Valdambrini

Libro primo d'intavolatura di chitarra... (*Rome: 1646*)

volume 1: The Toccatas

FERDINANDO

VALDAMBRINI

PER CHITARRA A CINQUE ORDINI 1646

Edited by Rockford Mjos

rockypeggy@earthlink.net

Version: 09.04.08

Copyright © 2008 Rockford Mjos

Valdambrini
VOLUME 1: The Toccatas

This collection presents the complete Toccatas from Ferdinando Valdambrini's *Libro primo d'intavolatura di chitarra a cinque ordini* (Rome: 1646).

I have notated changes to the original text at the end of each piece. Alfabeto chords have been written out in the tablature but are placed beneath the staff for reference. Like other composers, Valdambrini sometimes adds altered notes to alfabeto chords.

My thanks to Pat O'Brien who made scans of the publication available to me and to Monica Hall for sharing her preliminary translation of Valdambrini's introductory material.

Rockford Mjos
Saint Paul, Minnesota
November 30, 2008
rockypeggy@earthlink.net

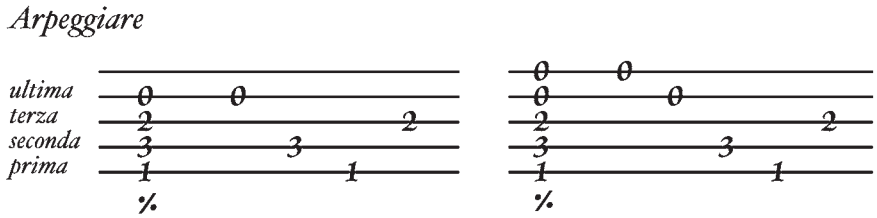
Performance Notes

Valdambrini offers some performance information in *Libro primo* and *Libro secondo* (c. 1647), which is summarized here.

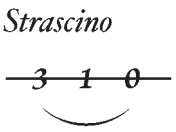
Tuning Valdambrini uses a totally re-entrant tuning with only high strings on the fourth and fifth courses (see Monica Hall's translation: *http://www.monicahall.co.uk/pdf/Stringing.pdf*).

Performance signs Valdambrini tells us that he uses the same signs as those used previously by Giovanni Girolamo Kapsperger.

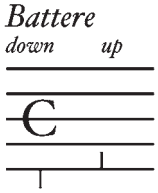
Arpeggio Valdambrini uses a common sign for arpeggiation and illustrates its performance. A four note chord uses the right hand fingering sequence of thumb, index, middle, index. A five note chord uses thumb, thumb, index, middle, index. These examples follow Kapsperger's manner of arpeggiation typical for theorbo tuning. The arpeggio can be repeated for as long as the written note value.



Slur This is notated in the typical way.

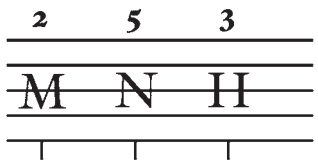


Strumming Chords are strummed in the direction indicated by short lines extending from the first course of the tablature.

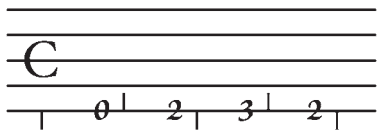


Chords When a number appears over the alfabeto chord letter, the index (barring) finger of the chord is positioned on that fret number and the other fingers the "normal" chord shape. (Note: in this edition the alfabeto chords have been written out in the tablature, but appear below the tablature for reference).

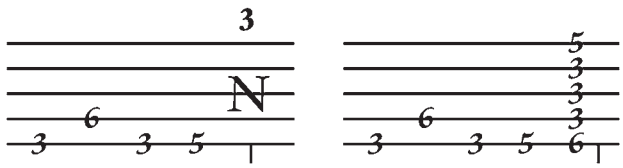
[*Playing chords in different positions*]



When single notes follow a chord and have direction marks, the chord shape should be held down and only the indicated notes should be altered [and played?].



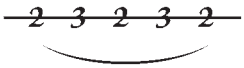
When a chord comes at the end of a series of single notes the player should choose fingerings to prepare himself for the upcoming chord.



Ornaments Valdambrini presents a series of ornaments ("adornments") and shows examples, but in the end tells us that he thinks it better to use only one ornament sign (the double dot), leaving the choice to the player as to exactly which ornament to use.

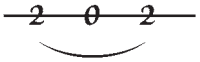
Trillo Played very fast with the next higher note.

Il trillo



Mordent Played very fast with a lower note.

