

The
BARITONESAX
of
LEO PARKER
“MAD LAD ”

Solographer: Jan Evensmo
Last update: May 14, 2018

Born: Washington D. C., April 18, 1925
Died: NYC. Feb. 11, 1962

Introduction:

Leo Parker was one of the very first bebop baritone sax performers and therefore an interesting subject. However, I am not sure we liked his playing very much . . . , too rough for us. Nevertheless, as time goes by, it is obvious that he is a candidate for jazz archeology!

History:

He first recorded on alto saxophone with Coleman Hawkins in 1944 (not quite true, see below). He changed to baritone saxophone during his tenure with Billy Eckstine's orchestra (1944-46) and became known as one of the finest performers in the bop style on that instrument, modelling his playing on that of Charlie Parker. He worked on 52nd Street with a small group led by Dizzy Gillespie in 1946, and performed briefly in Gillespie's big band. His recording with Sir Charles Thompson of "Mad Lad" (1947), which gained him wider public attention, demonstrates a style of improvisation combining elements of bop with an extroverted rhythm-and-blues idiom. In 1947 Leo Parker joined the group led by Illinois Jacquet and worked intermittently with Jacquet into the 1950s. In the 50s LP had problems with drug abuse, which interfered with his recording career. He recorded two albums as a leader shortly before his death by heart attack (ref. New Grove Dictionary of Jazz, and Wikipedia).

LEO PARKER SOLOGRAPHY

TRUMMY YOUNG **Chi. Feb. 7, 1944**
 Trummy Young (tb), Leo Parker (as), Harry Curtis (ts), John Malachi (p),
 Tommy Potter (b), Eddie Byrd (dm).
 Four titles were recorded for Pax, "The Man I Love Pt 1 & 2" not available, and
 since this is a 12" 78, it is possibly that no copies exist, however:

144 Hollywood (as)-Solo with ens 32 bars. (F)

145 It's The Talk Of The Town (as)-Solo 8 bars. (S)

Surprisingly good altosax playing in uptempo on "Hollywood"! And note such
 sweet playing on "... The Town", considering his later developments on the
 baritonesax!

COLEMAN HAWKINS & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Feb. 16&22, 1944**
 Personnel including Leo Parker (as).
 Six titles were recorded for Apollo but no LP.

BILLY ECKSTINE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 5, 1944**
 Bigband personnel including Leo Parker (bar).
 Six titles were recorded for DeLuxe, but no baritonesax soli.

LA. Feb./March, 1945

Same/similar. AFRS broadcast, but no LP.

NYC. May 2, 1945, Feb. 1946, March 1946

Same/similar. Twelve titles were recorded for National but no LP.

**SARAH VAUGHAN WITH THE
 TADD DAMERON ORCHESTRA** **NYC. May 7, 1946**
 Freddie Webster (tp), Leroy Harris (as), Hank Ross (bcl), Leo Parker (bar), Bud
 Powell (p), Ted Sturgis (b), Kenny Clarke (dm), nine (strings), Sarah Vaughan
 (vo), Tadd Dameron (arr). Note: Some sources say Cecil Payne (bar), wrong.
 Four titles were recorded for Musicraft, one has LP:

5488 My Kinda Love Solo 16 bars. (SM)

Pretty and highly competent baritonesax playing here. Postscript of May 14,
 2018: An alternate take on "... Love" on Vernon LP has been presented in discos.
 However, it is the same take, although with a slightly different audio quality.

DIZZY GILLESPIE & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. June 8 & July 6, 1946**
 Bigband personnel including Leo Parker (bar).
 Broadcasts from the Spotlight Club but no LP.

ILLINOIS JACQUET & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 7, 1947**
 Joe Newman, Fats Navarro, Marion Hazel, Miles Davis (tp), Gus Chappell, Fred
 Robinson, Ted Kelly, Dicky Wells (tb), Ray Perry, Jimmy Powell (as), Illinois
 Jacquet, Big Nick Nicholas (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Bill Doggett (p), Al Lucas (b),
 Shadow Wilson (dm).
 Four titles were recorded for Aladdin, one has LP:

NR-97-2 Jivin' With Jack The Bellboy Solo 8 bars. (FM)

This is definitely LP, combining in eight bars some good typical bebop phrasing
 with a few deep-down honking tones. Is it the first bebop baritonesax solo on
 record?

