

Banks of the Ohio *basic solo*

Here's a pretty solo on the classic song "Banks of the Ohio." The solo is a mixture of single note and double stop tremolo playing. Most of the double stops have at least one open string note. Because of that, this solo is a little difficult to move up and down the fingerboard to a variety of keys. However, you can move it over a string to a new key. You'll find a more advanced, crosspicking solo to "Banks of the Ohio" on page 46.

If a solo is played on one string on the mandolin we can move it over to three other strings and play the same solo in three additional keys. If a solo is played on two strings we can move it over to two other sets of two strings and play the same solo in two additional keys. This "Banks of the Ohio" solo is played on three strings: the second, the third, and the fourth. We can move this solo over to one other set of three strings. If we start the solo on the third string, second fret instead of the fourth string, second fret and essentially move the note positions over one string each we'll transpose it from the key of D, as written, to the key of A.

It's important to keep in mind that while solos with open strings might not be as readily movable up and down the fingerboard as solos with all fretted notes, they do have a unique timbre. They sound different from solos with all fretted notes. As such, open string solos and passages offer different tonal colors and are worth knowing for that reason alone.

You'll play a lot of long, legato, double stop tremolo notes in this solo. Look for the whole notes tied over the measure line to either quarter notes or half notes. You'll need to keep your tremolo going for a long time. Try to get it to sound like a kind of relaxed buzz. In order to do that you have to keep your picking hand quite loose and limber. If it's tight the tremolo won't sound right and your hand will get fatigued before you've finished playing the extended note. David Grisman has just about the most beautiful and expressive tremolo in the world. Listen to what he does with tremolo and try to make those same sounds yourself. **Key of D.**



Gibson A-model, early 1920s



Tracks 14 & 15

Banks of the Ohio

Arrangement © 2012 by Dix Bruce

Musical notation for measures 1-3. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), common time (C). Chords D and A are indicated above the staff.

Measure 1: Notes G4, A4, B4. Fingering: 1, 1, 2.

Measure 2: Notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 2, 2, 1, 2.

Measure 3: Notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 1, 2.

Tablature (T/B):

Measure 1: 2, 0, 2

Measure 2: 4, 4, 0, 6, 0

Measure 3: 2, 2, 2, 4

Musical notation for measures 4-5. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), common time (C). Chord D is indicated above the staff.

Measure 4: Notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 2, 3, 3.

Measure 5: Notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 3, 2, 1.

Tablature (T/B):

Measure 4: 4, 5, 4, 5, 0, 0, 5

Measure 5: 4, 4, 0, 2

Musical notation for measures 6-8. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), common time (C). Chord G is indicated above the staff.

Measure 6: Notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 2, 3, 2, 1.

Measure 7: Notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 1, 3.

Measure 8: Notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 2, 1.

Tablature (T/B):

Measure 6: 5, 7, 5, 4, 2, 0

Measure 7: 2, 5, 2, 5

Measure 8: 0, 2

Musical notation for measures 9-11. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), common time (C). Chords D and A are indicated above the staff.

Measure 9: Notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 3, 2, 1.

Measure 10: Notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 3, 2, 1.

Measure 11: Notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 3, 2, 1.

Tablature (T/B):

Measure 9: 0, 4, 0, 4, 5, 4, 2

Measure 10: 0, 0

Measure 11: 0, 0