



Figure 20-2. Slurs are feasible on some intervals that ascend across the register break.

2 Track 5

The adding of fingers seems to make it feasible to execute these slurs. There is no need for double tonguing when using slurs like this.

TONGUING TO ENHANCE INHERENT RHYTHMS, PHRASING AND PERSONAL INTERPRETATION

Notice in Figure 20-1 that all of the tongued notes that fall on primary or secondary pulses are articulated with a “t,” or the slightly softer “d.” These are tip of the tongue sounds. Most of the tongued notes that do *not* fall on pulses are articulated with the softer, back of the tongue sounds “k” or “g.” This serves to give subtle emphasis to the on-pulse notes. To further enhance this, and to give impulse and forward motion to the tune, I “lean into” the on-pulse notes slightly with my breath and “back off” the others.

Not all the tonguing in this reel is double tonguing. Where you see two or more “t”s in a row, this is single tonguing and is the result of choosing to give emphasis to some off-pulse notes.

For example, I emphasize the last note of measure 1, which is the first note of a syncopated long roll that crosses into the next measure. In similar situations, the last notes of measure 5 and of measure 9, I don’t choose to emphasize these rolls in this way. The last note of measure 3 is slurred to the first note of the next measure, so I choose to give it a strong tongue articulation. This also happens with the last notes of measures 6, 7, 10, and 11. These are all subtle but important touches.

There are many double-tongued *couplets*, groups of two notes that form a double-tongued unit. Examples are the second and third notes of measures 1, 2, and 3. This tonguing technique heightens what is already inherent in the melody. The E is stronger than the low A because of its high register and because it falls on a pulse. The low A is an off-pulse note.

Then there are some groups of notes that could be considered to function as *stretched couplets*. For example, the last note of measure 10 is slurred together with the first three notes of measure 11 and this slurred group is followed by a tongued note. Those five notes form a unit comprised of a slurred group plus a single note. The first note of the slurred group leads into an on-pulse note, so I give it a strong “t” articulation. The last, tongued note of the unit is an off-pulse note that I don’t choose to emphasize so I give it a softer articulation. Thus you have a “t-k” double tongue pattern happening over the space of five notes. Similar situations occurs in measures 4 and 12, in these instances over a space of three notes.

Finally, notice how I use the “d-g” pattern to slightly soften the attacks of the notes in measures 4 and 12.

PURISTS WHO OPPOSE TONGUING NEED TO DO MORE LISTENING

Some purists feel that there is no place in Irish flute and tin whistle playing for tonguing. This attitude is an extreme one that reveals a certain lack of understanding. Perhaps it is an overreaction to the misuse of tonguing that is often heard among players from outside the tradition who do not yet understand the aesthetic of traditional Irish music.