

Irish Guitar Podcast

Book 3

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Introduction

Welcome to Book 3 of the Irish Guitar Podcast.

Audio files for all the tunes in this book can be downloaded free of charge from www.irishguitarpod.com. You can listen to them on your computer, iPod or MP3 player.

We hope you'll find this a useful resource for learning to play traditional Irish music on the guitar.

This book follows on from Book 1 and Book 2. In general, explanations are not repeated, so we recommend you start with the tunes in previous books.

This book contains lessons 37 to 54.

Lesson 37 – Andy McGann’s

The first tune in our last booklet (lesson 19) was “Andy McGann’s Jig”. This tune is a completely different tune.

It’s one of the many compositions of the late New York fiddler Andy McGann. It is in the key of D, but on guitar Tony plays it in C, with the capo on the second fret.

Because the highest note in the tune (playing in C Major – that is, with the capo on the second fret), is an A, you can stay in open position throughout the tune. (Open position means you don’t have to move the left hand away from the home position.)

You’ll find it easier to pick triplets if you are holding the pick very close to the point of the pick. Tony suggests that you only “show” about 2-3mm of the apex of the pick.

Tony usually uses a .60mm Jim Dunlop nylon pick, or a .50mm Tortex, although sometimes he’ll use a heavier pick in noisy bars.

Heavier picks are not a problem where you do not have to pick triplets, but in Irish music where you are required to pick the triplet, a heavier pick creates more resistance and therefore makes the triplet harder to pick.

Accompanying the Tune

Tony recently recorded this tune and several others on his CD “An Sliabh Glas”, so he did quite a bit of experimenting. (Incidentally, you can purchase this CD, or individual tracks from it, on iTunes, Amazon, eMusic and other online music outlets.)

He found that you can get a nice effect with this tune by playing the melody in C (capo on fret 2), and the chords in D (no capo).

The chords in this tune are C, G, F, Am and Dm.

Reading the Sheet Music – Recap

If you don't read sheet music, don't worry. As you progress through the lessons, you'll find that you begin to pick it up little by little. For now, all you need to know is how the fingering is indicated. This is shown on the tablature, or tab – which is the lower part of each line of the sheet music.

You'll notice numbers highlighted in the diagram above. These refer to your fingers. The index finger is 1, the middle finger is 2, the ring finger is 3 and the little finger is 4. Where you see a zero, that means you play the string open – without any finger on it.

The lines in the tablature refer to the strings on your guitar. An easy way to remember which string is which, just remember that the highest link in the tablature is the highest pitched string (E) – also referred so as the first string. The second line down is the second highest (B) and so on.

For most of the lessons, we use standard tuning, so from first to sixth strings, the notes are: E, B, G, D, A, E. (Where tuning is different, we'll cover that during the lesson.)

So in the example the very first note is played with your third finger on the second string, then:

- third finger on the first string
- second finger on the first string
- third finger on the first string
- first string open (no finger)

... and so on.

The chords, you'll notice, are above each line in the sheet music, as shown highlighted in the following diagram (chords G and C appear above the line).

The diagram illustrates the relationship between the musical notation and the guitar fretboard. The treble clef staff shows a melody in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. The notes are G, A, B, C, B, A, G. A white box highlights the letters 'G' and 'C' above the first and fifth notes. Below the staff, the guitar strings T, A, and B are shown. The fret numbers for the melody are: 3 (T), 3 (A), 2 (B), 3 (T), 0 (A), 3 (B), 0 (T). A 'G' chord symbol is shown above the first measure on the A string.

Andy McGann's Jig – Sheet Music

Capo 2

Sheet music for Andy McGann's Jig, featuring guitar notation and chord diagrams. The music is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C). The piece is marked with a 'Capo 2' instruction.

The sheet music is organized into systems, each containing a melodic line and a guitar chord diagram line. The chords used are C, G, F, Am, and Dm. The notation includes various rhythmic values (quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes) and fingerings (numbers 1-3) for the guitar strings.

The first system shows the initial melodic phrase with chords C, G, C, F, C, Am, Dm, and G. The second system is marked with a first ending (1.) and includes a repeat sign. The third system is marked with a second ending (2.) and also includes a repeat sign. The fourth system continues the melody with chords F, G, C, Am, Dm, G, C, F, and G. The fifth system is marked with a second ending (2.) and includes a repeat sign. The sixth system concludes the piece with chords C, Am, G, and C.