

Pocono Workshop 2024: Piper's Guide



Welcome to the Pocono Workshop 2024! This guide will help you navigate the weekend's classes. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to a member of our staff or one of our amazing volunteers.

We're thrilled to have you with us and hope you enjoy the weekend!

Class Color-Keys

Upcoming is the list of piping classes for the weekend. To assist you in selecting the classes most relevant to your interests and skill level, we have included a helpful color-coding system.

The color codes provide a general guideline for the appropriate levels and topics of each class.

Themes
● Fingerwork Technique & Style
● Repertoire - Learn tunes!
● Music Theory & Creativity
● Bagpipe Setup, Tone & Tuning
● Piobaireachd
● Performance

Playing Level
■ Novice
■ Intermediate
■ Advanced

Saturday Sessions

Session 1 - 9:00-9:50am

A Piper's Warm Up Routine

Stuart Liddell ● ■

- *Let's get our minds in the game, fingers feeling ready to go, and instruments primed to create a great sound.*
-

Two Easy Jigs

Derek Midgley ● ■

- *Jigs sometimes seem like a formidable challenge, but they can be easy to play with the right approach. Let's have a look at two easy jigs together.*
-

Music Theory for Every Piper

Alasdair Henderson & Andrew Douglas ● ■

- *Together let's lay the foundation to create harmonies, compose new tunes, and to learn tunes better and faster!*
-

Bagpipe Setup Fundamentals

Glenn Brown ● ■

- *Blowing steadily, producing a good tone, and tuning are hard enough as it is, but if your bagpipe isn't set up well, that makes it far harder! Let's set up our bagpipes for success.*
-

Session 2 - 10:00-10:50am

Learn a Tune By Ear

Stuart Liddell ● ■

- *Learning a tune by ear is possible, and can greatly benefit your development as a piper. Think you can't? Think again! Let's learn a tune by ear together.*
-

Introduction to Playing Piobaireachd

Alasdair Henderson ● ■

- *Piobaireachd isn't boring music for old people. It's exciting. It's emotional. And, it's for everyone at all ages and stages. Let's talk piobaireachd, and learn some basic skills together.*
-

Sight Reading Accelerator

Andrew Douglas ● ■ ■

- *Sight reading seems impossible. It seems like you can't do it, while others thrive. Let's break the challenge down into bite-sized pieces and give your sight-reading skills the boost that they need.*
-

Bagpipe Tuning Basics

Glenn Brown ● ■

- *It's the big problem: How am I supposed to tune these things? Let's get together and get to the bottom of this age-old challenge!*
-

Session 3 - 11:00-11:50am

Caber Feidh Gu Brath - Part 1

Derek Midgley ● ■

- *Let's learn a piobaireachd together. This is a fabulous tune that you may not have heard before. We'll learn the ground and first variation together in this session, and the technical variations will be covered by Andrew during Session 5. "At least a little bit" of piobaireachd experience is recommended.*
-

Writing Great Harmony - Part 1

Alasdair Henderson & Andrew Douglas ● ■

- *What is the essence of writing great harmonies to bagpipe tunes? Let's do some hands on harmony writing together in this session. (Music theory class from Session 1 recommended, but not required).*
-

Developing A Competition 2/4 March

Glenn Brown ● ■

- *The 2/4 march is the linchpin of any solo competitor's repertoire. Glenn will do a deep dive into the art of 2/4 march playing in this session.*
-

Session 4 - 1:30-2:20pm

Developing Great Taorluaths and Crunluaths

Stuart Liddell ● ● ■

- *Piobaireachd is fun and emotional, but perhaps your tunes get let down a bit in the later technical variations. Let's start the process of solving that problem in this session with one of the world's great piobaireachd masters. PS - this is also a great session for anyone who simply wants to develop better embellishment control.*
-

Bagpipe Tuning Basics

Derek Midgley ● ■

- *Ready for more work on bagpipe tuning? Few get a better sound than Derek, and he's here to offer some hands-on help.*
-

Let's Play Some Gaelic Airs

Alasdair Henderson ● ■

- *Bagpipe music should come from the heart. And, there are no tunes with more heart than classic Gaelic Airs. Let's dive into a few together.*
-

Developing A Competition Strathspey

Glenn Brown ● ■

- *How do you get that "lift" and "expression" that a strathspey needs? Glenn will give you his take. It probably won't be what you expect!*
-

Session 5 - 2:30-3:30pm

Master Class

Glenn Brown and Stuart Liddell  

- *Glenn and Stuart will critique student performances in front of the class. If you'd like to play, put your name in the hat at the beginning of class! Alternatively, simply come to enjoy great performances and learn from the feedback given.*
-

Squashing Sloppy Playing

Derek Midgley   

- *Ok, so you've gotten that dreaded feedback: Elements of your playing are sloppy! Now what?*
-

Caber Feidh Gu Brath - Part 2

Andrew Douglas  

- *This is a fabulous tune that you may not have heard before. Picking up from Derek's "Part 1" from Session 3, we'll now have a look at the technical variations during this session. "At least a little bit" of piobaireachd experience is recommended.*
-

Session 6 - 3:30-4:30

Nuance, Expression, and Style

Stuart Liddell   

- *So you've been playing some tunes, but they just don't have that "spark." Let's talk about how to play with that "little something extra".*
-

Master Class

Andrew Douglas and Derek Midgley  

- *Andrew and Derek will critique student performances in front of the class. If you'd like to play, put your name in the hat at the beginning of class! Alternatively, simply come to enjoy great performances and learn from the feedback given.*
-

Optimizing Your Band Pipes

Alasdair Henderson   

- *How do you get your pipes truly solid for band playing? Let's take a deep dive with the current world-champion pipe-sergeant Alasdair Henderson!*
-

Sunday Sessions

Session 1 - 9:00-9:50am

Ask IDPB Anything

Stuart Liddell, Alasdair Henderson, Steven McWhirter, Fergus Bryce, Andrew Douglas - **All instruments and levels**

- *Many of the instructors here at the Pocono Workshop play in Inveraray and District, the current world champions. Members of all ages, stages, and instrumentations are welcome to this session where you can ask the band anything!*
-

Chanter Reed Manipulation

Glenn Brown & Derek Midgley ● ■

- *Chanter reeds can be fickle and challenging. Learn the art of reed manipulations from two of the world's top sound gurus.*
-

Session 2 - 10:00-10:50

A coupla' fun chuns

Stuart Liddell ● ■

- *If you like fun, and you like tunes, this is the place for you. Let's kick back and enjoy a coupla' fun chuns as we begin to wrap up the weekend.*
-

Professional Performance Presentation

Derek Midgley ● ■ ■

- *Tips and discussion pertaining to how best to present yourself in a variety of piping performance situations; competing, public appearances, etc.*
-

Writing Great Harmony - Part 2

Alasdair Henderson & Andrew Douglas ● ■

- *Reviewing the harmonies that students created after Part 1 (Session 3 on Saturday), and diving even further down the harmony-writing and arranging rabbit-hole!*
-

Developing A Competition Reel

Glenn Brown ● ■

- *As we put the finishing touches on the weekend, let's also put the finishing touches on some great MSR playing by learning a great competition reel.*
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Session 3 - 11:00-11:50

Ask The Piping Instructors Anything

All Piping Instructors - All levels

- *Let's enjoy an open discussion panel with our amazing instructors to conclude the weekend. All questions welcome!*
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Wrap Up - 11:50-12:15

Closing thoughts from Traci to conclude the weekend! Thanks to all for coming.
