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When You're Smiling

David Jack – A True Banjo Artist.

By Denis LePage



Denis LePage has spent over 40 years mastering the banjo, and is an active member of the Canadian bluegrass community. He currently runs a website dedicated to banjo instruction: banjoden.com.

"I immediately knew he had the drive, the will and the ability"

The banjo spotlight this month is on David Jack, a really terrific player who began his banjo playing music career in the London Ontario area in the late 70's. I was living in London at the time and playing with the Dixie Flyers and recall David coming out to watch many of our concert, pub and festival shows. There were a few other players in the area at the time also and David claims it was three of us, myself, Paul Hurdle (currently with New Cumberland) and the late Jack Glennie with his getting 'hooked' on the instrument.

The London area at the time was also a great place to catch some of the premier touring bluegrass acts and banjo players. Alan Munde with the Country Gazette, JD Crowe, and Terry Baucom with Ricky Skaggs were just a few of the bands you could see in small venue pubs. Local festivals featured Bill Monroe, the Country Gentlemen, Reno and Smiley, Lester Flatt, The Bluegrass Cardinals, Larry Sparks and many more and David took every opportunity to watch, listen and learn from the many banjo masters playing with these groups.

The first time I heard David Jack play it was relatively early on in his career but I immediately knew that he had the drive, the will and the ability to quickly develop into the truly great player he is today. In fact one of my favourite instrumental projects was the Dixie Flyers LP, *Just Pickin'* where David and I shared banjo duties on several cuts. His style today is a tasteful mix of solid Scruggs style leads, perfect backup and precision

melodic style accents, fills and breaks when and where they fit.

David's playing has earned him many awards over the years including the 1982 North American Banjo Championship, a CCBA Banjo player of the year nomination and a Recording King Banjo endorsement. He has also had the opportunity to play with some wonderful bluegrass bands including Rural Retreat, Station Road, the Dixie Flyers, Bruce County, Hard Ryde and Blackwell.

Currently he plays with Traditionally Wound and I strongly recommend that you pick up a copy of their recently released CD "Back Where I Come From". Not only will you hear a great band but also some great banjo work.

Here is David's tab for "When You're Smiling". This is a fun tune to play and a really nice arrangement that lays out nicely in the key of C.

Denis LePage



David Jack

When You're Smiling

Key - C

Handwritten musical notation for the banjo part of "When You're Smiling" in the key of C. The notation is arranged in 10 systems, each with a treble clef and a G-clef. The music includes various chords and techniques:

- System 1:** Chords: Dmin, G7, C. Includes triplets and sixteenth notes.
- System 2:** Chords: G, C, Cmaj7. Includes a half note (H) and a half note with a flat (H2).
- System 3:** Chords: A, Dm. Includes a half note with a flat (H2).
- System 4:** Chords: Dm7. Includes a half note with a flat (H3).
- System 5:** Chords: F, G7, C. Includes a half note with a flat (H3).
- System 6:** Chords: C7, F. Includes a half note with a flat (H3).
- System 7:** Chords: D7, Dm, G7. Includes a half note with a flat (H3).
- System 8:** Chords: C, A7. Includes a half note with a flat (H3).
- System 9:** Chords: Dm, Dm7, G, G7, C, G7/6, G7, C. Includes a half note with a flat (H3).
- System 10:** Ends with a "Brush" instruction.