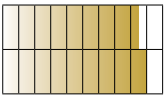
Sonny Rollins

45 RPM

Newk's Time

Music Matters/Blue Note 84001

Sandwiched between the eponymous volumes 1 and 2 and the Village Vanguard live recordings, Newk's Time is a solid bop/blowing session, with backing by Wynton Kelly, Doug Watkins and Philly Joe Jones. This studio session was cut in 1957, the same year as the Vanguard live sessions (and Way Out West on Contemporary) and only a year after Tenor Madness and Saxophone Colossus. So this is Sonny at the peak of his powers, and while this Newk's Time may not quite reach the peak of some of these masterpieces it is prime Sonny Rollins and a welcome addition to the reissue program. If there is any question about how good this record is, listen to side 3, all of which is devoted to Sonny's duet with Jones on Surrey With The Fringe On Top—it's worth the price of admission on its own. Once again, Kevin Gray and Steve Hoffman have taken Rudy Van Gelder's recording and freshened it up, making it sound better than ever. Before these 45 RPM releases, the only way you could understand the sound of Sonny's horn was at a live concert. No more! And just listen to the bass on Blues For Philly! As always, Music Matters packages these two slabs of fabulous vinyl in a foldout jacket filled inside with Francis Wolff photo sessions. A very welcome addition to the Music Matters collection. **DD**

RECORDING

MUSIC