

# On the Records

A critical analysis of the latest record releases, covering both the musical and commercial angles of each disk reviewed. Reviews of greater length are given to recordings that possess unusual interest as to artist, selection, or both.

Paragraphs in heavy type are designed for operators of automatic phonographs as a guide to the potential value of recordings in music machines.

Key: FT—Fox Trot; W—Waltz; VC—Vocal Chorus; V—Vocal Recording.

By M. H. ORODENKER

## GLENN MILLER (Bluebird 11401)

*Moonlight Cocktail*—FT; VC. *Happy in Love*—FT; VC.

NOT since *Sunrise Serenade* captured the fancy of the public has there been another as imaginative and colorful in its tuneful qualities as the Kim Gannon-Lucky Roberts *Moonlight Cocktail* served up by Glenn Miller on the A side of this disk. The soft saxes introduce the theme, and save for a short tenor sax interlude later in the winding, the ingredients are all mixed up vocally by Ray Eberle and the Modernaires with plenty of warmth and glow. The tempo is stepped up for the *Happy* side. Band applying a rhythmic punch, side gives the seldom-heard voice of Marion Hutton. Tune itself is the average rhythmic ditty, this one from the *Sons o' Fun* musical score.

It's the "Moonlight Cocktail" that carries all the punch and the operators can be certain this sweet harmony with a dash of romance will be ordered by the phono fans for a long time to come.

## JIMMY DORSEY (Decca 4102 and 4103)

*This Is No Laughing Matter*—FT; VC. *I Said No!*—W; VC.

*The White Cliffs of Dover*—FT; VC. *I Got It Bad (And That Ain't Good)*—FT; VC.

THREE ballads steadily increasing in popularity and a new novelty that promises to skip all formalities and soar to the top characterize this foursome of sides from Jimmy Dorsey. And having the edge with already accepted selections, Dorsey applies an individualistic touch in each, thus making each loom bigger. For the first pairing, *I Said No!* is the novelty item that threatens to dominate the song scene. From the forthcoming *Sweater Girl* picture, Dorsey sets to it a slow waltz tempo. While it enjoys a lilting melody, it's the lyrical expressions that sell the song. Jimmy turns it over to his singers. With plenty of gusto, Bob Eberly sings verse and chorus, Helen O'Connell carrying the closing refrain. And real cuddle-some, she confesses how she subscribed to *Liberty* magazine. Martin Block's *Laughing Matter* ballad (4102) is taken slowly and smoothly. The band opens for half chorus, paced by the maestro's clarinet, and Bob Eberly slugs out the side. For the second pairing, the war-inspired *White Cliffs* ballad is the more striking. Dorsey gives it grandiose orchestration, with as much military fire in the elaborate introduction as Tschalkowsky gave to his *1812 Overture*. Instead of the elaborating of cannon shots, the roll of tympani accompanies the song theme scored as a bugle call for soft-muted trumpets. Once the musical battlefield effects are out of the way, it settles down to the soft singing of Bob Eberly. Duke Ellington's *I Got It Bad*, soulful ballad completes the disk (4103). And it's plenty good, Jimmy's alto sax improvising the opening half chorus and Helen O'Connell getting under the lyric for the remainder. Makes for added evidence that *I Got It Bad* is still one of the best torchers of the year. This opus promises to become a standard.

Each of the four sides count as far as the music boxes are concerned. But for immediate consideration, it's "I Said No!" and "The White Cliffs of Dover" that rate face up.

## TOMMY TUCKER (Okeh 6526)

*I Said No!*—W; VC. *Moonlight Cocktail*—FT; VC.

IT'S A two-hit parlay for this platter and Tucker's interpretations figure as strong as any other of the recorded versions. With the tune qualities of both songs on the sweet side, it's all tailor-made for the Tucker sweet harmonies. *Sweater Girl* novelty is set in a bright waltz tempo, the band playing the first chorus, with Amy Arnell taking over for the verse and chorus. The highly potent musical cocktail that makes *Moonlight* is dished up in the slow and romantic tempo. Band splits the concoction with Don Brown and the Voices Three.

The blaze Tommy Tucker started with "I Don't Want To Set the World on Fire" will burn just as brightly for his "I Said No!" and "Moonlight Cocktail." Both songs are naturals, and with Tommy already entrenched among the music box faves, there's little more that the phono operator can hope or ask for.

## XAVIER CUGAT (Columbia 36469)

*I Found You in the Rain*—FT. *Chopin Nocturne No. 2 in E-Flat*—FT.