Il mordente

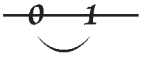


Tremolo The sign for vibrato.

Il tremolo

La Finta An appoggiatura from below.

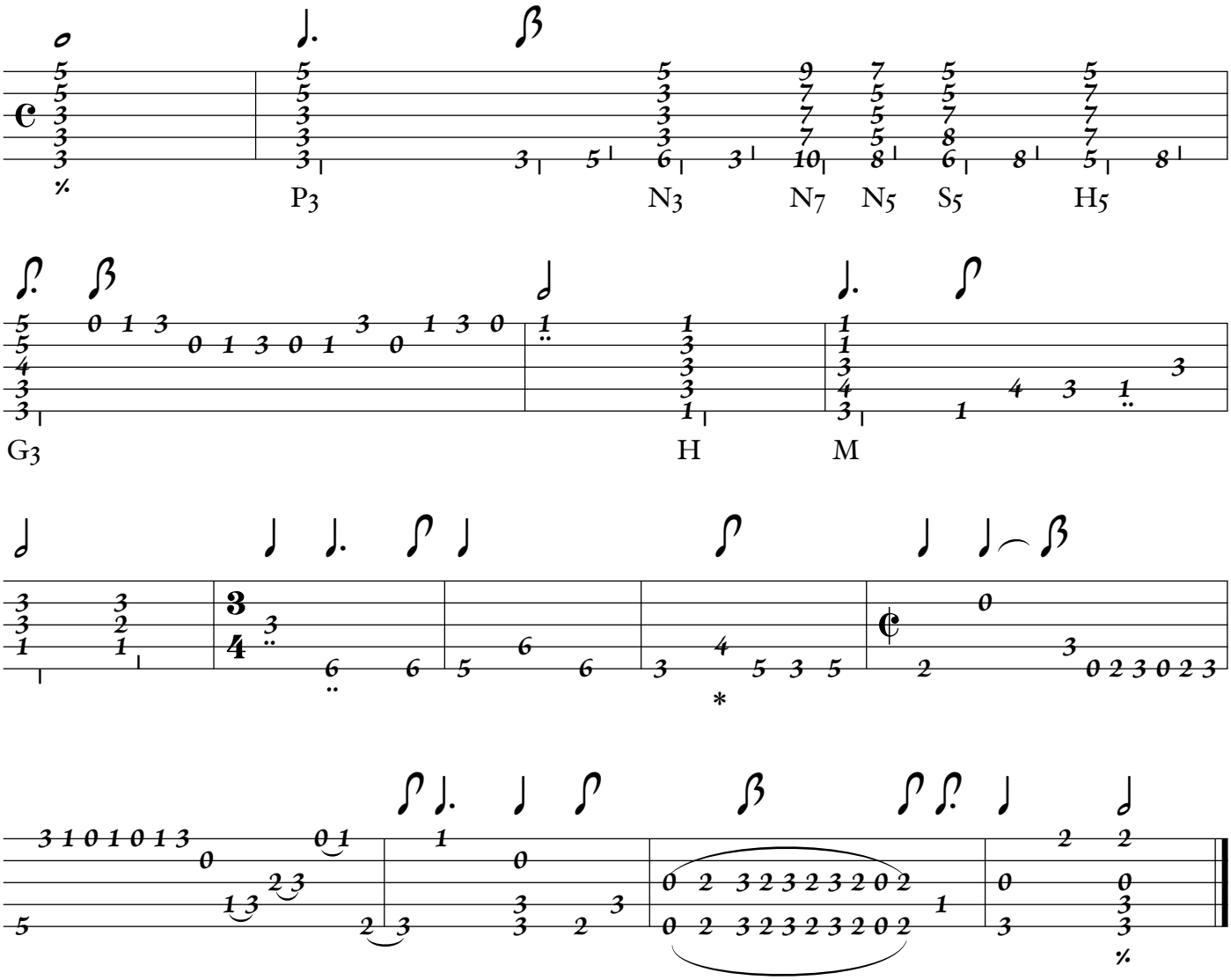
La finta



Sesquicroma Valdambrini does not mention this sign, but uses it frequently. Kapsperger claims in his *Libro quarto d'intavolatura di chitarone* (Rome 1640) to have invented it, and explains that it has the value of 24 to a measure (battuta). Basically, three of these note values fit in to the time of one single flag note.

