Third-generation arpeggios

by Frank Gambale

Ex. 1

Ex. 2  E7#9

Ex. 3  E7#9

Ex. 4  E7#9

Ex. 5  E7#9

NOW that we've explored arpeggios that begin on the root and 2nd degree of the melodic minor scale, it's time to move on to the 3rd. Don't forget that these arps are generated from the scale whose root is one half-step higher than the dominant chord at hand. Arpeggios starting on the melodic minor scale's 3rd are especially cool-sounding, as you'll soon see.

In this case the dominant chord we want to improvise over is E7#9. The melodic minor scale whose root is a half-step higher than E7#9 is F melodic minor, which reads F, G, A♭, B♭, C, D, E. To generate a four-note arpeggio from the 3rd degree, start with A♭ and skip every other note. So if A♭ is the 1st note of our arp, then C is the 3rd, E is the 5th, and G is the 7th. These notes combine to form an A♭maj7#5 arpeggio, which sounds terrific over E7#9. Ex. 1 shows fretboard positions for A♭maj7#5 arpeggios. Ex. 2 through Ex. 5 are some licks over the E7#9-Am7 progression.

We'll continue our melodic minor explorations next time. Until then, improvise to your heart's content. Bon voyage!

Virtuoso Frank Gambale is a member of Chick Corea's Electric Band, and a respected solo artist, teacher, and author.

"You can say more with a couple of notes than you can with 15, if the feeling's there." Jimmie Vaughan, July '86 GP