Samples of Flute Repertoire and Etudes
For Bb Savvy Flutists

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Flute teachers usually agree that the "long" B-flat fingering is the best first fingering for beginning flute students to use to stabilize the flute between their two hands.
For example passages that arpeggiate from D to F to B-flat allows the beginning student to find this balance with the aid of the right hand index finger remaining down throughout the three notes.

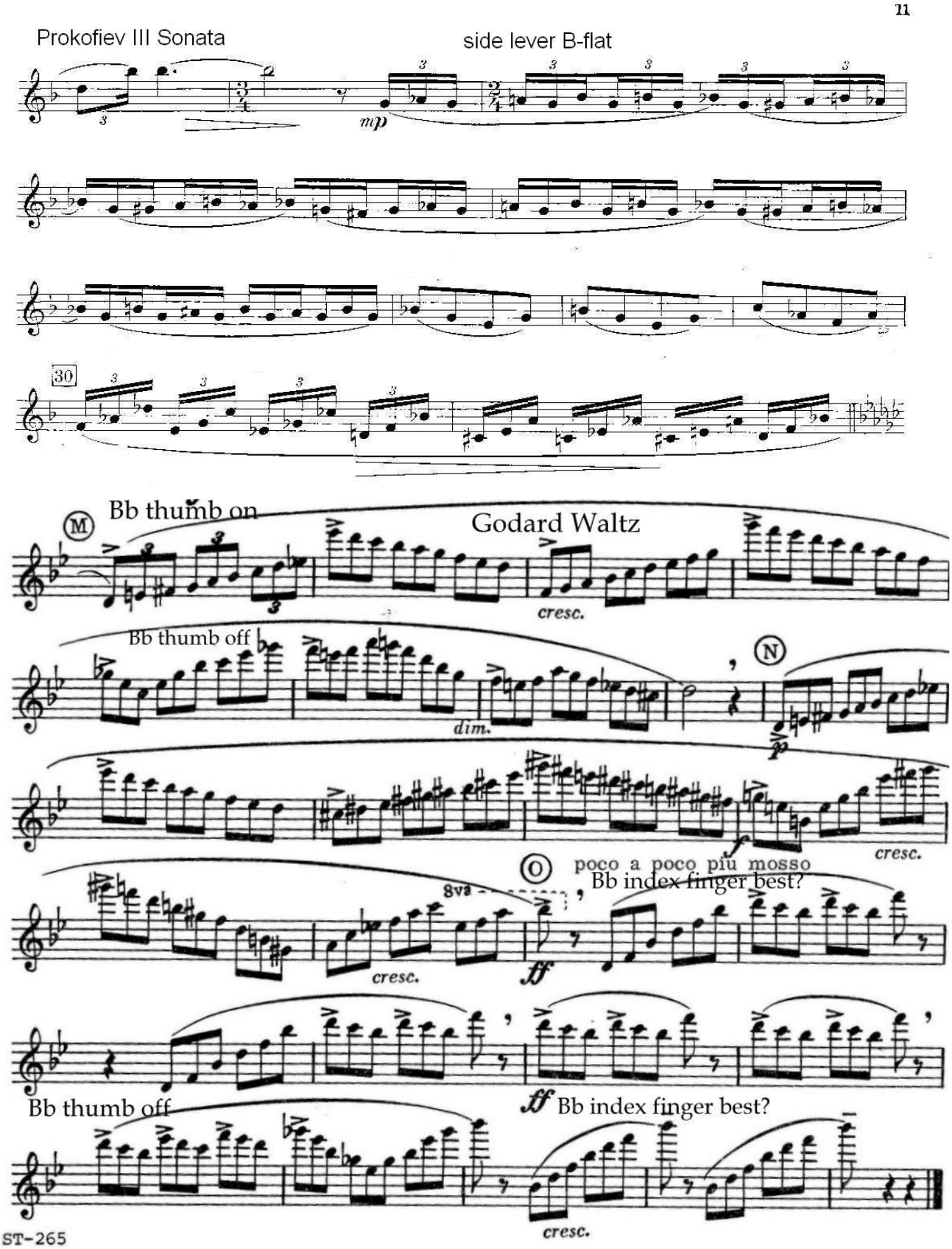
The intonation and tone colour of the long B-flat is not optimal. But using this long fingering as a standard actually prepares the flute student to learn to perform it easily when it is required later, in advanced repertoire that demands equal facility in three B-flat fingerings.

The primary consideration in advanced repertoire is deciding how to combine B-flat fingerings to their best advantage. A reliance on the B-flat thumb key will not be possible due to passagework that has written high F-sharps (F#3) and B-naturals at fast tempi.