Toccata prima

Ferdinando Valdambrini
Libro primo d'intavolatura di chitarra (Rome, 1646). p. 5

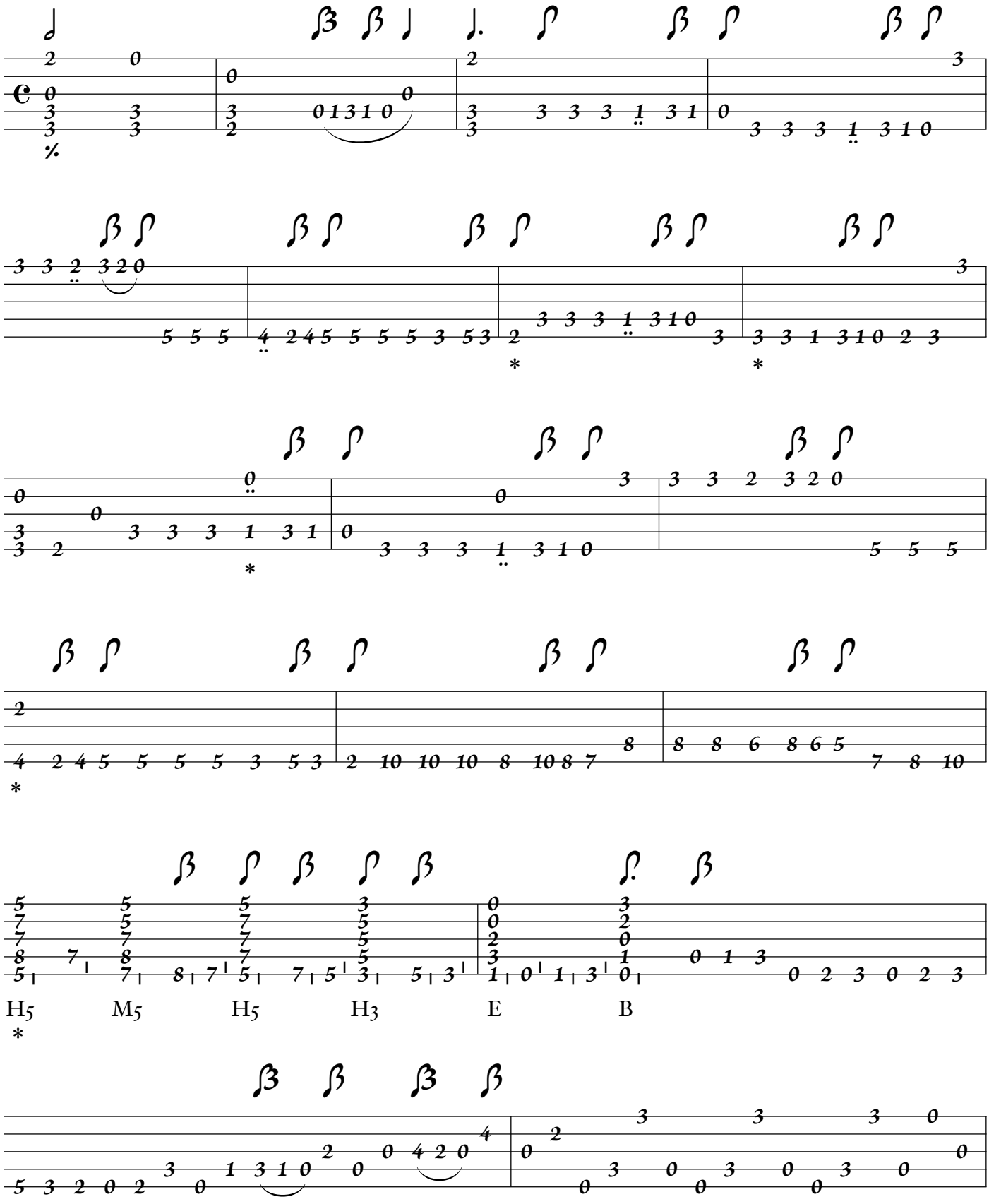


Notes:
Measure 9: Second note was "3" in original.

