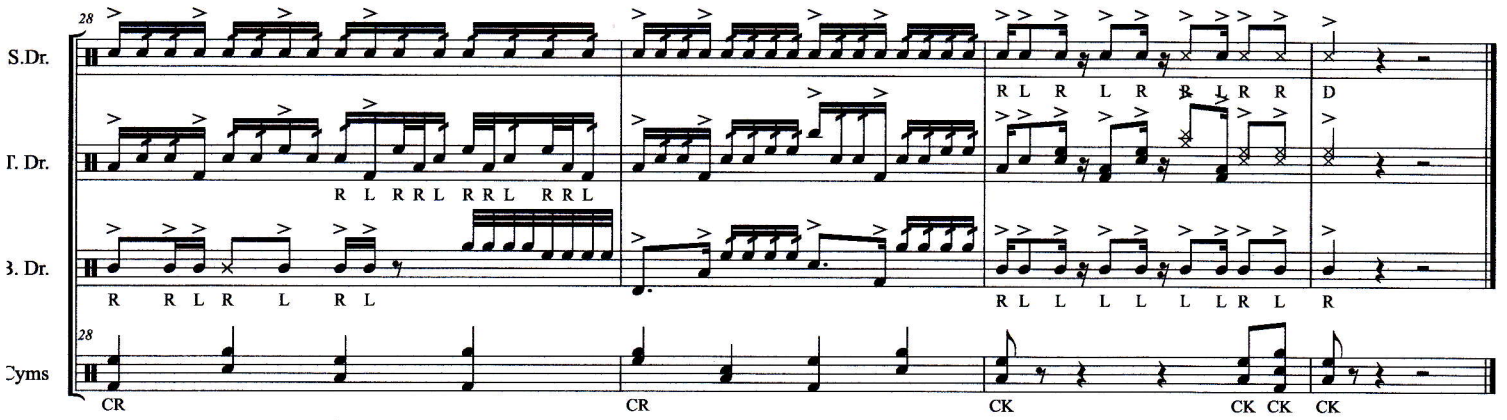
Dr.
ms
R R L L R R L R L
HH
SIZ UP SUC BT SUC SUC SIZ UP
CR


28
S.Dr.
R L R L R R D
T. Dr.
R L R R L R R L R R L
B. Dr.
R R L R L R L
R L L L L L L R L R
28
Cyms
CR
CR
CK
CK CK
CK