

# Wild Rose of the Mountain

Traditional

Arrangement (c) copyright 2011 by Donald J. Borchelt

2/4

G (A)

3

6

1/4 2/4

D (E) See notes

G (A)

3

10

D (E) See notes

G (A) See notes

3

14

1. 2.

See notes

3

18

C (D) See notes

See notes

3

22

G (A)

D (E)

3

Wild Rose of the Mountain - Traditional  
Up the neck break

26 G (A) 1. 2.

30 H SI D (E)

34 G (A) H D (E)

39 G (A) See notes 1. 2.

43 D (E) See notes See notes

48 G (A) H D (E) G (A) See notes

Wild Rose of the Mountain was the signature tune of the late eastern Kentucky fiddler J.P. Fraley, who was known for his elegant style of playing. For this setting, the banjo is tuned in a G variant tuning, with the second string tuned down a whole tone from standard. Since the tune is generally fiddled in the key of A, the banjo will need to be capoed at the 2nd fret.

This tune is very "crooked," in that it does not follow the usual even 16 beats per part that one generally finds in a "square" tune, designed for dancing. Wild Rose of the Mountain has 22 beats per part, two short of what might have otherwise been a not unheard of 12 bar pattern. This makes the tune very hard to follow for a guitar player, or anyone who does not know the tune cold. It takes some effort to hear the tune properly, but this delicate tune is well worth the effort.

One of the distinctive features of Fraley's fiddling of this tune are the long drawn out bow notes that he puts at the end of each phrase. The banjo, of course, does not have the sustain for that. I have substituted a simple forward roll, which you will find starting in measures 7, 13, 20, and 26, and in the up the neck break in measures 33, 39, 46, and 52. This timing matches Fraley's original performance exactly, but I have found that some fiddlers will change the duration of those draws of the bow, which are hard to sustain, so when playing the tune, it is critical to listen closely to what the fiddler is doing. He might be arriving at the next phrase before you do.

The B part poses a particular challenge. The fiddle, which is cross-tuned AEAE, ranges a full two octaves, which the banjo doesn't when you are playing most of the melody "down the neck." My answer to this was to move the opening notes up an octave, the notes you find at the very end of measure 15, and the first one and a half beats in measure 16. The same notes are used at the beginning of the B part in the up the neck break, where it matches the two octave range of the fiddle. When playing these notes, Fraley anticipates the first melody note, playing it ahead of the first beat, at the end of the previous measure, as a pick up note. This is the note on the open 3rd string at the end of measures 15, 27, 41 and 59, and it should be played with a little more emphasis, and allowed to ring through. The note is picked again in the next measure as an open drone, at the same time you are hammering onto the 2nd string, but here it should be picked a little lighter than the surrounding notes.

Measure 12 features a ghost hammer, where you hammer onto the 4th string at the 4th fret, without picking it first with the right hand. The preceding open "ghost" note, the note in parentheses, is not actually played, it is only there so that the hammer will sound in the MIDI playback.