FATS NAVARRO & HIS THIN MEN **NYC. Jan. 29, 1947**
 Fats Navarro (tp), Leo Parker (as, bar), Tadd Dameron (p), Gene Ramey (b),
 Denzil Best (dm).
 Four titles were recorded for Savoy:

3383-2 Fat Girl Solo 32 bars. (FM)

3384-2 Ice Freezes Red Solo 64 bars. (F)

3385 Eb Pob Solo 16 bars. (FM)

3386 Goin' To Minton's Solo 64 bars. (F)

Now things are getting serious, one does not joke with serious artists like Tadd
 Dameron and Fats Navarro! On "Eb Pob" he plays one of his best soli from this
 period. He also obviously does his very best on the other items, but the tempi are
 pretty high, and he simply does not have technique or imagination enough to

make his soli really noteworthy, almost always he has to use simple repetitive phrases simply to keep the music flowing.

ILLINOIS JACQUET **NYC. April 1, 1947**

Personnel including Leo Parker (bar).
Two titles were recorded for Aladdin but no LP.

ILLINOIS JACQUET & HIS ALL STARS **Toronto, April 29, 1947**

Personnel as below plus Russell Jacquet (tp, vo).
Concert(s?), eleven titles, the following have baritone sax soli:

Bottoms Up No. 1	Solo 64 bars. (FM)
Medley: Music Hall Beat	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 40 bars to fade out. (FM)
Music Hall Beat	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)
Oh, Lady Be Good	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. (F)
Mutton Leg	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (F)

Exciting recent discovery, but LP has an ungrateful role here, as you can see, all his contributions are in quite high tempi which seem to give him problems. He simply has not technique to express his ideas sufficiently clear, possibly simply lacking technique yet! A ballad and some medium tempo would have been nice, as well as a chase with Illinois! He is best on "... Be Good" where his boss takes a break.

ILLINOIS JACQUET & HIS ALL STARS **NYC. May 21, 1947**

Joe Newman (tp), Illinois Jacquet (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Sir Charles Thompson (p), Al Lucas (b), Shadow Wilson (dm).
Five titles were recorded for Apollo, three have LP:

R1214	South Street Special	Straight 8 bars. (FM)
R1214	South Street Special alt.	As above. (FM)
R1215	Diggin' The Count / Sid's Kick	Solo 16 bars. (F)
R1218	Jumpin' At the Woodside	Break to solo 30 bars. (F)
R1218	Jumpin' At The Woodside alt.	As above. (F)

As on LP's first session with Jacquet, "South Street ..." and "... The Count" have some deep-down honking, but here it is not much room for any bebop at all. Most interesting here are the "... Woodside"s, also these pretty rough, but one can easily understand his qualities and why LP became a part of the upper modern jazz society.

ILLINOIS JACQUET & HIS ALL STARS **NYC. Sept. 10, 1947**

Joe Newman, Russell Jacquet (tp), J. J. Johnson (tb), Illinois Jacquet (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Sir Charles Thompson (p), John Collins (g), Al Lucas (b), Shadow Wilson (dm).

Five titles were recorded for Apollo, but no LP.

SIR CHARLES THOMPSON & HIS ALL STARS **NYC. late summer 1947**

Joe Newman (tp), Bob Dorsey (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Sir Charles Thompson (p), Freddie Green (g), John Simmons (b), Shadow Wilson (dm).

Three titles were recorded for Apollo (1249 "Rhythm Itch" has rhythm section only), no baritone sax on 1248 "Strange Hours" but:

1247	Tunis In	Solo 16 bars. (M)
1250-1	Mad Lad	As below but 4 bars before coda. (F)
1250-2	Mad Lad	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars to coda. (F)

Queer allocation of tasks here; LP has only one 'normal' solo among the the first three items, and then Sir Charles let him go into that "Mad Lade" craze which gets so boring after awhile, and it does not help much that LP was one of the few who could blow strong bebop influenced r&b baritone saxophone (or r&b influenced bebop baritone saxophone) those days.

