

Flatpicking Guitar Magazine

Free Lesson - October 2017

“Bully of the Town”

Arranged by Mickey Abraham

Hello and welcome once again to Flatpicking Magazine’s free lesson portion of our monthly newsletter. This month I present to you a cool rendition of the unique flatpicking classic “Bully of the Town.”

“Bully of the Town” has been recorded by everyone from Jerry Reed to The Everly Brothers. Many of the older versions have lyrics and simple chords. Somewhere along the line the great Normal Blake laid the foundation for “Bully of the Town” entering the flatpicking universe.

Norman’s version has become the go-to version in which most flatpickers interpret the tune by. This lesson is based on the melody set forth by Norman’s iconic rendition. I love the use of the diminished chord. Not many flatpicking tunes use diminished chords. The voicing I use for the Eb diminished is a simple diminished voicing with your index finger on fret 1 of the D string, ring finger on fret two of the G string, middle finger on fret 1 of the B string, and pinky on fret 2 of the high string. Once you have that shape just move every finger up four frets so your index is now on fret 4. This is now the F# diminished chord. Both of these chords are found in measure 2.

Next, I find the use of the D7 chord especially interesting in this tune. Many of us can hear chord changes like the I, IV, V. In the Key of C the I, IV, V chords would be C, F, and G. The D7 while not in the key of C works great leading from the F to the G. In classical music the D7 would be called a secondary dominant. What this means is that the song has changed keys for that one chord and we are now in the key of G. D7 is the V of G. Luckily you don’t have to know this to hear the amazing sound the D7 adds to “Bully of the Town.” Make sure to click on the included lesson mp3 to hear the effect the D7 adds to the flow of the chords.

I hope you enjoy working on this unique flatpickng standard and adding to your every growing list of tunes. As always, should you have and questions or comments on this e-lesson just drop me a line at michabraham@comcast.net

Bully of the Town

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1

C Ebdim F#dim C

TAB

6

F D7

TAB

10

G C

TAB

15

C G

TAB

19

C

TAB

Bully of the Town (con't)

23

F **D**

2 3 4 | 0 1 1 0 3 | 2 3 2 0 3 2 1 | 0 3 5 0 0 1

27

C

2 1 2 3 0 0 2 | 3 0 3 2 0 3 2 0 | 3 0 1 2 0 2 0 | 1 0 2 3 1 0 2 3