

Australian Guitar Magazine

Issue 100

Blues and Beyond

by Adrian Whyte

Firstly, I'd like to say that I'm very excited to be part of the 100th issue of Australian Guitar magazine. For this month's issue I've cooked up something very special. I'll eat that later, but right now I'm excited about this month's column.

You may or may not know that I'm a big fan of Chet Atkins, a player who came to prominence in the 1950's playing in the Grand Ole Opry and dazzling everyone with his ingenuity on the guitar. His finger picking skills have reached deep into modern guitar playing to an extent we will never know.

So to honour his good name, I've composed a short piece called "No Plans Tonight" and provided an excerpt here for you to have a look at.

Use the tab carefully, and follow the tab one beat at a time - do not make the mistake of trying to play the bass line and adding the rhythm later. Look vertically at each note or pair of notes that need to be played, and after a period of stringing the beats together you'll get the flow soon enough. It's not an exercise for the impatient!

Furthermore, I've uploaded a video to YouTube called "No Plans tonight - Adrian Whyte Australian Guitar Issue 100" so that you can SEE how to play the piece. Make use of this if your are serious about nailing this ultra fun little tune and breaking into the style!

**Bars 1 - 6 A major based ideas**

Step one - let's get the picking hand sorted out. Your thumb will play the E A and D strings for the bass line, and with a slight push when playing the 4th string you have the option of hitting the little two note chord that appears on every second beat of each bar, the optionally picked note has brackets around it. Your first second and third finger will play the G, B and E strings respectively.

To help you understand the duties of the left hand in this style of playing, I've put chord forms that are of specific mention. The left hand is not sporadically jumping around the neck, but instead holding a rough chord form with alterations. Remember you are not strumming so you don't need to be fretting notes on every string. The generally idea in these first six bars comes from the root four F chord that is the first bugger of a chord we all learn. Take it up to the 5th fret as notated and there is the basis for the first six bars.

### **Bars 7-10**

For bars 7-10 we move to a D9 based idea. The video will prove particularly helpful for this section, and of course listen to the track provided on the cd. The hardest part is barring a few strings to catch the fourth fret on the first string, and alternating the bass note with the fretted hand.

### **Bars 11 and 12**

We return back to the A form here (derived from F in the open position) before playing an inverted F#7. This change is the hardest - abandon the chord on the third beat of the eleventh bar to get the pinky at the sixth fret of the 3rd string. Now you are half way to playing the inverted F#7 so practice dropping the rest of the notes down on the next beat - beat 1 bar 12. The right hand just carries us through bar 12.

### **Bars 13 and 14**

Here we return to the 9 chord form similar to we used for D, only this time we have to use our pinky on and off to catch the melody, all the while alternating the second finger again to get the bass line. Tricky!

Very much the same thing in the final bar, sliding that 9th form up to the seventh fret . Some clever tricks learnt from Chet and Jerry Reed with open strings makes pretty easy work of what sounds like a complex melody, but poke that second finger out at the right time to catch the melody again.

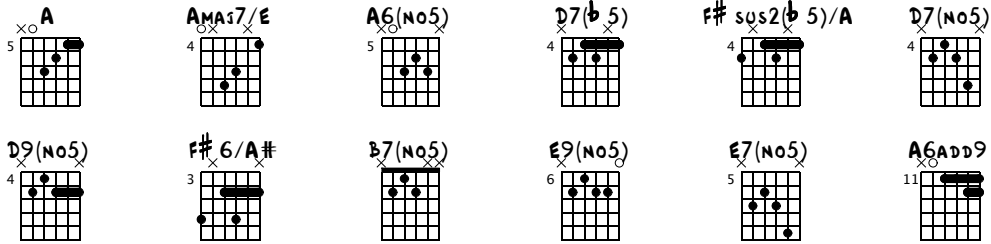
We finish on the A form that we started with, and I've included a fun little 6/9 chord at the end.

Don't be frightened by this style of playing - it is challenging, but it's a great sound and very fulfilling to play for any guitarist. The reason I named this piece "No Plans Tonight" is very simple - if you want to learn this stuff, you best have...

# NO PLANS TONIGHT

A STUDY IN THE STYLE OF CHET ATKINS

ADRIAN WHYTE



STANDARD TUNING

♩ = 240

E-GT

*mf*

A      A major 7/E      A6(no5)

D7(b5) sus2(b5)/A      D7(no5)      D9(no5)      F# 6/A#

B7(no5)      E9(no5)      E7(no5)      A6add9