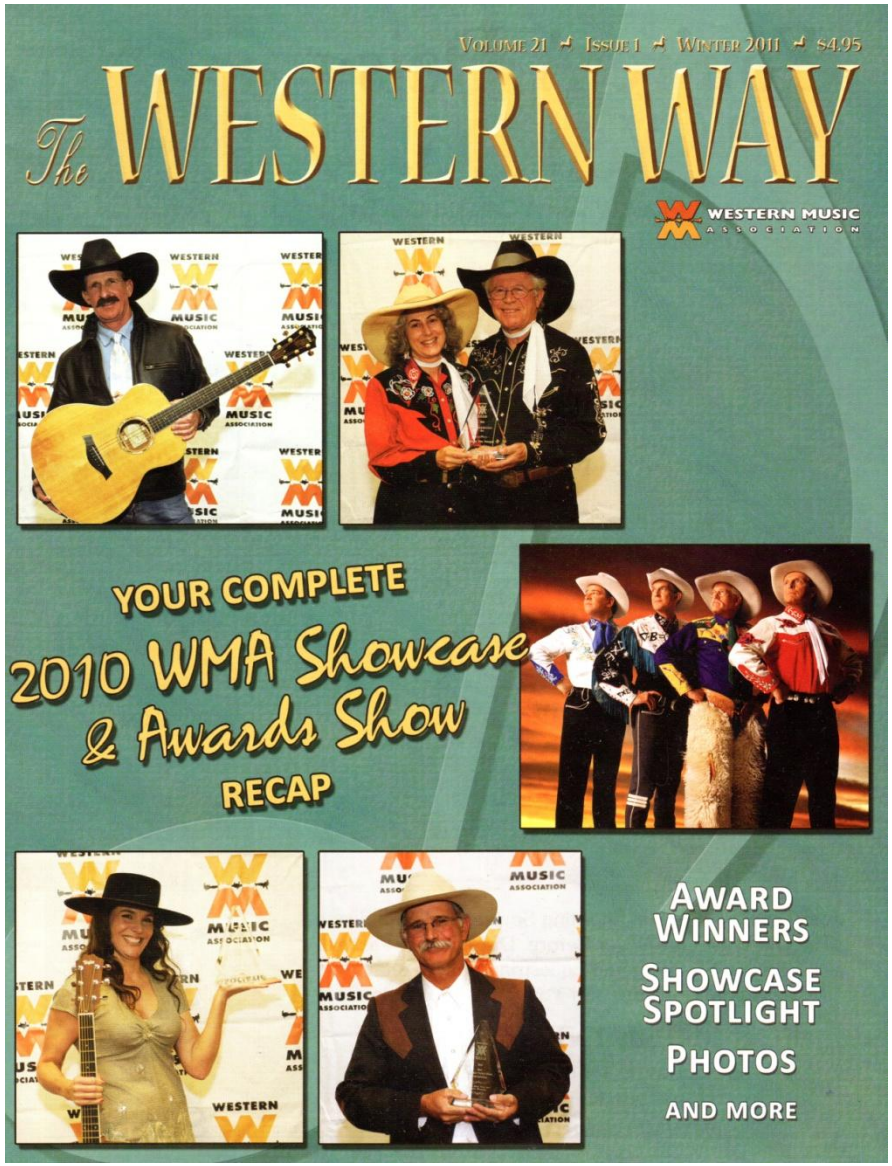

Blaze Across the West
The Tumbling Tumbleweeds

In this review column I said I felt that on The Tumbling Tumbleweeds' debut CD the wonderfully talented young harmony group was not particularly well served by their production people. Their follow-up release arrived with a note saying they took it to heart and hoped I liked the new one. Rest easy, guys. This time you absolutely nailed it!

In their terrific originals like "The Mighty Santa Fe," "Lazin' Down The Trail," "Sleepin' On A Mountain," and "California" everything is there for a reason. It's all showcase, never showoff. And when they handle the classics like "Oregon Trail," "Cattle Call" or "Dear Hearts And Gentle People" everything is done with supreme care and obvious affection for the material. On this release they've also invited some really interesting guests, including Ric Steinke of Open Range, Gary "Harmonicowboy" Allegretto and the fine Conjunto Norteño accordion player Otoño Lujan.

The Tumbling Tumbleweeds use barbershop quartet-tight harmony patterns and are not some carbon copy of an existing group. One of the ways you can spot the originality of their approach is to hear them perform tracks like Bob Nolan's "Saddle Your Worries To The Wind" or Glenn & Tim Spencer's "So Long To The Red River Valley," both offered here. If any Sons of the Pioneers comparisons will be drawn, that's where it will happen. The great news is The Tumbling Tumbleweeds *don't* sound like the SOPs. Or Riders in the Sky, or Sons of the San Joaquin. They sound 100% like The Tumbling Tumbleweeds… and that, folks, is simply wonderful!
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