SESSIONS

Duke Robillard's Piano Blues

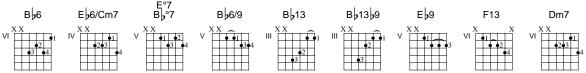
BY DAVID HAMBURGER

DUKE ROBILLARD HAS A

slick, swinging alternative to four-tothe-bar comping. He terms it pianostyle comping because it recalls the tightly voiced, riff-style approach of Count Basie and other Kansas City pianists.

This 12-bar example also has some cool guitarisms, particularly the $B \not = 13$ - $B \not= 13$ - $B \not$





give credit where it's due," says Duke. "I got that from a Rhode Island guitarist named Fred Bates. He used to play with tenor man Scott Hamilton in the Hamilton/Bates Blue Flames." Duke also likes to slide into the chords from a fret below, which is easier on six strings than 88 keys.

The signature sound of this B_h blues chorus is the recurring IV6-#IVdim-I6/9 ramp into measures 3 and 7. The familiar minor-7 chord shape on the top four strings (used in measures 7 and 8 to chromatically descend from the IIIm7 to the IIm7) doubles as a IV6 in measures 2 and 6. It's cool because it lets you keep a B_h ringing on top of the IV without using the ubiquitous 9th chord, which becomes a welcome sound when it appears in bar 5.

For the scratches in bars 10-12, muffle the strings by relaxing your left-hand grip and continuing to strum. Duke tends to do this when he gets fired up. The final V-I cadence is a crafty chord-melody move.

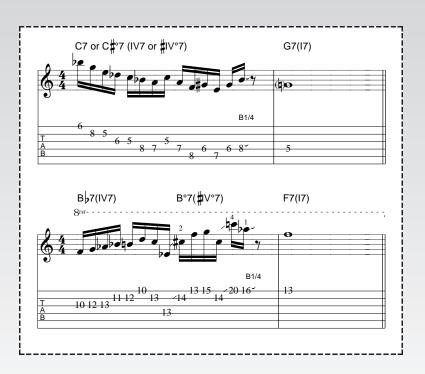
Check the fretboard grids for Duke-approved fingerings.

Lick of the Month

SPIKY BLUES

KENNETH LASAINE, SEPTEM-

ber's lick champ, hails from Los Angeles. "In the May '97 and Nov. '95 issues," Kenneth recalls, "Scott Henderson and Charlie Hunter mention that straight diminished or symmetrical-diminished (whole-half) patterns can make you sound like a student. To help you avoid that, here are two phrases that merge diminished pattern elements into 12-bar blues. Each goes over bar 10's IV chord (coming from the V) and outlines a common substitution, the #IVdim7."



Send us your candidate for Lick of the Month (preferably notated and on cassette), along with a brief explanation of why it's cool and how to play it. If we select your offering, you'll get a funky custom T-shirt that's available only to Lick of the Month club members. Mail your

entry to Lick of the Month, *Guitar Player*, 411 Borel Ave. #100, San Mateo, CA 94402. Include your name, address and phone number. Materials won't be returned, and please don't call the office to check the status of your submission. You'll get your shirt if your lick is chosen.