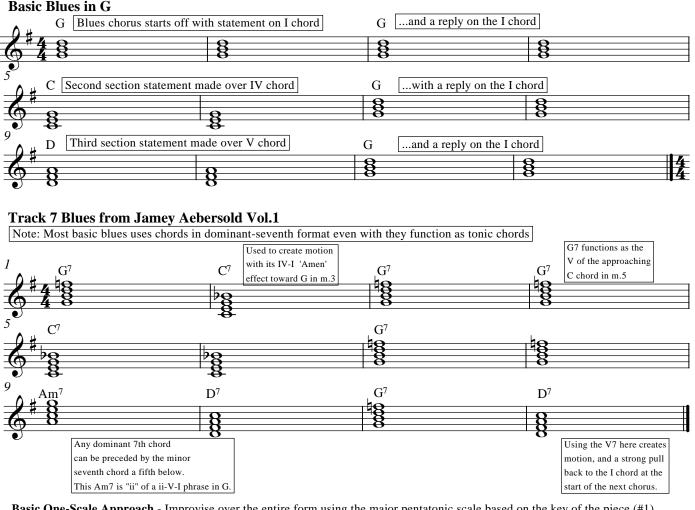
The Blues

by Allen Cole

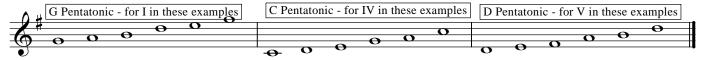
The Basic, Bottom-Line Chord Progression - The standard blues is 12 measures long, divided into 3 equal sections www.jamschool.net The standard chord progression is I-IV-I-V-I, although there are many variations on it. Here's how the blues basically functions. While most blues chords including the tonic chords are dominant 7ths, I'm just putting 7ths in this progression when they function as dominant chords.



Basic One-Scale Approach - Improvise over the entire form using the major pentatonic scale based on the key of the piece (#1) Then take the same major-sounding licks and transpose them to the major pentatonic a minor 3rd above. (#2) Note the change in the character of the licks.



Chord Running Approach - Take major pentatonic scales based on the I, IV and V of the key and then use them over the appropriate sections of the piece. (see first blues example above -- use this approach with Jamey Aebersold Vol.1 Track 7



Voice-Leading Approach - The chief area of player dissatisfaction with the single major pentatonic scale is the fact that the major 3rd (B, in this case) sounds bad over the IV chord. Adding a flat 3rd to the scale (#1) allows basic licks to be played the same over the entire form, substituting flat 3rd for major 3rd when it sounds appropriate. This is the approach taken in *Tenor Madness*. Now try modifying your up-a-minor-third pentatonic in the same way (#2). Rearrange those notes into your minor pentatonic and you now have your blues scale. (#3)

