The United States Army
Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps

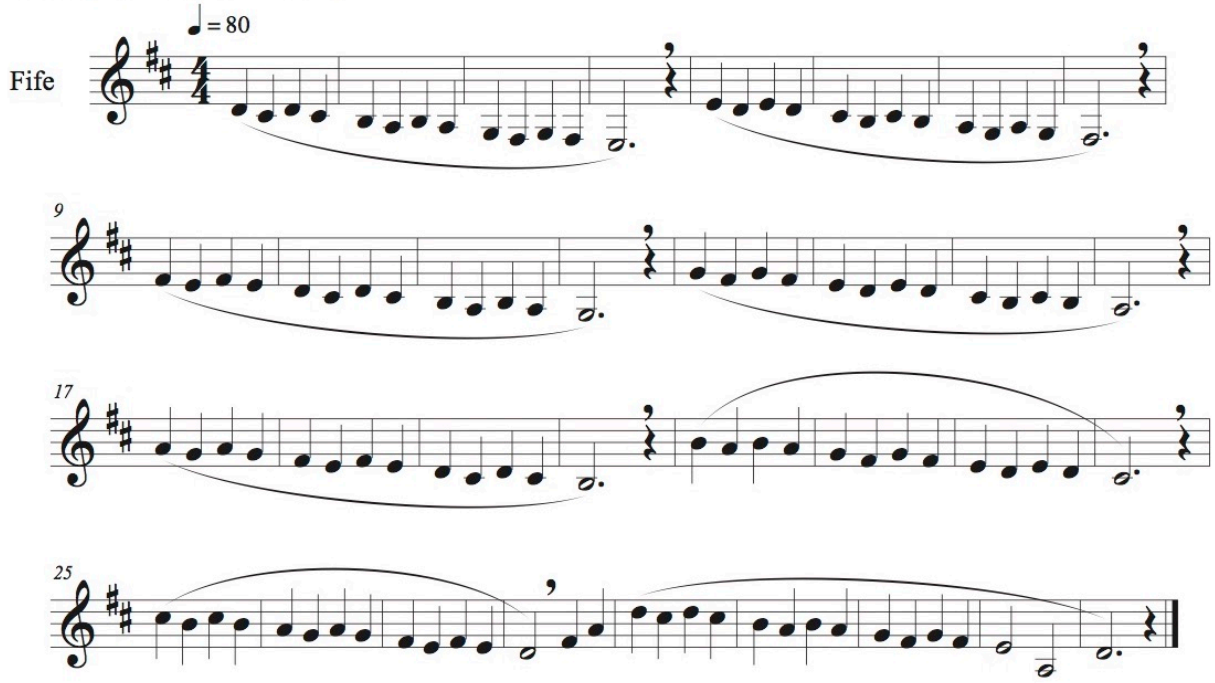
FIFE BOOK 3

www.fifeanddrum.army.mil

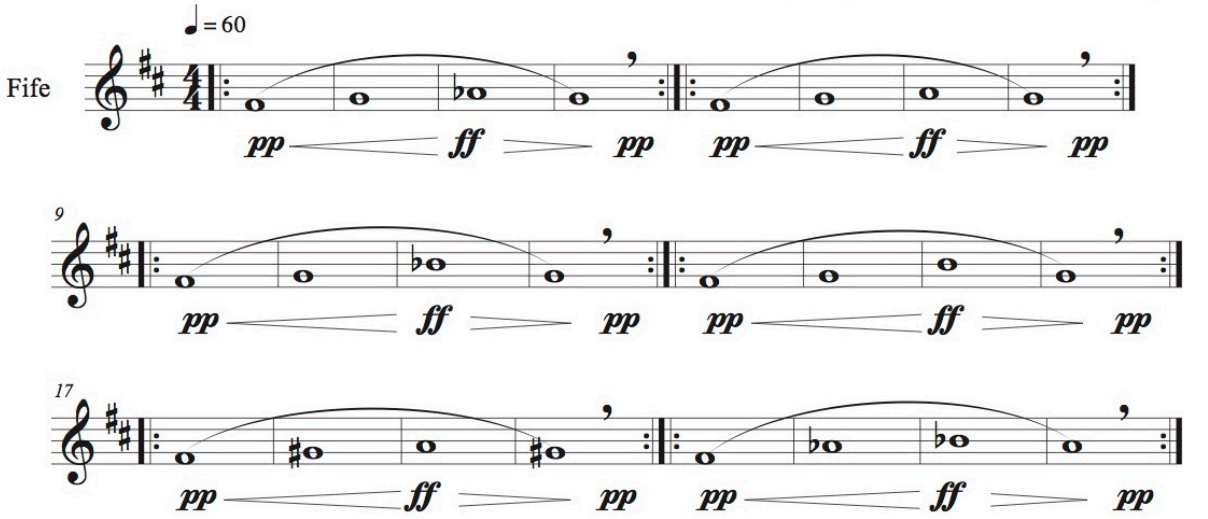
WARM-UP EXERCISES

Tone/Intonation:
Tone and Intonation work together.
Begin your daily practice with this exercise adapted from John Benoit's "Core Technique and Exercises"
Always strive to have a clear tone without pulling back the corners of the mouth.
Become aware of the aperture (hole made between the lips) as a tool to adjust the clarity of the sound.
Pay close attention to maintaining the same pitches for each note, even with neighbors in-between.
Hear the notes in your head before you play.
For extra practice, sing through the exercise before you play.

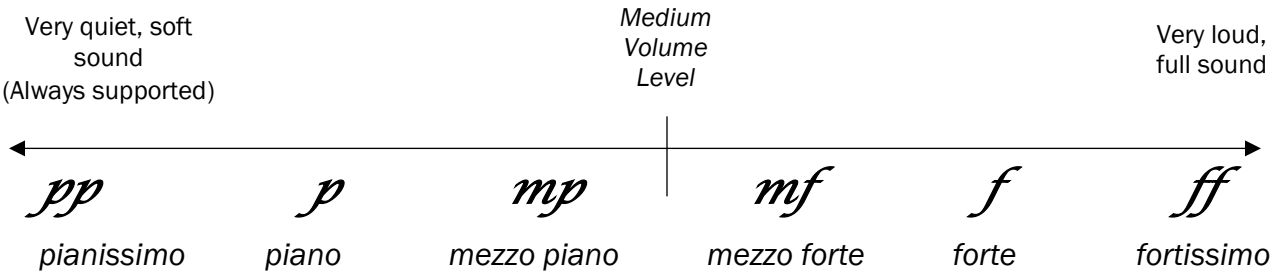
D Major; transpose to all keys



Intonation:
Practice this exercises adapted from Marcel Moyse's "The Art of Technique"
Strive to maintain a centered tone and consistent pitch through the dynamic changes.
Crescendo and Decrescendo evenly.
Push yourself to extend your dynamic range on both ends. Work for a softer pp and a louder ff.
Hear the third note in your head before you play, to correct a reaching tendency.
Utilize the aperture to achieve dynamic contrast without pitch changes:
Decrease circumference size during decrescendo, increase during crescendo - like a stretching rubber band)



Referential Dynamic (Volume) Continuum:

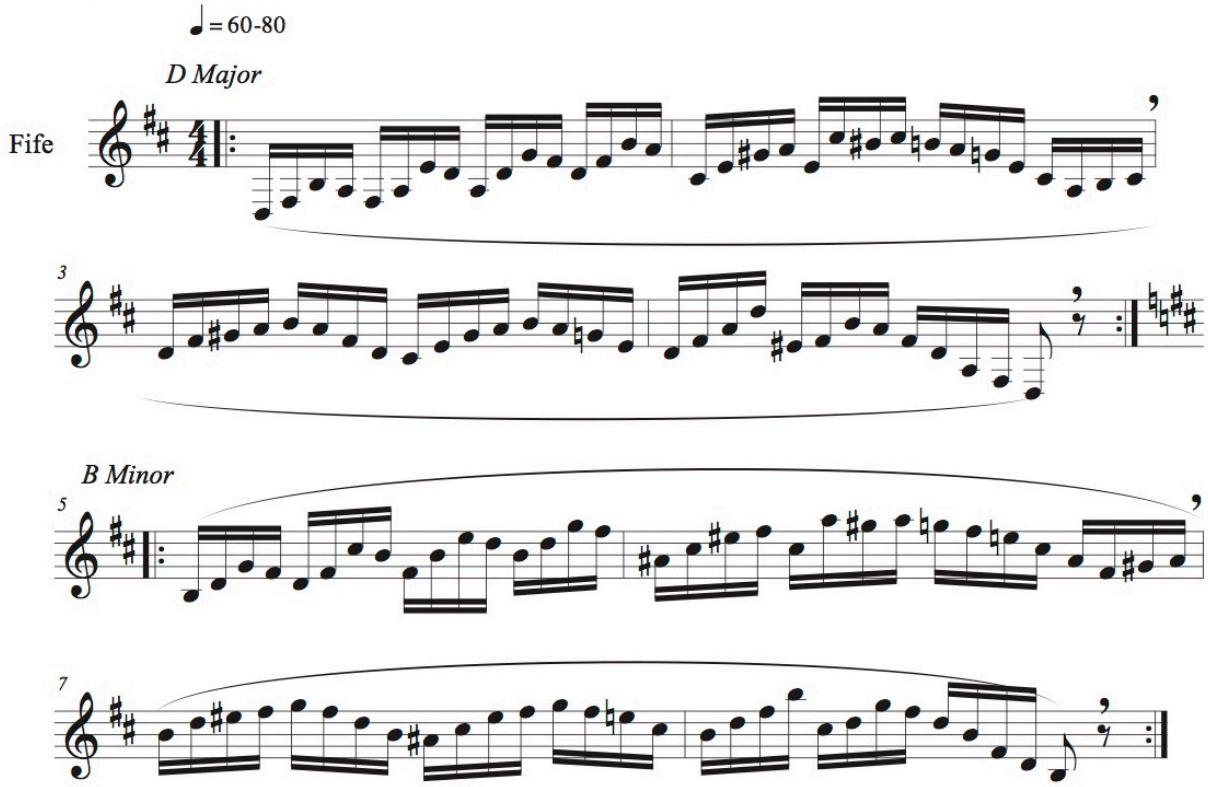


Translations:

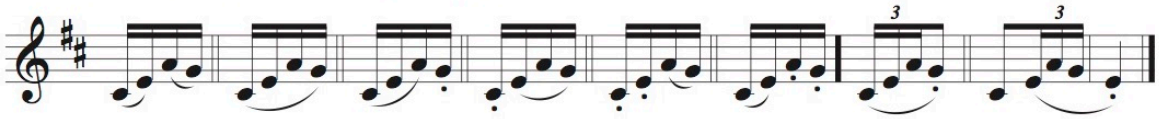
- piano: soft
- mezzo: medium
- forte: loud

Note: Volume (dynamic level) and air speed (intensity) are independent of each other.
Practice altering dynamics independently from intensity, and vice versa.
Always keep intonation at the forefront:
Every note you play must have a centered tone and pitch.

Technique:
Practice this exercise adapted from Andre Maquarre's "Daily Exercises for the Flute"
Work to memorize the exercise and sight-transpose to all major and minor keys.
Play with the written ariculation and all other options.



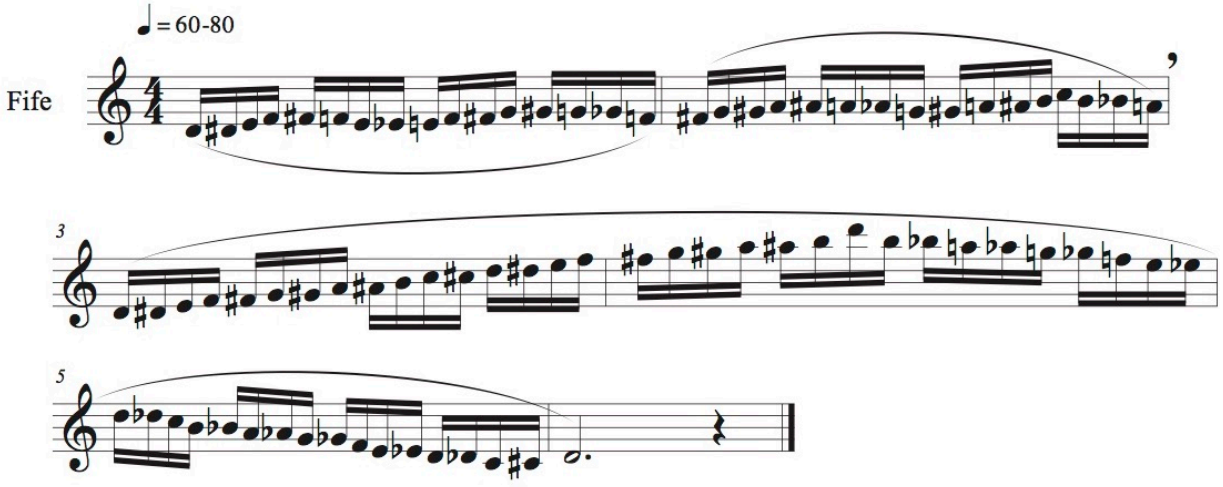
Play with the following articulations/augmentations.
Keep the air directions constantly moving forward between slurring and tonguing so notes are not clipped.



PRACTICE ALL MAJOR AND MINOR SCALES, ASCENDING AND DESCENDING!

- Diatonic (scale)
- 3rds
- 6ths
- Inverted 3rds
- Inverted 6ths

Chromatic Scale:
Practice this exercise adapted from John Benoit's "Core Technique and Exercises"
Work to memorize the exercise and transpose to begin on different notes.
Also practice 8vb (1 octave below written)
*Note: notes are written in enharmonic spellings to practice reading in sharps and flats.



