

## Pee Wee Crayton - Early Hour Blues (1999)

Written by bluesever  
Friday, 22 June 2018 14:20 -

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1 *Blues At Daybreak* 3:00 2 *Early Hours (Instrumental)* 4:31 3 *Barefootin'* 2:38 4 *Blues After Hours (Instrumental)* 5:23 5 *You Know Yeah* 4:05 6 *E.T. Blues (Instrumental)* 4:21 7 *When I'm Wrong* 2:52 8 *Send For Me* 4:30 9 *Red Rose Boogie (Instrumental)* 2:30 10 *Come On Baby* 4:23 11 *Head'n Home (Instrumental)* 1:53 Alto Saxophone – Fred Clark (tracks: 1,3,7,9-11) Baritone Saxophone – Fred Clark (tracks: 1,3,7,9-11) Bass – Dan Fredman (tracks: 1,3,7,9-11), Eric Ajaye (tracks: 2,4-6,8) Drums – Lee Spath, Soko Richardson (tracks: 1,3,7,9-11) Harp – Rod Piazza (tracks: 1,3,7,9-11) Keyboards – Liew Matthews (tracks: 2,4-6,8) Lead Guitar – Pee Wee Crayton Piano – Honey Piazza (tracks: 1,3,7,9-11) Rhythm Guitar – Doug MacLeod Saxophone – Fernando Harkless (tracks: 2,4-6,8) Tenor Saxophone – Bill Clark (tracks: 1,3,7,9-11), Fred Clark (tracks: 1,3,7,9-11), Marshall Crayton Jr. (tracks: 1,3,7,9-11) Trumpet – Claude Williams Vocals – Pee Wee Crayton

A West Coast blues guitar hero, Crayton died shortly after these sessions, done primarily with Rod and Honey Piazza's band, or with jazz pianist Llew Matthews' quartet. The two dates show Crayton could do it all. Jump blues, hard or straight blues, and boogie were all easily played. It's that unmistakable T-Bone Walker influence, a stinging, swinging single line or chunky, chortling chord progressions that made Crayton stand out among the crowded blues guitar landscape. He was a one-of-a kind player, and this CD is not only his final testament, but a solid exclamation point on the career of a true American music legend. Crayton also proved to be a pretty good singer. His soulful rendering of the hit "Send for Me" is sincere and believable. "Barefootin'" might be a throwaway, but he really sends up the B.B. King evergreen "When I'm Wrong." Steaming instrumentals with big horn charts swing hard as on "You Know Yeah," Eddie Taylor's "E.T. Blues," "Red Rose Boogie," and the short horn-fired rave-up "Head'n'Home." The Piazzas and Matthews really know how to support a star, and their work is as credible as any. Additional kudos to Crayton's wife, Esther, who wrote six of these 11 cuts, and was always a major factor in his repertoire. On some of his solos, Crayton is astounding; on the rest, his guitar is merely spectacular. Though 14 years late (Crayton died in 1985) and only 45 minutes short on this CD, this is a precious document of one of originals of blues guitar, and a reminder that although he was relatively obscure, he had many fans who knew what the real deal was. For blues scholars, this is an artist, like Freddie King, Otis Rush, and T-Bone, well worth studying

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and relishing. ---Michael G. Nastos, AllMusic Review

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