

PROGRAM  
SCHEDULE



SEE PAGE 8

# THE VERSATILES...

By Eddie Barker

As long as Herb Holeman has a cornet stuck in his mouth you can understand him—his music says something.

It is when he stops blowing and starts talking that a listener becomes confused.

You shake your head and wonder, "What was that he said?"

The words are a mixture of musician slang, Cajun phrases from a Louisiana bayou background, and the fine structural sentence parts of a professional school teacher, which Herb Holeman is.

What he was trying to do was explain the music of "The Versatiles," an "unoriginal two-man band," to quote the musician.

With Hank Swindull, another Escambia County music teacher (Blount Junior High School) Holeman plays seven nights a week ("We wanted to work more—but found there's seven nights

in a week") at "The Oasis," a Pensacola Beach restaurant.

The two men play eight instruments "nine if you want to count the pocket comb."

They do it the hard way, too. Playing the cornets left-handed, switching off to piano, organ, drums, clarinet, flute, and banjo.

Herb Holeman tried to explain all this to me during breaks and while a diner was shoving a five-dollar bill at the lead man, asking that "The Versatiles" play "Whispering Hope" just one more time ("Can you imagine how long I can go without playing 'Whispering Hope?').

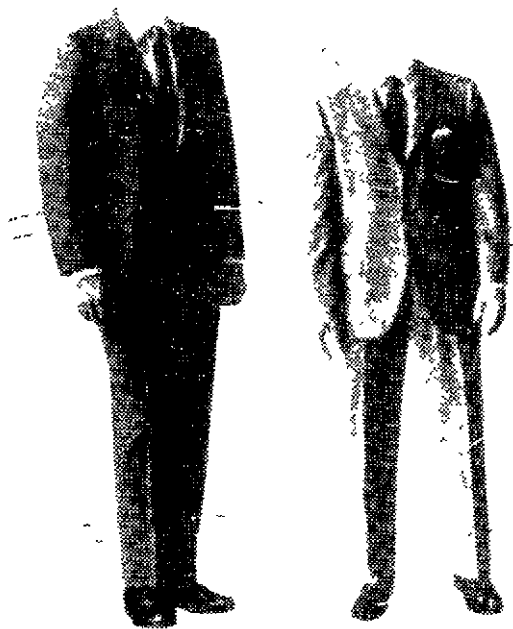
He mixed me up throwing in snatches about left handed horn players, his Brownsville Junior High School band, and for his mother's sake how about somebody getting he and Hank on the Mike Douglas TV show.

(continued)

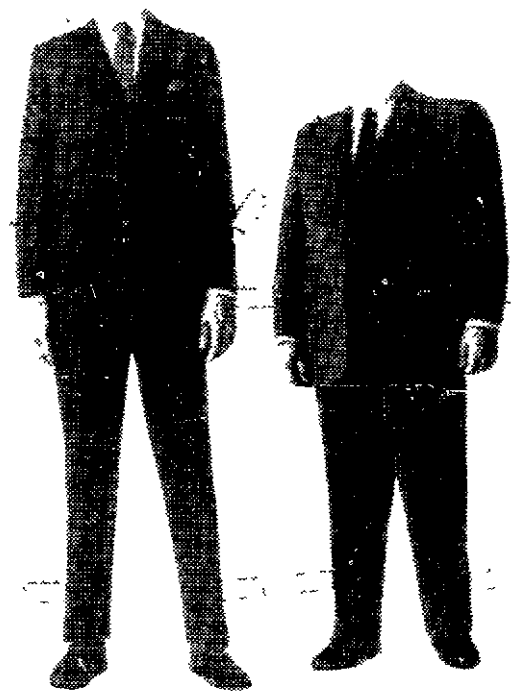
## *Two Cats Swing Like Five, But It Isn't The Music That's Way Out . . . It's the Chatter . . .*



*Herb Holeman (left) and Hank Swindull double in brass (and strings and the pocket comb) in their "unoriginal two-man band."*



**Men come in  
all shapes and  
sizes and Ordon's  
can fit them all!**



**Ordon's**

FLORIDA'S  
FINEST MEN'S STORE  
201 S PALAFOX  
PENSACOLA FLA

# VERSATILES.../ (continued)

"Write it down," I suggested.

The copy said:

"For my mother's sake, won't someone tell Mike Douglas we're around."

Maybe not Mike Douglas, but plenty of people know that "The Versatiles" are around. Theirs is a clean, fun-type performance. They play the standards—"Stardust" and "Laura" and "San Francisco" for slow dancers, switch to the big beat numbers, and meld into Tijuana-type, Herb Alpert, brass. They end sets big, Hank Swindull beating on the banjo, the crowd joining in on "Bill Bailey Won't You Please Come Home."

For two men, they make a lot of noise.