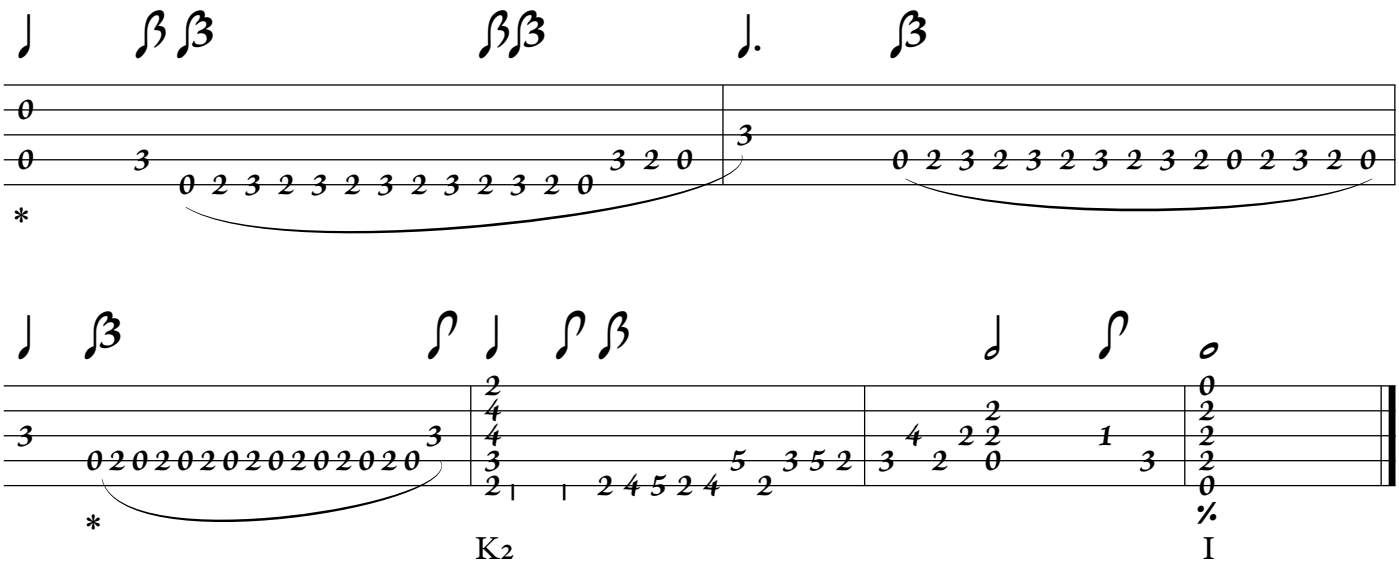
Edited and Copyright © 2008 Rockford Mjos. Version 08/13/08

Toccata seconda

Ferdinando Valdambrini
Libro primo d'intavolatura di chitarra (Rome, 1646). p. 5–6



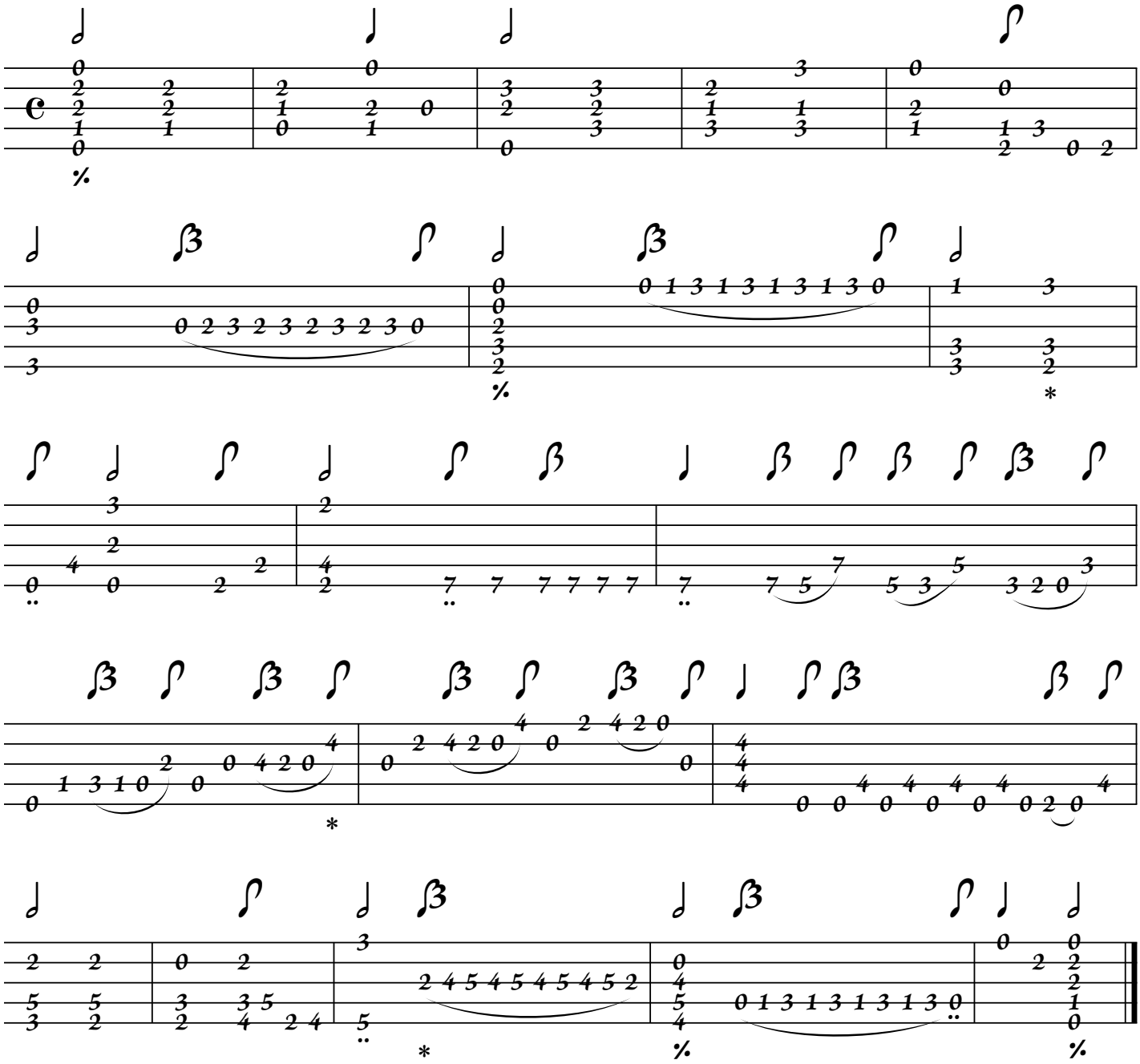
Edited and Copyright © 2008 Rockford Mjos. Version 08/13/08