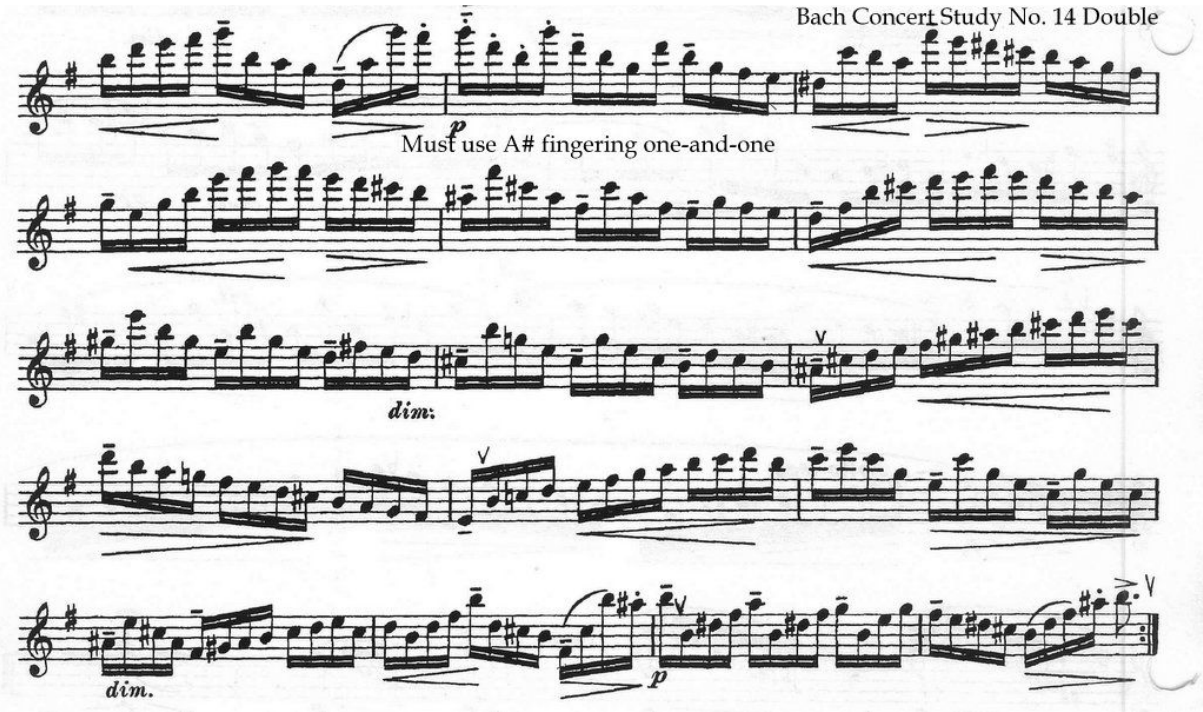
These passages occur in perhaps one in fifty of the standard flute repertoire and etudes, for example, the Godard Waltz. But they also do crop up in several major works including Prokofiev Sonata. Music that is written in the keys of B-minor, F# Major, B-Major or that uses chromatic passage work often contains passages that do not work with quickly sliding thumb switches. For example, in the key of B-minor, the B to A# fingerings are best handled with one-and-one fingering especially at fast tempi. Therefore the student must be light and accurate with this long fingering first, easing the contrary motion between the fingers, so that overtime they become equally facile at all three B-flat fingerings. When a passage *does* allow the straight forward use of the Briccialdi B-flat thumb key, B-flat thumb it comes as a welcome relief, as it is always far simpler to execute by comparison.

The following are examples of advanced repertoire and intermediate etudes that require the flute student to be equally facile with all three fingerings. These excerpts demonstrate the demand for balance in the hands while shifting the weight of the flute minutely between the B-flat thumb key and the RH index finger I with the standard long B-flat fingering or side key.

