

**TEXAS BANDMASTERS ASSOCIATION**

ADVANCED YOUNG PLAYER SERIES



**TUBA**

JEFF LIGHTSEY  
CLINICIAN

53RD ANNUAL CLINIC  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS  
2000

## FORWARD

The Texas Bandmasters Association has a long and honorable tradition of providing unique educational conventions with superb opportunities for professional growth. For over fifty-two years the association has served as an agent for improving instrumental music education in communities throughout the Lone Star State.

Over the last five years the Beginner, Intermediate, and the first half of the Advanced Instructional Series have provided exemplary strategies to improve classroom music instruction and student success. This year the clinics are a continuation of the Advanced Instructional Series. The Advanced Instructional Series focuses on the needs of the third year band students or transitioning into the high school band. Our clinicians are chosen **from** the ranks of superior music educators in our state. They also represent a wide diversity in geographic locations and school sizes.

The clinics that are scheduled this year include Bassoon, Low Clarinets, Saxophone, Trombone, Euphonium, Tuba, and Snare Drum. Each of these sessions will have a companion booklet presented during clinic. The booklets will contain valuable instructional methods and classroom organizational techniques.

We appreciate the time and efforts invested by these clinician to prepare and produce these clinics. Special acknowledgement is appropriate for TBA Past-Presidents Jim **Hagood**, Bob Brandenberger, Mike Olson, Bob Parsons, and Charlotte **Royall** whose hard work and commitment made this educational series such a colossal success.

***This series is respectfully dedicated to all band directors, past and present, for their invaluable contributions to the education of young people through the band medium.***

Arturo **Valdez** III, President

## **JEFF LIGHTSEY**

Jeff Lightsey attended The University of Texas, graduating with a Music Education degree in 1991. Jeff began his teaching career as the assistant band director in Alpine, TX. In 1996, Jeff graduated from Baylor University with a Master in Music Education, and began working as the band director at Comfort High School. In 1997 he returned to Alpine. In 1998, he was elected Teacher of the Year for the Alpine Independent School District. **JeffLightsey** is currently serving as the band director at Smithson Valley Middle School.

# TEXAS BANDMASTERS ASSOCIATION

Convention/Clinic

July 23-26, 2000

## ADVANCED SERIES TUBA

Presented by

Jeff Lightsey

Jeff Lightsey received his BM in Music Education **from** the University of Texas at Austin and his MM in Music Education from Baylor University. After teaching at both the middle school and high school levels, Jeff is beginning his first year as the Director of Bands at Anderson High School in Austin, Texas. Jeff studied with Rick Colvin while growing up in Austin, then continued with Steven Bryant at The University of Texas and Mike Fisher of Baylor University.

### Foreword

In preparing for this clinic, I tried to come at it **from** the perspective of the average middle school and high school music educator. What do we need to know about the Tuba to make not only our individual tuba players better, but our bands as well? There certainly is a variety of teaching situations that can have an effect on how our young people develop as musicians. I will outline some of these situations, and discuss some strategies to help your tuba players develop into the young musicians we know they can be.

Fundamental beginning and intermediate tuba concepts have been provided in clinics over the last two years, and are available on the Texas Bandmasters Association **Website**. Both Jorge Avendano and Gabe Musella did a wonderful job providing practical information and exercises to build your tuba foundation on. We will talk indirectly about these same principals, but I strongly recommend you take a look at the **Website**. These guys did a great job.

### I. WHERE ARE WE?

- A. Middle School
- B. Small High School / IA - 3A
- C. Big High School **14A -5A**

### II. WHAT TO EXPECT

- A. Freshman Tubas • A Standard
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- A. Motivation
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#### I. WHERE ARE WE?

As most of us know, teaching music can be done anywhere, but environment does make a difference. For those of us who have **taught** in smaller communities with limited musical resources, the task of developing musicians often falls only on the local music professional, the band director. There are no private lessons available unless the director teaches them, and many students must divide their time among several activities. Scheduling can be a problem, with often all beginning students lumped into one class. A great benefit is students come to know teacher expectations from a very early age, and certainly retention problems are eased through familiarity on both the students and directors part.

The opposite end of this pendulum is the director who teaches in the larger school, and never gets a chance to interact with students from most likely many feeder schools. This lack of control can lead to great differences in the individual student's musical experience, creating problems the director will have to overcome only at the high school level. A benefit of being at a larger high school is the support base of musical experts to draw upon for private lessons, master classes, and concerts. In either of these situations, music teachers, using the resources available to them, have to be able to identify individual musicianship problems, develop a plan to overcome them, and implement this plan to achieve student individual and ensemble success.