Notes:
Measure 7: First rhythm sign missing.
Measure 8: First two notes missing due to damaged page.
Measure 9: Note on fifth course was printed on 4th course.
Measure 12: Note on fouth course was printed on third course.
Measure 15: 8 added to the H5 chord in original.
Measure 19: Fourth course note was printed on fifth course.
Measure 21: Two notes (2 0) added to fill out measure. Could also add dot to initial quarter note.

Toccata terza

Ferdinando Valdambrini
Libro primo d'intavolatura di chitarra (Rome, 1646). p. 6

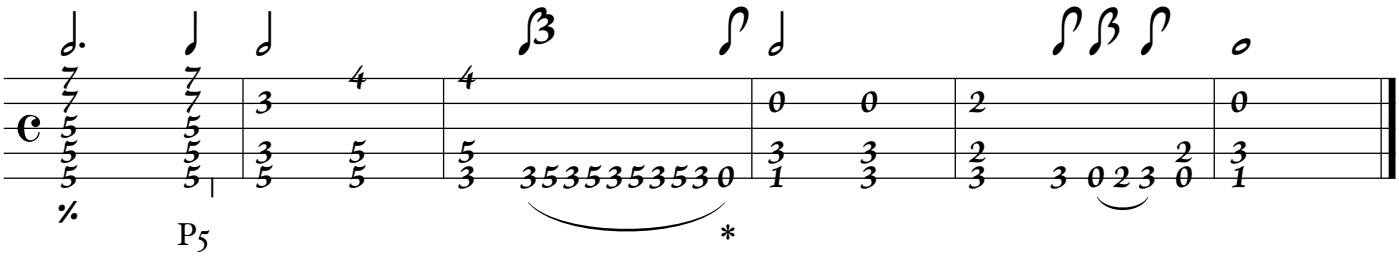


Notes:
Measure 8: Second note on second course was "0" in original.
Measure 12: Last rhythm sign missing.
Measure 17: Final notes unclear in the photocopy of original. Both '2's have been added.

Edited and Copyright © 2008 Rockford Mjos. Version 08/15/08.

[*Toccata terza e mezzo?*]