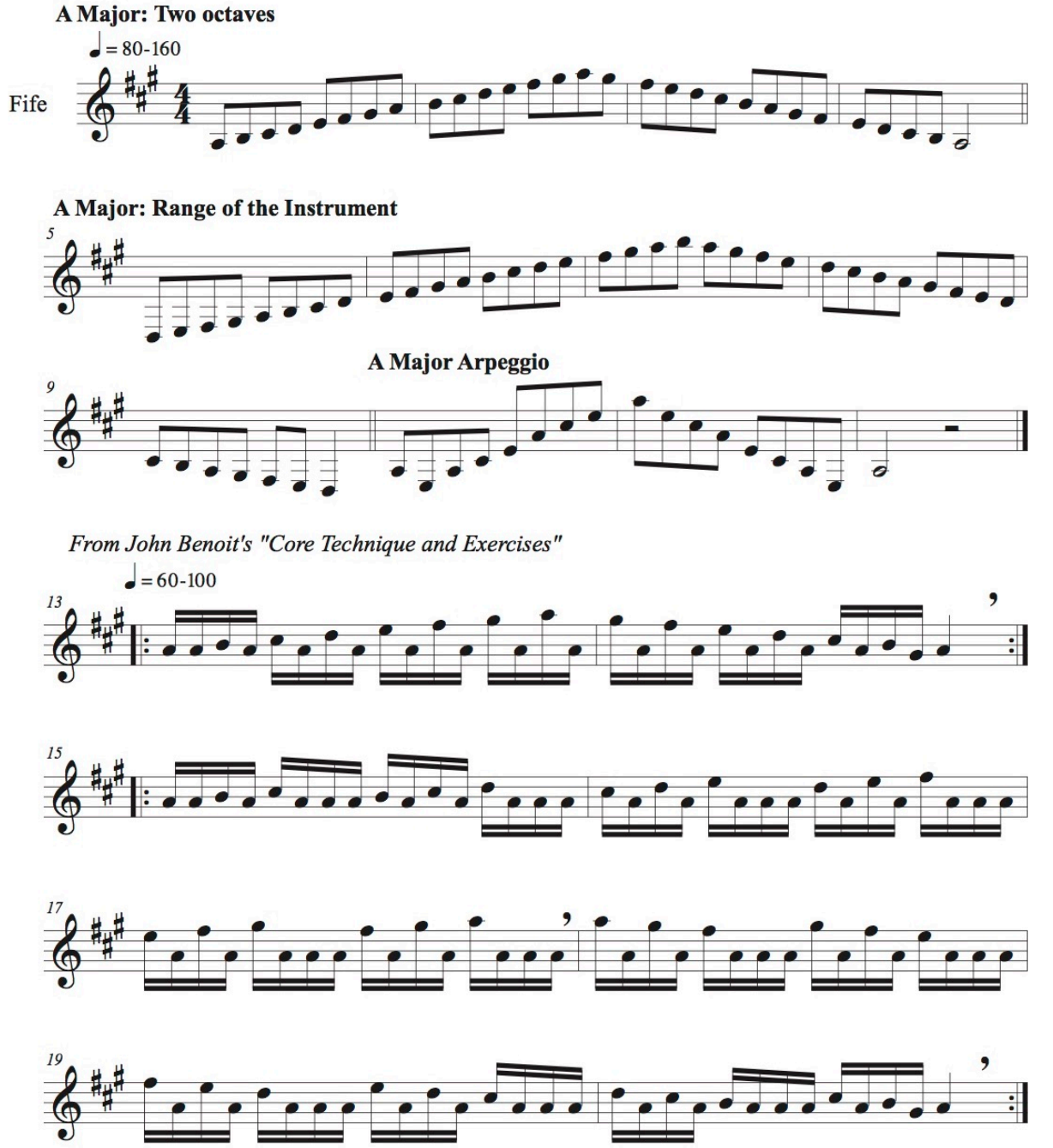
Supplement these warm-up exercises as needed, dependent on personal goals and/or demands of repertoire.

A MAJOR

A Major has three sharps: F#, C#, and G#. Its relative minor is F# minor, beginning on the 6th scale degree of A Major.
Refer to your fife maker's fingering chart for G# fingerings.

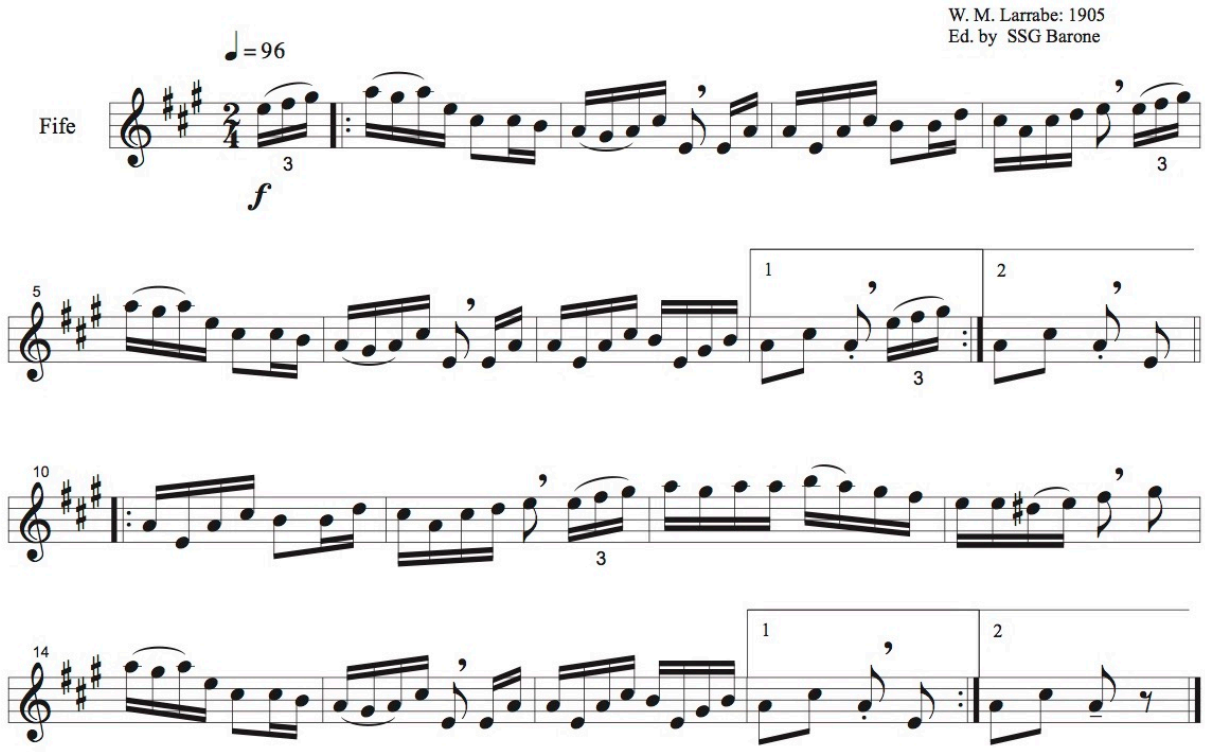
EXERCISES

Practice the following exercises with various articulation patterns.
Keep the air direction moving forward. Minimize finger movements to maximize efficiency.
Increase speed by one metronome click only when exercises can be played five times with no mistakes.



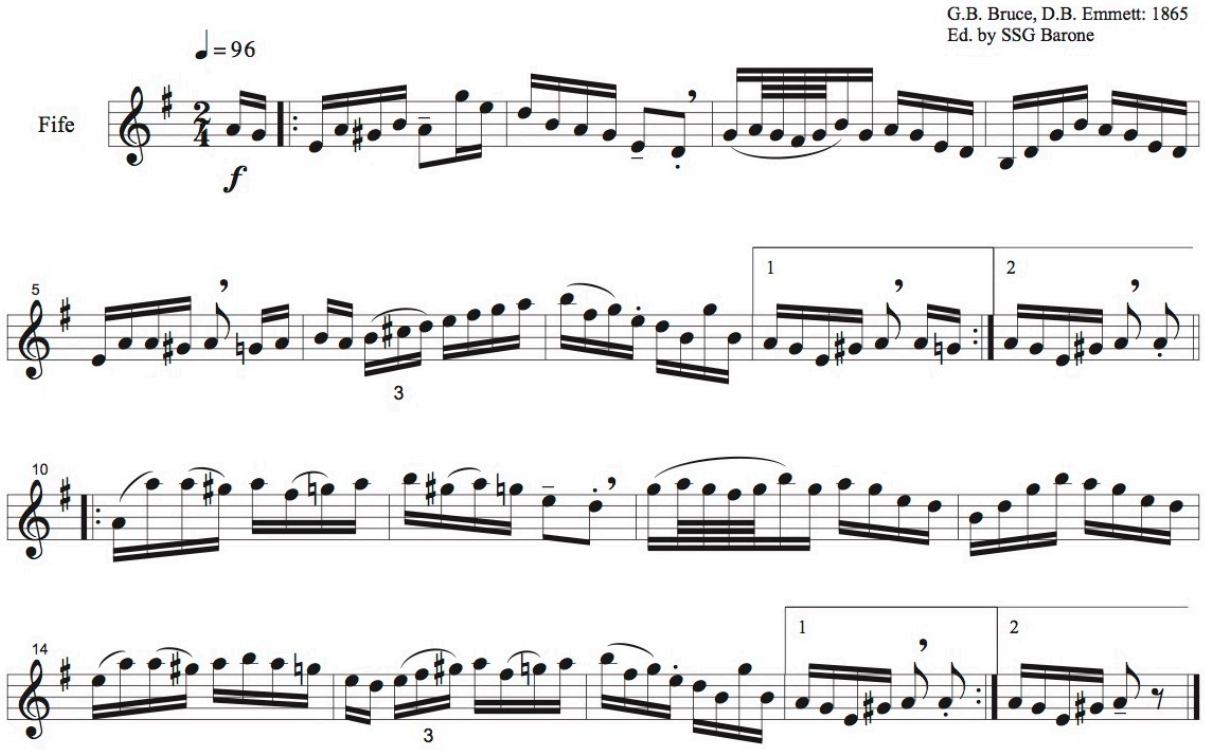
PRACTICE TUNES

Dream Quickstep

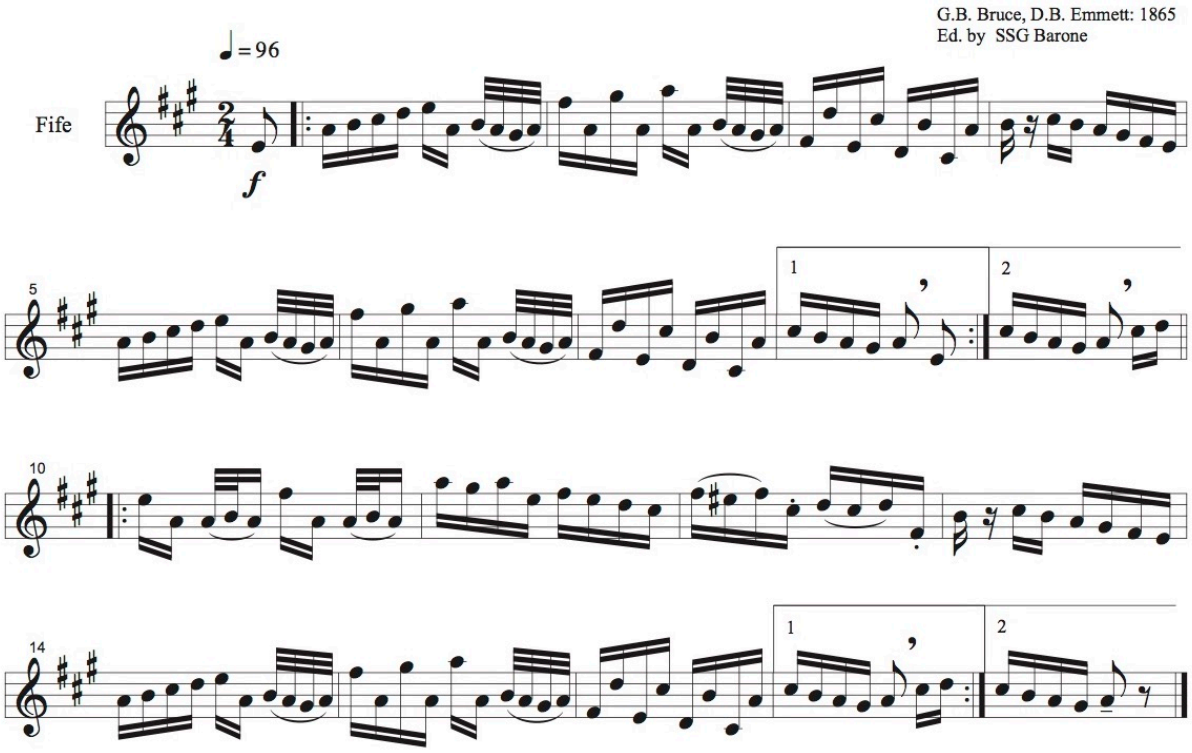


*Note: 64th notes are a further division of 16th notes.
Four 64th notes = Two 32nd notes = One 16th note