WHILE Tschalkowsky has become a patron saint of Tin Pan Alley, that distinction may very readily be shared by Chopin. It's two classics by the old master, and both familiar ones, that Cugat dresses up instrumentally with added tonal color in blending the Cugat Chorus with the orchestra's sections. The *Rain* opus was adopted by radio's Harold Barlow from Chopin's *Prelude No. 7*. The plattermate is perhaps better recognized as Eddy Duchin's theme song than as a classical nocturne, Cugat giving C. Taylor the arranger credits. And it's a creditable performance for both sides, both set in a medium tempo to a light beguine beat. Glossier finish, altho both are rich in melody, is applied to the *Nocturne* side, making greater use of flutes and violins to enhance its instrumental beauty. The Latin-type beats are wisely restrained for these instrumentals.

Already popularized by Eddy Duchin as his theme song, the "Chopin Nocturne" is sure to attract attention in locations where the appreciation is for the better class of music.

## BUD ABBOTT and LOU COSTELLO (Victor 27737)

*Laugh, Laugh, Laugh*—Part I and II—FT; V.

JOE MILLER, of joke book fame, are to these two funsters what Tschalkowsky is to Tin Pan Alley. And while it may be difficult to appreciate the corny and ancient gags sight unseen, the team turns up with such regularity on the movie screens that it shouldn't be difficult to visualize the two peering right at you from the loud-speaker. Making for a present-day *Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Sheen*, this is Joe Miller set to music. The two-part story-telling makes for the song verse with the invitation to laugh sung as the chorus by the *Sportsmen*, a male quartet. Lou Bring provides the orchestral setting. It's the personal viewpoint that will bring laughs in unwinding the disk, however, there is not the spontaneity or spark of a Gallagher and Sheen here.

Considering the fact that Abbott and Costello are the laugh sensation of the nation, the phono fans are bound to be attracted. It matters none which side is turned face up, even start it in the middle of the side. Unless they are avid Abbott-Costello fans, players will hardly go beyond the initial nickel for curiosity's sake.

## OZZIE NELSON (Bluebird 11403)

*The Little Guppy*—FT; VC. *I'm Breaking My Back Putting a Front for You*—FT; VC.

Since the plight of some three little fishes several years ago captured so much public fancy, it's very easy to appreciate the deep-wave of interest that will attend this tale of the poor little guppy looking for his dad—a deep sea gigolo. Ozzie Nelson sings this silly-

dilly as a bedtime story, with a "sea-water" trio assisting on the chorus breaks. There is an added humor touch when Ozzie asks the youngster to tell him how she liked his song story. And she does—in that confidential tone popularized by Mischa Auer. The *Guppy* side overshadows the novelty note of the plattermate, which has Ozzie and Harriet Hilliard painting a familiar picture of the Mrs. putting the bite on the Mr. to keep up with the fabulous Joneses.

For real comedy material, there's a good round of wholesome humor in "The Little Guppy" side, one that will sell to the phono fans on the first listen.

(See ON THE RECORDS on page 66)

# On the Stand

Reviews of orchestras playing hotel, night club and ballroom locations and one-nighters. Comment is based upon the present or potential commercial value of the band, as well as its musical quality.

## Don Bestor

(Reviewed at Hotel Netherland Plaza, Cincinnati)

THERE'S nothing fancy or flashy about this combination; it's just a sound, well-balanced band that offers a good brand of music and looks wholesome and pleasing on the stand.

Employing four brass, four sax, three rhythm, with the maestro himself at the vibraharp, the band strikes good balance and precision and comes thru with rhythm that's altogether pleasing to the dancers. The band's style is diversified, giving out with sweet thru the swing and Latin pieces, but never getting too noisy on the brass.

Arrangements are in the commercial groove, with Bestor handling the sweet work, and Wayne Euchner and Roy Rader, the rhythm stuff.

Ork sports a pair of better-than-average warblers in Penny Lee, a pert brunette looker with personality and a voice, and Dave Ballentine, a sweet tenor.

Bestor gives his usual good direction to the outfit and has a knack for handling the dancers. *Sachs.*

## Everett Hoagland

(Reviewed University Coliseum, Lincoln, Neb.)

UP TO his neck in p. a. trouble, Everett Hoagland didn't have too good a time with the University of Nebraska student body at its annual formal opener, the Military Ball. Coliseum here is a barn of a place, and it's possible to lose a five outfit of less than 16 or 17 pieces, much less a sedate, sweet, mellow rhythmized outfit such as Hoagland fronts.