Ferdinando Valdambrini
Libro primo d'intavolatura di chitarra (Rome, 1645). p. 6

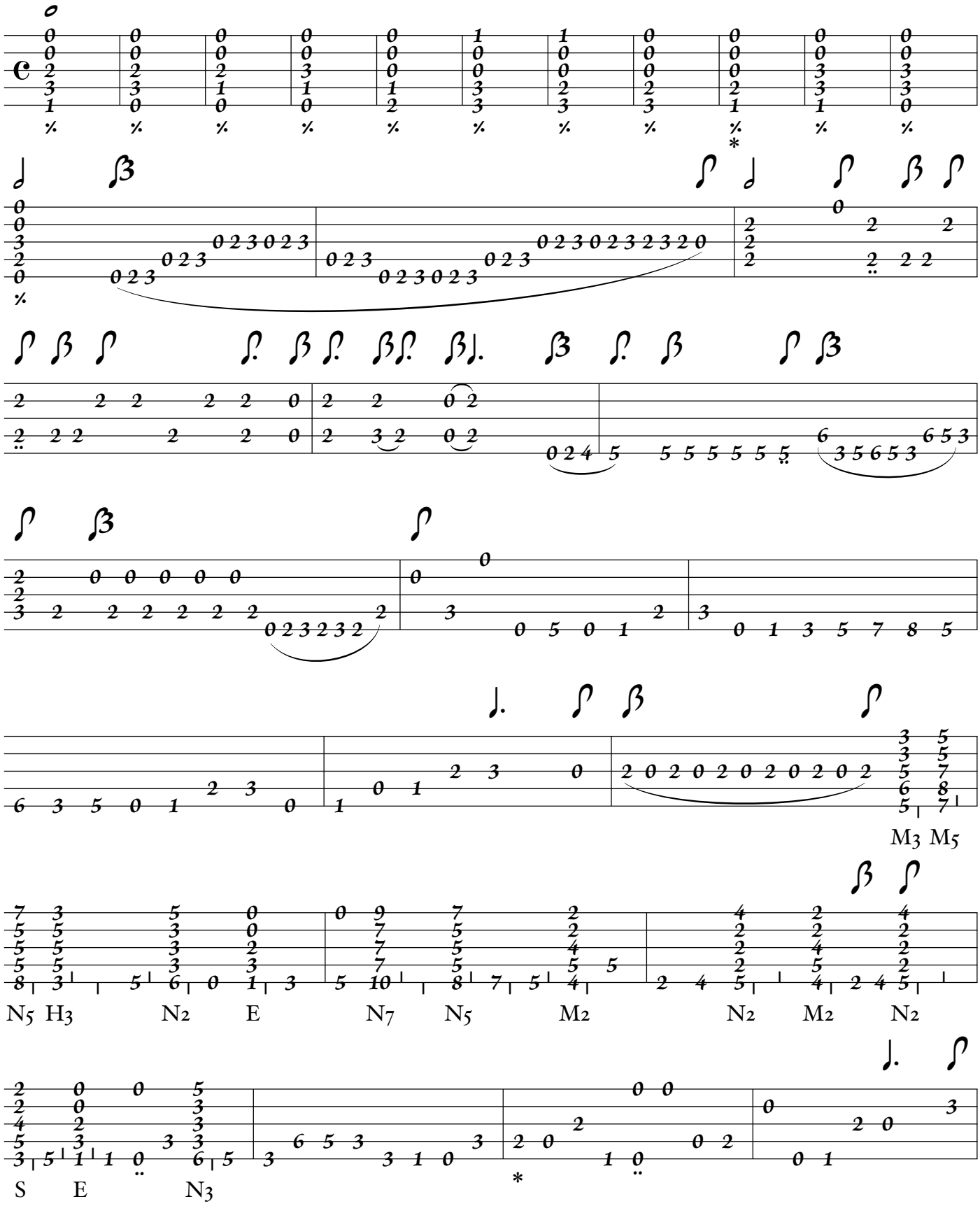


Notes:
This short piece of music comes between Toccata terza and Toccata quarta. It could be thought of as a bridge from the concluding A mimor harmony of Toccata terza to the D minor harmony which begins Toccata quarta. Or could we consider it Toccata Three-and-a-half?
Measure 3: Valdambrini is rather meticulous about the correct number of beats in a measure. The last rhythm sign has been added in order to fill out the measure.