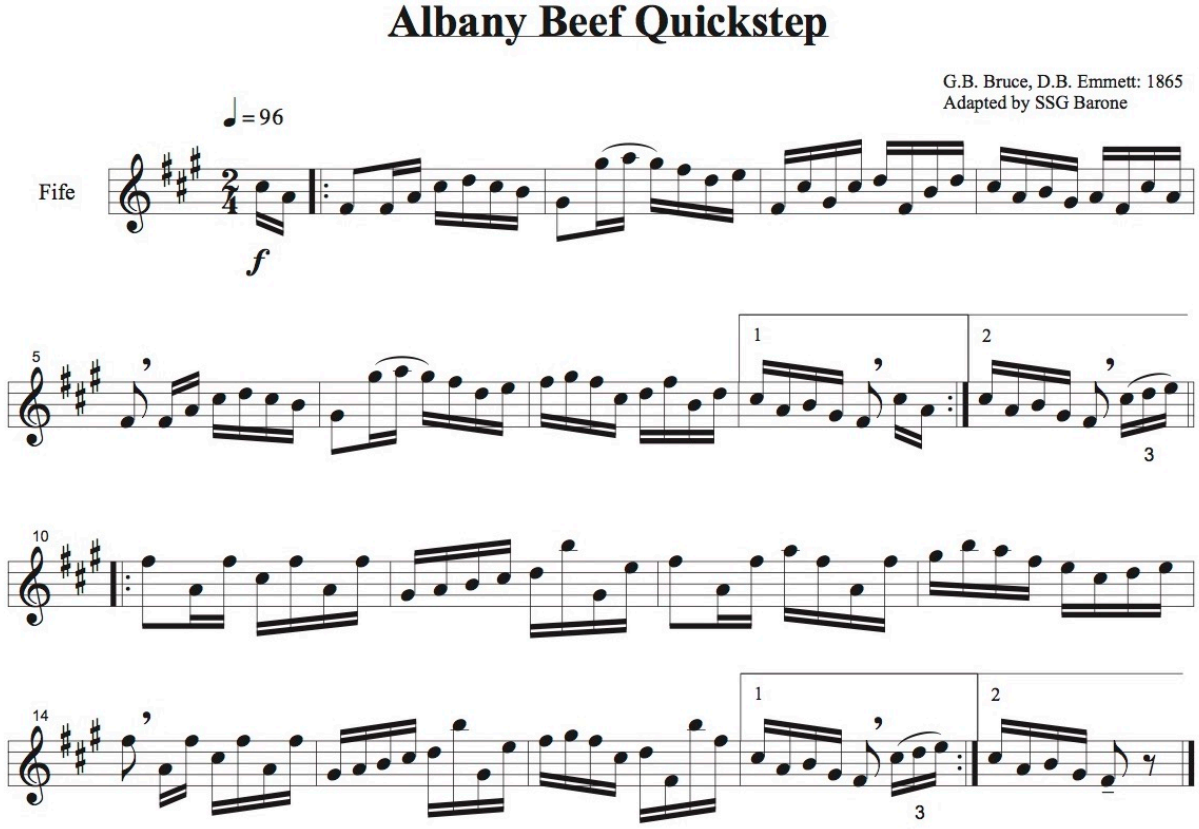
Sandy McGregor's Quickstep



Cincinnati Quickstep



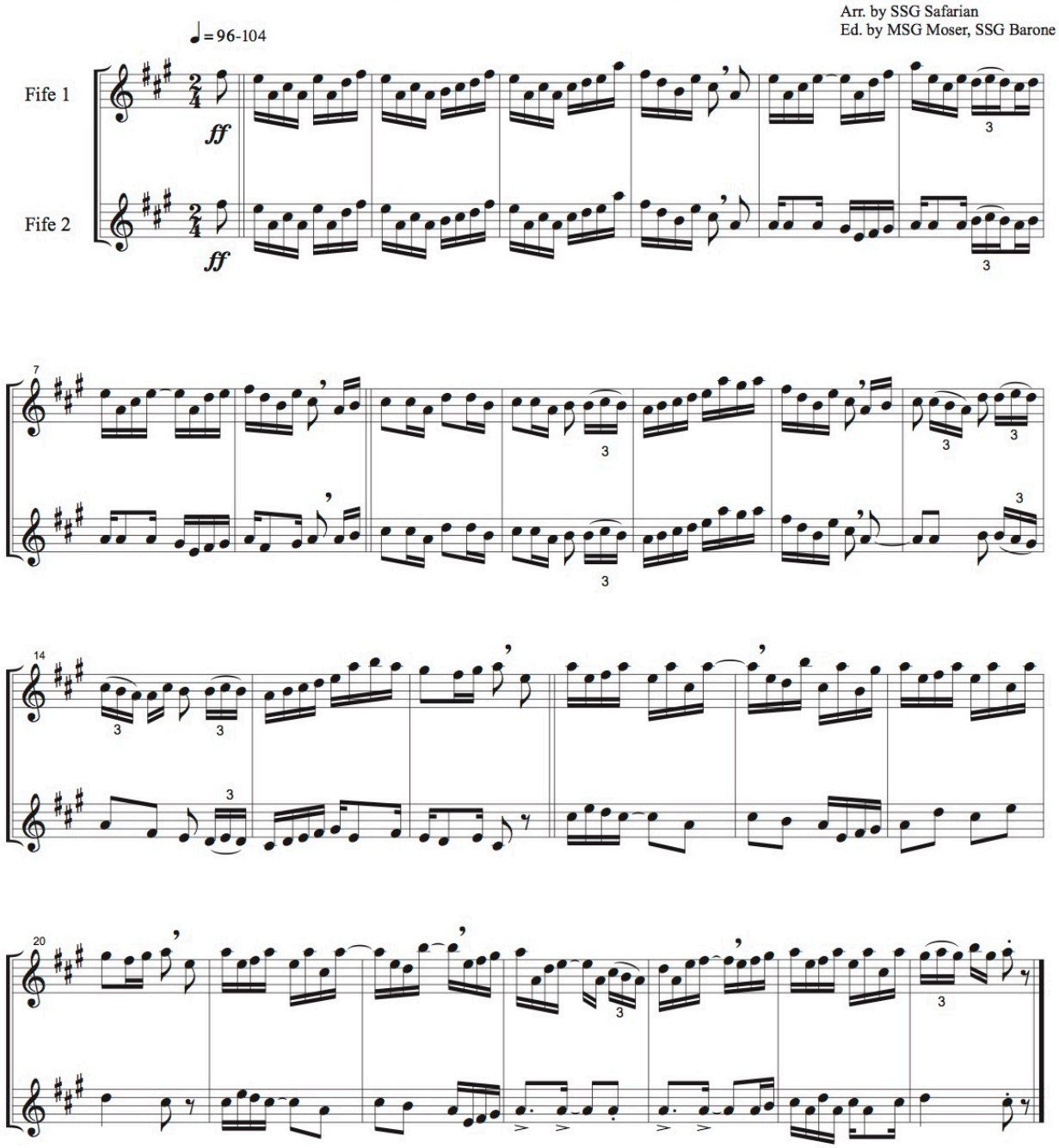
The following tune is in F# minor. It has the same key signature as A Major, but its tonality centers around F#.



Money Musk

from 2008 Twilight Tattoo Feature

Arr. by SSG Safarian
Ed. by MSG Moser, SSG Barone



Supplement these practice tunes with other tunes in A Major/F# minor.

Practice sight-transposing tunes into A Major/F# minor for in-depth practice of the scales.

LIP FLEXIBILITY

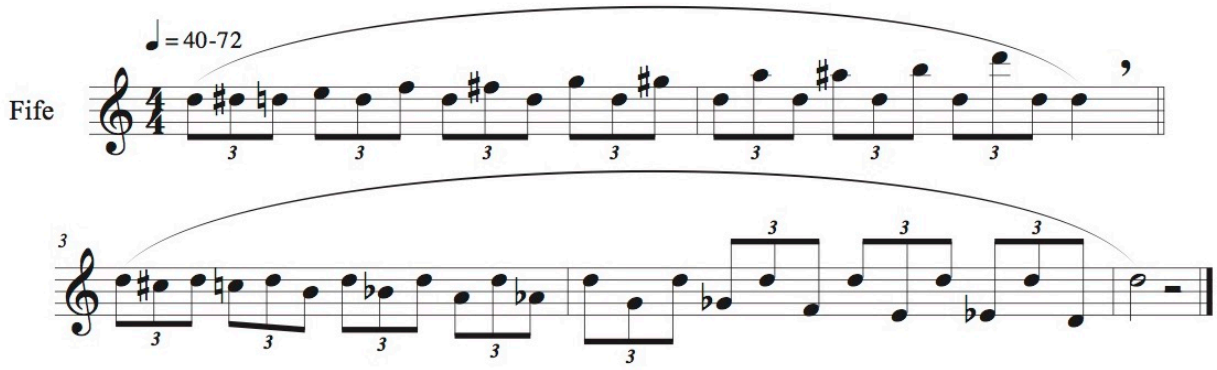
Keeping the tone and pitch centered over large intervals requires lip flexibility. Always angle the air stream into the embouchure hole, but the degree of the angle will change over the range of the fife.

"Target practice": Practice with targets on a wall. For lower notes, the angle of the air stream is going to be lower. For higher notes, the angle of the air stream will be higher. Successfully playing intervals with various articulation patterns involves practicing these angles, seamlessly flowing between them, and ultimately committing them to muscle memory.

EXERCISE

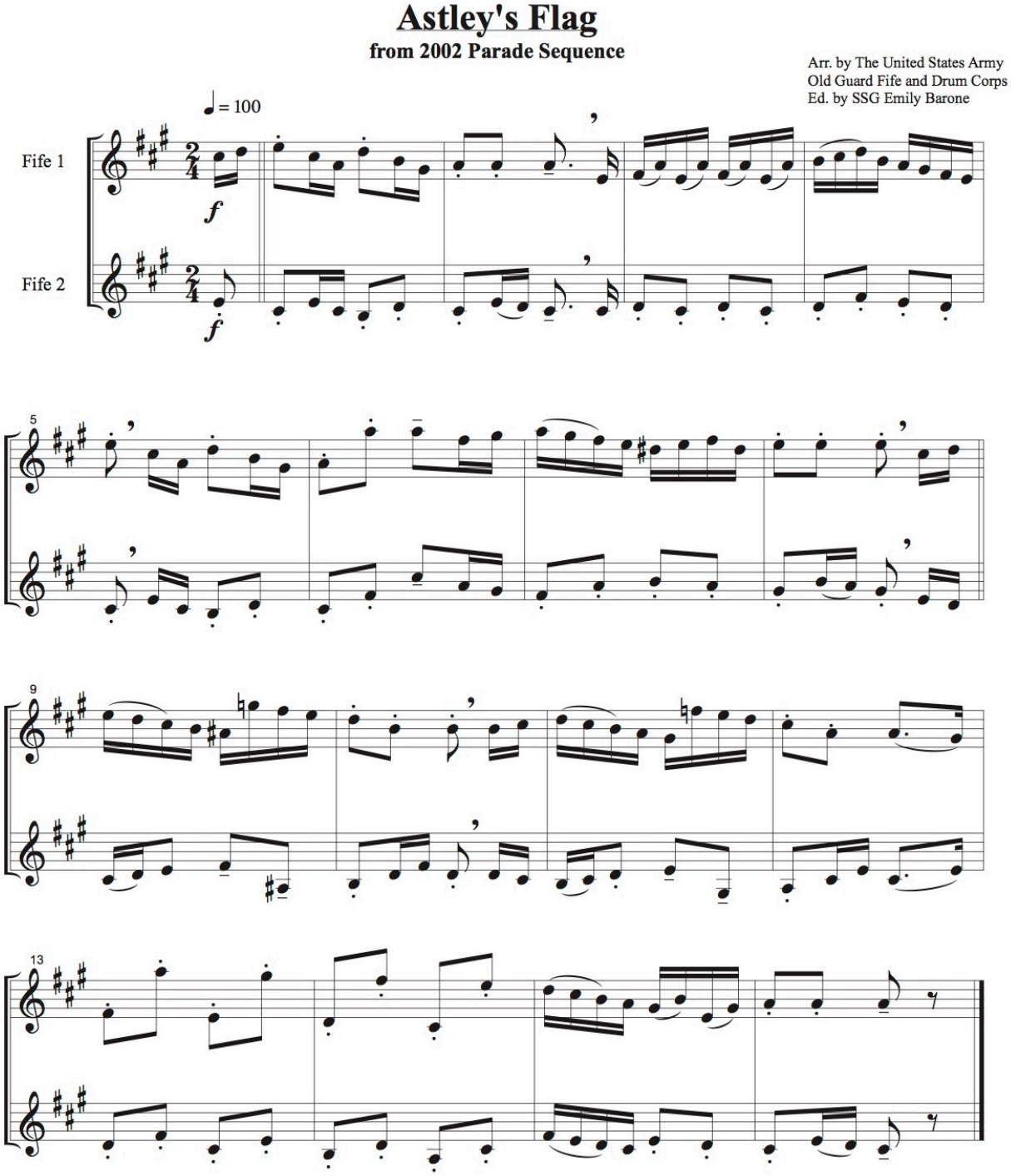
Practice this exercise slurred as well as tongued.
Keep the air direction moving forward throughout.
Work to have a continuous sound in-between notes, without breaks.
Aim the air stream appriopriately for each note and work to make lip transitions smooth.
Also practice 8vb.

Adapted from Marcel Moyse's "The Art of Technique"



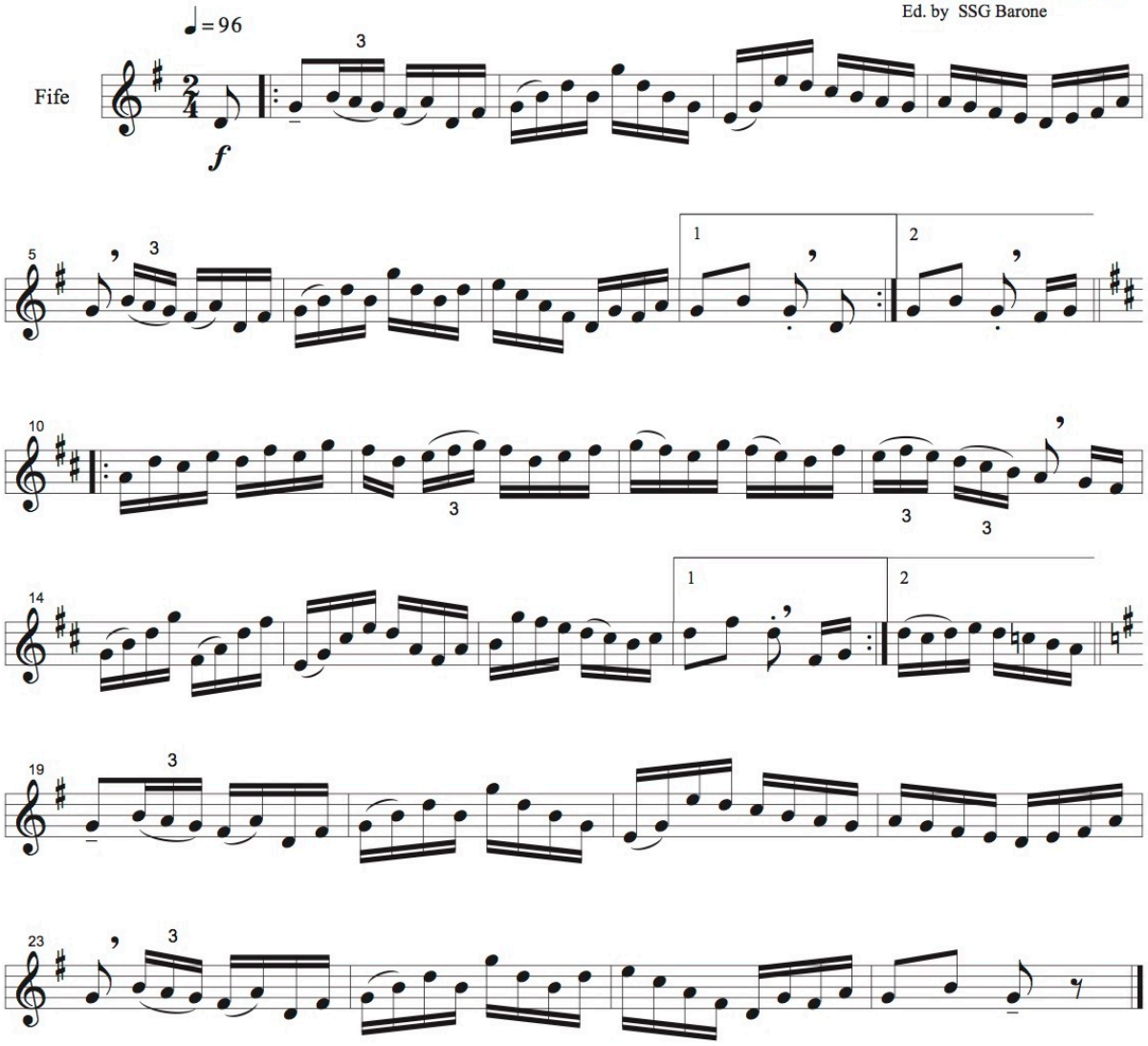
PRACTICE TUNES

Pay close attention to air direction angles in the following lip flexibility practice tunes.



