

# If I Could Fly

MIKE SMUKAL

## INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor	1st Trombone
1st E $\flat$ Alto Saxophone	2nd Trombone
2nd E $\flat$ Alto Saxophone	3rd Trombone (Optional)
1st B $\flat$ Tenor Saxophone	4th Trombone (Optional)
2nd B $\flat$ Tenor Saxophone	Guitar Chords
E $\flat$ Baritone Saxophone (Optional)	Guitar (Optional)
1st B $\flat$ Trumpet	Piano
2nd B $\flat$ Trumpet	Bass
3rd B $\flat$ Trumpet	Drums
4th B $\flat$ Trumpet (Optional)	

## Optional Alternate Parts

C Flute  
Tuba  
Horn in F (Doubles 1st Trombone)  
1st Baritone T.C. (Doubles 1st Trombone)  
2nd Baritone T.C. (Doubles 2nd Trombone)

**YOUNG  
JAZZ  
ENSEMBLE**

## NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

*If I Could Fly* is a bossa nova ballad featuring the tenor sax. This arrangement is full of passing lines, unisons, and various other musical textures that provide a good opportunity to discuss and teach a variety of concepts. Good balance and blend is essential to a successful performance. Remind students of the concept of the pyramid of balance where lower pitched notes should be played slightly louder than higher pitched notes.

Regarding articulation, the *marcato* or rooftop accent in measure 20 is played detached but not too short, think “daht.” The tenor sax is the only instrument playing the melody therefore it is critical that all players in the band listen and balance their parts to avoid overpowering the solo.

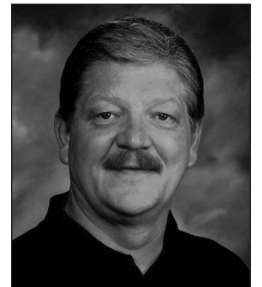
Since good listening skills are required in all music styles, it is necessary for younger players to be aware of who is playing their notes along with them. Is it only the trombones, or the trombones and saxes, or the whole ensemble? I believe students will play with more confidence if they are sure of their notes and how those notes sound in an ensemble passage. For example, the director or pianist can play the trombone voicing in measure 9 so that the trombones can hear how the chord is supposed to sound. Then add the saxophones and have each player identify who also plays their same note. For example, the second tenor and the third trombone might have the same pitch so the third trombone can listen for the tenor and lock-in together on the pitch.

Students should also be aware of some basic rules for ensemble playing. Occasionally stop and ask students to recognize the difference between unisons and harmonized chords. Unisons should be played softer than ensemble parts. For example the trombones, second tenor, and baritone sax have a unison line in measure 7. In measure 8 on beat 3, the unison line becomes a harmonized chord, so players will need to decrease the volume of the unison lines and increase volume on the harmony notes. Also, players should learn to allow the moving lines (quarter notes) to be heard and at the same time, ease off the stationary parts (whole notes). It’s good practice to always listen for the moving part and direct students to play that part so that so that the moving lines can be clearly heard by the audience. Have students realize that moving lines are often passed through the band. For example in measure 24 the trumpets begin playing a quarter note descending line and it is passed to the trombones in measure 25. The entire line in both measures should sound like a descending A-flat major scale as a unit. Students should be reminded often to strive hear the “big musical picture.” Sometimes younger players are so focused on playing their part correctly that they forget to listen to what it the entire ensemble really sounds like.

Above all else players should enjoy the music that they are making instead of being stressed out about playing their part correctly. Have fun and enjoy the performance!

Thanks and please enjoy.

–Mike Smukal



**Mike Smukal**

Mike Smukal was a member of the U.S. Air Force with the Airmen of Note and played professionally in Las Vegas. He holds a master’s degree from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and is currently the director of bands at Charles A. Silvestri Junior High School in Las Vegas. Mike is a prolific composer, having written many works for high school and middle school band.

# IF I COULD FLY

BOSSA NOVA ♩ = 86

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C FLUTE (OPTIONAL)

1ST E♭ ALTO SAXOPHONE

2ND E♭ ALTO SAXOPHONE

1ST B♭ TENOR SAXOPHONE

2ND B♭ TENOR SAXOPHONE

E♭ BARITONE SAXOPHONE (OPTIONAL)

1ST B♭ TRUMPET

2ND B♭ TRUMPET

3RD B♭ TRUMPET

4TH B♭ TRUMPET (OPTIONAL)

1ST TROMBONE

2ND TROMBONE

3RD TROMBONE (OPTIONAL)

4TH TROMBONE (OPTIONAL)

GUITAR (OPTIONAL)

PIANO

BASS

DRUMS

SOLO

8.D. H.H. PED. *mf* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7