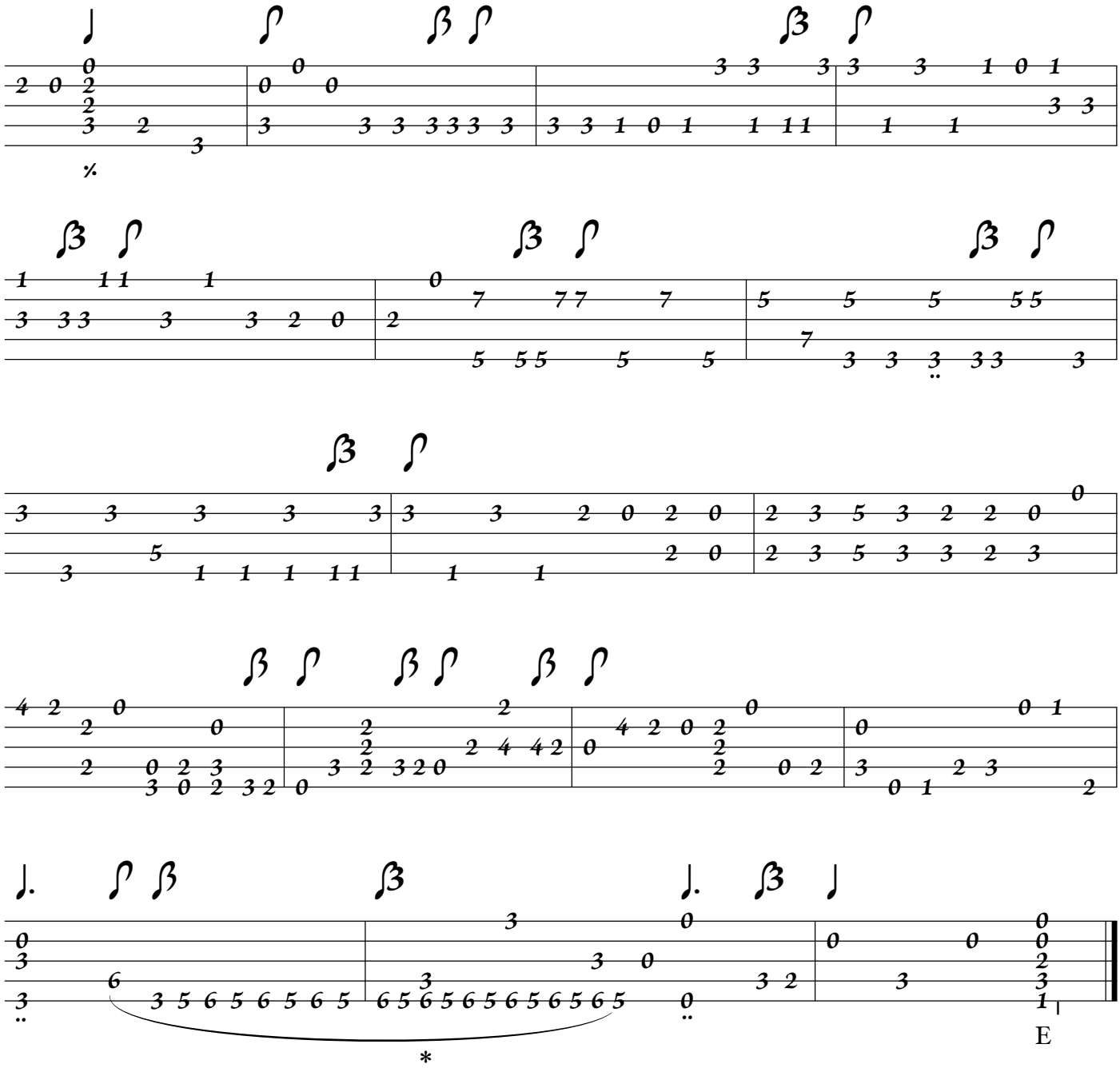
Edited and Copyright © 2008 Rockford Mjos. Version 08/15/08

Toccata quarta

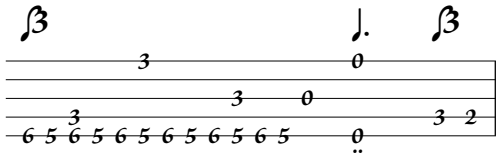
Ferdinando Valdambrini
Libro primo d'intavolatura di chitarra (Rome, 1646). p. 6–8



Edited and Copyright © 2008 Rockford Mjos. Version 08/15/08.