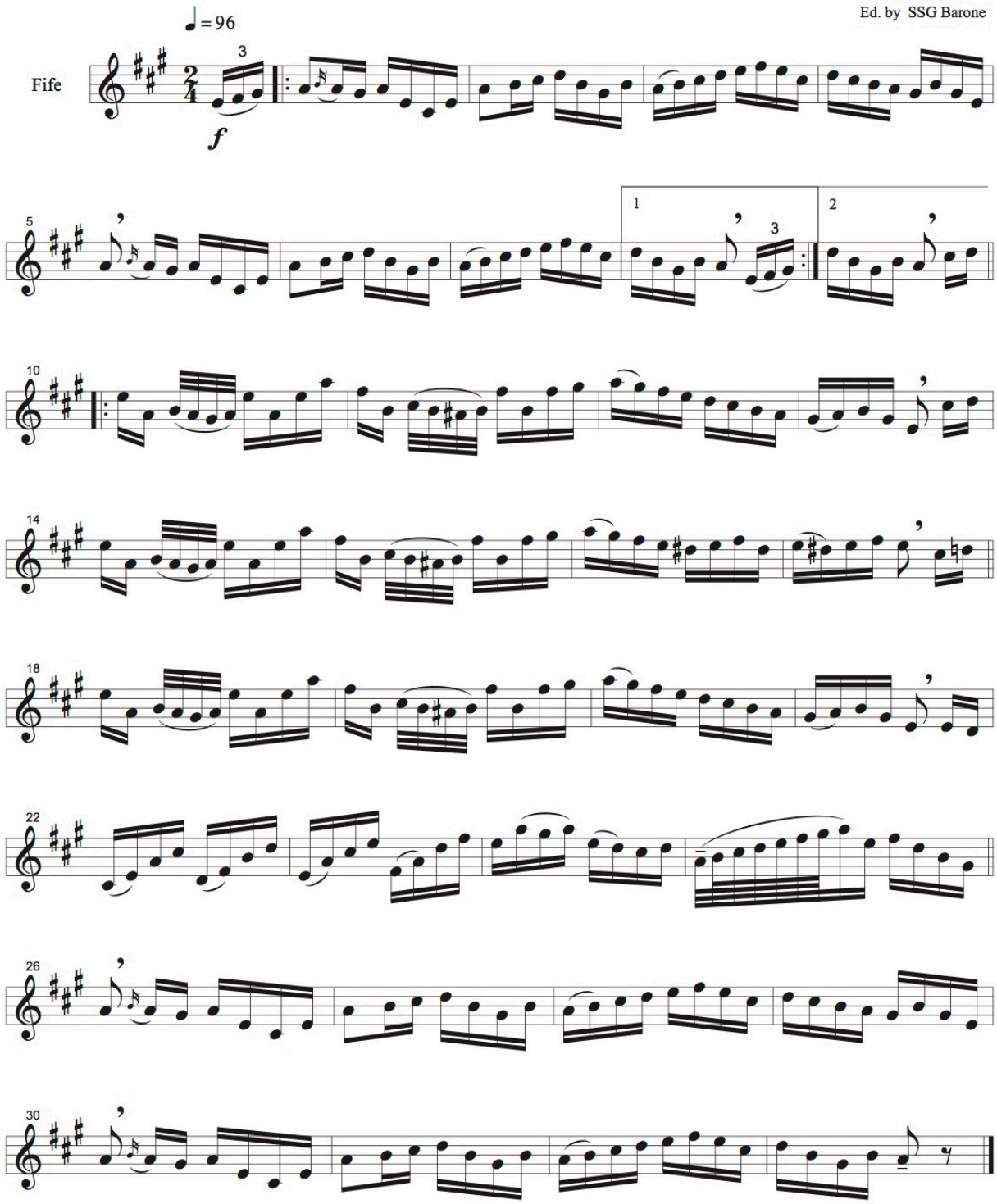
Iron Bridge Quickstep

G.B. Bruce, D.B. Emmett: 1865
Ed. by SSG Barone

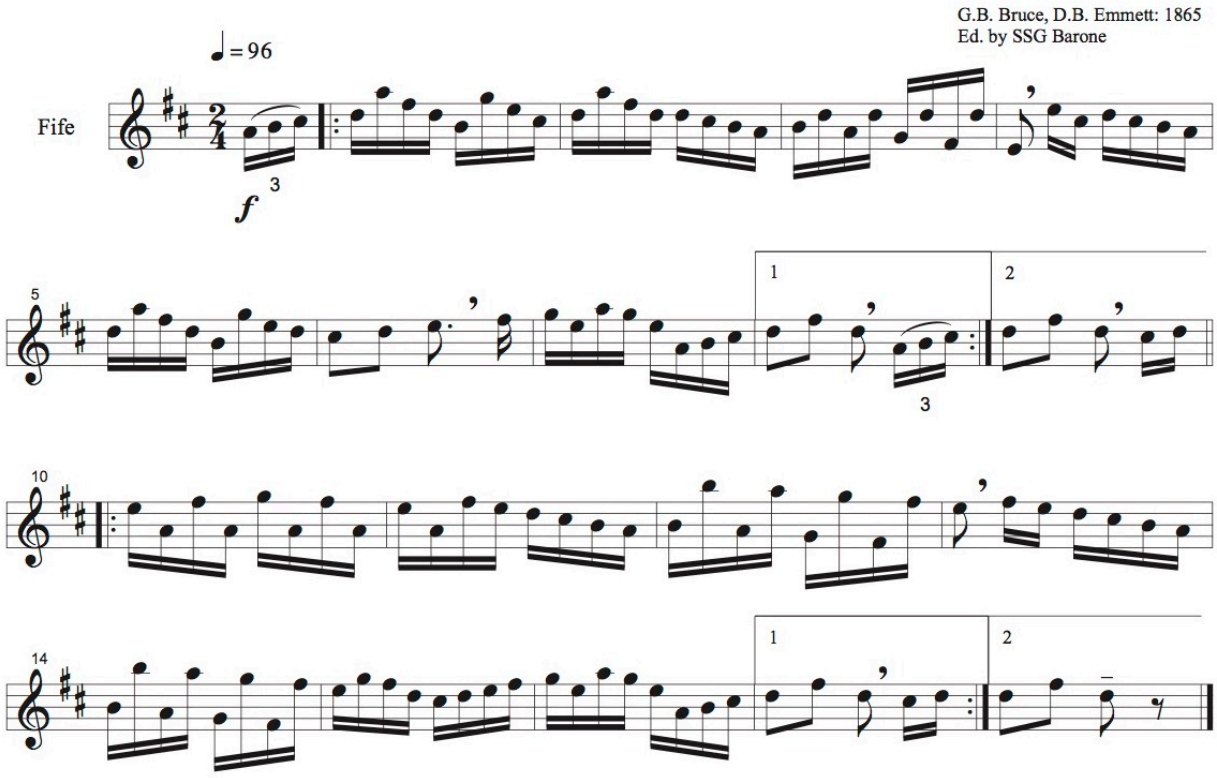


Ned Kendall's Quickstep

E. Kendall: 1865
Ed. by SSG Barone



Lydecker's Quickstep



Supplement these practice tunes with other tunes featuring interval leaps.

DOUBLE/TRIPLE TONGUING

Double and triple tonguing are tools to utilize during fast passages in which single tonguing becomes labored or impractical. Fife repertoire often utilizes these tools as ornamental flourishes. It is important to practice them thoroughly so that they can be used to the player's advantage in any situation, as well as what is dictated by repertoire.

DOUBLE TONGUING

Double tonguing involves using the syllables t and k, as opposed to single tonguing utilizing the syllable t. Other syllables may be used, such as d and g, which provides a softer option. However, the most common utilization of double tonguing for fife music utilizes t and k due to the strength of air pressure often needed to play notes in the top octave of the fife.

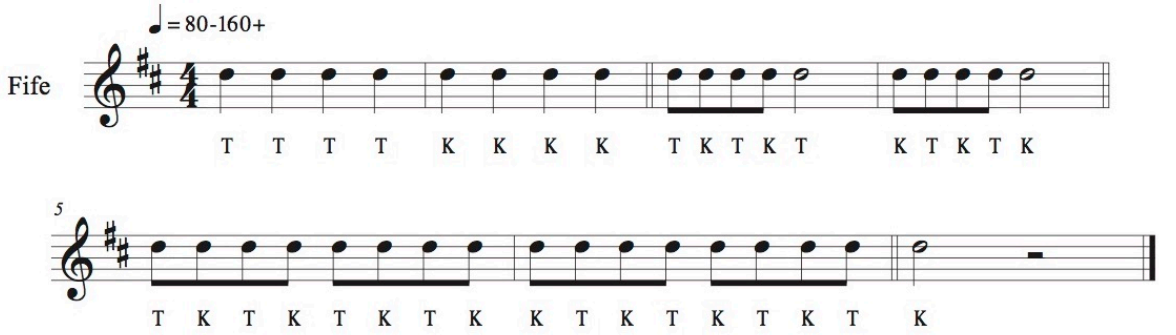
Begin practicing by saying the following: "Too too too too, too koo too koo"
The syllables for double tonguing can be practiced while doing daily tasks or walking down the street.

It is imperative to practice smoothing out the t and k as much as possible. No discernable difference between the t and k articulations should be audible to the listener. The t sound is often stronger, resulting in an uneven sound. The k articulation should have just as much air pressure behind the tongue, even if it originates from farther back in the mouth. Great care should be taken to strengthen the k articulation to create a seamless line.

A fifer's single tonguing and double tonguing ranges on a metronome should overlap, to allow for more options at all times. For example, if a fifer can single tongue sixteenth notes up to 92 bpm per quarter note, he/she should be able to seamlessly double tongue below that speed ranging to well above it.

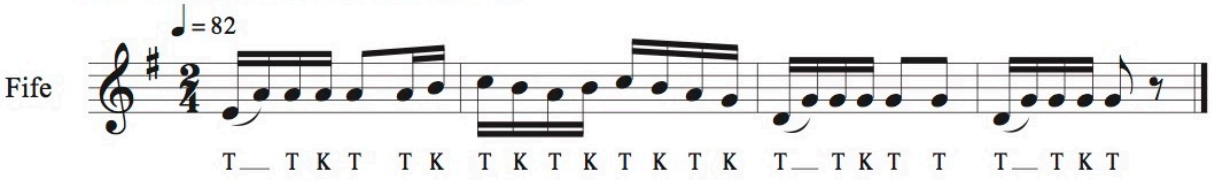
EXERCISES

In order to practice seamless transitions between t and k, practice reversing the starting syllable as written below. However, when practicing repertoire for a performance, figure out which syllable is more efficient to begin with and practice the passage consistently with the same syllable grouping.



Paddy on the Handcar

For added practice, reverse all syllables



Implement double tonguing into common tunes to become more comfortable with the syllables.

See John Benoit's "Core Technique and Exercises" for more double tonguing exercises.

TRIPLE TONGUING

Triple tonguing should be utilized in fast triplet tongued passages as an asset to making the passage more efficient. Fife repertoire often includes triplet tongued passages as ornamental additions.

Triple tonguing involves the same syllables as double tonguing. Most commonly, they are grouped the following ways:

- **TKT TKT ("Triple tonguing"):** Useful for accenting the first triplet (beat accents)
- **TKT KTK ("Double tonguing"):** Very efficient for extended triplet passages, helps to keep the last of three notes from crushing (avoids two Ts in a row)
  Better for seamless transitions between double and triple tonguing because it is double tonguing utilized in groups of three

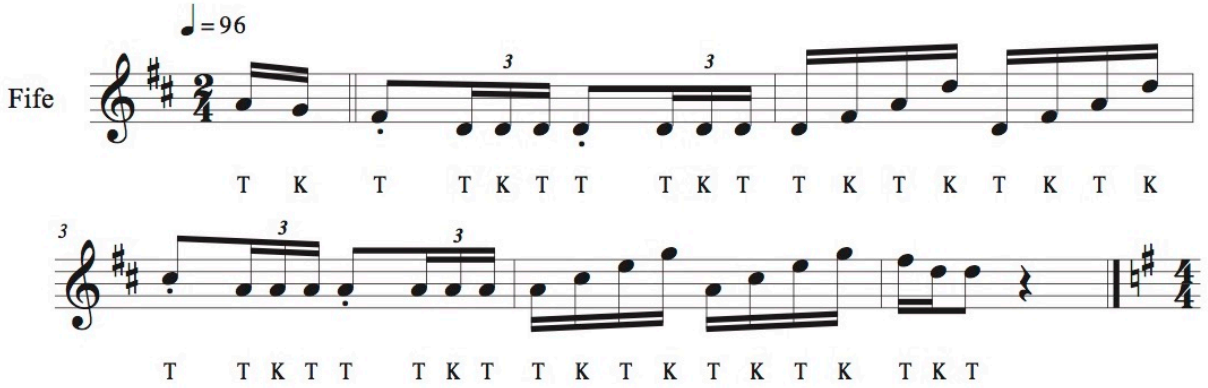
With practice, both are very effective in varying situations.

Great care should be taken to spreading out triplets so that they are not crushed into sixteenth notes or other variants of duple subdivision. However, triplets should not be stretched to the point of rhythmic distortion or uneven playing.
Triplets should be played as an even subdivision of a beat into three parts.

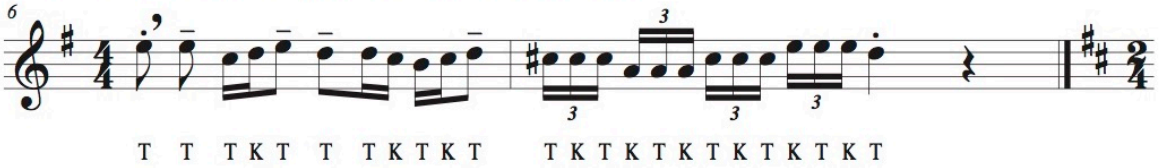
EXERCISES

Practice the following excerpts featuring triple tonguing.
Use the written articulations and try other combinations.

