



SICK DRUMMER MAGAZINE

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Product Review: HingeStix®

www.HingeStix.com

\$24.95

HINGESTIX®

Fortunately for me, my neighbors and my various band mates throughout the years; my mother insisted that if she were to buy me a drum set, I'd agree to take private lessons. My first teacher was a progressive Hard Rock/Metal drummer who along with teaching me the basics, grilled me on using a metronome and being solid as a rock. Soon my passion and quest for speed had arrived, inspired much by the music I was then listening too. I returned to private lessons, this time under the tutelage of a jazz teacher, who understanding my desire to acquire fast hands knew first he had to help me develop my technique which meant he was going to have to work on my grip. You could imagine my dismay as I sat there paying this guy by the hour hitting the snare drum, one slow hit at a time as he tried to teach me the Moeller technique. If you don't know what the Moeller technique is I'd recommend you check out "Speed, Power, Control, Endurance" by Jim Chapin. Learning this technique changed my life and is ultimately the best thing that ever happened to my career as a drummer.

More years than I care to admit later I find myself still sitting around working on my grip, technique and manipulation of the stick rebound. It was therefore with great joy that I discovered Sam Ruttenberg's HingeStix. I was evidently not the only one that was impressed as Sam's HingeStix brought home the much coveted "Best in Show" award at the 2011 Winter NAMM. The HingeStix were designed as a learning tool to enable drummers to feel the rebound, develop finger technique, understand the fulcrum, hold the stick properly and feel the whipping motion of the Moeller technique. You youngsters have all of the good stuff available to you; first the internet and now this! Now I know how my older brother felt when he first saw the microwave oven. "You mean you can just heat it up in two minutes, back in my day you had to heat it up on the stove oven or eat it cold!"

The HingeStix are regular drumsticks with wood tips that are available in sizes 5A and 5B. However the HingeStix have three holes drilled in them about where your thumb would be if you were gripping a stick. There is a two sided, unscrewable plastic piece that goes through those holes and acts almost like two mini wheels connected by an axle. This plastic piece unscrews so that you can change the fulcrum position if you desire. You simply grip the HingeStix between your thumb and pointer finger and they then simulate the loose grip that you should be feeling when playing the drums. Developing a loose grip will help you in countering the effects of sore muscles which are a result of holding drum sticks too tightly for long periods of time and quite possibly help you from developing Tendonitis! I'm also sure that your "significant other" will appreciate you losing those calluses you've developed from holding your sticks like a monkey as well.

I would highly recommend the HingeStix if you're interested in developing speed, power, control and endurance. They will indeed help you in developing a loose and relaxed grip which is ultimately the key to playing fast and in control. I dare say that the HingeStix are one of the most powerful and practical teaching tools developed in our time and at \$24.95 what a bargain! For more information on HingeStix please visit www.HingeStix.com and as always, your questions, suggestions, accolades, and hate mail can be sent to: Dross@SickDrummerMagazine.com