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George Kilby Jr. on guitar and his band, the Coolerators, who have backed Mr. Perkins for a decade, kept the music lean and pushy. Up. tempo tunes kicked along; stop-time parts, like the ones in "Caledonia." were absolutely exact. Two saxophonists played sinewy riffs and broad-shouldered solos as Mr. Perkins goaded them with just one chord And Mr. per measure. squeezed out blues lines and traded licks with Mr. Perkins, whose lessons in pithiness have been taken to heart.

By JON PARELES