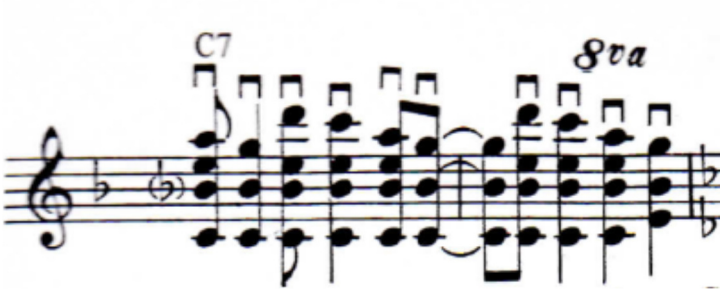
Easy Goin' Playing Notes

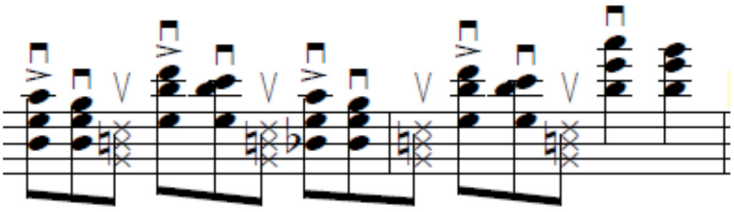
Here are the two notational things I need to explain: I have spent a lot of time playing saxophone in jazz Big Bands; modern jazz arrangers have developed their own unique notational methods because—*can you really write out jazz?* Even with the most complex writing methods, jazz defies codification. Harry had a great sense of "swing," especially considering he was playing before swing became a jazz "thing!" If you have ever played jazz, you know that true, heart-felt swing just *cannot* be reproduced in writing!

I have adopted a couple of these notational tricks in an effort to come as close to the way Harry played it as possible; again, it is no easy task to copy a style. Even after *writing* it down of course, the real proof is in the *playing*; I also have the advantage of hearing the playback on my computer as I'm writing it (though *it* can't swing to save it's life!).

Here is a syncopated passage from his original published sheet music (from the Trio):



And here is how I notated it:



His notation is again "how he wrote it," but *my* attempt to interpret the stroke is how he actually played it (they are both "correct" of course). Two things to note: Notice how I wrote "across the bar line," the beam from the third set of three notes stretching through the bar line, as opposed to the tie across the bar line in his example. This more accurately *visually* reflects the symmetrical-but-off-beat nature of his syncopated stroke (which is almost exactly like one of Eddie Peabody's most famous strokes by the way—of course, Reser recorded this two years *before* Peabody started recording). Is the notation "correct?" ***I*** *didn't invent it*; somebody much smarter than me did, and that's good enough for me!

The other thing to notice are the X's in place of note heads; this means to play the G, B, and D strings muffled, and is technically known as "ghosting." His notation does not show this, but if you *listen* very closely, you can hear the ghosted notes on that third beat of each group of three. During this muffled beat, your fretting hand should be moving to the next chord shape, gliding along the strings but not compressing. This also gives you an up stroke in order to reset for the next "double-down" stroke.