GENE AMMONS QUINTET **Chi. Sept. 23, 1947**

Gene Ammons (ts), Leo Parker (as, bar), Junior Mance (p), Gene Wright (b), Ellis Bartee (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Aladdin, three issued, two have LP:

301-5	Concentration	Solo 24 bars. (F)
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302 Jack's Town Solo 16 bars. (M)

On "Concentration", Gene takes eight bars and then kicks LP along for two rough blues choruses, personal but not exactly beautiful and in fact pretty vulgar. Postscript of Jan. 31, 2018: Another title has appeared with a typical solo. When shall we have the full session with alternates?

LEO PARKER'S ALL STARS

Detroit, Oct. 4, 1947

Howard McGhee (tp), Gene Ammons (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Junior Mance (p), Gene Wright (b), Charles Williams (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Savoy:

800 El Sino Solo 32 bars. (M)

801 Ineta Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. (M)

802 Wild Leo Soli 5 and 3 choruses of 12 bars. (M)

803 Leapin' Leo Soli 8 and 40 bars. (FM)

LP's first recording session under his own name, with famous side men! Possibly that makes him particularly confident, because he seems to relax and not be so wild as usual, not even on "Wild Leo". Still, he has not enough ideas, just listen to the last two choruses of "Ineta", you will understand what I mean. The LP highlight seems to be "Leapin' Leo".

ILLINOIS JACQUET & HIS ALL STARS

Chi. Nov. 7, 1947

Joe Newman, Russell Jacquet (tp), Illinois Jacquet (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Sir Charles Thompson (p), John Collins (g), Al Lucas (b), Shadow Wilson (dm).

Three titles were recorded for Aladdin, one has LP:

481 For Truly Solo 32 bars. (F)

LP has no technical problems with high tempo, like on "For Truly", but the amount of good music can be questioned.

DEXTER GORDON QUINTETTE

NYC. Dec. 11, 1947

Dexter Gordon (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Tadd Dameron (p), Curly Russell (b), Art Blakey (dm).

Three titles were recorded for Savoy, complete session exists, not available, possibly even more than the items below exists (not all available for the time being):

3491/92-1 Settin' The Pace I & II As below? ()

3491/92-2 Settin' The Pace I & II As below? ()

3491/92-3 Settin' The Pace I & II Soli 64, 32 and 32 bars.
Solo 8 bars to 80 bars 4/4 with (ts). (F)

3493-1 So Easy As below? ()

3493-2 So Easy As below. (M)

3493-3 So Easy Solo 24 bars. (M)

3494-1 Dexter's Riff As below. (F)

3494-2 Dexter's Riff Solo 64 bars. (F)

3494-3 Dexter's Riff As above? ()

This session contains the best LP soloing from this period. He seems to be reigned in by Dexter, and thus concentrates on serious music without going to the excesses often encountered. Listen to his relaxed, swinging and concentrated playing on the blues "... Easy", very high quality on these! He also surprises by taking the fast tempi with no problems, playing fine and serious bebop, nothing to criticize negatively here!

ILLINOIS JACQUET & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Dec. 18, 1947

Joe Newman (tp), Russell Jacquet (tp, vo), J. J. Johnson (tb), Illinois Jacquet (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Sir Charles Thompson (p), Al Lucas (b), Shadow Wilson (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Victor, one has LP:

2857 Embryo Solo 8 bars. (M)

same

Personnel as above except John Collins (g) added.
Four titles, two have LP:

2890-1	Mutton Leg	Solo 8 bars. (F)
2891	Symphony In Sid	Solo 8 bars. (FM)

Three brief baritonesax soli, more functioning like fill-ins before the tenorsax master enters the scene.

