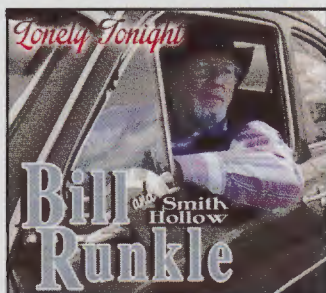


BILL RUNKLE AND SMITH HOLLOW *LONELY TONIGHT*

Patuxent Music
CD-275



Bill Runkle was the long-time banjo player in Del McCoury's Dixie Pals, before Del fully incorporated his sons into the family business. York County, Pennsylvania is a wee bit of the South that ignored political boundaries. Bluegrass predominated there. Bill Runkle reprises many of his banjo instrumentals that have been part of his repertoire throughout his career. Some like "Billy Boy" and "Cheaters In The Soup" (a Del McCoury original) have been long-time standards in his repertoire.

Banjo instrumentals dominate here, but there are some songs as well. Runkle plays some fine and funky banjo on Flatt & Scruggs' "Someone Took My Place With You" and displays more than a few finger-twister moves on "Black Mountain Hop," a kind of hybrid of Reno's "Green Mountain Hop" and "Black Mountain Rag." He also covers Ralph Stanley's "Hard Times," both of these later two tunes are in D tuning. He uses C tuning for "Carocus."

There are three songs here. "Lonesome Road" and "Hello Trouble," both featuring guitarist Larry Connor on lead vocal, and Runkle's fine original "I'm Lonely Tonight" really shines with Danny Paisley singing lead. Jeff Kidd lays it to the mandolin throughout the project. Patrick McAvinue shows why he is so popular as a fiddler with his spot-on performance. Judy Winters holds down the bass line with drive. This is straight-ahead bluegrass, the kind they have been playing along the Mason-Dixon line for decades. If you like your bluegrass hard-driving and solid, look no further. (Patuxent Music, P.O. Box 572, Rockville, MD 20848, www.pxrec.com.)RCB

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