#### A. Middle School

At the middle school level, we are constantly challenged to develop young musicians within an ensemble framework that is instrumentally correct. It does not matter what size middle school you teach at, getting kids to play tuba can be tough. While I always had success attracting "big kids" to the instrument, I learned to keep several guidelines at the forefront of recruiting tuba players.

##### 1. If a kid wants to play tuba, let them

**Attitude** is everything. If it is in a student's heart to play the instrument, then know **matter what** the other considerations are, let them. If the students have problems later on, you can always move them up. Desire equals success.

##### 2. Size does not matter, but it does help

Many of you know tuba players who do not fit the classic stereotype, or have taught long enough to see smaller students succeed. Certainly there can be a physical problem later on with the Sousaphone, but for most programs that **docs** not occur till the ninth grade. Let it ride. I have seen students get so excited about playing the Sousaphone that their size was not even a consideration.

### 3. Girls do not play football

While stereotypical in some ways, this statement for the most part rings true, particularly for smaller school situations. Girls certainly mature faster than boys during the middle school years, and can be very serious and intent when it comes to learning a “boys” instrument. This is a great time to foster friendly competition, which makes everyone better. I have had seven female tuba players at the middle school level, and all continued their success through high school.

### 4. Sousaphones recruit better than tubas

In many ways, the Sousaphone is the most recognizable instrument we teach. Certainly young kids know it from its use on the marching field. When you begin introducing instruments to your incoming beginners, take your best-looking Sousaphone for show. Obviously the instrument physically dominates all others, and can seem larger than life to **fifth** grade students. It helps to get a high school kid to come in a play something the kids recognize the “Darth Vader Theme”, etc. You can continue to use the Sousaphone as the carrot for a number of years with middle **schoolers** moving to high school.

### 5. Keep recruiting tuba players

Don't stop looking for tuba players once your beginner band is picked. Look for weaker trumpet players who display range problems, preferably a good player who just can't quite get up there. You can present the argument in a number of ways, but the one that has worked for me is “Why be an average player in a large section when you can be a great player in a smaller section”. Look for the positive spin, and most students will go with it. Again, any kid interested in the tuba you need to push that direction.

## B. Small High School / IA - 3A

Particularly at a smaller school level, instrumentation can be a challenge. The benefit of teaching in the smaller community is that as the director, you know all the students, so retention can be easier. In terms of teaching students at the individual level, it becomes **difficult** to meet all their individual musical without private teaching. In fact many directors struggle to do this themselves on their own time before or after school. I listed some strategies below which may help in this area,

#### 1. As a **teacher, be organized about musical goals for program**

Particularly in a smaller program, be clear about what your students should know from grade level to grade level. An example would be at the end of their beginner year, all students should be able to play three major scales. Much of this depends on your particular situation, if you are teaching by yourself, if your classes are homogenous, etc. As the professional, you need to make these decisions to build the program, then work to build individual musicians from the **fundamentals** you have taught in class. Look at it as an opportunity that many larger schools do not have.

#### 2. **Fit individual student system within program goals**

Be organized about pushing your kids as individual musicians. Get their region music and solo music out to them early. Do it at exactly the same time every year so it is an expectation. Do it as early as you can, then build checkpoints along ~~the~~ way to track their progress. Have' a chamber music concert before they go to contest. Give their ensembles a special nickname, and have them audition for a spot. “The Heavy Metal Brass Choir”. Particularly in a smaller **school**, try to tie everything you do together. It will really pay off.

### **3. Make recordings for students to listen to**

Buy recordings and get the students to listen to them. There are literally thousands of recordings at your fingertips. If you cannot demonstrate a great sound on tuba, Sam **Pilafian** or Gene Pokorny certainly can. Make it a contest to see who gets the free recording today. Be creative, but modal what you want as much as you can.

### **4. Know literature**

Become familiar with the individual instrumental lists for solos and ensembles. Get to know the standard literature for each instrument. If you have questions, call someone for help. Find out what the best method books are for each instrument. Teaching at a smaller school **docs** not mean you sacrifice quality, but you may have to make hard decisions about what is best for your students. If you know the literature, these decisions become easier.

### **5. Find as many professional musicians as you can in area**

This one can perhaps be the toughest to do. Sometimes you have to sort through your definition of what you want in a private instructor. Obviously you are limited, but there may be some people around to help. Find them and put them to work. Most musicians want to share their knowledge.