LEO PARKER's ALL STARS **NYC. Dec. 19, 1947**
 Joe Newman (tp), J. J. Johnson (tb), Dexter Gordon (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Hank Jones (p), Curly Russell (b), Shadow Wilson (dm).
 Four titles were recorded for Savoy, complete session exists (not all items available):

3495-1	Wee Dot	Solo 36 bars. (M)
3495-2	Wee Dot	As above. (M)
3495-3	Wee Dot	As above. (M)
3495-4	Wee Dot	Solo 24 bars. (M)
3496-1	Solitude	As below? ()
3496-2	Solitude	Intro 4 bars to solo 32 bars to very long coda. (S)
3496-3	Solitude	As above? ()
3497-1	Lion Roars	Solo 48 bars. (M)
3497-2	Lion Roars (NC)	As above. (M)
3497-3	Lion Roars	As above. (M)
3497-4	Lion Roars	As above. (M)
3498-1	Mad Lad Boogie	As below? ()
3498-2	Mad Lad Boogie	As below? ()
3498-3	Mad Lad Boogie	Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. (M)

Another very good LP session where he shows his best sides. His solo feature "Solitude" is played rather straight but with great beauty and shows him as a sensitive and emotional artist. Otherwise the theme is the blues, which he executes with restraint and inspiration. The differences between the takes are not that great though.

JAY JAY JOHNSON's BOP QUINTET **NYC. Dec. 24, 1947**
 J. J. Johnson (tb), Leo Parker (bar), Hank Jones (p), Al Lucas (b), Shadow Wilson (dm).
 Four titles were recorded for Savoy:

3519	Bone-o-logy	Solo 8 bars. (M)
3519-alt.	Bone-o-logy	As above. (M)
3520	Down Vernon's Alley	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
3520-alt.	Down Vernon's Alley	As above. (FM)
3521	Yesterdays	Part of coda. (S)
3522	Riffette	Solo 36 bars. (F)
3522-alt.	Riffette	As above. (F)

Pleasant session with good soloing by LP. Note particularly the two brief, relaxed and quite different soli on the "Bone ..."s. Professional playing also in upper tempi, this is baritonesax bebop of high quality, although he sometimes seems to be uncertain of what to do and therefore fill in some appropriate clichés.

LEO PARKER's QUINTETTE/SEXTETTE **Detroit, March 23, 1948**
 Joe Newman (tp), Charlie Rouse (ts-846-849), Leo Parker (bar), Sir Charles Thompson (p), Al Lucas (b), Jack Parker (dm).
 Eight titles were recorded for Savoy:

D842	On The House	Solo 36 bars. (M)
D843	Dinky	Intro 4 bars to solo 64 bars. Solo 64 bars to coda 4 bars. (F)
D844	Senor Leo	Soli 36 and 24 bars. (M)

D845	Chase 'n' Lion	Soli 36 and 36 bars. (M)
D846	Leo's Bells	Soli 8, 64 and 8 bars. (F)
D847	Sweet Talkin' Leo	Soli 48 and 12 bars. (FM)
D848	Swingin' For Love	Soli 8 and 64 bars. (F)
D849	New Look Swing	Soli 8 and 56 bars. (FM)

Fine baritonesax playing also on this Savoy session, reasonably restrained in uptempo and swinging persistently in medium. We are sorely missing ballads though; the session as a whole is sounding somewhat monotonous.

RUSSELL JACQUET & HIS ALL STARS **Detroit, May 1948**
 Russell Jacquet (tp, vo), J. J. Johnson (tb), Sonny Stitt (as), Maurice Simon (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Sir Charles Thompson (p), Al Lucas (b), Shadow Wilson (dm).
 Four titles were recorded for Sensation, no LP on B-4009 "Relaxin'" (S) but:

B-4010	Lion's Roar	Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars, last 2 with ens. Solo 4 bars. (M)
B-4011	Suede Jacquet	Solo 16 bars. (M)
B-4011	Suede Jacquet (alt.)	As above. (M)
B-4011	Suede Jacquet (alt. 2)	As above. (M)
B-4012	Scamper Roo	Solo 8 bars. (M)

"... Roar" is almost a feature number for LP, interesting but not outstanding. More interesting is the brief but surprising solo "... Roo" with four quiet bars exploding into four with very fast runs. Also "Suede ..." surprises with its combination of various quite different elements.

