

BARNEY'S BLUES (Barney Kessel)



Two distinct versions are preserved, the one with two different spoken introductions by Cliff, and so broadcast at least twice, the other, shorter and with a different arrangement, without any preamble. The first (available on the Italian *Atlantis* CD, a legal release according to Italian law subsisting at the time) is almost certainly the earlier of the two if both lead guitar phrasing and the bass solo contribution are anything to go by; in the second version Hank is certainly more fluent, not arty exactly but certainly more ornate, while the bass work sounds more assured and is worked in rather more smoothly. This latter solo closes with an element of 'Pop Goes The Weasel' familiar from some versions of NIVRAM. Indeed, it is natural to posit an early BARNEY'S BLUES making way for a more elaborate version which would culminate in The Shadows' trademark tune-with-bass-solo (in fact, the bass and other parts in NIVRAM have something in common with this second Kessel workout): why pay other composers royalties when a Shadows' styling can be used instead (cf. notably SHADOOGIE ~ GUITAR BOOGIE)?

NIVRAM was recorded on 13 June 1961 (first BBC broadcast: 13 August), so it is reasonable to suppose that both takes on BARNEY'S BLUES went out in the first series of the Luxembourg show, as it seems likely that the second, 1961 series (for which no programme schedules or even transmission dates are known) hit the airwaves later rather than earlier that year. It is conceivable alternatively that what we may call BB Mark II was recorded prior to NIVRAM (say February or March 1961), but was broadcast at about the time, whether before or after, the LP that accommodated NIVRAM appeared (September 1961). Later on, NIVRAM was recorded (or the studio version called upon?) for RL and was broadcast twice in 1963 although we do not have a surviving example.