

Teach In: Fiddle Tunes on Harmonica by Glenn Weiser

*Glenn Weiser is a harmonicaist from Albany, NY. If playing fiddle tunes on the harmonica is your thing, be sure to check out Glenn's book, aptly titled *Fiddle Tunes for the Harmonica* (available from Centerstream Publishing, P.O. Box 5450, Fullerton, CA 92635). It's \$16.95 and includes a cassette.*

Part II – Gallagher's Frolic

In this workshop we'll continue to explore the topic that was introduced in the Winter '89 issue – fiddle tunes for harmonica. If you missed that issue, try to obtain a copy (they are available from SO!, Vol.34 #1), as there were some instructions in the first workshop that may be helpful.

Last time we had a reel, so this time I'd like to offer you a jig. As many of you know, the jig is a dance tune of Irish origin that tends toward continuous eighth notes in 6/8 time (incidentally, the word "jig" originally meant the fiddle itself). Jigs are counted differently than reels, so I'll explain that first.

The time signature of 6/8 tells us two things: first, that there are six counts to a measure, with the accents falling on beats one and four (ONE, two, three, FOUR, five, six) and second, that the eighth note receives one beat, rather than the half beat it received in 4/4 time when we played "Rakes of Mallow." A quarter note will therefore receive two beats and a dotted quarter note three beats. When playing a jig, tap your foot on the accented beats (one and four).

The jig I've selected for this issue is "Gallagher's Frolic", which I first heard on the Shanachie LP *The Funny Reel*, featuring Joe Burke on button accordion, Andy McGann on fiddle, and Felix Dolan on piano. This tune is arranged for the D-scale diatonic harmonica,

and is in the Dorian mode (starting on "Re"). Performance tempo for the tune is about ♩ = 126 bpm (beats per minute). Wild and capricious, it is aptly named. As before, slur lines and tonguing indications have been provided, but here tonguing has a new use, which requires explanation. In "The Rakes of Mallow," tonguing was only used in the ending measures for the purpose of articulating the repetition of a note. The other use of tonguing occurs when one has to play non-adjacent reeds of the same direction in eighth-note rhythm. Here tonguing is necessary to prevent the wrong reed or reeds from sounding. For example, in going from the first to the second measures in the "A" part (4) to (6), you tongue on (6) to prevent (5) from being heard. If you use tongue blocking rather than the more common lip blocking method, the comparable technique for skipping over a reed is to cover the reed or reeds in between the two desired reeds with the tip of the tongue. Using the example just given, (5) would have to be covered with the tongue when executing the leap from (4) to (6). Playing fiddle tunes on the harmonica often requires this particular use of tonguing, which could be termed "leap tonguing" as opposed to "repeat tonguing."

At this point, you should be ready to try the tune. If you have any questions, feel free to write me at P.O. Box 2551 ESP, Albany, NY 12220. Happy Frolicking!

*SO!

Gallagher's Frolic

*D-scale harmonica
(diatonic)*

*traditional; arr. Glenn Weiser
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