## **C. BIG HIGH SCHOOL / 4A - 5A**

Numbers at larger high schools hinder the director getting to work with most students on the individual level. It is your job to set a positive classroom rehearsal plan, and encourage the students to work outside of this plan with private instructors. It would be impractical to try and see all the students, and most likely many of the students may be at a level on any given instrument beyond the director's expertise. **A** active private lessons studio will make the biggest difference with your program.

One problem that we often see at larger schools particular to the tuba is the lack of quality depth within the section. You may have one or two really solid players, but things fall off from their. We have all heard bands that had ten tuba players, but they sounded like three. Below I have listed some ideas to remedy this problem.

#### **1. If you switch a high school kid, teach them yourself**

Switching or starting a high school kid on tuba is not a big deal. Usually they progress faster because they are older, and they are more serious about the decision to begin a new instrument. If it was your idea to move them, you should be the one to begin the teaching process. Thirty minutes before or after school a couple of times a week will make a huge difference. Use beginner and intermediate exercises, Remington's etc. Find the students natural anchor note and build around it. If the student was already in band, they should know how to read music, so this process will not slow you down. Most high school students I have worked with are very aggressive because they really want to participate on their new instrument, it is up to us as the directors to begin their success.

#### **2. Keep new kids interacting with older ones**

As we move **high** school students to tuba, the temptation may be to try and keep them separate from the ensemble until they can really play. Peer pressure **really** helps **in** this area. Keep the students in the class. They want to be a part. Pick them **to** do something you **know** they can, such as play a "concert F". I have found other students to be very supportive of this process, **and** your new tuba players will improve faster when they are around other students.

3. Once they have a grasp, start private lessons

Once you feel the student really knows what is going on, encourage them to begin to study with a lesson teacher. This gets them a great model for the instrument that can only improve their success. Find them a solo of easier quality to work on, or put them into a tuba-euphonium ensemble to keep the pace up. I promise you they will love it and succeed.

#### 4. **Start a tuba-euphonium ensemble**

This type of group is no different than any other chamber group. There are many great pieces out there for all age groups. Give the group a fun name, get a neat T-shirt, and play some fun gigs. Your students will eat this up, and it can really help develop your younger players. It can give you quality rehearsal time that is specific to these low brass instruments, perhaps working on low range, tonguing, or pedal tones. If students can develop in the chamber music setting, larger ensemble work becomes much easier.

## II. WHAT TO EXPECT

As directors, what do we expect from our tuba players? We know that no matter what the ensemble, we have to have a solid bass presence. We have all been in a position where we have sweated out eligibility on our one good player, or picked a piece wondering can the tuba player hack it. While we have addressed the concept of depth in the previous section, we need to think about what our tuba players should be able to do coming into the high school band. These are guidelines I have always strive for with my young tuba players.

### A. **Freshman Tubas - A Standard**

A freshman classified as ninth grade should be able to:

1. Play all twelve Major Scales / B Major -Bb Major two octaves
2. Play chromatic scale **from** low F through high Bb above staff
3. Play pedal tone Bb in quarter note pattern 60 bpm.
4. Demonstrate characteristic tone from low F through F in the staff
5. Be able to play at least a grade 2 solo

If a tuba player comes to you being to do these things, no music you will pass out in class will be too difficult for them over the rehearsal time for performance. They will have a solid foundation upon which to build, and if they are not on private lessons, they probably need to begin.

### B. **Freshman Tubas - Where To Begin**

More **often** than not, your tuba players reach you achieving some of the goals listed in section A. You can incorporate most of these goals to your entire band class. Pick your warm-ups **carefully** using those that are flexible, such as the warm-ups in Foundations For Superior Performance by Richard Williams and Jeff King, Work low register Remington style warm-ups emphasizing tone and intonation. Expect your tuba players to tongue as quickly as your trumpet players. Keep expectations high, don't settle for less and the students **will** meet them. Below is the order of approach that I use to improve tuba players within the larger ensemble rehearsal.

1. Tone - Remington Style Warm-ups
2. Intonation - Unison, Fifths, Triads
3. Attack - Scales with various Articulation Patterns
4. Flexibility - Lip Slurs stretching toward both ranges

Consistency over time is the key. Don't just use these methods as you get ready for contest. Begin them as soon as you can and continue them over the course of a student's career. Set goals for kids and reward them. Be creative, and it will really pay off.

### **III. HEAVY METAL**

#### **A. Motivation**

It has always been my experience that tuba players are an easily motivated lot. Motivation is certainly the key to all student learning, and with creative, positive motivational techniques, your tuba students should flourish.

##### **1. Build your tuba section identity**

Get your tuba players special shirts made helping them create section pride. Have polish parties and order pizza the night before contest. Make your tuba section the band loading crew, and get them out of class a little early. Give them different hats to wear during games, and rehearsals. Again, creativity counts.