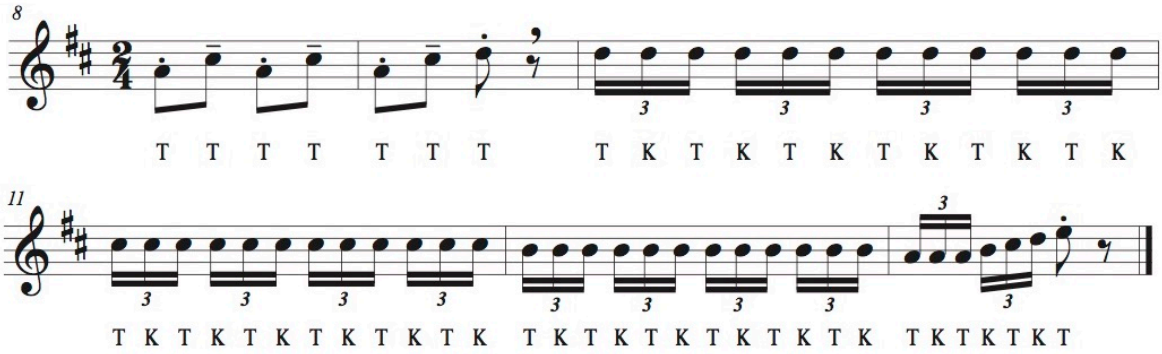
Downshire: Adapted from the Company of Fifers and Drummers



Fairfield Muster: Adapted from John McDonagh



Clem Medley: Adapted from John McDonagh



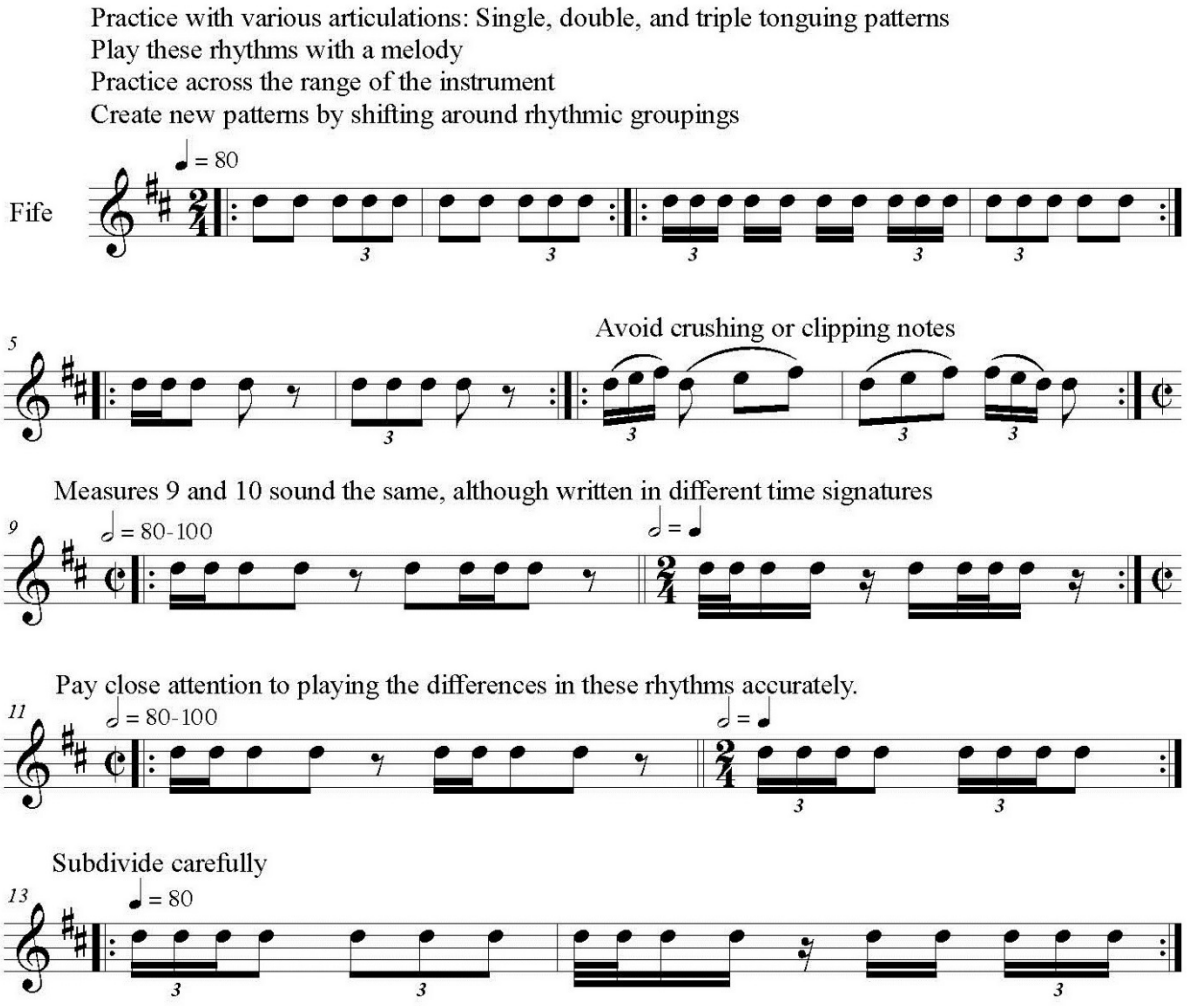
Practice before and after double and triple tongued passages to integrate them into the segment.

See John Benoit's "Core Technique and Exercises" for more triple tonguing exercises.

RHYTHM “TONUNDRUM” ☺

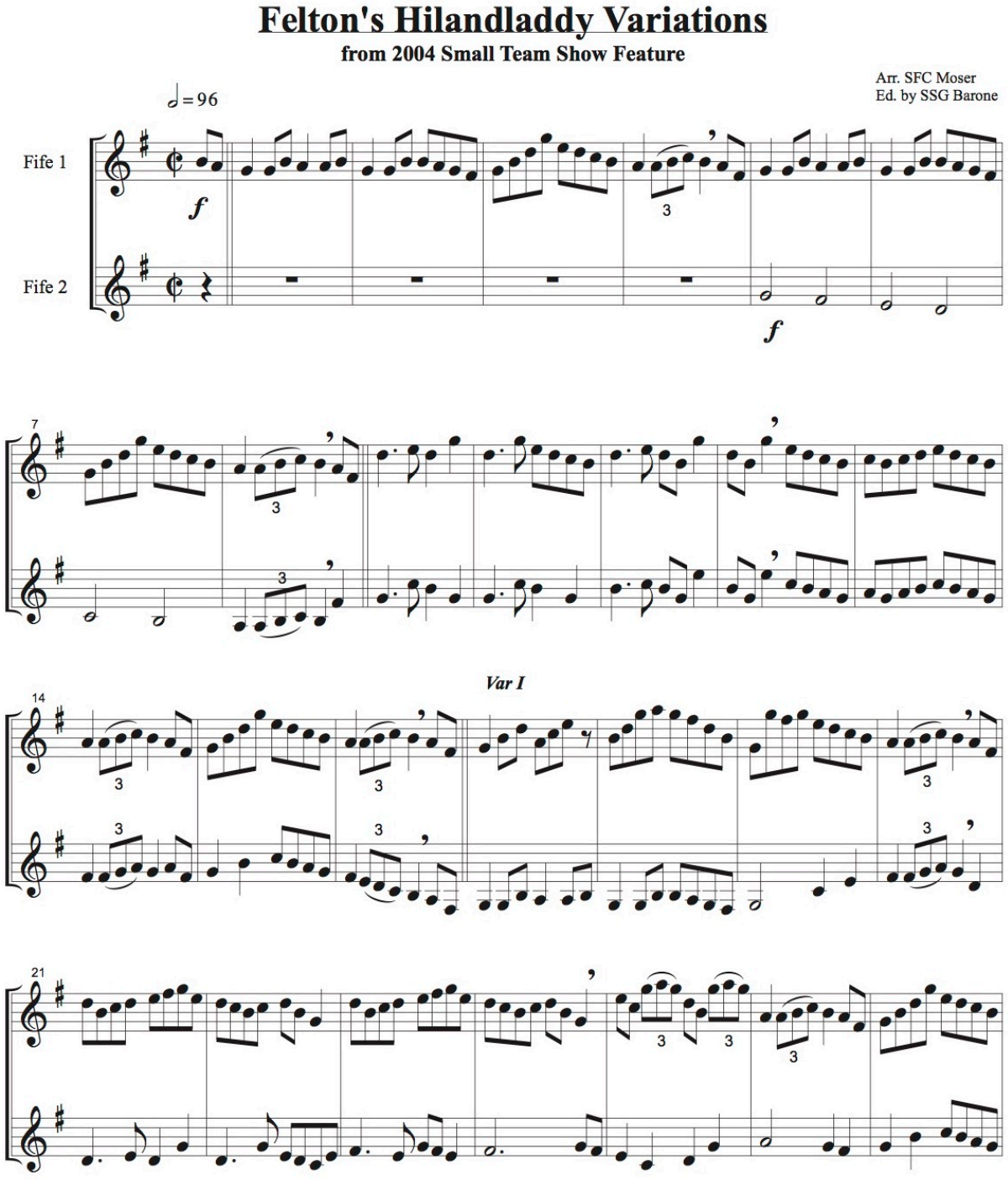
Tongued triplets utilizing the TKT TKT pattern can often result in a rhythmic distortion. The last T of the triplet is often crushed to be able to reset the tongue to articulate T again. It is imperative that a player takes great care to make sure rhythms on the page are played accurately, regardless of the articulation pattern utilized.

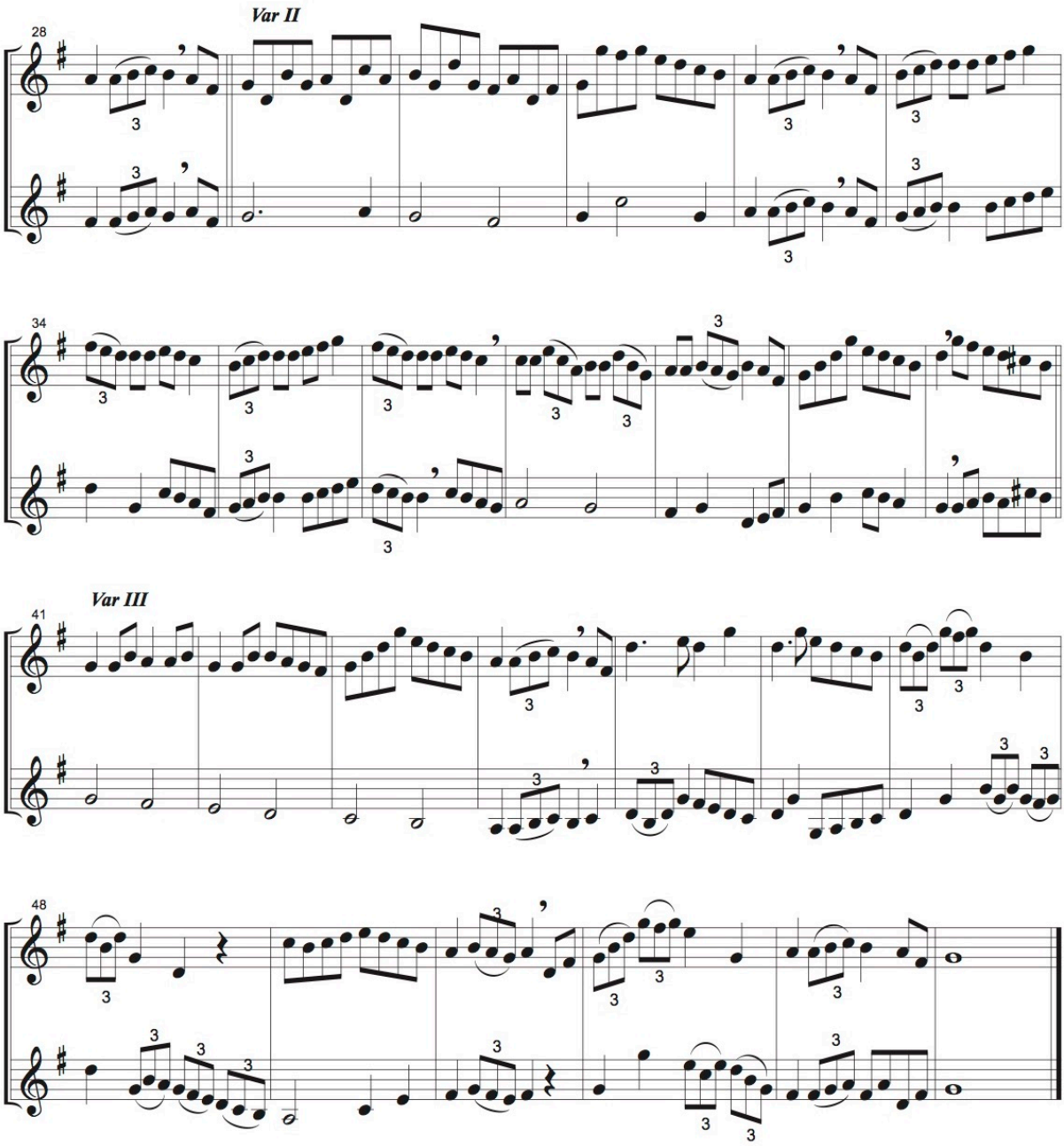
EXERCISES



PRACTICE TUNES

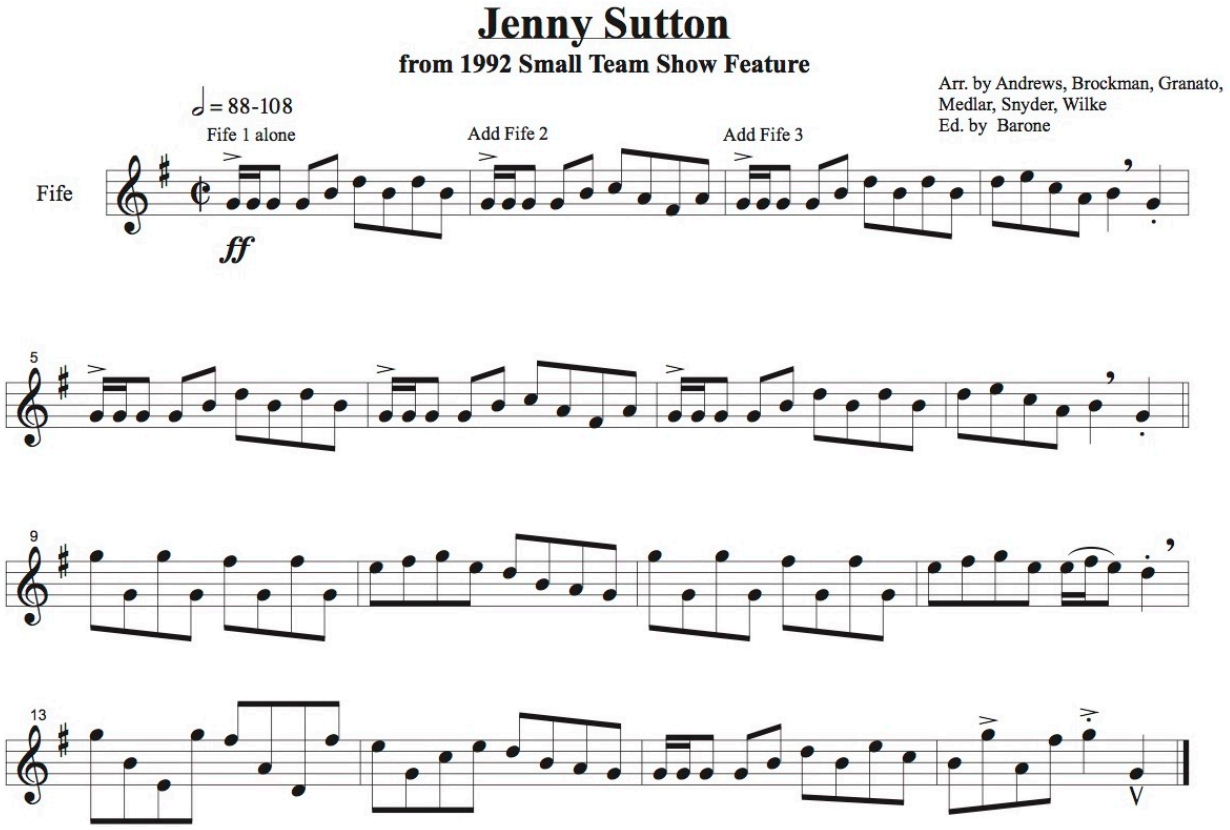
Utilize the rhythmic exercises in the following applications. Focus on accuracy of subdivisions regardless of articulation patterns. Always be mindful of air direction over different octaves.