LEO PARKER & HIS MAD LADS **NYC. July 20, 1950**
 Leo Parker (bar), Al Haig (p), Oscar Pettiford (b), Max Roach (dm), Jack Parker (dm-96,99).
 Six titles were recorded for Prestige, five issued:

95-A	Mona Lisa	As below. (S)
95-B	Mona Lisa	Soli 16 and 12 bars to very long coda. (S)
96-A	Who's Mad?	Straight 2 to solo 6 to straight 2 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
97-A	Darn That Dream (NC)	Solo 30 bars (NC). (SM)
97-B	Darn That Dream	Soli 32 and 16 bars to coda. (SM)
98-B?	I'll Cross My Fingers	Soli 16 and 16 bars to coda. (S)
99-B?	Mad Lad Returns	Straight 32 to solo 64 bars. Solo 64 bars to straight 8 bars. (F)
99-C?	Mad Lad Returns	Straight 32 bars. Solo 96 bars to straight 16 bars. (F)
99-D?	Mad Lad Returns (NC)	Straight 32 bars. Solo 80 bars (NC). (F)
99-mst?	Mad Lad Returns	As take 'C' above. (F)

Note: Tom Lord's discography on "Mad Lad Returns" is wrong. I have not heard the so-called take A on Misterioso MLP 1983, but the three takes, named B, C and on MLP 1984 are different from the take on Classics 1203 (CD), even if the latter has the same solo structure as C.

One of the best LP sessions, and the excellent rhythm section should take some credit, listen to how it is cooking on "Mad Lad ..."! The four takes show some of his best works in uptempo, although some listeners may find there is still too much extrovert r&b in his playing. On "... Mad?" he is really swinging the blues in a pleasant medium tempo. And there is, maybe most important, also some very attractive ballad playing on this session; both "Mona ...", "Darn ..." and "... Fingers" show a lyrical vein, a feeling for beauty, so very different from his uptempo playing, dig these!

LEO PARKER & HIS MAD LADS **NYC. Dec. 28, 1950**
 James Robertson (tp), Henry Durant (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Kenny Drew (p), Curly Russell (b), Eddie "The Mole" Bourne (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Gotham (note that “Leo Leaps In” on Krazy Kat is the same as “On The House” on Onyx/Polydor):

Woody / Symphony Sid	Soli 8, 64 and 8 bars. (FM)
Rolling With Leo/Parker	Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
Rolling With Parker alt.	As above. (M)
Solitude	Intro 4 bars to solo 48 bars to coda. (S)
Solitude alt.	As above. (S)
On The House -1	Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
On The House -2	Solo 12 bars. 4 choruses 4/4 with (ts), ((bar) first). (FM)
On The House -3	Soli 12 and 12 bars. 5 choruses 4/4 with (ts), ((ts) first). (FM)

Nothing much to add to the comments for the previous 1950 session. LP seems to be in good shape for playing, notwithstanding his general health situation. My favourite is a new “Solitude” to be compared with the Savoy versions three years earlier.

LEO PARKER

Chi. July 7, 1951

Eddie Johnson (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Claude Jones (p), Johnny Pate (b), Al Williams (dm), Leonard Chess (vo?).

Four titles were recorded for Chess:

7353	Candlelight Serenade	Soli 12 and 12 bars. (S)
7354	Hornet	Solo 32 bars. 96 bars 4/4 with (ts). (F)
7355	Reed Rock	Duet with (ts) 8 bars. Solo 8 bars. (M)
7356	Leo’s Blues	Solo with ens 4 choruses of 12 bars. (S)

Here we get some examples of LP at his very softest (he can if wants to ...), and particularly “Candlelight ...”, where he alternates his choruses with the fine tenorsax of Eddie Johnson, should be particularly noted. “Hornet” has a very fast but successful long tenorsax/baritonesax chase, also one LP item standing out from the crowd.

