

"Tam Lin"

by Roger Landes

"Tam Lin" is a common session tune I recorded on my CD *Dragon Reels*. It is normally played in A or D minor (Aeolian mode). I first heard it played in B minor about 10 years ago by uilleann piper Kieran O'Hare. For this version I came up with my own approach to the "B" part, adding a few G#s to put it in Dorian and reinforce the B Dorian relationship to A Major. I never really cared for the "B" part in the usual session setting of this tune so I took the liberty of almost rewriting it! Not common practice by any means but I think I'll squeak by with it this time, especially if you like my emendations.

So, as in my previous columns, I transcribed each tune three ways:

1st setting - bare bones melody. 2nd with some ornamentation (see my column in the February/March 2005 Mandolin Sessions for an explanation of these ornaments). I've transcribed this one without repeats to allow showing how each repeat might be ornamented differently; 3rd is an even more ornate setting, utilizing many or most of the ornaments that I use on the mandolin.

Here are the ornaments in the 2nd and 3rd settings of the tune:

2nd setting bars 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9: two note muted triplets; bar 10: two note descending string crossing triplet; bar 11: three note muted descending triplet; bar 12: three note ascending triplet; bar 13: two note string ascending crossing triplet; bar 14: 2-two note descending string crossing triplets; bar 15: muted triplet two notes, string crossing triplet descending; bar 16: three note descending triplet, three note ascending string crossing triplet; bar 17: two note muted triplet; bar 18: three note descending triplet; bar 19: two note muted triplet; bar 20: 2-three note ascending triplets; bar 21: two note muted triplet; bar 23: three note muted descending triplet; bar 24: two note muted triplet; bar 25: three note descending triplet, two note muted triplet; bar 26: three note descending and ascending triplets; bar 27: three note descending string crossing triplet, crann; bar 29: two note muted triplet bars 30 & 31: three note descending triplets; bar 32: two note muted triplet.

3rd setting. A-Part: bar 1: long roll on back of beat; bar 2: muted triplet two notes; bar 3 muted triplet two notes; bar 4: triplet three notes; bar 5: triplet three notes; bar 6: string crossing triplet; bar 7: muted triplet two notes; bar 8: muted triplet two notes; bar 9: triplet three notes. B-Part: bar 10: muted triplet two notes; bar 11: triplet three notes; bar 12: muted triplet two notes; bar 14: muted triplet two notes; bar 15 muted triplet three notes; bar 16: 2-muted triplets three notes; bar 17: muted triplet three notes, muted triplet two notes.

Play through the first, unornamented transcription a few times (at least 5-6) to become familiar with the shape of the tune. Be sure to keep to our agreed upon picking pattern for reels: Down-Up-Down-Up. Playing the tune without ornaments is a good way to practice this pattern. Do this until it is second nature and becomes your "default setting" for reels. Remember that the feel for Irish reels tends toward making the 1st and 3rd notes on every beat slightly longer than the 2nd and 4th notes. Since the 2nd and 4th notes are all played with upstrokes (and the 1st and 3rd notes all with downstrokes) in this setting, you can easily achieve this by delaying your upstrokes to a very small degree.

In the 2nd setting, I've not used repeat signs so that I could show how the A and B parts of the tune might be ornamented differently when repeated. In bar 10 we have a "two note descending string crossing triplet." Since this requires picking the A string with a downstroke and the D string with an upstroke this might be a little tricky the first few times you do it. If so, don't worry, we'll cover this challenge in my next column.

In bar 12 there is a three note ascending triplet - notice that I've fingered the A on the D string 7th fret. This is to allow it to be phrased more smoothly than it could be with a string change to the open A string. In bar 13 there is a new picking pattern for a triplet that I have not discussed in any previous column. This is a two note ascending string crossing triplet. Notice that the 1st and 2nd notes, which are on the D and A strings, are both played with a downstroke. This might be a bit weird at first but it allows for smoothness and speed. Try it! In bar 14 the same type of string crossing triplet as in bar 10. Jumping ahead to the B part, in bar 27 there is a crann. Refer to my earlier columns about this ornament, which comes from the uilleann pipes.