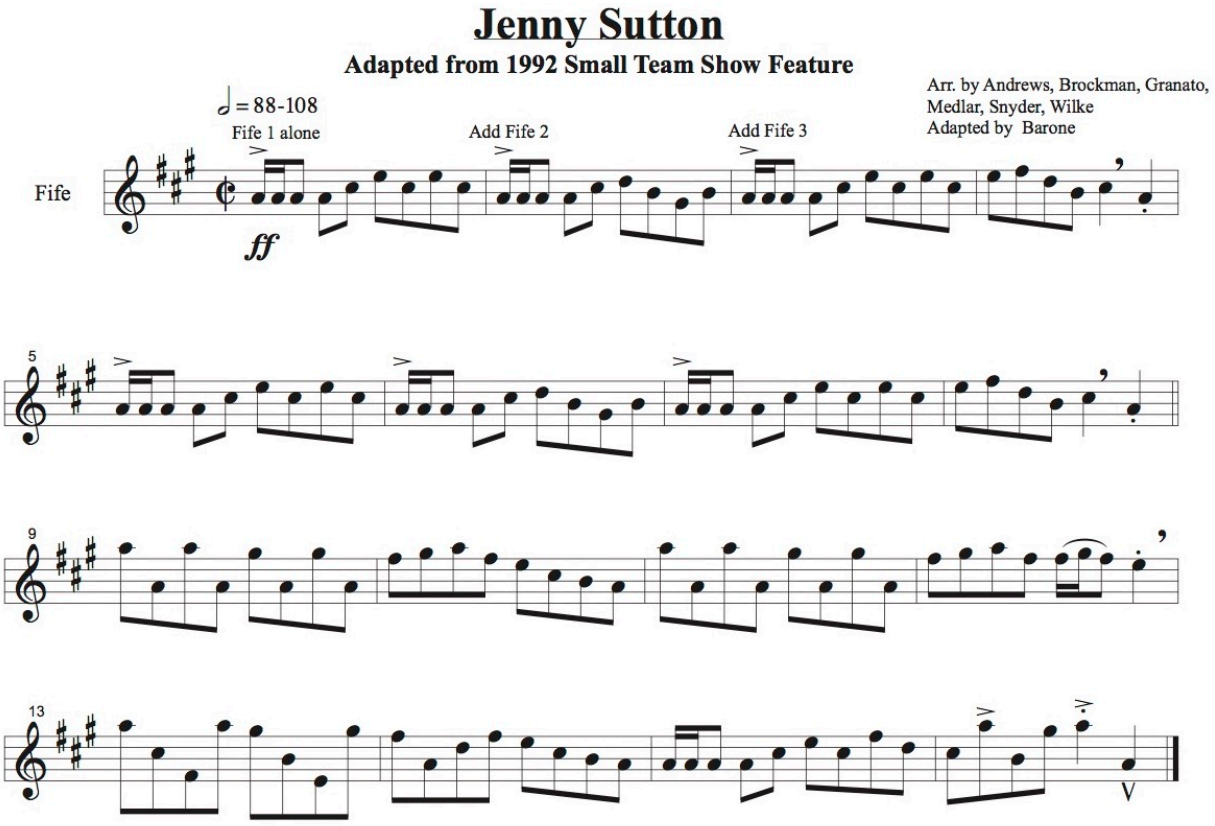

Var II
28
34
Var III
41
48

The opening rhythm of “Jenny Sutton” is more compressed than a sixteenth note triplet. This pattern also has a stronger T at the beginning due to the accent. Know the difference between the two rhythms, and play accordingly.

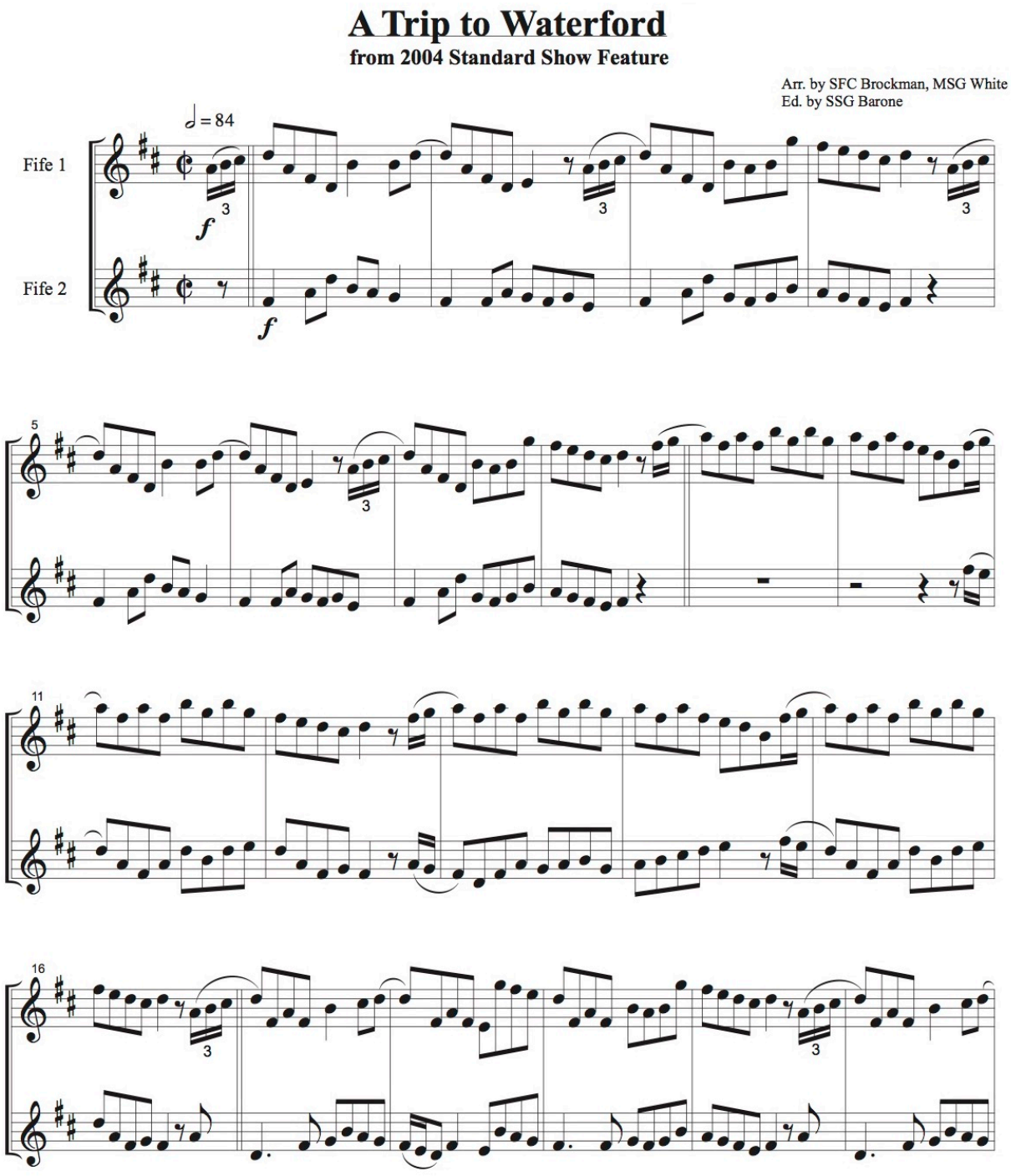
Apply lip flexibility skills in the B strain to successfully navigate the large intervals.

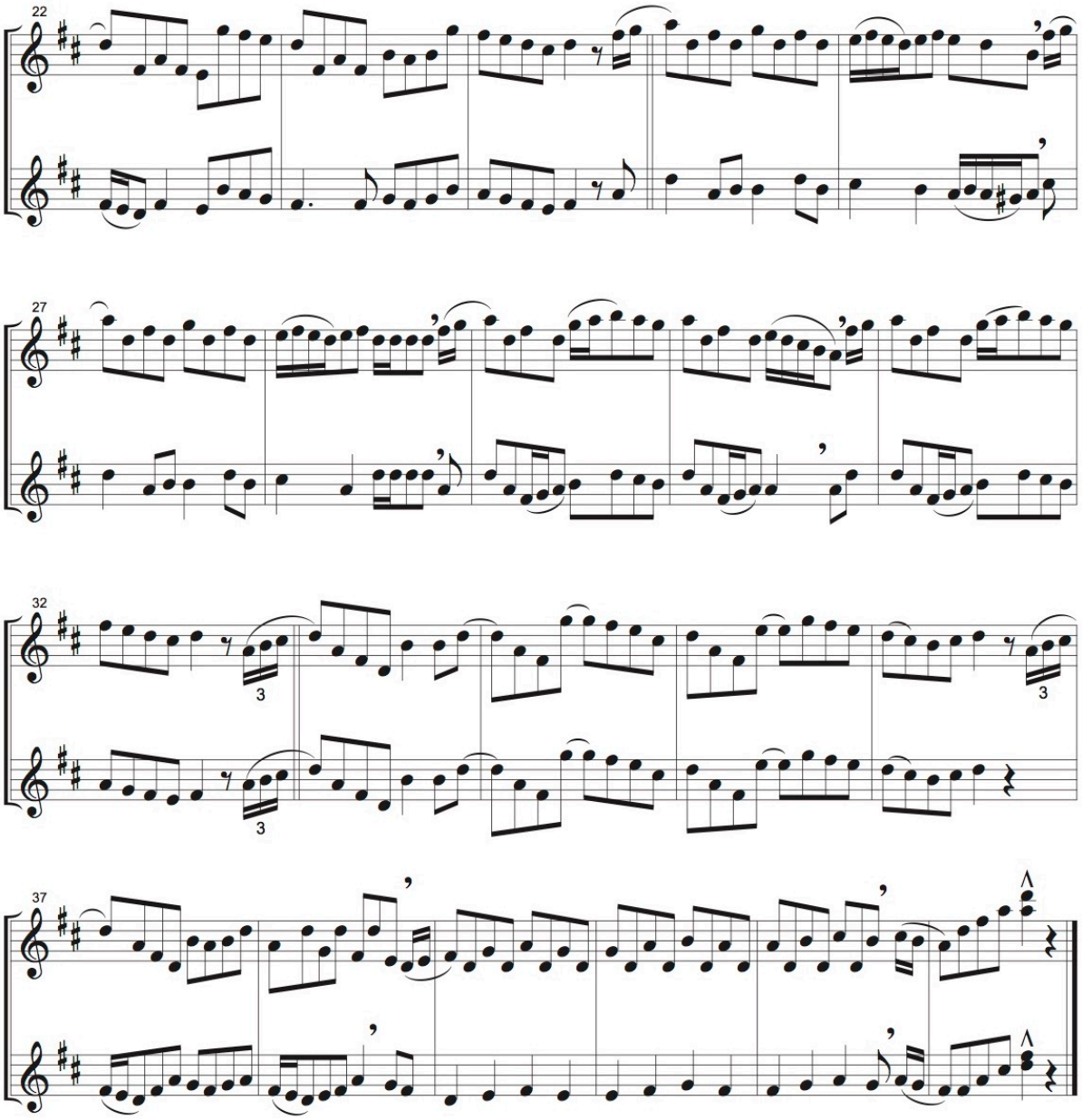


Practice “Jenny Sutton” in A Major to work on large intervals in A Major.