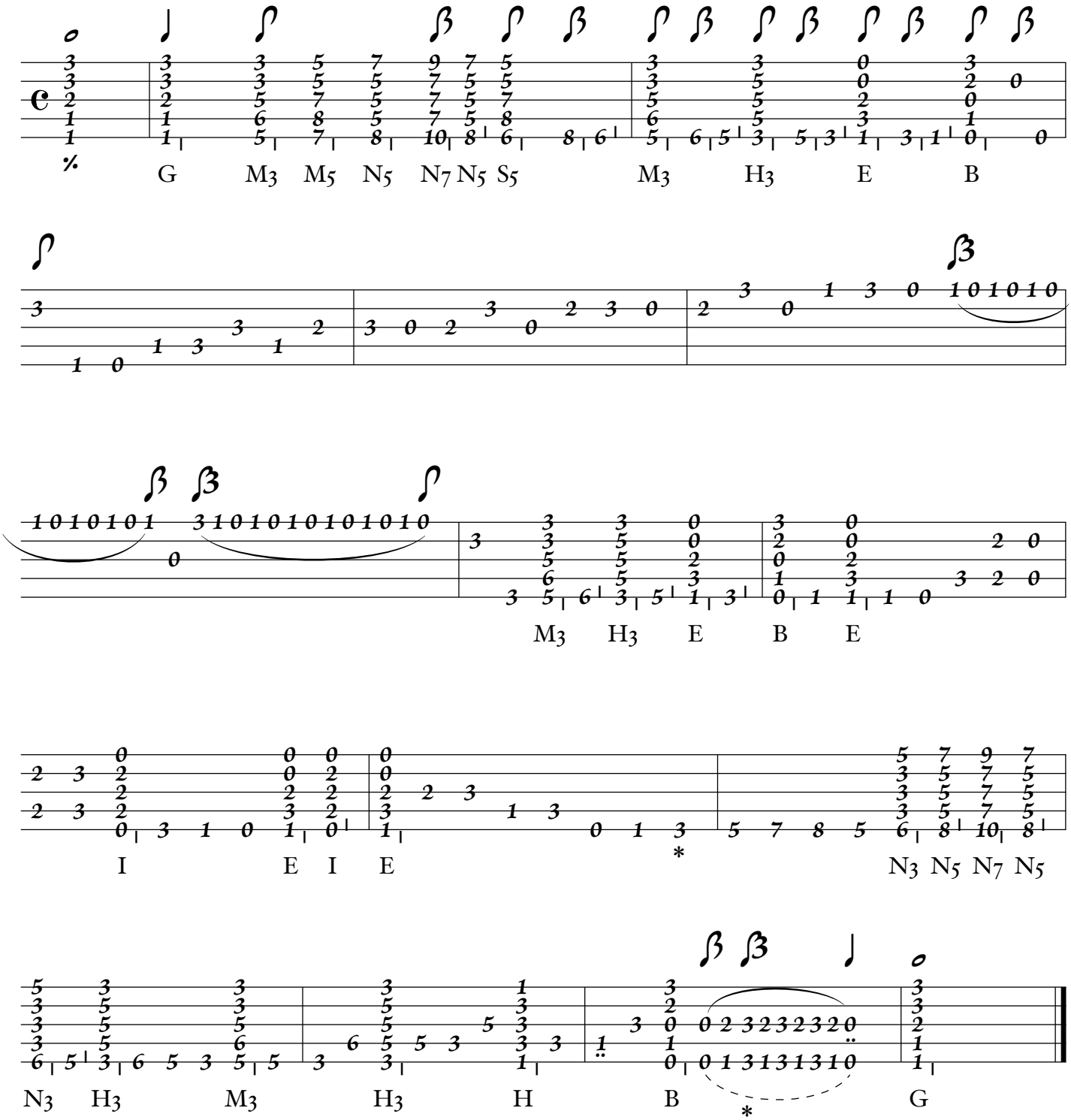


Notes:
Measure 9: First course note is not clear in the photocopy print.
Measure 29: First three notes missing from original due to page damage.
Measure 46: The placement of the second voice is not very clear. Another possibility would be:



Toccata quinta

Ferdinando Valdambrini
Libro primo d'intavolatura di chitarra (Rome, 1646). p. 8



Notes:
Measure 11: Last note illegible in the photocopy print.
Measure 15: Last seven notes on first course and dotted slur not in original.

Edited and Copyright © 2008 Rockford Mjos. Version 08/15/08.

Suggested Reading

Gary R. Boye
The Baroque Guitar: Printed Music from 1606-1737
http://www.library.appstate.edu/music/guitar/mixed.html
Boye presents detailed information about Valdambrini's two books and including contents, alfabeto used, and illustrations.

'Performing Seventeenth Century Italian Guitar Music: the Question of Appropriate Stringing', *Performance Practice on Lute, Guitar, and Vihuela: Historical Practice and Modern Interpretation*. ed. V. Coelho (Cambridge, 1997), 180–194.

'Valdambrini' *in* Oxford Music Online *erroneously lists the composer's first name as 'Francesco' instead of 'Ferdinando'. Boye contributed the rest of the entry.*

Monica Hall
http://www.monicahall.co.uk/
Particularly the essays on guitar tuning and Foscarini.

James Tyler
James Tyler and Paul Sparks. *The guitar and its music: from the Renaissance to the Classical Era*. Oxford University Press, 2007.
Tyler characterizes the Valdambrini books as being "outstanding."