RAY SNEAD

Chi. Sept. 14, 1951

Gail Brockman (tp), Eddie Chamblee (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Eddie Ware (p), Ike Perkins (g), Johnny Pate (b), Al Williams (dm), unknown (perc), Ray Snead (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Mercury, two issued, “Don’t Play Me For No Clown” has no LP, but:

4209	I’m A Good Rockin’ Daddy	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
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Postscript of Jan. 16, 2016: Found “...Daddy” recently in a Mercury box, two fine and typical blues choruses by LP here! The flip side, supplied later by Austrian friends, has no LP.

LEO PARKER

Chi. Nov. 15, 1952

Leo Parker (bar), Andy Johnson (p), Remo Biondi (g, vln), Ira Pettiford (b), Jack Parker (dm).

Four titles were recorded for United, two issued:

1159-6	Leo’s Boogie	Straight 3 to solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. Straight 12 bars to coda. (M)
1160-1	Cool Leo	Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. Straight 12 bars to coda. (SM)

The “... Boogie” is what you can expect, the r&b side of LP with heavy echo, strong but pretty vulgar playing, probably exciting to be in the studio, but not necessary in your own living room. The groovy “Cool ...” is however because of the better tempo much more attractive. LP is certainly in good playing shape here, although it is known that he was struggling with bad habits in the early fifties.

LEO PARKER QUARTET

Chi. Aug. 10, 1953

Leo Parker (bar), unknown (cel-“Smoke ...”), (p), (b), (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Chess:

Anything Can Happen	Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars. 16 bars 4/4 with (dm). Straight 8 bars. (M)
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Tippin' Lightly	Soli 4 and 3 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
Blue Sails	Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars to straight 8 bars and coda. (M)
Smoke Gets In Your Eyes	Solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)
Smoke Gets In Your Eyes alt.	See text below. (S)

Good but not outstanding LP here, who leaves very little solo space to his companions. Nice blues on "... Lightly", also competent work on "... Happen" and "... Sails". The highlight for you, as for me, will probably be "Smoke ...", beautifully played in a very slow tempo, not much improvisation though. The so-called alternate is in fact LP playing duet with himself. Probably the basis is the master take, upon which he plays a flashing and improvisational background, cheating yes, but definitely interesting!

BILL JENNINGS / LEO PARKER QUINTET Cincinnati, July 6-8, 1954
Leo Parker (bar), Andrew Johnson (p, org), Bill Jennings (g), Joe Williams (b), George DeHart (dm).

Eleven titles were recorded for King, issued as "Billy In The Lion's Den":

K9452	Piccadilly Circus	Solo 32 bars. (F)
K9453	There Will Never Be Another You	Solo 16 bars. (M)
K9545	What'll I Do?	Solo 32 bars. Acc. (g). (S)
K9455	Billy In The Lion's Den	Soli 24 and 12 bars. (M)
K9456	Fine And Dandy	Duet with (g) 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Duet to coda. (FM)
K9457	Just You, Just Me	Solo 16 bars. (M)
K9458	Down To Earth	Solo 24 bars. (M)
K9459	May I?	Solo 16 bars. (M)
K9460	Get Hot	Soli 8 and 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (g). (F)
K9461	Stuffy	Solo 16 bars. (M)
K9462	Solitude	Intro to solo 32 bars to coda. (S)

This could have been an unforgettable session and one of LP's most memorable, if only ... one has had Blue Note technical quality, a competent producer, half (or even less) titles and more varied tempi... Because LP is in very good shape here, cooperating with an exciting guitar player. However, all soli are stopped when it is evident that they are proceeding fine. For highlights, choose the two slow items, but in fact, LP has something to offer on any item here. Waste of talent.

ILLINOIS JACQUET & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Dec. 13, 1954
Russell Jacquet (tp), Matthew Gee (tb), Illinois Jacquet (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Johnny Acea (p), Al Lucas (b), Osie Johnson (dm), Chino Pozo (cga-2118).
Four titles were recorded for Clef, one has LP:

2120-1	Saph	Solo 12 bars. (M)
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A fine relaxed solo here!

