

ProLogix All-N-1 Russ Miller Signature Practice Pad

>>Way Beyond "Tap, Tap, Tap"

by Chap Ostrander

KEY NOTES

- Great playing response
- Well conceived to offer multiple practice options
- Pricy for a single pad

Everyone needs to practice. The question is, how, where, and when? Some practice pads make so much noise that they can be as annoying to others as live drums. And if you're a teacher using such pads in a lesson situation, you often have to shout to be heard above them. ProLogix has an answer. Let's see if it's *your* answer.

More Than Meets The Eye

The All-N-1 Russ Miller Signature Practice Pad is a 13"-diameter red gum-rubber pad atop a $\frac{3}{4}$ "-thick Baltic birch base. A raised rim around the pad is made from the same rubber as the pad surface. A non-slip disk on the underside of the base keeps the pad in place on a tabletop or your lap. The pad's 13" diameter lets it sit comfortably on a 13" drum, while a thoughtfully placed Hoop Groove around the bottom of the base allows it to sit on top of the rim of a 14" drum. Three cutouts around the circumference of the pad accommodate the arms of a snare stand basket.

Russ Miller's Brush Maps and Groove Wedge add instructional and sonic options to the All-N-1 pad.

The red playing surface of the pad offers pretty low-volume response. A blue muffling disk can be placed over this surface, lowering the volume even more. The disk also reduces stick rebound, turning the unit into more of a chops-building pad.

The ProLogix pad was originally designed by drummer/inventor Jason Edwards. Then Russ Miller got involved and made

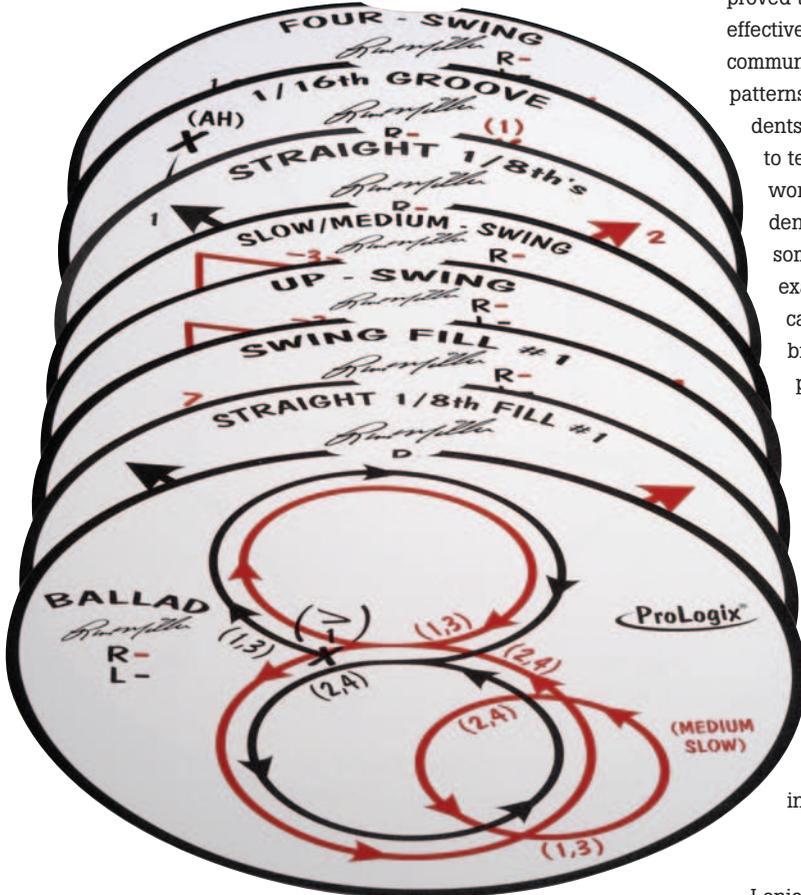


A Remo FiberSkyn 3 drumhead insert provides an excellent brush surface.

The red playing surface is made of gum rubber for quick rebound.

The blue muffle insert reduces stick sound significantly. It also reduces rebound, turning the pad into a "chops exerciser."

some significant contributions. These include a Remo Fiberskyn 3 "drumhead" insert that makes a great surface for brush practice. The sound of the brushes is very apparent, making the practice effective. Russ also worked on Brush Maps, which are solid inserts (sold separately) that fit over the primary pad. The Maps contain working diagrams that show the placement and direction of eight different brush patterns. Color coding identifies the right and left hands, and arrows indicate the direction for playing the pattern. The Maps cover a range of musical



Eight Brush Maps are available as a separate set.

styles and feels, and they provide practical instruction to the novice brush player. A video produced by Russ for the Prologix Web site demonstrates all the Brush Map patterns.

Russ's involvement in the All-N-1 pad's design also called for two drumkey screws that attach his Yamaha Groove Wedge (sold separately). If you want to practice clave, cascara, or cross-sticking, this is your accessory. The cool thing is that once you've mastered the patterns on the pad, you can then take the Wedge off and add it to your drumset.

It Ain't Just Tapping

My favorite aspect of the ProLogix pad system was the sound of the pad itself. I loved the resonance of the wood base, especially when the pad was suspended on a snare stand. When the pad was placed on a snare drum, the Hoop Groove made a great connection, and I could moderate the snare tension on the drum to achieve the desired sound.

The red surface provided a great practice tool. Of equal value was the rim. I love being able to practice stick patterns involving rimshots without having my ears pierced by the sound of a plastic rim (as found on

some practice pads). The rubber rim on the All-N-1 pad stands up solidly and invites all manner of rim work, including the Johnny Rabb freehand technique.

The Brush Maps proved to be an effective means of communicating brush patterns to my students. It's difficult to teach brush work when students don't have some kind of example they

can watch and emulate on their own. The Brush Maps put the brush strokes right in front of them and guide them through the patterns. The ProLogix Web site indicates that more artists are getting involved with the pad, which could mean more Brush Maps in the future.

Bagging It

In addition to the All-N-1 pad, ProLogix also offers the D-Lux 16" Traveling Practice Pad Bag. It's roomy enough to take the pad and several lesson books, with foam-lined pockets for storing the Brush Maps and the blue and brush inserts. A stick pocket on the outside easily holds several pairs of sticks and brushes. A deeper square pocket can take keys, cell phones, metronomes, and other items. The carrying handle is padded for comfort, and there's a shoulder strap as well. A plastic insert protects the bottom of the bag.

Wrap-Up

I enjoyed working with the All-N-1 pad. It was big enough to place between my student and me so that we could both play on it. And the sound level was such that I could speak and be heard while we were playing. The sound created by the wooden base was satisfying to work with, and the response of the pad and the rim made that work easy. The blue insert was great for working finger exercises and for muscle building, and the Brush Maps were very helpful for instructing students in brush basics.

The All-N-1's price may seem a little steep for a single pad. But the pad is really a complete system, with quite a bit of versatility to offer. As such, it's almost a must for teachers or players with a dedicated practice regimen. Get one and you'll get some serious practicing done.



The D-Lux carrying bag can contain the pad and all inserts for easy portability. It can also accommodate sticks and accessories.

THE NUMBERS

All-N-1 Russ Miller Signature Practice Pad\$149.99
Includes Fiberskyn and blue muffle inserts	
Eight signature Russ Miller Brush Maps\$35
D-Lux 16" Traveling Practice Pad Bag\$170
Yamaha Groove Wedge\$65
www.prologixpercussion.com	