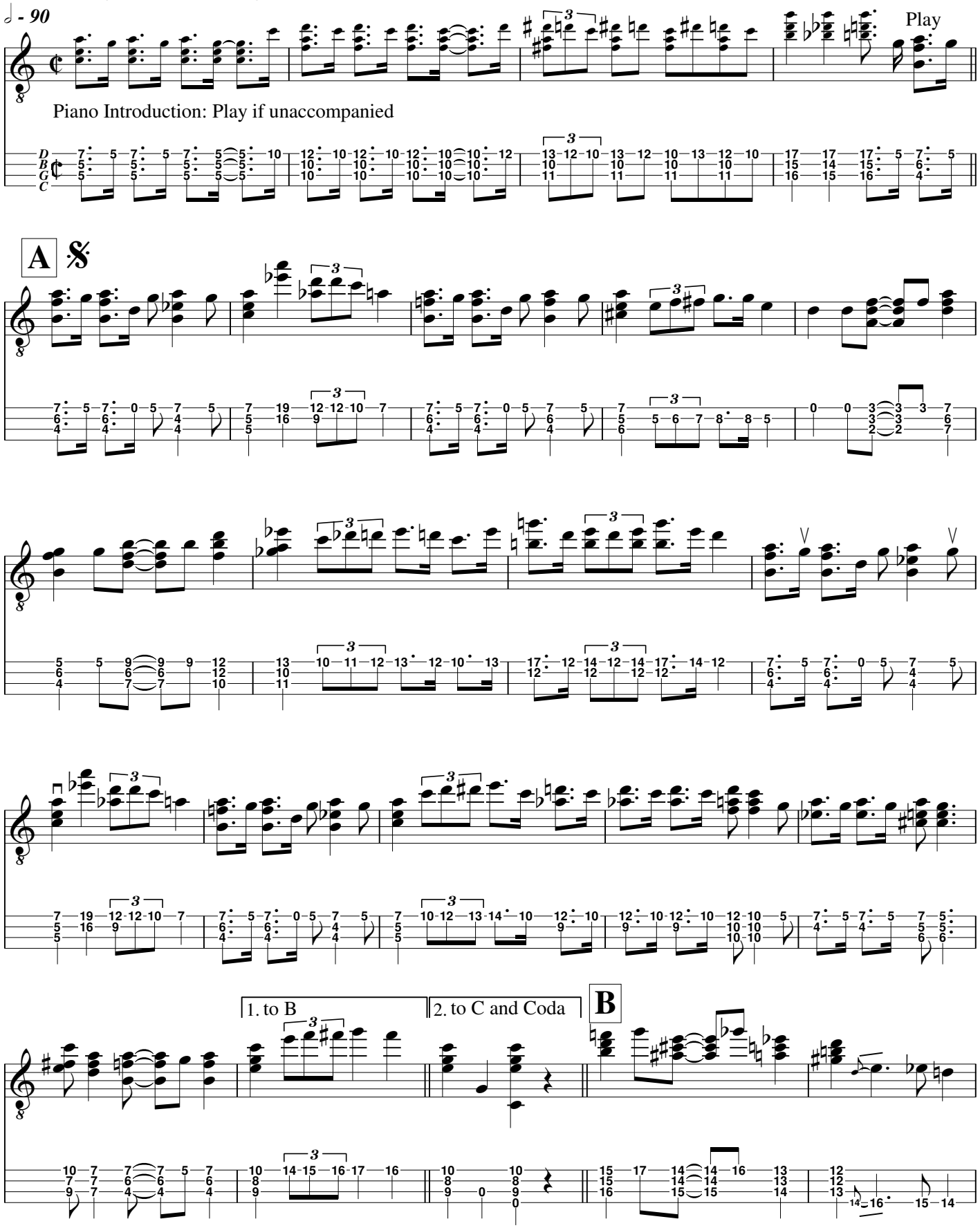
The most important thing to realize about this passage is that they are ***not*** *triplets!* If they *were* triplets, they would be bracketed (with a little "3" under the bracket); there would also be a total of 12 separate notes in the measure, instead of the eight shown.

