

Section 4: Daily Routines Survey Conclusions

In February of 2004 a total of 150 surveys were mailed to professional tuba and euphonium players in the United States. A majority of the participants are current college professors, prominent freelance musicians, and musicians in professional ensembles such as military bands and orchestras. First, questions ranged from personal information such as instrument, current job, and their general practice habits. Then, specific questions were asked about their daily routine habits. Questions in this section focused on what specific components of tuba and euphonium playing they focused on. They were asked the likelihood of focusing on one particular aspect of playing, and if they did, how they did it, how long they did it, and in what order did they structure it. The respondents were also given a chance to write in detail about any of these things if they so desired. As of November 2004 total of 47 people have responded.

The results provided some worthwhile insight into the practice habits of many successful tuba and euphonium players. Many of them stressed a need for a consistent routine that still allowed for flexibility to meet the individual's current performing demands. For most of the components isolated in this survey a majority of the respondents indicated that they work on them every day or almost every day. This shows that most of the professionals surveyed aim for consistency in their daily warm-up. Most of the respondents indicated that they work on a very standard list of components such as breathing exercises, mouthpiece buzzing, long tones, lip slurs, low range, high range, scales, and tonguing exercises. Many of those who were surveyed stressed the importance of using actual music instead of exercises as often as possible. Also, many advocated the need for regular sight-reading practice as well as to actively listen to music more as a part of a daily routine. Overall, the conclusion this survey brings is that the standard items stressed by many teachers to students for improving their playing are items focused on regularly by professional musicians.