And music.

Herb Holeman and Hank Swindull first met in college at Hattiesburg, Miss., where Holeman was picking up eating money doing a supper-club organ single, doubling as a French horn (a real left-handed instrument) performer in a concert band.

"Hank played the flute in that band," Holeman added in his biography. "I was much impressed by his pureness of tone and speed on the flute (Swindull plays the instrument beautifully duplicating the theme from the movie, "Dr. Zhivago"). I was also impressed by his speed on foot, chasing the college girls.

"I next met Hank in Pensacola six years later. He had slowed some, was teaching at Blount, and I was spreading my gospel in Brownsville.

"I got placed as a single (by Bob Monzingo, a band instrument sales-firm owner) on weekends. Hank started dropping in, playing flute with my piano, and this was the beginning of "The Versatiles."

"Hank wanted to work, and I pointed out that he should learn to play drums. The band stand honestly couldn't hold more than two people, so this originally set our number—"a two-man band."

"I knew that there was always work for a good, commercial group. I already felt my own musicianship, but figured it could be improved by having another musician to play to.

"First, we got a full set of drums for Hank. Several weeks of sweat later he was laying down a pretty nice beat.

"The flute he had mastered.

A borrowed clarinet wasn't a hard thing for him to add.

"As we went along we made sure he kept

time with both feet on the drums, releasing both hands for the flute or clarinet. We had special wheeled platforms made and a custom stand to hold flute, clarinet, cornet, and a microphone.

"I had played with a trumpet man once in Panama City who tried to play left-handed drums and trumpet—did little of either, but the public acceptance was fine.

"I know, from training, and experience, that the rhythm must come first, then the horns.

"This we did.

"Left-handed cornet playing is possible, with much effort, to time it with organ, piano, or drum.

"I started playing along on cornet with Hank, who was also playing left handed.

"It worked well.

"I had once seen Larry Adler accompany himself while playing, so with much work we started getting a five-piece sound—just the two of us. The bass from the organ, the right hand drum from Hank, the accordian from my right hand on the organ.

"This, plus Hank's left foot 'sock cymbal' and right foot bass drum gave us the standard three rhythm. His left-handed cornet and mine gave us two cornets for the popular Tijuana Brass sound.

"His clarinet playing plus my left-handed drum stick gives us the clarinet of a Pete Fountain or a Benny Goodman. Or his clarinet and my cornet gives us a fair Dixieland-band sound. Or his flute and my side piano gets some startling Latin effects.

"For the sing-alongs and fun-type tunes, Hank's banjo and my vocals seem to sell, for some strange reason.

"I add that because sometimes we'll get smiles of approval or polite applause from a difficult flute and organ number, yet to really get a hand we break out the cotton-picking banjo and bring the house down."

Herb Holeman doesn't mind being commercial, because it means "bread." But the colorful, personable performer wants to do whatever "The Ver-satiles" do well.

"Hank and I are trained musicians with teaching degrees. Music we do not trifle with. We are interested in playing what people want to hear, but mastering what we are trying to do.

"It's fun to play all the instruments but there is one more sound we want to hear—that is the knock of opportunity."

You tuned in, Mike Douglas? And, if so, stick that cornet in Herb Holeman's mouth. The horn can be understood quickly, easily; with the cut-up cornet man, it takes a little time.

# National Appliance and Food Sales

*invites you to*

## COMPARE!

YOUR PRESENT WAY	NATIONAL WAY
MEATS STAPLES PERISHIBLES	FREEZER AND FOOD PER WEEK
?	\$13 <sup>28</sup> *

**\* INCLUDES UPRIGHT FREEZER OF-YOUR-CHOICE!**

- Better Quality



- Unconditional

Guarantee

- Free Home

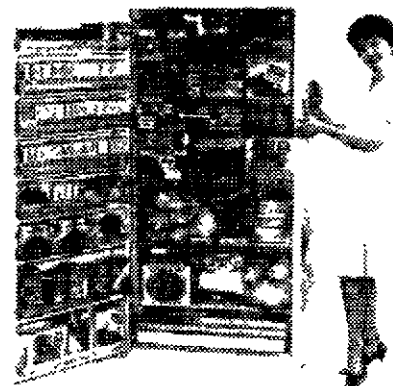
Delivery Service

- Pickup Service

When Moving

- Nationwide

Service



ALL THIS FOR ONLY **\$13<sup>28</sup>** WEEK

**FREE** Gourmet Steak Box with each new order.

CALL 456-0343, OR WRITE FOR FREE BROCHURE . . . NO OBLIGATION!!

**National Appliance and Food Sales**

P.O. Box 3177  
Pensacola, Fla.

Own Home Freezer  
 Do Not Own Home Freezer

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY .....

STATE ..... ZIP .....