


The Little Spree

Notes relevant to the audio tutorial.

Essentially it is helpful to know the structure or classification of Piobaireachd (pipe music) or Ceol Mor (the big or great music). The Little Spree is classified as of Primary construction as below with three lines in the urlar/ground and each variation. The bars per line are six, six, four. The small phrases each of two bars are simply: Line 1 - A, A, B; line 2 - A, B,* B; and line 3 - A, B*. The * indicates that often these bars have small changes to the theme. Knowing the structure helps with memorisation of the piece, and shows the element of what we call "phrasing" (a little coma at the end of the phrase) meaning to dwell subtly on last longest note of the phrase, but as much in your mind without dwelling too much on that note). Sometimes I put a pause mark  on appropriate notes at the end of some phrases, or elsewhere to denote usually a little extra tasteful duration.

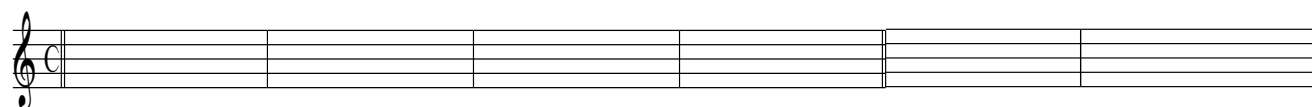
The written piece of only the urlar/ground, the first variation (doubling of the ground), and the second Siubhal variation follows on from the structure illustration below.

Primary construction

_____ A _____ _____ A _____ _____ B _____



_____ A _____ _____ B* _____ _____ B _____




_____ A _____ _____ B* _____



The musical score for 'Urlar' is written in 12/8 time and consists of five staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth notes and rests. The second and fourth staves end with a double bar line, indicating the end of a phrase. The fifth staff continues the piece with more intricate rhythmic patterns and includes some notes with accents.

Note:

Time taken to normally play the **first line as a guide** to timing the Urlar would be about 42 seconds duration, give or take a second or two.

Endeavour to have a song-like approach with a certain momentum and subtle feeling on the notes with pause marks thus  often occurring at the end of the small phrases (every two bars) as mentioned above, without seemingly dragging or becoming tedious. Listen to the relevant audio of the piece.

I have taken some liberties in the notation with a few note values to convey a shorter value i.e. the sixteenth notes (semiquavers) as in bar one first line and elsewhere where the "B" is fractionally shorter than the first low "A" eighth note in that bar.

Technically, there are many trills on "E" page 8 that you can be reminded on how to play them well if necessary in the relevant videos on that embellishment.

The variations next pages:

Variation 1 Urlar doubling

The image displays five staves of musical notation for a variation of the Urlar. The music is written in treble clef with a 12/8 time signature. Each staff begins with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The notation consists of a series of eighth notes, often beamed in groups of three, with some notes having grace notes. The first staff contains 12 measures. The second staff contains 12 measures, with the final measure ending in a fermata. The third staff contains 12 measures. The fourth staff contains 12 measures, with the final measure ending in a fermata. The fifth staff contains 12 measures, with the final measure ending in a fermata.

Note:

This doubling of the Urlar would be at a slightly faster tempo (say 36 - 40 seconds depending on mood etc.) and more regular rhythm. Listen for the certain subtly at the end of these lines especially in the last line before the change to the next variation that follows next page.

You may have a very subtle touch, hardly noticed or just in your mind as a controlling point on the last of each little phrase.

Variation 2

The image displays five staves of musical notation for Variation 2. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The music consists of a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped together. There are several phrasing marks, including slurs and accents, placed over the notes. The notation is presented in a clear, black-and-white format, typical of a music score.

Note:

This Siubhal variation has good feeling on the lower dotted notes with the shorter sixteenth notes relatively shorter than written yet not clipped – a kind of subtle cutting with the fingers just opened/raised a little higher perhaps. The phrasing touches could be applied in this variation to the last dotted note in each bar or two as indicated with pause marks, yet not overdone in the fairly regular quite faster rhythm of about 30 seconds or so first line guide. Listen to the audio tutorial relevant to the whole Piobaireachd.

In the audio the next Taorluath Fosgailte (tripling) variation might be a slightly steadier tempo, with the final Crunluath Fosgailte variation slightly faster than the tripling, yet controlled especially on the normal upper hand crunluath longer theme notes. Consider a slight deliberation last pulse end of variations (usually doubling variations) to glide into the next variation.

Next page are the Taorluath Fosgailte and the Crunluath Fosgailte variations with the use of abbreviations as shown foot of that page. These abbreviations are used in the Piobaireachd publications of both the Piobaireachd Society, and Kilberry. The use of these abbreviations might help to make you familiar when using these books.

Taorluath and Crunluath variations with abbreviations at foot of the page* to assist when using books.

The image displays a musical score for Taorluath and Crunluath variations, consisting of 12 staves of music. The first 11 staves are in common time (C) and feature complex rhythmic patterns with many beamed notes and accents. The 12th staff is in 2/4 time and contains two measures with a wavy line above the notes, indicating a specific articulation. The score is divided into two sections by an asterisk (*). The first section includes the first 11 staves and the first two measures of the 12th staff. The second section includes the remaining two measures of the 12th staff and the first two measures of the 13th staff. The 13th staff is in 2/4 time and contains two measures with a wavy line above the notes, indicating a specific articulation. The score is written in treble clef and includes various musical notations such as beamed notes, accents, and wavy lines.