Keep in mind that in Irish traditional music ornaments are usually not melodic sequences so much as rhythmic events. I think of them as rhythmic gestures- that are used over and over in myriad ways within many different types of tunes.

As with our previous tunes "Bush on the Hill," "Peter Street," "Tom Billy's Jig," and "Gallagher's Frolics," please **don't** play this tunes only as written, and don't use all of these ornaments in a single repetition of the tune. I've condensed the many possibilities into one time through the tune and would make a point of playing each of these ornaments at least once over, say, three repetitions of each tune, but never all of them in one repetition.

Enjoy!

"Tam Lin" - 1st Setting

The musical score for "Tam Lin" - 1st Setting is presented in three systems. Each system consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/2 time signature, and a guitar tablature section with strings T, A, and B. The first system includes a repeat sign and a series of rhythmic gestures indicated by triangles (upward and downward) below the tablature. The second system includes a first ending bracket labeled "1." and a measure with a "5" above the string line. The third system includes a second ending bracket labeled "2." and a key signature change to one sharp and a common time signature.

System 1:
T: 2 2 2 0 2 4 0 2 5 2 0 0 4 0 0 4 0 0 2 5 4 2 0
A: 4 5 5 5 5 5 4 5
B: 4 5 5 5 5 5 4 5

System 2:
T: 2 2 2 0 2 4 0 2 5 2 0 0 4 0 0 4 0 5 2 0 2 2 2
A: 4 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 4 2 2 2
B: 4 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 4 2 2 2

System 3:
T: 5 2 0 5 4 0 5 2 7 5 2 0 5 2 2 2 7 5 2 0 0 2 4 5 0 0 0 4 0 4
A: 5 2 0 5 4 0 5 2 7 5 2 0 5 2 2 2 7 5 2 0 0 2 4 5 0 0 0 4 0 4
B: 5 2 0 5 4 0 5 2 7 5 2 0 5 2 2 2 7 5 2 0 0 2 4 5 0 0 0 4 0 4

13

T 0 0 4 0 5 4 0 5 7-5-2-0 5-2-2-2 7-5-2-0 5-2

A 0 4 4 0 5 5 2 2 2 2 2 4 5-4-5 0-2-0-2-4

B

17

T 5-2-0 2-2-2

A 5-4

B

"Tam Lin" - 2nd Setting

Musical notation for the first system, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 2/4 time signature. The notation includes a series of eighth notes with some notes marked with an 'x'.

Tablature for the first system, showing strings T, A, and B. The fret numbers are: T (2, 252, 0, 2, 4, 0), A (4), B (4, 5, 7, 5, 5, 5, 5). The fret numbers for the second measure are: T (2, 5, 2), A (5, 7, 5, 5, 5), B (5, 7, 5, 5, 5). The fret numbers for the third measure are: T (0, 2, 0, 4, 0), A (0, 4, 0), B (0, 4, 0). The fret numbers for the fourth measure are: T (0, 2, 5, 4, 2, 0), A (4), B (4, 5). Below the strings are symbols for fretting: triangles for natural notes and inverted triangles for notes with an 'x'.

Musical notation for the second system, identical in notation to the first system.

Tablature for the second system, starting with a measure number '5'. The fret numbers are: T (2, 252, 0, 2, 4, 0), A (4), B (4, 5, 7, 5, 5, 5, 5). The fret numbers for the second measure are: T (2, 5, 2), A (5, 7, 5, 5, 5), B (5, 7, 5, 5, 5). The fret numbers for the third measure are: T (0, 2, 0, 4, 0), A (0, 4, 0), B (0, 4, 0). The fret numbers for the fourth measure are: T (5, 2, 0, 2, 252), A (5, 4), B (5, 4). Symbols for fretting are shown below the strings.

Musical notation for the third system, identical in notation to the first system.

Tablature for the third system, starting with a measure number '9'. The fret numbers are: T (2, 252, 0, 2, 4, 2, 0), A (4), B (4, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5). The fret numbers for the second measure are: T (2, 5, 2), A (5, 5, 5, 5, 5), B (5, 5, 5, 5, 5). The fret numbers for the third measure are: T (0, 2, 4, 2, 0), A (0, 4, 0), B (0, 4, 0). The fret numbers for the fourth measure are: T (2, 5, 4, 2, 0), A (4, 5, 7), B (4, 5). Symbols for fretting are shown below the strings.

