

# from hand to drum

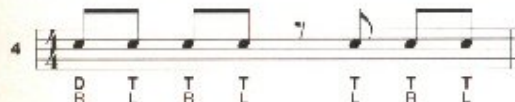
## HAND DRUM TECHNIQUES FROM AROUND THE WORLD



© WWW.PETELOCKETT.COM

This month we'll continue with our look at frame drumming. It is essential to have read last month's article to understand the hand positions and finger techniques.

We'll continue from where we left off. You will remember that we had the strokes 'DUM' and 'TEK' with the right hand and the stroke 'TEK' with the left hand. We will now begin to incorporate the left hand 'TEK' into our patterns. When we do this it is important to maintain the stability of the drum and not to let it wobble around.



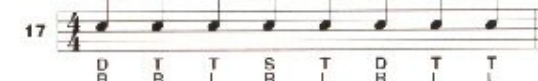
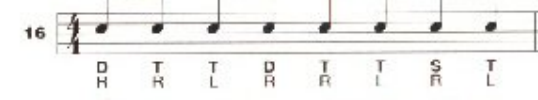
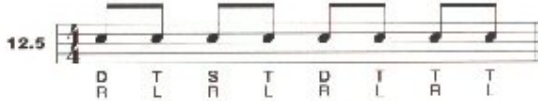
It is now time for the introduction of a new stroke – the slap stroke. This should end up sounding like a slightly softer version of a slap one might find on the Congas. In the style of frame drumming we are looking at,



this stroke is played with the right hand and, as with the other right hand strokes, it can be played with the thumb either resting on the edge of the shell or with the thumb not resting on the edge of the shell (see last month's article for detailed explanation). If we look at Fig.1 we can see the position for the slap stroke. Hit with all four fingers and 'grab' the head, killing the tone as you grab. All that should remain after this grabbing motion are a few high overtones reverberating through the head. This is a very difficult stroke to describe in words, and also

one which takes a while to conceptualise and master.

Conga players should find it quite easy due to the similarity of the slap stroke on the Congas. When I play this stroke on the frame drum my whole hand grabs in such a way that it 'cups' around the rim with the palm actually striking the edge of the shell. Bear this grabbing motion in mind when attempting this stroke, but don't force it and hit too hard. Here are a few rhythms using all the strokes we have so far:



18

D R T T D T T D T S T  
R R L H R L R L R L

19

D T S T D T T  
R L R L R R L

20

D T S T D T D T T  
R L R L H L R R L



Next we will look at another technique – the ‘brushing’ technique. This is a very effective technique and can help to create some particularly elaborate rhythms. The brushing can be articulated with either the tips of the fingers or the finger nails. I prefer the tips of the fingers because they produce a softer, more subtle sound which does not jump out at you like the finger nail method. Look at the hand position in Fig. 2.

In this position we will put our fingerlips on the head and create a brushing sound by moving the fingers up and down across the surface of the head. We will now do this in an ‘up-down’ motion

following the quaver pulse as indicated in Ex. 21:

21

H R R R R R R R  
B B B B B B B B

Now, here are a few rhythms using the brushing technique:

22

D T T T R B R R  
R L H L R B R R

23

D T T S T T R T  
R L R L R L R L

D T R R H R R R  
R L R L R L R L

24

D T T R R B R R  
R L R L R L R L

25

D T R R R B D T  
R L R L R L R L

R R R R D T S T  
B B B B H L R L

That's all for this month. I never got round to those traditional rhythms I promised. I'll cover those next time, along with the foggy speaking tone. If you are really getting into this frame drumming lark and you want to take it further, why not check out recordings by John Bergamo or Glen Velez; they are both stunning.

In future articles I'm going to be covering other playing positions for frame drumming as well as looking at Irish bodhran, Egyptian req and a few other Indian drums.