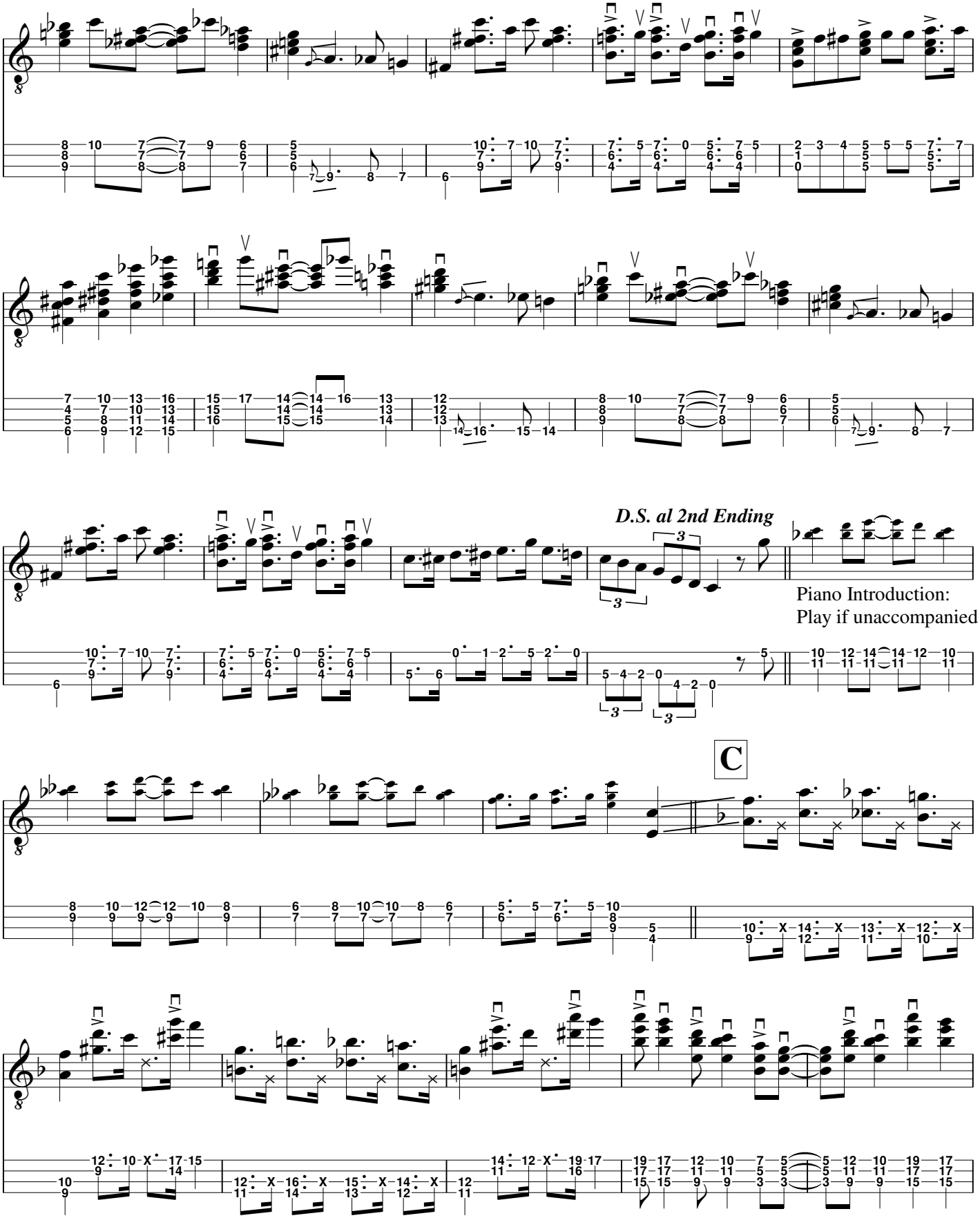
EASY GOIN'

