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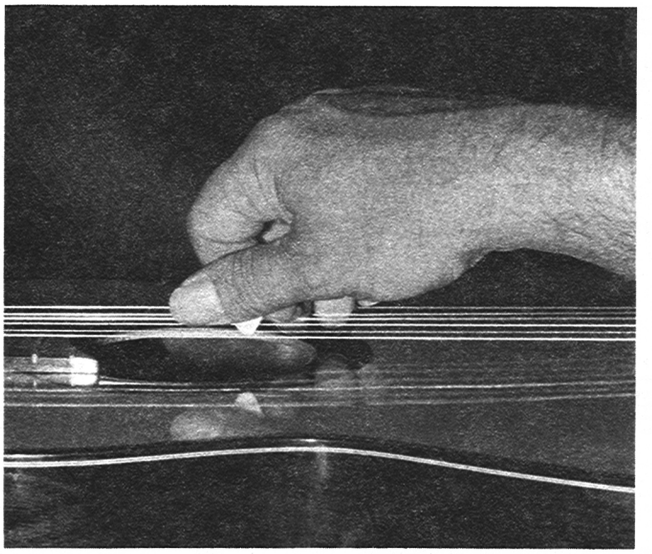
THE PICK (FLAT PICK)

HOLDING THE PICK:

I use the same technique in holding the pick as golfers do holding a golf club. Extend the right hand like you were going to shake hands. Close the hand. Put your pick between the thumb and first joint of the first finger. Bring your hand back to the guitar. You are ready to play. You will notice the pick is facing up towards the string not perfectly at a 45° angle. This enables a player to play much faster. As an alternate choice, extend the last three fingers out, having them touch the strings or the pick guard. This acts as an anchor for your hands. Do not anchor the wrist to the bridge to enable the hands to be free to pick near bridge or neck for different tonal variations. My wrist is very loose when I play.



Note — You will notice that very little of the pick is extended outside the fingers.

USING A PICK FOR SOUND:

Try different picks for tone quality. Each different pick thickness gets a different sound. Many times I am asked to get a soft sound on the Classical guitar. I go to a heavier thick pick. This creates a sweet and mellow sound. The thinner picks bend, creating a slapping sound along with the string tone (remember playing cards in the bicycle spokes?).

SUPER PROFESSIONAL ADVICE:

If you are happy with your pick hand, don't change a thing. This method is for the student who is having a problem with picking. I've heard numerous guitar players with a lot of technique that all have a different system. Years ago there was a guitar player in Los Angeles, Milt Norman, that held the pick between his thumb and second finger. His technique was the fastest I ever heard at that time.

Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea

On a date I was doing a Jingle for Bob Thompson; at the beginning of the session I went to Bob and told him I would flip for the payment of the jingle. If I won I would get double scale. And if I lost I would donate my services. He accepted. We flipped. I lost . . . We ended up working for four (4) hours. I lost over $200.00 plus about $600.00 in reuses. "Stupid Gambler."

A STUDIO PLAYER

Contrary to the popular belief, a player that works Studio jobs is not necessarily a Studio player. He might be a specialized player in a certain area and called upon to do his specialty on a date (rock, jazz, classical, country, etc.) If these players are miscast, which often happens, and they are thrown in circumstances foreign to their specialty, DISASTER STRIKES. When you take a job, be sure it is right for you. I will try to define Studio playing in five different categories and a brief description of each category.

1. Records
2. Jingles
3. TV film
4. Movies
5. Live TV shows

We have a saying in the studios. It goes like this. "Studio work is 95% boredom and 5% terror." Be prepared for the 5% terror and you will be able to fight off the 95% boredom.

Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea

I was doing a TV film and invited a young guitar player from New York, Marc Silvers, to sit and observe. He noticed my knee was resting against the back of my amplifier. He asked me why. I told him the gadget holding the fuse broke a couple of days before and I had to hold the fuse in to allow the amp to work. A few minutes later I had him holding the fuse in with his hands while I played a solo. He looked at me bewildered. He had always heard about the big studio player technique but this was not exactly what he had ever expected.

Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea Tea

CONTRACTOR

A majority of your calls for Studio work will come from a Contractor. (A Contractor is a person appointed by the Studio or leader to hire a band.) The Contractor is a powerful figure in the music business. He can help or hurt a musician's career. The leader will call his Contractor and say, "I need a band for a record date for Dec. 12 from 8 to 12 at R & R Studio. I need a guitar. Try guitar player A or guitar player B. If you cannot get them, get me someone of their caliber. If the guitar players A or B cannot make the date, the power of the Contractor comes into being. He uses his own discretion on who to hire. He hopes his judgment is the best. If he has a new good player on hand, he will help him to get the job. It is best to keep on good terms with a Contractor. (I've made a few mistakes in my day.)

While I was writing this book, I spoke to a few Contractors in regards to hiring of new unproven musicians. I asked them all the same questions. Below you will find the questions and their answers.

QUESTION:

1. When do you hire new unproven musicians?

ANSWERS:

1. We hire new players generally when the players we usually use are busy and we need a player to fill the job.
2. We hear through the grape-vine about a player doing great work for other people but we haven't had the occasion to try him ourselves.
3. An established player will come to us and recommend a new player that meets Studio work qualifications.
4. When a leader asks for him.

QUESTION:

2. How do you go about hiring these new players?

ANSWERS: