

# Texas Guitar Tornados

Buddy Magazine

The original Texas Music Magazine

Volume XII, Number 2

August 1984

The Texas Sound. For some, it's the report of a 12-gauge pointed at the flock of doves. For the rest of us, it's the sound of a guitar laced with a smidgen of sweet distortion, a singing, violin-like tone that can make an audience quiver in harmonic sympathy with a bend this way or a vibrato that way. Texas is guitar country, has been ever since before Dallas-born Charlie Christian became the first-ever electric guitarist to achieve fame (with the Benny Goodman Sextet). Since before-born Gene Autry strummed his way to fame as the first "Singing Cowboy." Regular Buddy readers need no further proof of just how deep in guitar history Texas is, and now with the tandem successes of Stevie Ray Vaughan and the triple titanium ZZ Top album, "Eliminator", the rest of the country has come around.

The Texas Tornadoes are an elite corps of the Line Star States' finest musicians. With so many fine players in circulation, choosing a few each year is a harrowing task. The variety of styles in Texas is as wide as the horizon, all the way from the sweet subtlety of Billy Sanders to the string popping flamenco run of Rene Martinez to the urgent, cold sting of Albert Collins. We salute the new inductees for 1984, may they spank their planks until the cows come home.

ROBIN SYLAR

Dallas native Robin Sylar is another in the fine Texas Tradition of white blues hounds. Robin has played in several bands during his 33 years, including a nine-month stint with Canned Heat in California. Their regular player, according to Robin, either died or freaked out on dangerous drugs, so the gig was his.

After that, he returned to Dallas and formed several bands, including his most enduring, Krackerjack. Backing him up were Uncle John Turner and Tommy Shannon, both fellow Tornadoes. In one line-up of the band, Robin shared his seat with Stevie Ray Vaughan, who was nineteen at the time. Robin's most recent trio was called The Millionaires, and included fellow Tornado Alex Napier and Doyle Bramhall.

Among Robin's influences are Albert King, fellow inductee Albert Collins, Lightnin' Sam Hopkins, and Jimmy Reed. Robin didn't listen much to the blues-rockers of the '60s because he questioned the merit of copying someone copying someone else. Currently on his own, Robin remains one of the hottest blues players in the state, and a credit to his race.