

## Notes on 'Hole In The Hedge' and bellows modulation

The jig, 'The Hole In The Hedge', is played by that great fiddler, Martin Hayes, as a **slow jig**, in the key of C major. It's a nice - and simple - tune to play on concertina, involving only the buttons on the C row.

Since it's a slow jig, you want to be able to play it pleasingly. Working on the way you work your bellows - bellows modulation - is a way of achieving this. So think of learning this tune as a way of concentrating on *how you move the bellows*.

Try to treat the pushing and pulling of the bellows *gently*, and vary the speed and force you use in pressing (or pulling) the bellows. By doing so, you'll find that you can obtain a kind of 'vibrato' effect, which with practice can sound really nice. It's the kind of thing you need to work at a little, but you'll find that it comes easily enough.

'The Hole In The Hedge' is a really ideal starting tune for this technique of bellows modulation. Practice it; you'll find you can improve the sound of slow tunes and airs immensely by focusing not just on the buttons but on the bellows as well. Especially try it with that long C (C6) crotchet at the start of the second part; practice getting a fine 'vibrato' effect while playing that note.

Also, when playing those three E notes (C4) in succession, at the very start of part one, try *not* lifting your finger between notes. Keep the finger (it will be your LH middle finger) pressed down, and obtain the three E notes by stopping the bellows-push rather than lifting the finger. It can be hard to do at first, because you're used to lifting your finger between notes. But there are very many places in tunes where you'll get a nicer sound by stop-starting the bellows rather than raising the fingers.

Incidentally, Martin Hayes plays Cooley's Jig after The Hole In The Hedge. Cooley's Jig is Tune No 2 in The Concertina Diaries, and you may remember that it too is played on just one row of buttons. In The Concertina Diaries, it's in the key of D major, and played completely on the G row. Hayes plays it in the key of **G** major; and you can do the same, by playing it *exactly as shown in The Concertina Diaries, but playing the notes on the C row rather than the G row - hence, with the concertina notation, **G6** becomes **C6**, and so on*: the C (middle) row for playing it in G, and the G (inside) row for playing it in D.

In fact, if you want to show off a little, you could play The Hole In The Hedge in C, three times, then Cooley's Jig in G (on the C row), twice; then switch to playing Cooley's Jig in D (on the inside G row). It's easy - and it sounds pretty good too!