Bowing Basics 23

the quarter notes as well.



Figure 14: A mixed non-shuffle bowing



Figure 15: Mixed speed non-shuffle; a kick-off



Figure 16: Mixed direction bowing

This may take a while to perfect, but keep at it. Remember to keep the wrist and fingers very loose and relaxed. Any tightness in your grip will be reflected in the sound you produce. Try this: In Figure 15 we have mixed speed combinations that might be used for a kick-off to a tune. The rhythm of the first measure is something like "da-da-da DUM DUM". In order to do that group of 3 eighth notes, your wrist must be very loose. The eighth rest at the beginning gives it a slightly syncopated sound.

Note that it starts with an up bow, not a down bow; you should be able to start either way, but we chose this so that the beginning of M2, the nominal start of the melody, would begin with a down bow, which normally gives a stronger sound.

Here's one more exercise (Figure 16) which could actually be part of a fiddle break. Note that there's two notes on the first up bow. We've done all these exercises in the key of A, but they could just as well have been in G or D or C; the bowing will be indifferent to the key you're playing in.

For now, that's enough bowing exercises. There are more for you to practice in the Appendix. The important points to take away are *loose grip*, *tone*, and *bow control*.

Scales And Arpeggios

Why do we keep mentioning scales and arpeggios? What's so important about them? More than almost any style of music, bluegrass fiddling is built around fragments of scales and arpeggios. Even the common fiddle tunes have those as a basis!

For example, look at Figure 17. *Soldier's Joy* is built around a series of descending and ascending arpeggios. *Mississippi Sawyer* has as its basis descending and ascending scales, and *Uncle Joe* is comprised of an ascending scale and descending arpeggio. There are countless