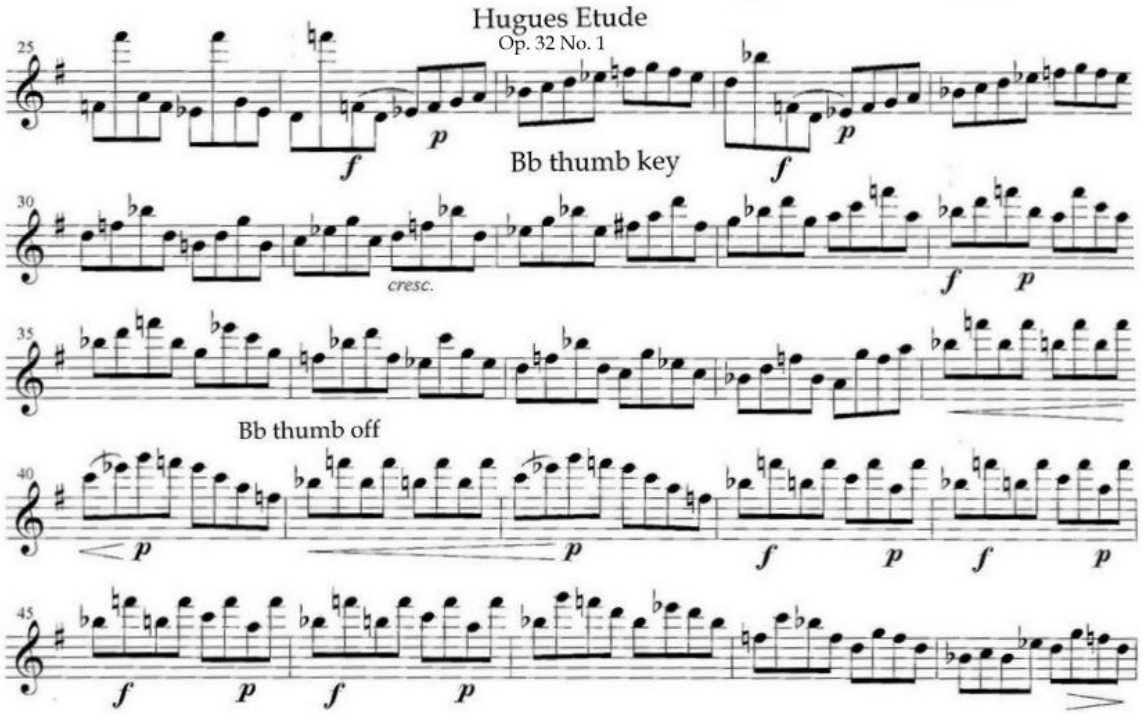
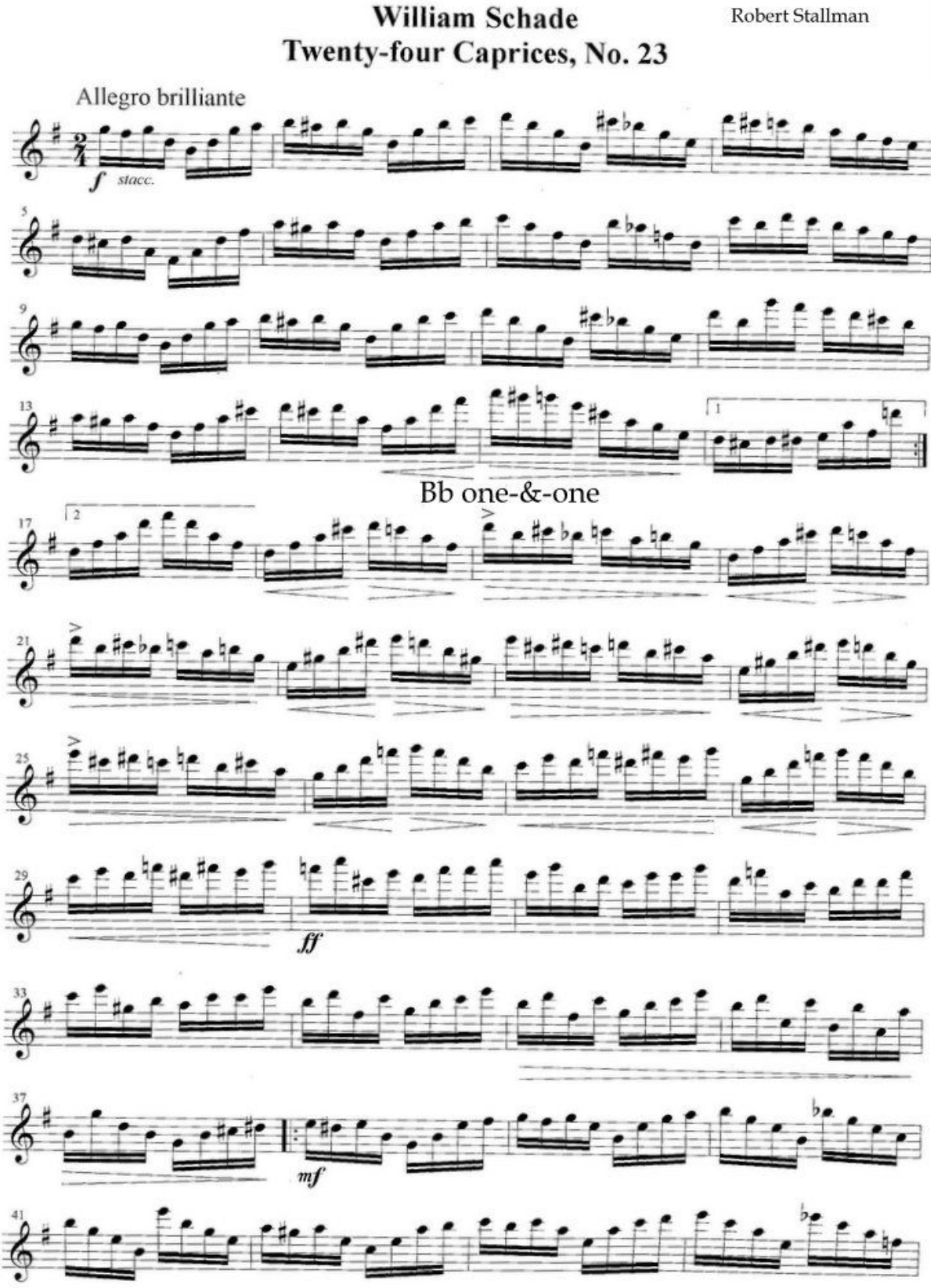
1. Advanced Repertoire Bb side lever, index & thumb switches



2. Intermediate Etude for developing the facility with the Standard Long B-flat.



3a. More advanced etude that requires facility in B-flat fingerings at fast tempi



3b. Advanced etude for B-flat standard fingering at fast tempi.