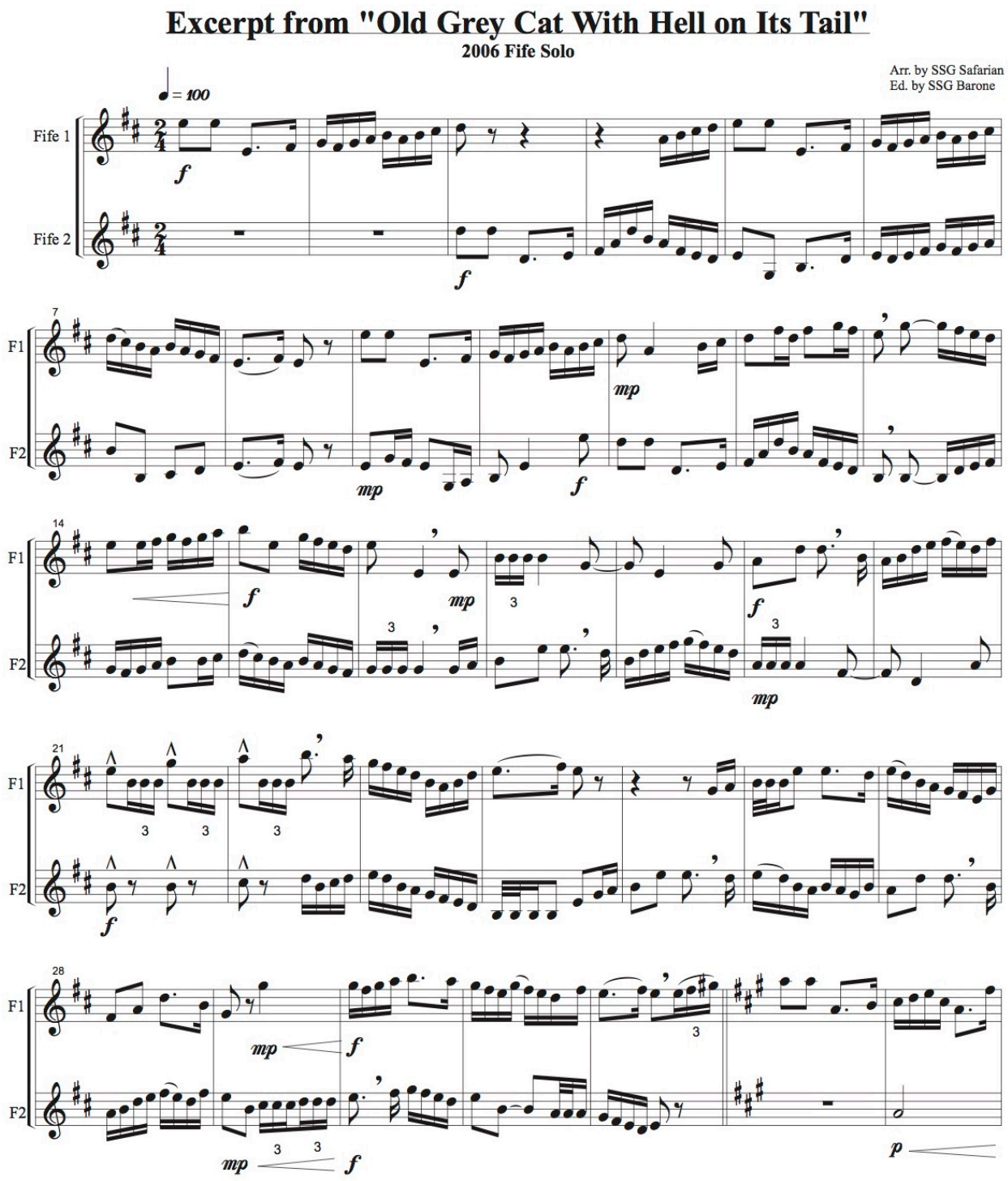


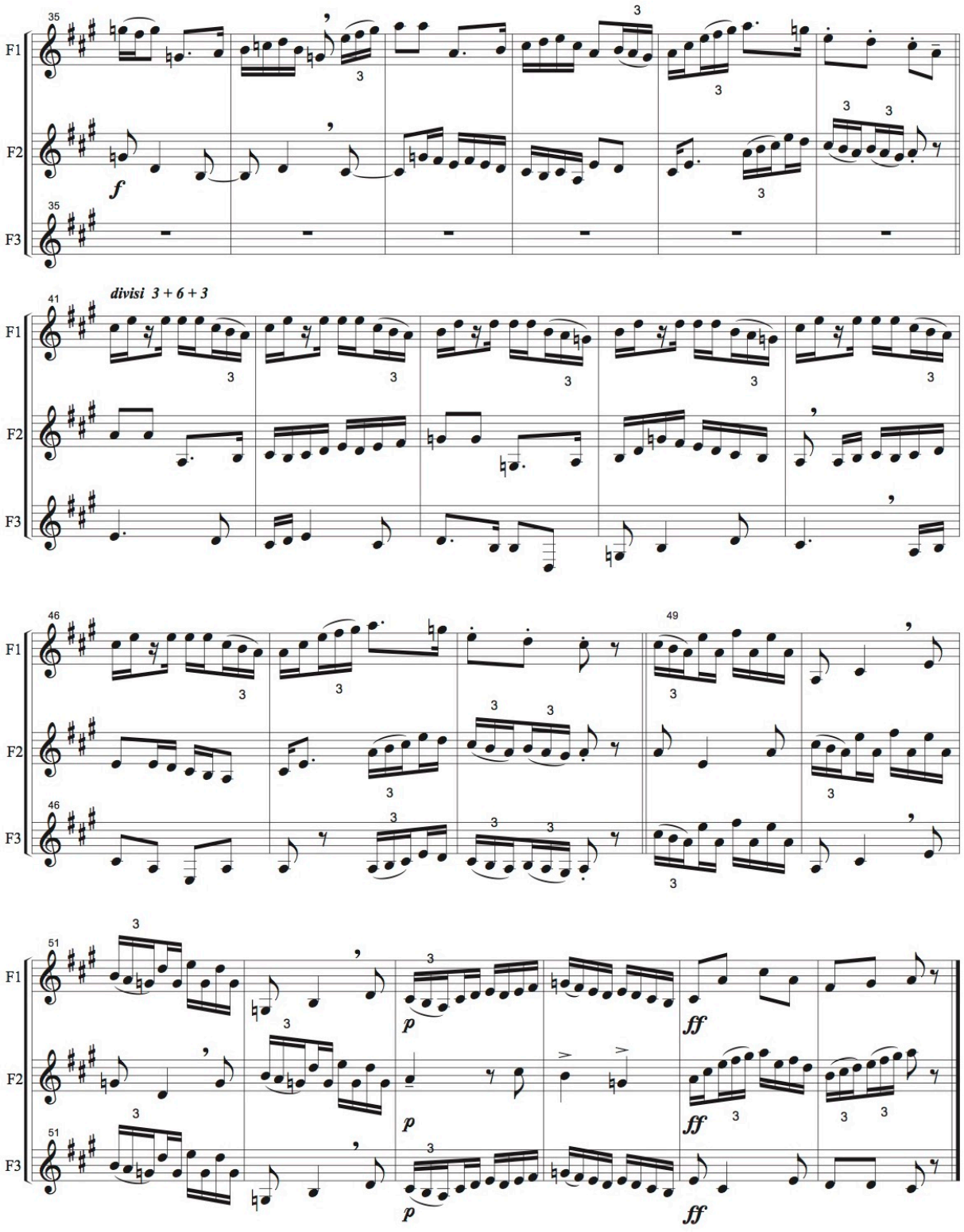
Discern the differences between triplet and sixteenth note rhythms.




22
27
32
3
3
37

Locate many of the rhythmic patterns we have recently worked on. As always, subdivide consistently so that different rhythms are discernable.





Supplement these practice tunes with other tunes featuring differing rhythmic groupings.

ENSEMBLE INTONATION: INTERVAL TUNING

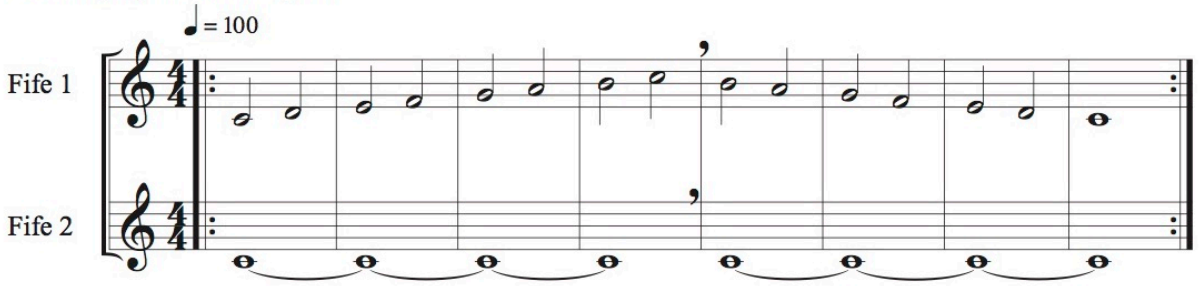
Individual intonation is imperative to daily practice, and the foundation of any ensemble's intonation success. Examples of individual intonation exercises were discussed in the warm-up section of this book. Our attention will now shift to the secondary element of an ensemble's intonation: interval tuning. This is the tuning of intervals between players, such as occurring in intervals between a melody and harmony part(s).

DRONE SCALES: EXERCISE

Fife 1: Pay close attention to tuning each interval with relation to the drone.
Hear notes before you play in order to minimize pitch tendencies (rising pitch on the ascending scale, falling pitch on the descending scale)
Listen closely to the difference tones (third tone produced) and adjust them to better tune the intervals.

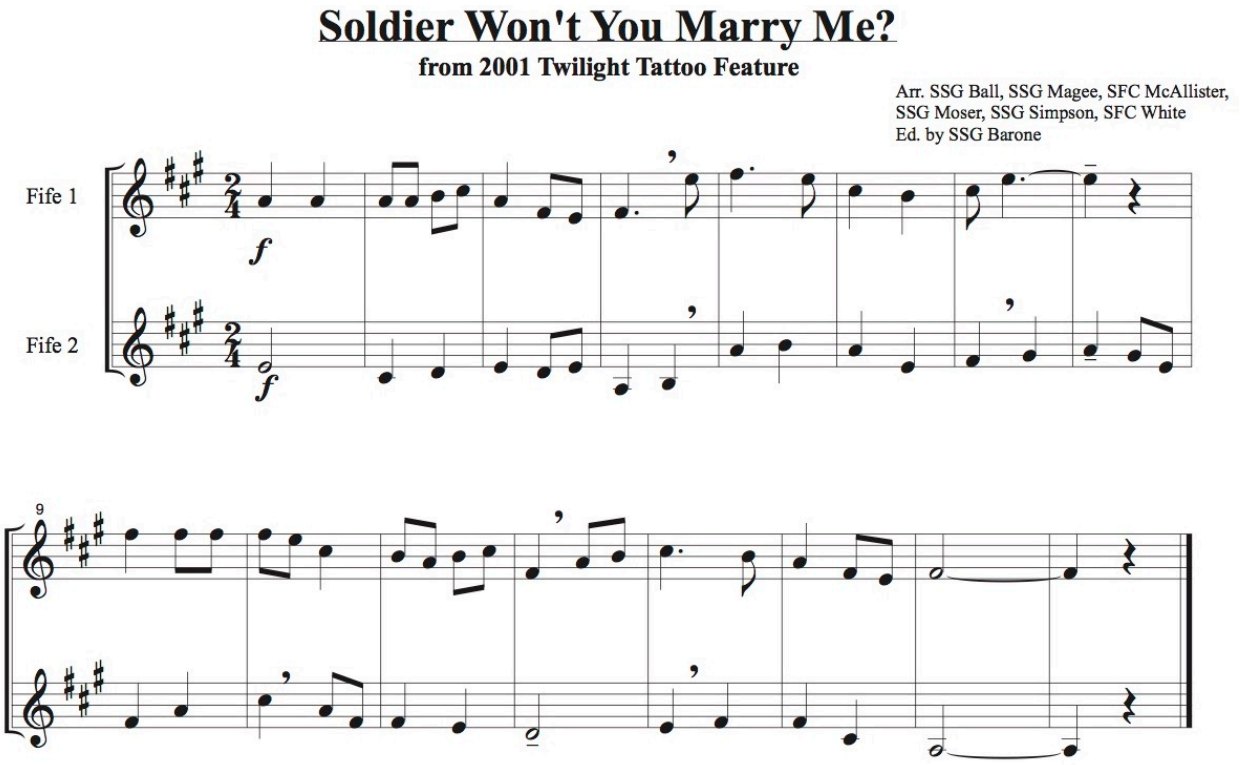
Fife 2: Keep the pitch as consistent as possible with a clear tone. (No vibrato)
Minimize pitch variances before and after the breath mark.

Switch players on the repeat



PRACTICE TUNE

Pay close attention to tuning each interval between the players.
Fife 2 should “track”: listen to the melody (Fife 1) and hear where each note will be placed before it is played to anticipate pitch changes.



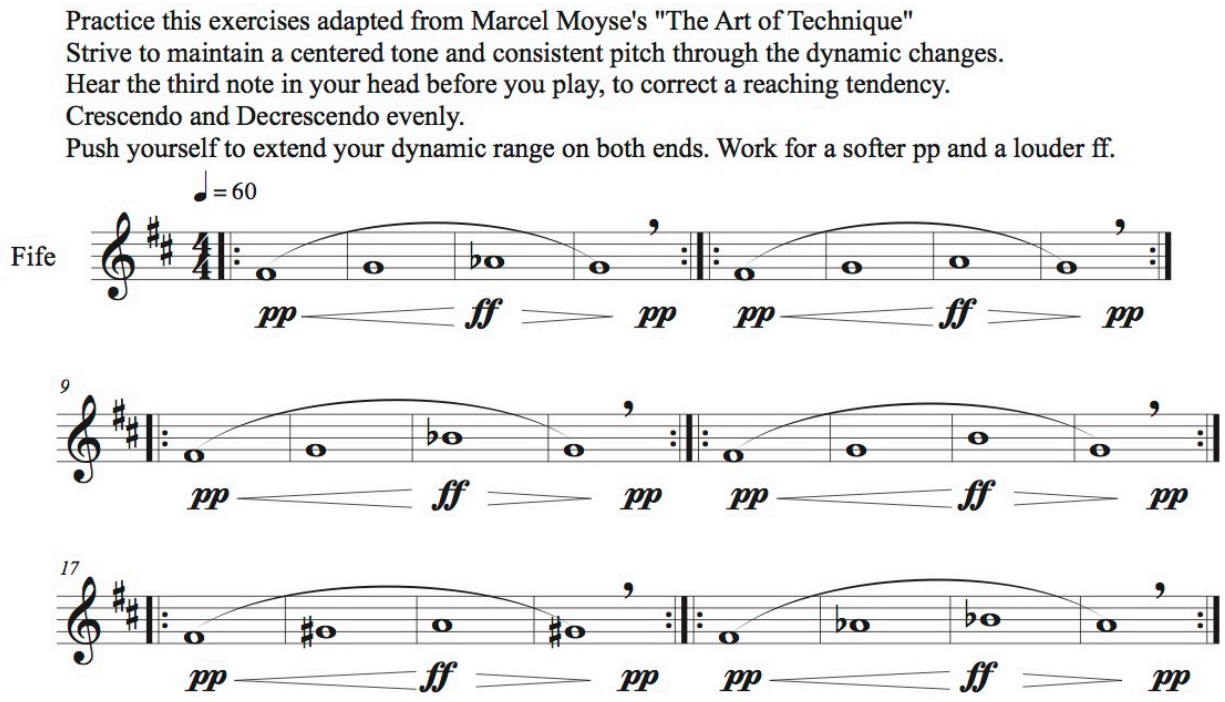
Supplement these practice tunes with other tunes featuring interval tuning.

