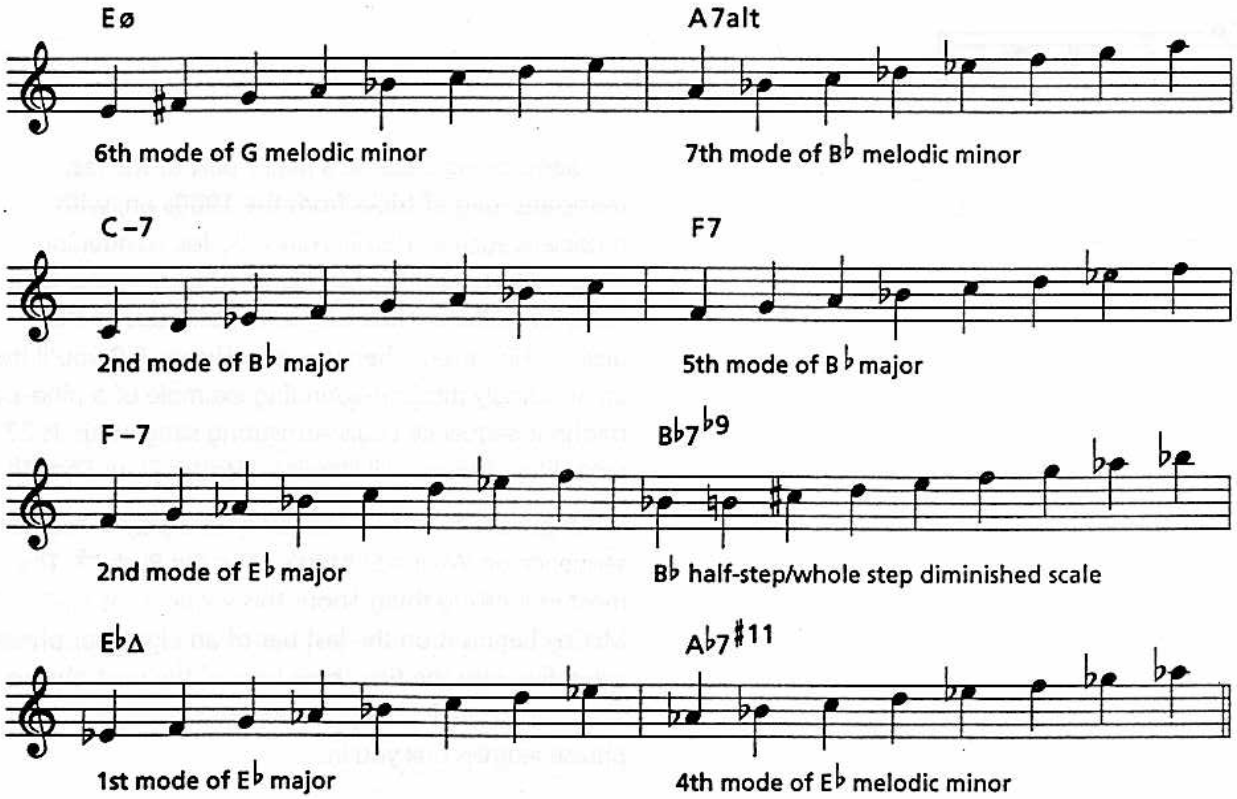
The Continuous Scale Exercise

How should you practice transforming scale notes into melodic sequences? A method called *the continuous scale exercise* prepares you for this. In a continuous scale exercise you connect the scale notes from whatever chord you are playing to the scale notes of the following chord. We'll use the first eight bars of Victor Young's "Stella By Starlight" as a working example of this technique. **Figure 6-11** shows a set of chord changes for the first eight bars of "Stella," along with the appropriate scale for each chord.

Figure 6-11



As you go through a tune like "Stella," ask yourself what type of harmony each chord is derived from. Major? Melodic minor? Diminished? Whole tone? The parent scale (from major, melodic minor, diminished or whole-tone harmony) is listed below each bar. If you don't have the melodic minor mode numbers memorized yet, let's review them: minor-major is I, sus$^{\flat 9}$ is II, Lydian augmented is III, Lydian dominant is IV, half-diminished is VI, alt is VII. *Learn them together in each key as a family.*