

Canning Drone Reeds

www.schoolofpiping.com

It has been quite some time since we did the initial review of the Canning drone reeds and as there have been quite a few developments in how we test drone reeds, but also some changes by the reed maker like the introduction of a polycarbonate bass reed, so we thought it about time for a serious update.



Canning Drone Reeds showing Carbon and Polycarbonate bass reeds and tenors.

First impressions being what they are, we were pleased with what I saw upon opening the parcel. Sensible and effective packaging (that ensured the product got to us in as many pieces as it left the store). Always a good start!

The instructions were simple and brief, not an essay like some others can be. They were very easy to follow and along the lines of catering for all levels of skill and experience.

The reeds themselves are well made precise and clean. Great care had been taken in assembling the reeds as well.

It must be said that these reeds are not unique in design, or to look at, but not many reeds are when the principles remain the same. They appear to borrow from other similar design types, whilst obviously incorporating the design and tone philosophies of the designer/manufacturer.

After applying hemp to the reeds and installing them in the drones, the first test was to see what they were like straight out of the box using the Carbon bass reed. These were truly plug and play with just a few minor alterations for set up and pitch.



Canning Carbon bass reed.

A few adjustments later (as per the instructions), in order to get the drones sounding full and tuning at the preferred level on the tuning pins, and the reeds were playing really well. There is a nice unison and melding between the tenors, which I like, without losing out on vibrancy and brightness. The Carbon bass is deep and resonant with strong bottom end harmonics. It was also very stable.

As with all reeds that have very small blades/tongues, the tenors change quite drastically in response to even the most minute bridle adjustments, so great care and ongoing testing is essential when first setting them up. However, once they are set, that's pretty much it.

We found some difficulties setting the Carbon bass in some of the narrower bored pipes. We found a spot where it would change pitch dramatically when tuning. It did not do this in the wider bore sets. The Polycarbonate bass we found much better in the narrow bore sets. The two reeds are not tonally the same. The Polycarbonate bass is very similar but a little more refined in tone. It locks in very well with the tenors, having the same type of blade and is a very stable combination.



Canning Polycarbonate bass reed.

Adjustments to pitch are made by a significant rubber bridle or a grub screw inserted into the nose cone of the reed. The bridles made a significant adjustment as compared to the grub screws, but a wide range of overall pitch adjustment using the two methods was possible. The hemped tenons on the reeds are tapered and quite wide, not being able to be fully inserted in some drones with a smaller reed seat.



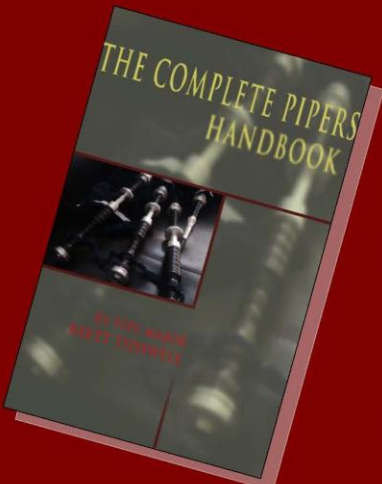
Press fit nose cone containing adjustable grub screw.

The Polycarbonate reed was harder to control as the small tongue was easy to get a sound from before striking in and after cutting out. Not a huge problem for experienced pipers, but the Carbon Reed was more forgiving in this regard.

The reeds were easy to balance for strength and stability. Very reliable and the tenors gave a good bright vibrant tone and both of the bass reeds have good strong lower end harmonics with a vibrant tone and strong volume.

Canning drone reeds are available from the School of Piping Shop at:
http://www.schoolofpiping.com/shop/bagpipes_and_accessories.html

More reviews can be seen at: www.schoolofpiping.com



The Complete Pipers Handbook is a must for every serious piper. Never before has a more comprehensive guide been published. Maintenance, set up, refinement, tuning, setting up bands, performance psychology and **much more!**

Available from:
www.schoolofpiping.com
and selected stockists.