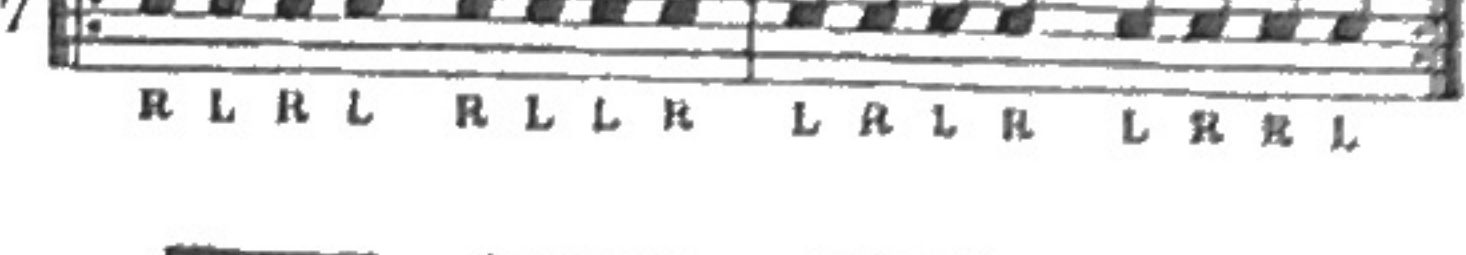## Stick Control

Stick Control, the title of George Lawrence Stone's snare drum method published in 1935, and it is unquestionably the most famous drum book ever written. Below is a reprint of the first page of exercises from Stone's book. I recommend memorizing the first thirteen patterns and practicing them daily in a variety of ways.

My recommendations for developing hand control are based on several simple concepts:

1. Master rebound motions in constant rhythms before progressing to up and down motions. Initially, move the hands quickly enough to facilitate connected, constant stick motion in each hand. Slow, deliberate playing, although seemingly very thoughtful and calculated, often disconnects motions because of the long interval between each hands' movements and I believe this is a problem with some pedagogical approaches.

2. Initially master a relatively moderate length and moderate volume stroke (6-9 inches) as moderate length motions are easier to hardwire into the muscles than smaller motions and will be less likely to cause over-exertion, tension, or technical distortions than larger motions early on.

3. Emphasize a fluid technique and a consistent full-tonal spectrum sound quality (timbre) via maximum stick resonance, rather than focusing on speed. Speed is a natural by-product of excellent technique.

4. Clearly define your practice priorities.

   a. At the beginning level focus on the essentials – which I consider six sticking patterns – unison, singles, doubles, triples, fours, and multiple bounces; these patterns are the basic elements of all other drum rudiments.

   b. In the intermediate and advanced levels add other stroke motions (up and down), additional dynamics, more complex sticking patterns (rudiments), and more complex rhythm patterns. However, the six essential patterns should constitute a significant part of your regular practice routine regardless of your experience level. Persistent focus on fundamentals will yield superior long-term results.

Single Beat Combinations

(Read downward)

1
R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

13
R R R R L L L L R R R R L L L L

2
L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R

14
R L R L R R L L R L R L R R L L

3
R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L

15
L R L R L L R R L R L R L L R R

4
L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R

16
R L R L R L R R L R L R L R L L

5
R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L

17
R L R L R L L L L R L R L R R L

6
R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L

18
R L R L R R L R L R L R L L R L

7
R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L

19
R L R L R R R L R L R L R R R L

8
R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R

20
L R L R L L L R L R L R L L L R

9
R R R L R R R L R R R L R R R L

21
R L R L R L L L R L R L R L L L

10
L L L R L L L R L L L R L L L R

22
L R L R L R R R L R L R L R R R

11
R L L L R L L L R L L L R L L L

23
R L R L R R R R L R L R L L L L

12
L R R R L R R R L R R R L R R R

24
R R L L R L R R L L R R L R L L

* R = right stick
* L = left stick

Repeat each exercise 20 times

Wrist Stroke Studies
No.1

A = Equals Arm Strokes
W = " Wrist Strokes
B = " Bounce or (rebound) Strokes
F = " Finger Strokes

Arm and Wrist Stroke Studies
No. 3