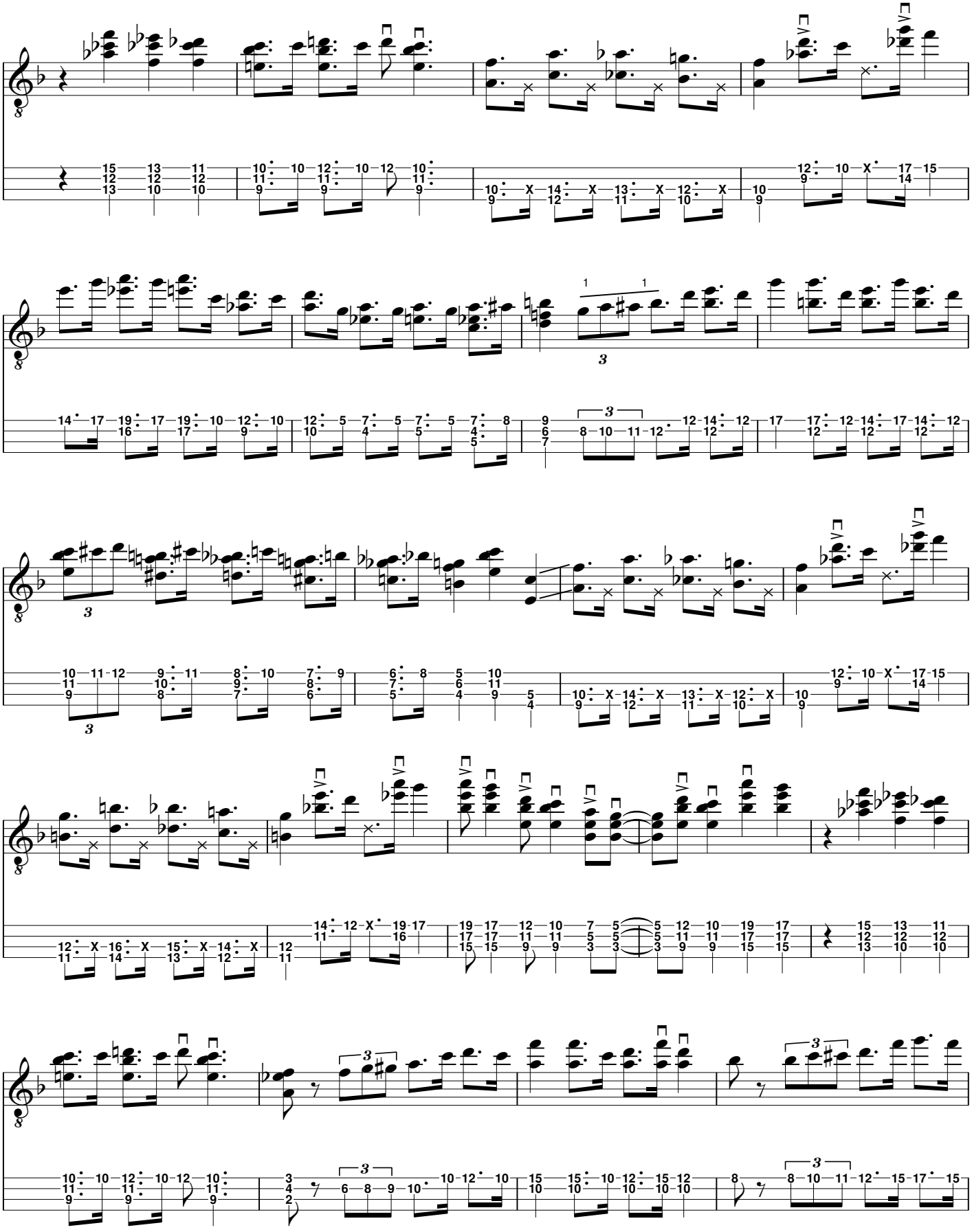
for the Plectrum Banjo,
as played by the composer.

