

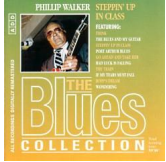
## Phillip Walker - Steppin' Up In Class (The Blues Collection Vol.77) [1996]

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 15 May 2018 14:40 - Last Updated Tuesday, 15 May 2018 14:43

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## Phillip Walker - Steppin' Up In Class (The Blues Collection Vol.77) [1996]



1 *What Can I Do* 2:45 2 *Port Arthur Blues* 4:38 3 *I'm Tough (Tough As I Want To Be)* 3:54 4 *A Lyin' Woman* 2:49 5 *Wondering* 3:42 6 *Think* 3:39 7 *Go Ahead And Take Her* 4:26 8 *Not The Same Man* 3:21 9 *The Blues And My Guitar* 6:05 10 *The Trace* 2:29 11 *Trouble In My Home* 2:45 12 *Bopp's Dream* 3:57 13 *Bad Luck Is Falling* 2:46 14 *If My Tears Must Fall* 3:15 15 *Steppin' Up In Class* 2:53 16 *The Train* 5:25

Despite recording somewhat sparingly since debuting as a leader in 1959 on Elko Records with the storming rocker "Hello My Darling," Louisiana-born guitarist Phillip Walker enjoys a sterling reputation as a contemporary blues guitarist with a distinctive sound honed along the Gulf Coast during the '50s. A teenaged Walker picked up his early licks around Port Arthur, Texas from the likes of Gatemouth Brown, Long John Hunter, Lightnin' Hopkins, and Lonnie "Guitar Junior" Brooks. Zydeco king Clifton Chenier hired Walker in 1953 as his guitarist, a post he held for three-and-a-half years. In 1959, Walker moved to Los Angeles, waxing "Hello My Darling" for producer J.R. Fulbright (a song he's revived several times since, most effectively for the short-lived Playboy logo). Scattered 45s emerged during the '60s, but it wasn't until he joined forces with young producer Bruce Bromberg in 1969 that Walker began to get a studio foothold. Their impressive work together resulted in a 1973 album for Playboy (reissued by HighTone in 1989), *The Bottom of the Top*, that remains Walker's finest to date.

Walker cut a fine follow-up set for Bromberg's Joliet label, *Someday You'll Have These Blues*, that showcased his tough Texas guitar style (it was later reissued by Alligator). Sets for Rounder and HighTone were high points of the 1980s for the guitarist, and 1994's *Big Blues from Texas* (reissued in 1999) continued his string of worthy material. His 1995 set for Black Top, *Working Girl Blues*, shows Walker at peak operating power, combining attractively contrasting tracks waxed in New Orleans and Los Angeles. *I Got a Sweet Tooth* followed in 1998, and displayed no letdown in quality or power. Walker got together with fellow blues legends Lonnie Brooks and Long John Hunter in 1999 to record *Lone Star Shootout* for Alligator. Walker is featured as lead vocalist on four tracks and backs the others on the rest of

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the record. In the fall of 2002, a live recording of a spring concert was released on M.C. Records. ---Bill Dahl, allmusic.com

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