Note: The so called Dizzy Gillespie / Leo Parker session for Imperial, ca. 1956 is a ghost (ref. Bob Porter), nothing like those two guys there.

LEO PARKER Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Sept. 9, 1961
John Burks (tp), Bill Swindell (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Yusef Salim (p), Stan Conover (b), Purnell Rice (dm).
Eight titles were recorded for Blue Note, issued as "Let Me Tell You 'Bout It" (tk 5 and tk 18 only on CD issue):

tk4	Glad Lad	Soli 3 and 2 choruses of 32 bars. (F)
tk5	Low Brown (long version)	Soli 3 and 1 choruses of 28 bars. (M)
tk6	Low Brown	Soli 2 and 1 choruses of 28 bars. (M)
tk9	Parker's Pals	Solo 8 bars. Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. (M)
tk11	TCTB	Soli 64 and 32 bars. 32 bars 8/8

		with (ts). 32 bars 4/4 with (dm). 64 bars 4/4 with (ts). Break. (F)
tk18	The Lion's Roar	Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 2 choruses. (FM)
tk25	Vi	Solo 8 bars. Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. (F)
tk28	Let Me Tell You 'Bout It	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (M)
tk31	Blue Leo	Soli 5 and 2 choruses of 12 bars. (SM)

Almost seven years have passed since we heard LP last time, and luckily there are no signs of any reduction of his qualities. The style is the same as before, and the execution likewise. In fact, there are good arguments for saying that LP is better than ever, and if one is to choose some good baritonesax to play, choose as well this and the following and final sessions. An extra benefit is his fellow musicians, better than on his previous sessions for a long time, and particularly the tenorsax could deserve his own solography. The extrovert honking is almost entirely gone, although full three items are having fast tempo, "Glad ...", "Vi" and "TCTB", a slightly camouflaged "Sweet Georgia Brown", all played with strength and inspiration, note the baritonesax/tenorsax battle on the last title. The gospelish "Low ..." and "Let Me ..." in ¾ time are maybe not that exciting, but I am sure you will enjoy the groovy soft blues on "Blue Leo"! Good to have him back!!

LEO PARKER **Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Oct. 12, 1961**
Dave Burns (tp), Bill Swindell (ts), Leo Parker (bar), John Acea (p), Stan Conover (b), Purnell Rice (dm).
Six titles were recorded for Blue Note, two issued as "Rollin' With Leo":

tk1	Rollin' With Leo	Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
tk8	Music Hall Beat	Soli 8, 64 and 32 bars. (FM)

NYC. Oct. 20, 1961
Same, except Al Lucas (b), Wilbert G. T. Hogan (dm) replace Conover and Rice.
Eight titles, six issued:

tk22	Bad Girl	Solo 24 bars. (SM)
tk27	Mad Lad Returns	Solo 8 bars. Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars (4 th with ens). Solo 32 bars. Long coda. (F)
tk30	Stuffy	Straight 8 bars. Solo 32 bars. (M)
tk32	Jumpin' Leo	Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. Breaks and coda. (FM)
tk37	Talkin' The Blues	Soli 3 and 1 choruses of 12 bars to straight 1 chorus and coda. (S)
tk38	The Lion's Roar	Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. 64 bars 4/4 with (dm). (FM)

But LP came back only to leave us shortly afterwards. The two October sessions are quite similar to the September one, same setup, fine Blue Note work and baritonesax soli of very satisfying quality. The choice of material is slightly more attractive; although fine baritonesax playing on upper tempi like "Mad Lad ...", "Music Hall ..." and "... Leo", the audience of today will most probably dig primarily "Rollin' ..." and "Bad Girl", both delicate and very groovy. And for a final goodbye we get the magnificent slow blues on "Talkin' ...", with this one in the ears we shall close the solography of one of the earliest modern baritonesax artists.

ILLINOIS JACQUET & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Feb. 5, 1962**
Personnel including Leo Parker (bar).
Two titles, "Satin Doll" and "Pucker Up", were recorded for Epic but no LP.

Leo Parker was scheduled for a session with **DEXTER GORDON** on Blue Note but died of a heart attack on Feb. 11, 1962.