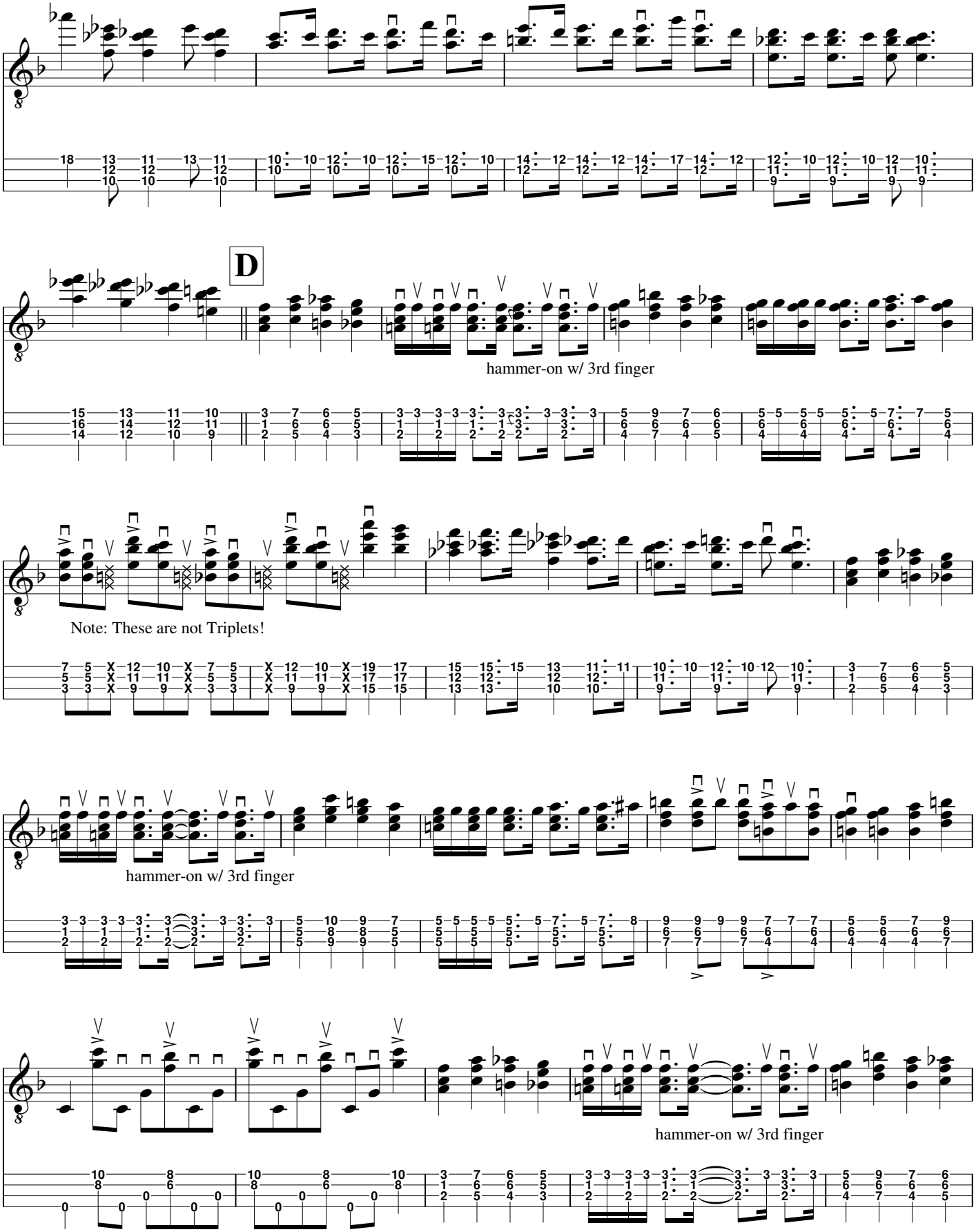
transcribed by Ron Hinkle,
w/ technical guidance from Juergen Kulus