Measures 13-16:
 Treble clef, *Sya*
 T: 2 2 2 2 0 2 4 0 | 2 2 5 2 | 4 0 4 0 0 4 0 | 5 4 2 0 0 5 7 2
 A: 4 | 5 5 5 5 | 4 0 4 0 4 0 | 5 4 |
 B: (empty) | (empty) | (empty) | (empty)

Measures 17-20:
 Treble clef, *Sya*
 T: 7 5 2 0 | 5 2 2 5 2 | 7 5 4 2 0 0 2 4 | 5 0 0 2 0 4 0 4 | 0 0 4 5 7 4 0 4 5
 A: | 5 2 2 5 2 | 5 | 0 0 2 0 4 0 4 | 0 4 5 7 4 |
 B: | | | |

Measures 21-25:
 Treble clef, *Sya*
 T: 7 5 2 0 | 5 2 2 5 2 | 7 5 2 0 | 5 2 2 4 | 0 2 0 2 4 | 5 2 0 2 2 5 2
 A: | 5 2 2 5 2 | 2 4 | 7 5 4 5 | 5 4 |
 B: | | | |

The image displays a musical score for the 3rd setting of "Tam Lin". It consists of two systems of music. Each system includes a vocal line in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a guitar accompaniment with a six-string fretboard.

System 1 (Measures 25-28):

- Vocal Line:** Starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps, and a *Sya* marking. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some notes marked with an 'x'.
- Guitar Tablature:**
 - Measure 25: T (7 5 4 2 0), A (5 2 2 5 2), B (5 2 2 5 2)
 - Measure 26: T (7 5 4 2 0), A (5 2 2 5 2), B (5 2 2 5 2)
 - Measure 27: T (5), A (4 0 0 0 4 0), B (4 0 0 0 4 0)
 - Measure 28: T (0), A (0 4 4), B (0 4 4)

System 2 (Measures 29-32):

- Vocal Line:** Continues the melody from the first system, ending with a double bar line. Notes are marked with 'x'.
- Guitar Tablature:**
 - Measure 29: T (7 5 2 0), A (5 2 2 5 2), B (5 2 2 5 2)
 - Measure 30: T (7 5 2 0), A (5 4 2), B (5 4 2)
 - Measure 31: T (0 4 2 0 2 4), A (2 4), B (7 5 4 5)
 - Measure 32: T (5 2 0), A (5 4), B (5 4)

Below the guitar tablature, there are rows of triangle symbols (▲ ▼ ▲ ▼) indicating fretting techniques or bends.

"Tam Lin" - 3rd Setting

Musical notation for the first system, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 2/2 time signature. The melody consists of eighth notes and quarter notes, with a repeat sign at the beginning. The word *Sya* is written below the staff.

Tablature for the first system, labeled with T, A, and B strings. It includes fret numbers (e.g., 4, 2, 5, 2, 0, 2, 4, 0) and a capo position of 4. The text "HPcPo" is written above the first measure. Fingering and picking directions (up/down triangles) are indicated below the strings.

Musical notation for the second system, continuing the melody from the first system. It includes a first ending bracket labeled "1." and a repeat sign. The word *Sya* is written below the staff.

Tablature for the second system, corresponding to the musical notation above. It includes fret numbers and a capo position of 4. The text "HPcPo" is written above the first measure. Fingering and picking directions are indicated below the strings.

Musical notation for the third system, featuring a second ending bracket labeled "2." and a repeat sign. The key signature changes to one sharp (F#) in the second measure. The word *Sya* is written below the staff.

Tablature for the third system, corresponding to the musical notation above. It includes fret numbers and a capo position of 4. Fingering and picking directions are indicated below the strings.

13

Sya

T 0 0-4 0-5 4 0-5 7-5-2-0 5-25202 7-5-2-0 542 0-520-2-4

A 0-4 4 0-5 4 0-5 5-25202 2-4 754-5

B 0-5 0-5 7-5-2-0 7-5-2-0 542 0-520-2-4

17

Sya

T 542-0 2-252

A 5-4 5-4

B 2-252 2-252