##### **2. Start a tuba - euphonium ensemble**

Use this ensemble for special gigs around school or community. Get arrangements made of their favorite pieces, and let them play one at a football game. This ensemble will disguise the fundamental work you can do while you are rehearsing, and a little of this goes a long way.

##### **3. Balance everything to the bottom**

As you begin to work with any of your ensembles, discuss your concept of sound built from the bottom. Constantly emphasize the need for a great tuba section. This in itself will attract good students to the instrument, and sends the message that your tuba students are important.

#### **B. EQUIPMENT**

The most important thing here is to have something a student can produce a characteristic tone on and that will not break all the time. Money can be important as well as you look for something that works within your school budget. I listed some things I tried to do below, but you really have to find what works for your school. GOOD LUCK!

##### **1. Sixth Grade - Beginners**

a. **Mouthpiece** - 24AW or equivalent

b. **Instrument** - 3/4 three or four valve, sousaphone with support chair

Obviously you have to go with what you have. Three quarter size horns are easily manipulated by smaller kids, the size is not so daunting to them. A sousaphone with support chair makes it easy on them as well, they just can't carry it home as easily. Durability counts with whatever you have.

##### **2. Seventh and Eighth Graders - Middle School Band**

a. **Mouthpiece** - 24AW or equivalent

b. **Instrument** - full size four valve upright, full size four valve rotary

I prefer the four valve upright that is as big and durable as possible.

Moving to a larger horn, the students are forced to increase air **flow** and sound production. I realize many people love the rotary horns, but I like to save them for the older students, or for special occasions

##### **3. High School Students**

a. **Mouthpiece** - Conn Helliburg A or equivalent

b. **Sousaphone** - Conn short action silver plate, King silver plate

This is personal preference, but you definitely want metal, and silver plate looks sharp. Gives you an excuse to have a polish party.

c. **Tuba** - Rotary four valve

There are many different models out. Usually the cost goes up, and a new line begins. Find something that is proven to be durable over time. If you have a tuba player that really progresses, you then want to find out what is top of the line.



## C. LITERATURE

Most of you know the standard music books for tuba due to familiarity with the region music etudes. These books are great to have around, as well as a few more I have run across. The solo's are a compilation of what I think is standard repertoire, but it is still my opinion. The recording list was just for fun. ENJOY!

### 1. Etude Books

Blazhevich, Vladislav	70 Studies	Advanced / Rob. King
Bordogni, Marco	43 Bel Canto Studies	Advanced / Rob. King
Kopprasch, C	60 Selected Studies	Advanced / Rob. King
Robinson, Keith	Rain Forest Etudes	Intermediate
Snedecor, Phil	Low Etudes For Tuba	Advanced / PAS Mus.
Vasiliev, 5.	24 Melodious Etudes	Advanced I Rob. King

### 2. Solo's

Bell	The Spartan	Class 3
Grieg / Holmes	In The Hall of the Mountain King	Class 3
<b>Issac</b>	The Jolly Dutchman	Class 3
Liadov / Dishinger	Dancing Song	Class 3
Barnes	Arioso and Caprice	Class 2
Handel / Bell	Honor and Arms	Class 2
<b>Marcello</b>	Largo and Presto	Class 2
Vandercooke	<b>Colossus</b>	Class 2
Bach / Bell	Air and Bouree	Class 1
Beaversdorf	Sonata	Class 1
<b>Gabrieli / Morris</b>	<b>Ricercar</b>	Class 1
<b>Haddad</b>	Suite for Tuba	Class 1
Handel / Little	Larghetto and Allegro	Class 1
Hindemith	Sonata for Tuba	Class 1
<b>Marcello / Little</b>	Sonata No. 1	Class 1
<b>Marcello / Little</b>	Sonata No. 5	Class 1
Vaughan-Williams	Concerto for Bass Tuba	Class 1

### 3. Recordings

Davis, Ronald	<b>Solopro:</b> Tuba	Intermediate / Summit
Perantoni, Daniel	Daniel in the Lions Den	Intermediate / Summit
<b>Philafian</b> , Sam	<b>Travelin</b> Light	Jazz Improv / <b>Summit</b>
Pokomy, Gene	<b>Orch.</b> Excerpts for Tuba	Advanced / Summit
Pokomy, Gene	Tuba Tracks	Advanced I Summit
Self, <b>Jim</b>	Changing Colors	Intermediate / Summit
Sheridan, Patrick	Lollipops	Beginner / Summit
Swoboda, Deanna	Deanna's Wonderland	Intermediate / Summit

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