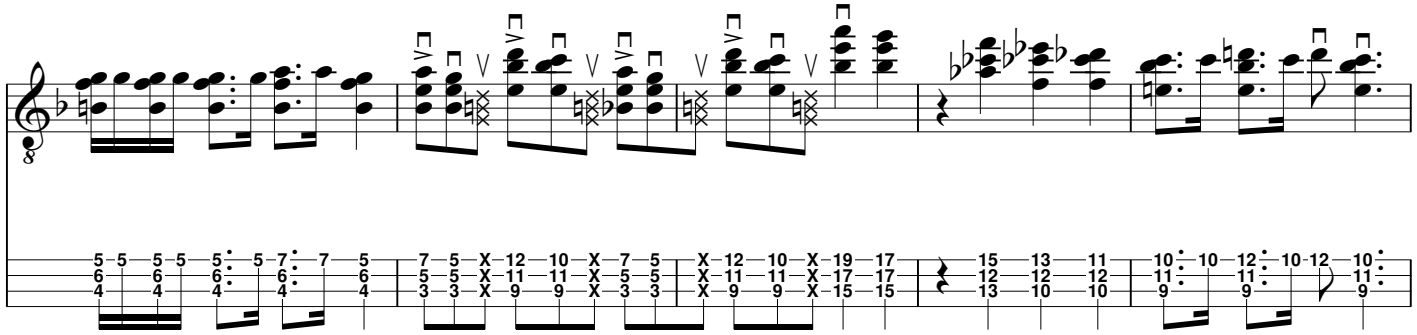
Harry F. Reser

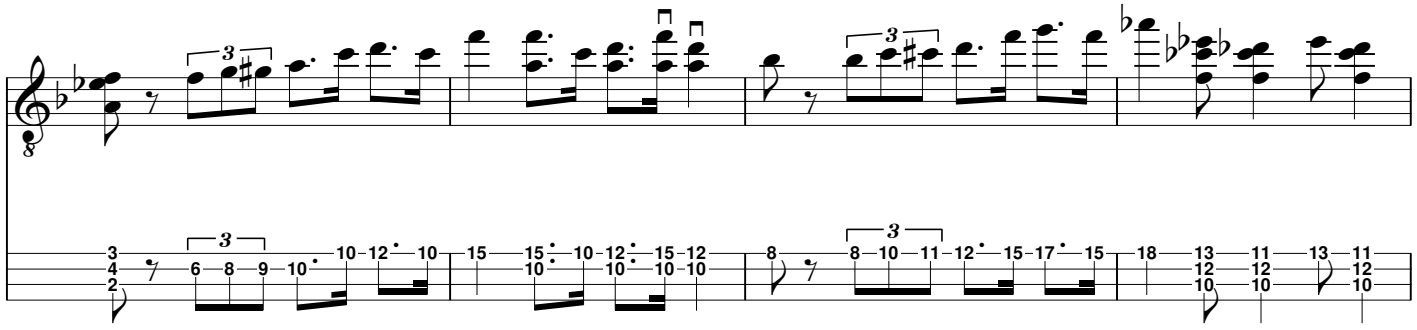


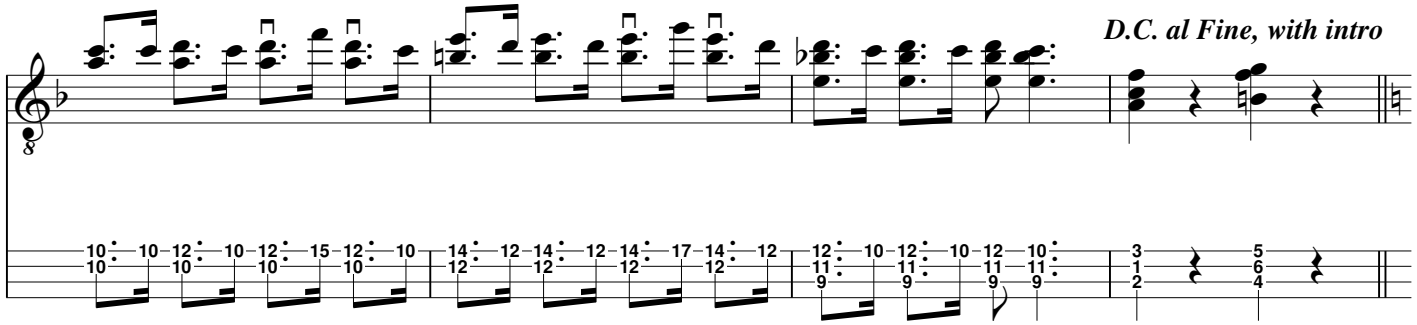
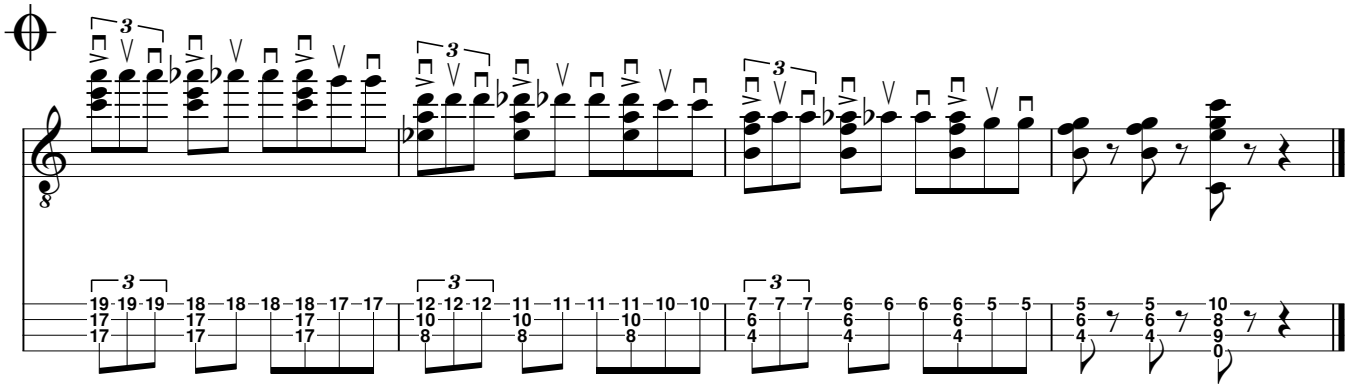

D.S. al 2nd Ending
Piano Introduction:
Play if unaccompanied
C




D
hammer-on w/ 3rd finger
Note: These are not Triplets!
hammer-on w/ 3rd finger
hammer-on w/ 3rd finger






D.C. al Fine, with intro