

Going for Gold

As you hold this recording in your hands, you're holding more than just music; you're holding a piece of history. These tracks capture a moment in time that has been both cherished and quietly waiting for its chance to shine, and we are thrilled to share this long-awaited release with you.

This album is not just a revival; it's a celebration of endurance, passion, and the timeless connection between artist and audience. We hope these tracks bring back memories, evoke new emotions, and remind us all that some things, like great music, never truly age—they simply wait for the right time to be rediscovered.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. Here's to the past meeting the present, and to the music that bridges the gap. With gratitude and excitement, Silver Thistle Pipes and Drums

Our History

Way back in 1977, Patrick Reagan and Kevin Hendryx founded Silver Thistle Pipes and Drums on the University of Texas campus with the goal of developing a band that would compete within and outside Texas. The Band's first out-of-state competition was in Colorado in the mid-eighties, competing in Grade 4 under Pipe Major Kenneth Liechti, who has led the band for more than 30 years. In 1998, Silver Thistle became a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization promoting Scottish Highland piping and drumming in Central Texas. We have competed successfully across the US, in Canada and in Scotland, with Doug Slauson taking the helm as Pipe Major from 2011-2023. From our start as a teaching band and Grade 4 competition band, we added a Grade 3 competition band in 2002 when we were promoted by the Eastern United States Pipe Band Association.

Our Mission

The focus of the band has always been to bring the music of the Great Highland Bagpipes to Central Texas through community outreach and cultural education. One way we achieve this is through the major performances that Silver Thistle participates in such as the Austin Celtic Fest and St Patrick's Day celebrations. The Band promotes a highly acclaimed and successful Burns Supper, a cultural event which commemorates the life and poetry of Robert Burns, Scotland's most famous bard. We also put on performances for Tartan and St Andrews Days. We also strive to provide educational opportunities. We have a robust educational program that offers four levels of beginner instruction in bagpiping and drumming, which funnels into opportunities to join the band in competitions and performances.

SILVER THISTLE GOING FOR GOLD



Our Music

We have five recordings under our belt, from the first (available on cassette, if you remember what that is), through Samba Thistle and the Silver Album, released in 2005 to commemorate our Silver Anniversary a few years late. "Going for Gold" is meant to put us in the mood for celebrating our golden anniversary in 2027. The album contains contributions from the B band (grade 4), the A band (grade 3), Scottish small pipes and whistle duets and some solo performances.

The B band contributes their three 2023 competition sets: a quick march medley, march, strathspey and reel (MSR) and a medley. The A band provides its 2024 competition sets (MSR and medley) a set of 6/8 marches and three sets featuring some alternative percussion. The percussion for all the band pieces is delivered by the same talented and multifaceted drum corps. Duncan (smoking fingers) Peterson-Jones dazzles us with his solo pieces and Ken (old goat) Liechti slows the pace with a piobaireachd that highlights the distinction between Ceol Mor (the classical music of the Scottish Highland bagpipes) and Ceol Beag ("the light music", that includes marches, slow airs and dance music). We also feature some Scottish small pipe numbers with Jason Whitson (a former piper with the Band) accompanying on the whistle. We certainly hope that you enjoy the range of music that is provided in this album.

Our Gratitude

No pipe band can exist without the support of dozens, if not hundreds, of people. Thank you to our families for their encouragement and understanding when we're pulled away from them for practice, rehearsals and gigs. Thank you to our many instructors over the years who have helped us get better and shown us that we really can do this. Thank you to Liz Patranella, who champions us at every opportunity, and Maggie Meador, who has helped us find an indoor, long-term rehearsal space at the Austin Playhouse. Thank you to the Northwest Recreation Center for a beautiful space for outdoor rehearsals, Leo Day at Hyde Park Baptist Church for providing a wonderful recording space for us and Andy Sharp, our long-time recording engineer (aka Andy the Wizard).

And finally, the real reason for it all, our thanks to you, dear listener, for supporting our band by buying this recording, attending our performances, hiring us for events, and maybe even taking lessons with us yourself one day. Go for Gold!

Tune list

1. Quick March Medley: Weary Maid, Jenny's Bawbee, Sweet Maid of Glendaruel, Mairi's Wedding (All traditional tunes)
2. March/Strathspey/Reel (MSR): Prince Charles' Welcome to Lochaber (E. MacRae), Mac an Irish (Trad.), Auld Wife Ahint the Door (Trad.)
3. Hornpipe/Jig (Duncan, solo): Struttin Hornpipe and Swaying with the Trees (Duncan Petersen-Jones)
4. Medley: Murdo's Wedding (Gordon Stoddart), The Duck (Donald MacLeod), Shoreline of Lewis (Donald MacLeod), The Honeymoon (Alan MacDonald), Itchy Fingers (Robert Mathieson)
5. MSR (Duncan – solo): John MacColl's March to Kilbowie Cottage (William Lawrie), John Roy Stuart (Trad.) Jackie Latin (Trad.)
6. Set of 6/8s: Cock o' the North (Trad.), Leaving Port Askaig (Willie Ross)
7. Hornpipe Sandwich (Ken - Solo): Fair Maid of Bara (Trad., arr. Campbell), Duncan Johnstone (Donald MacLeod), Cutting Bracken (Duncan Johnstone)
8. MSR: Arthur Bignold of Lochrosque (John MacColl), MacDonalds of Baleshore (Angus Lawrie), Captain Lachlan MacPhail of Tiree (Peter Farquhar)
9. Alternative Set: On the Turning Away (D. Gilmour & A. Moore), Highland Whisky (Trad.), Mason's Apron (Trad.)
10. Piobaireachd: (Ken - Solo): Lament for the Viscount of Dundee (MacKay)
11. Medley: The Gladiator (Gordon Duncan), The Bright Side (W.J. Maitland), Tones of Westlawn (Bruce Gandy), The Gauntlet (Doug Slauson), Back of the Moon (A.G. Kenneth)
12. Alternative Set: She Moved Through the Fair (Trad.), Cathy's Willie (Terry Tully), Glasgow City Police Pipers (Donald MacLeod)
13. MSR (Ken solo): Abercairney Highlanders (A. MacKay), Susan MacLeod (Donald MacLeod), John Morrison, Assynt House (Peter MacLeod)
14. Traditional Set on Small Pipes and Whistle: (Ken & Jason) Scots Wha Ha'e, Man's a Man, Auld Lang Syne, Flower of Scotland (All Trad.)
15. Funky Set on Small Pipes and Whistle: (Ken & Jason): Christmas at Sea (Trad.), Suo Gan (Trad.), Aspen Bank (Trad.), Seonaidh's Wee Tune (Fred Morrison), Wee Jean's (Hamish Moore), Slippit Bar (Hamish Moore)
16. Alternative Set: Walrus (Robert Mathieson), Sandy's New Chanter (Tom MacAlister, Jr), Good Drying (R.S. MacDonald)