Thunderthumbs & The Toetsenman 'Freedom' Bass Solo

THUNDERTHUMBS
ALL THE THE PERSON

Artist: Thunderthumbs & The Toetsenman Album: Freedom Single - non album track

Track: 'Freedom A-Go-Go'

This bass solo is taken from 'Freedom A-Go-Go', the extended version of 'Freedom. This was a track that Mark King and Mike Lindup released in 1982 under the names 'Thunderthumbs & The Toetsenman'.

This transcription begins at CD Time 4.28 and is a showcase for Mark's slap technique, which by this point had developed to the high level of proficiency that propelled Level 42's music for the next twelve years. The first half, or 'A' section of the solo is based around a trill motif that opens each two bar phrase. In some instances the rhythm of the trill is clear, and in these cases I have notated it. The first trill is a good example of this. The rest of the line is a sixteenth note riff that involves the use of both hands to create the continuous rhythm. This kind of slap playing is best compared to drumming on a tabletop with your hands - Mark has often pointed out that his background as a drummer was crucial to his development as a slap player. Note how some of the trill phrases begin on the last sixteenth note of the previous bar, such as at the end of the second bar. This 'anticipation' makes the line more exciting.

The second half of the solo (at letter B) is a great example of the way Mark uses both hands to play fast flurries of 'machine-gun triplets'. These are easier to play than they sound, and the key to mastering them is to play the line slowly, being sure to follow the slap guides that are notated between the staves.





