

Scott Joplin (between July 1867 and January 1868 – April 1, 1917) was an American composer and pianist. He achieved fame for his unique ragtime compositions, and was dubbed the "King of Ragtime." During his brief career, Joplin wrote 44 original ragtime pieces, one ragtime ballet, and two operas. One of his first pieces, the "Maple Leaf Rag", became ragtime's first and most influential hit, and has been recognized as the archetypal rag.

The copyright on "The Easy Winners" was registered October 10, 1901 and was published by John Stark & Son of St. Louis, Missouri. "The Easy Winners" also appeared in orchestration as part of "The Red Back Book" of "Standard High Class Rags" popular with ragtime bands.

Vera Brodsky Lawrence of the New York Public Library published a two-volume set of Joplin works in June 1971, entitled *The Collected Works of Scott Joplin*, stimulating a wider interest in the performance of Joplin's music that included a recording called *Joplin: The Red Back Book* by Gunther Schuller, a french horn player and music professor. In addition, Marvin Hamlisch won an Academy Award for his adaptation of Joplin's music used in the 1973 film *The Sting*. His adaptation of "The Entertainer" reached #3 on the American Top 40 music chart on 18 May 1974, prompting the *New York Times* to write, "the whole nation has begun to take notice...". Biographer Edward Berlin tends to agree that the movie was an important factor in the revival: "Led by "The Entertainer", one of the most popular pieces of the mid-1970s, a revival of his music resulted in events unprecedented in American musical history." He further added, "never before had any composer's music been so acclaimed by both the popular and classical music worlds." In 1976 Joplin was posthumously awarded the Pulitzer Prize.

Dr. Michael Pratt has degrees in music education and music composition from The University of Toledo, The University of Michigan, and Boston University. He studied composition with Pulitzer Prize winning composers Ross Lee Finney and Leslie Bassett at The University of Michigan, and taught music in the public schools for many years in Michigan.

He has sung with The Toledo Choral Society, Toledo Symphony Chorale, Opera!Lenawee, and The University Musical Society Choral Union of The University of Michigan with whom he has performed with The Detroit Symphony Orchestra, The San Francisco Symphony, The Kirov Orchestra, The Russian National Orchestra, The Ann Arbor Symphony, The Lansing Symphony, The Grand Rapids Symphony, The Toledo Symphony, The Birmingham Symphony, The Gabrieli Consort, and The Tallis Scholars.

He has played tuba with The Toledo Symphony, Toledo Concert Band, Toledo Opera, University of Toledo Faculty Brass Quintet, Adrian Chamber Brass, Adrian College Faculty Brass Quintet, The Croswell Opera House, The Adrian Symphony Orchestra and The Adrian City Band.

He has performed with many notable conductors, including, Valery Gergiev, Michael Tilson Thomas, Neeme Jarve, Mikhail Pletnev, Rafael Fruhbeck de Burgos, Leonard Slatkin, John Adams, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Paul McCreech, Peter Phillips, Catherine Comet, Eric Kunzel, Margaret Hillis, Martin Katz, and John Finley Williamson.

Michael Pratt is a member of ASCAP.

The Easy Winners

Duration 4:15

A Rag Time Two-Step
from *The Red Back Book*

Scott Joplin

Arr. by Michael Pratt
for Brass Septet

Not fast ♩ = 72

A

Trumpet in B \flat 1
Trumpet in B \flat 2
Trumpet in B \flat 3
Trombone
Euphonium
Tuba
Banjo

B \flat Tpt. 1
B \flat Tpt. 2
B \flat Tpt. 3
Tbn.
Euph.
Tuba
Bjo.

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