MUSICALITY

Playing the notes on a page is not enough to communicate music effectively. Musical expression is very difficult to convey, but one must utilize techniques to communicate, as a listener is not involved in the performer's thoughts. There following are a few ways to help communicate your personal musical ideas through your playing:

DYNAMICS

(From Warm-up Exercises)

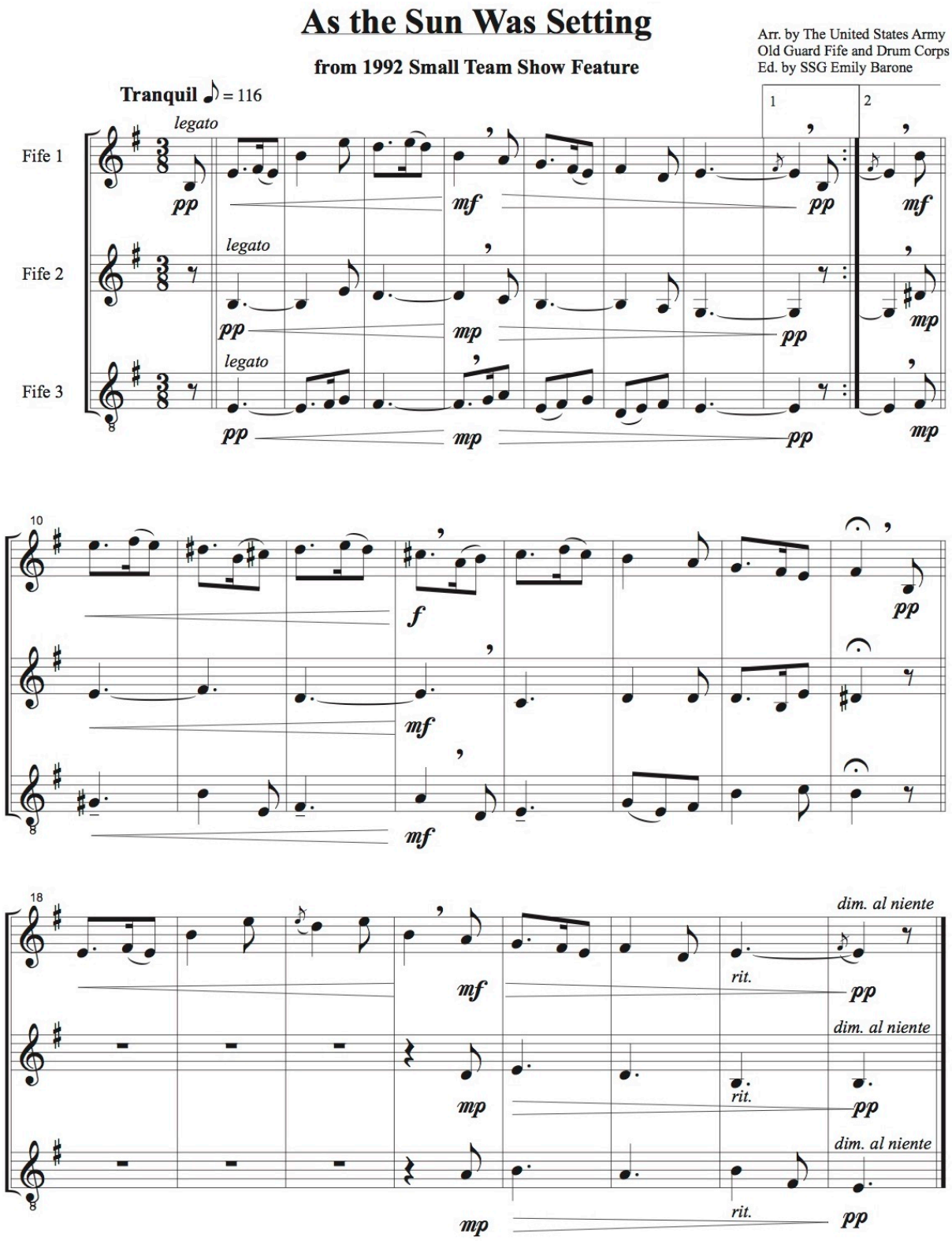


PHRASING

Musical phrasing creates a musical line out of a collection of notes. Air speed and musical direction can help achieve phrasing, as well as dynamics. Showing phrasing with our playing helps to communicate a piece of music to an audience.
Most fife music has four or eight-bar phrases or musical ideas, often correlating with "strains". To communicate your own personal idea of phrasing, allow the music to become active, then allow it to become calm, etc. Pay careful attention to not rely on rubato (slowing down) as a crutch. Musical lines must always have a purpose and direction.

PRACTICE TUNE

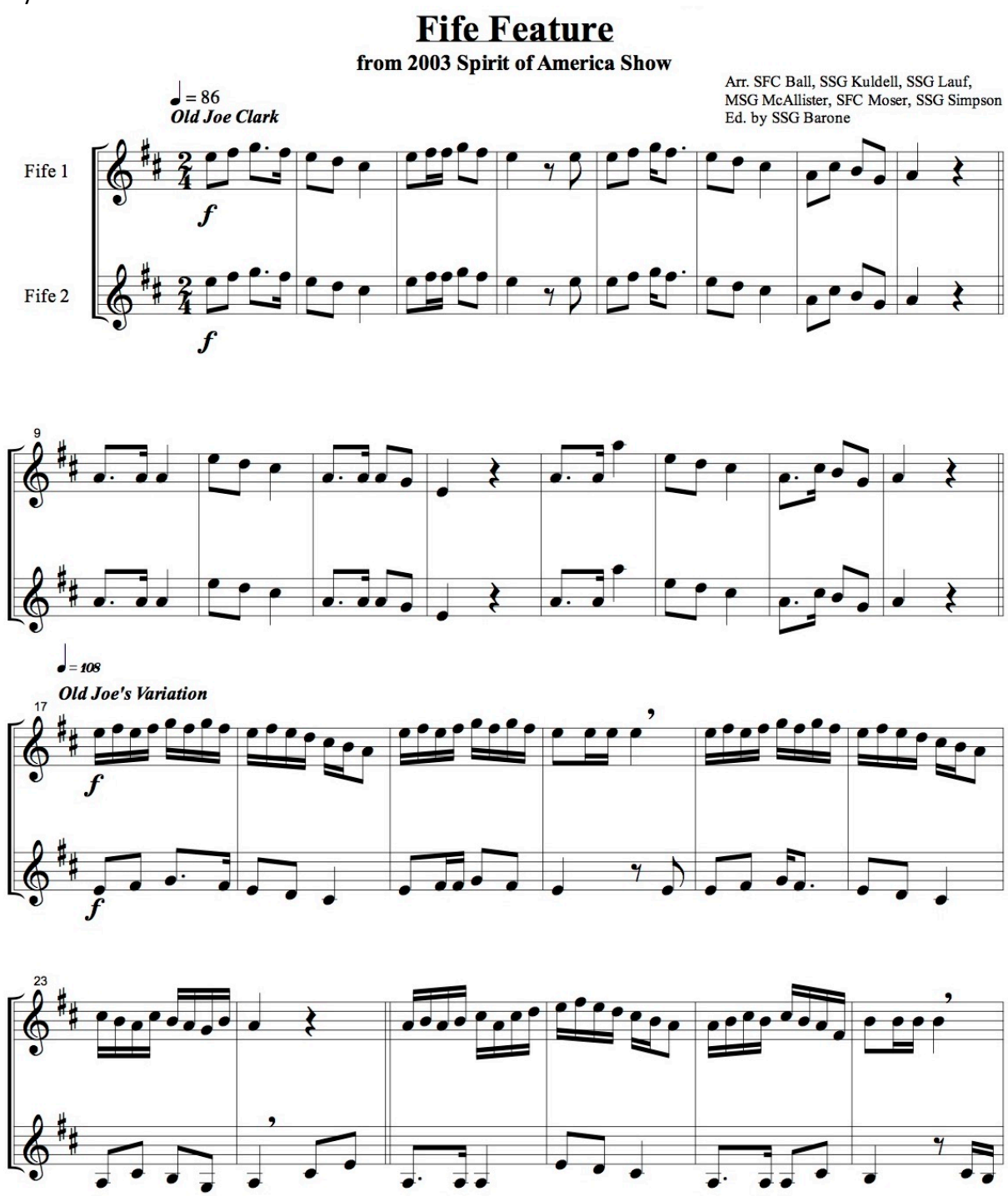
Experiment with musical phrasing on the following tune.

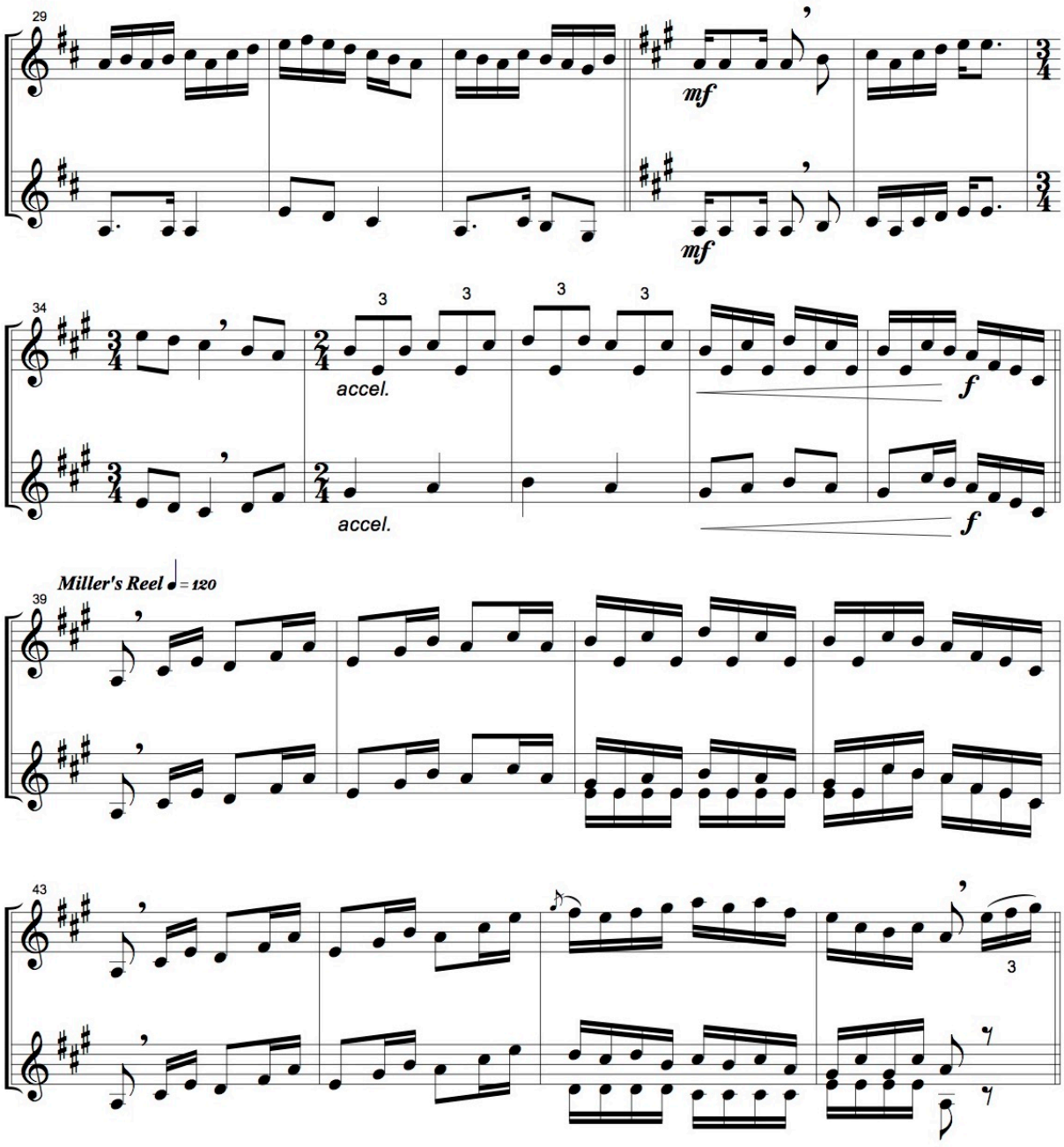


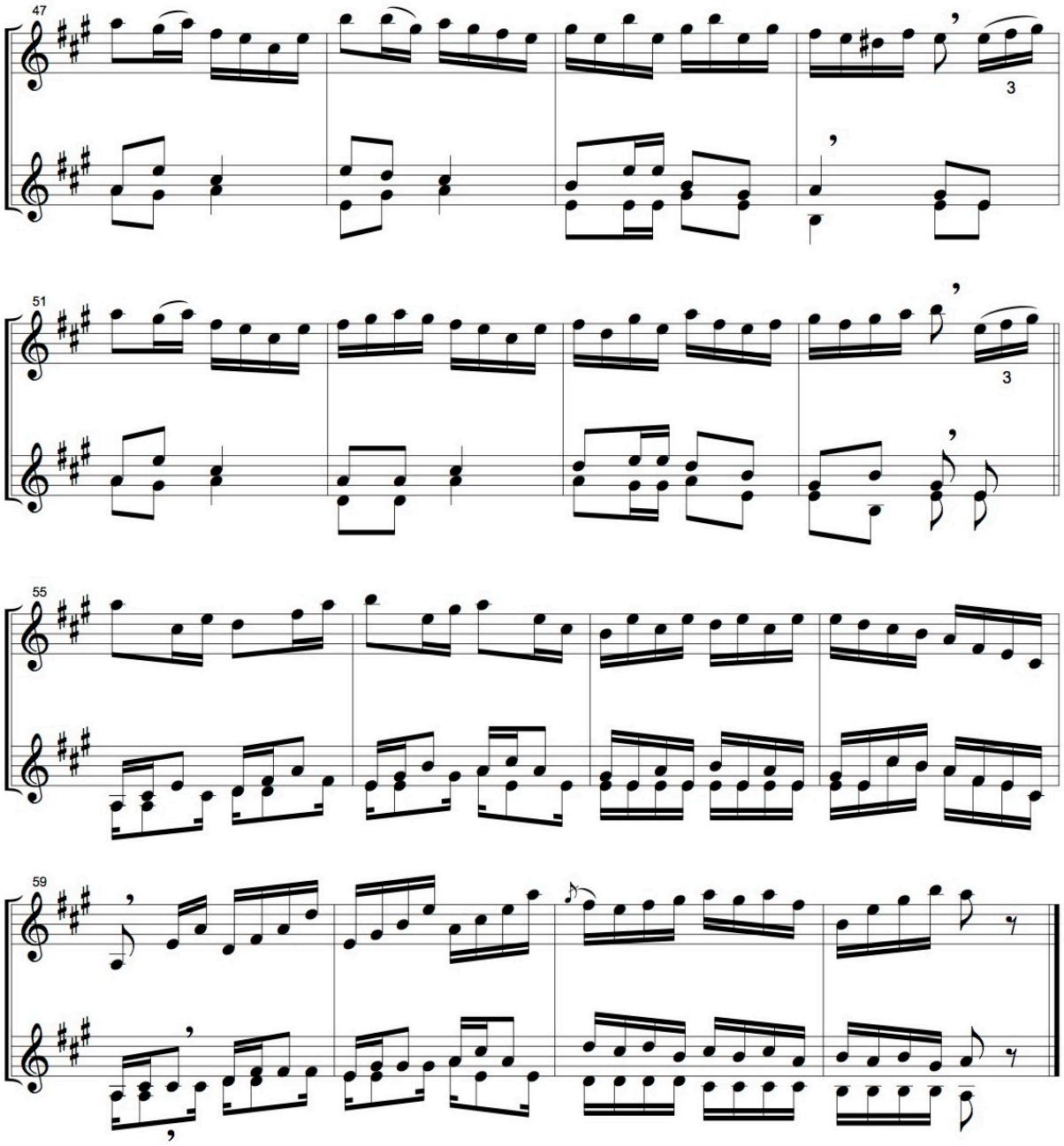
Supplement this exercise in phrasing with other tunes of varying styles.

CULMINATION PIECE

Annotate the score to help implement the skills we have worked on.
Play with confidence!




29
mf
mf
34
accel.
accel.
f
f
Miller's Reel ♩= 120
39
43
3


47
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51
3
55
59