There was no doubt, to the people who were able to log around the bandstand, that he listened good and had a nice dancing tempo, but there was some doubt in the minds of those around the fringes. Three brass, three reeds and four rhythm, the Hoagland set-up is definitely hotel and club gaited, not ballroom—and certainly not mammoth ballroom.

His singer, Don Burke, has an appropriate voice for the style of the music, but he, too, was lost in the space.

Hoagland wanted no part of it personally since he was in pinching for Gus Arnheim, who was suddenly booked away. He extended a friendly personality and showed a clean, good-looking

crew, but lack of volume, coupled with a public-address system that howled, set him back. Whatever happened to Hoagland here was not his fault. He really has a creditable, class organization. *Oldfield.*

## Ray Pearl

(Reviewed at the Rainbow Ballroom, Denver)

CONSISTENTLY on the beat so far as danceable tempos are concerned, the Pearl outfit could do nicely with an attempt at stronger swing, especially in its ballroom work. Present pattern of sweet swing holds nicely for hotel or possibly nitery work, but is insufficient for j-bugs. Outfit works full most of the time, and the blend of instrumentation, four reeds, four brass and three rhythm, is equally well balanced on leads. Outfit follows a straight commercial style, but its easy-going rhythms could easily be adapted to a particular type.

Band has both quantity and quality in vocalists: Walter Bloom, guitarist, who incidentally does his picking with his left hand, works a high-pitched tenor; Buddy Madison, bass player, has a baritone range that verges on crooning; Eddie Santini handles novelties with an even tenor range. All turn in commendable jobs both in song and sell. Trio, composed of Bloom, Bob Berkeley and Jack Rowe, takes over sweet novelties and often backs other singles. Entire personnel does a nice job in glee club efforts.

Pearl is very much an easy styled fronter, both in stick waving and chatter, which, added to his constant smile, creates a general friendly atmosphere. Pearl and Steve Milazzo are responsible for arrangements. *Trackman.*

## Roberson Does \$350 in Det.

DETROIT, Jan. 3.—Orlando Roberson and His Club Congo Orchestra played a one-nighter for the Beauticians' Association at the Mirror Ballroom here, drawing 400 people at 75 to 90 cents admission, for an estimated \$350 gross. Roberson, who is used to be tenor with Claude Hopkins, is back in the Club Congo here for a stand before taking his band out on the road for a string of one-nighters.

# On the Air

Comment on dance remote programs from the standpoint of showmanship, presentation and general listening appeal rather than the musical ability of the bands reviewed.

By DICK CARTER

## Bob Allen

(Roseland Ballroom, New York, NBC-Blue Network, Thursday (1), 11:05-11:30 p. m.)

NBC-Blue and the First Interceptor Command conspired to put the kibosh on the first half of Allen's shot. There were so many interruptions that after a while it began to seem as if Allen were being used to furnish brief musical interludes between station breaks.

Shot started off somewhere near the middle of an Allen vocal and was interrupted during the middle of the next tune in order that the air force could rehearse some wireless signals. Nobody possibly could object to this important defense work, but NBC-Blue added insult to injury by throwing in a pause for station identification (with chimes) right in the midst of the very next number.

Second half of the remote was sufficient to reveal the Allen ork as a promising one, especially strong in the vocal department, which is handled by the maestro and Dottie Reid. Allen spaced the ditties nicely. Letting the band put itself on display in a wide variety of arrangements, Miss Reid sounded like one of the best of the girl warblers, and Allen showed that he is still close to tops in the male heart-throb category.

Band seems to fit into the commercial

sweet-swing class and, as such, should do okay over the ozone.

## Dean Hudson

(Hotel Syracuse, Syracuse, N. Y., NBC-Blue Network, Wednesday, December 31, 12:05-12:30 a. m.)

CONSIDERING that this was a first remote for Hudson, the 25-minute shot was well done. Hudson handled a couple of the announcements himself in an assured manner, and arrangement of the library was varied and dispensed in an easy fashion.

Musically, ork leaned toward the swiny things on most of the stuff played. All of it was decidedly commercial, but was lifted above the ordinary by deft handling of the numbers. None were stretched out too long, a fact which gave a nice pacing to the program. Interspersing of a showmanly rendition of *Annie Laurie* was a highlight. On this number Hudson had the ork do take-offs on how various bands would play it. Impersonations were all good and a refreshing relief from the usual ballad-fox trot-rumba formula.

Dixie Debs (four fems) vocal group, came in for most of the chirping. Hudson himself doing some. Gals' work is rhythmic and peppy, but not too strong on the harmony side. Hudson does a straight warbling job in a clear-pitched voice. All in all, a remote that certainly held more than one candle to the rest.