

MG Drone Reeds Review

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MG Drone Reeds are made in Scotland by McCallum Bagpipes and reed maker Rory Grossart. They are almost a plug and play reed, but usually need some minor adjustment of the bridle and tuning screw. This is of course to be expected with all reeds to perfectly match with any instrument.

The set tested had tenor reed bodies made of a moisture absorbent cellulose compound and the reeds have a very small plastic blade held in place by a rubber sleeve. Another rubber sleeve and O ring acts as a bridle and because of the small size of the blade; any small movement of the bridle creates a huge change in the reed, for this reason any adjustment should be made in the fractions of a millimetre. The tenors are similar to an Ezeedrone or Wygent style reed in construction.



MG Mark II Reeds with Carbon Bass.

There is an alloy tuning screw in the closed end of the reed. These are very effective and well fitted. The tenor tuning plugs are hollow and to gain a little more tuning variance the plugs can be filled with blue-tac or a similar compound to further sharpen the pitch of the reed. There is a very good sized hemped section to insert into the reed seat and they are quite narrow and they fitted well into all pipes tested.

The bass reed tested has a black plastic body and a carbon tongue. We also tested a carbon bass with the cellulose body.

The reeds have a good strong volume when measured on a decibel meter. The tenor reeds produce a brighter tone than an Ezeedrone for example, but we found the Ezeedrone tenors to produce a little more tonal depth in the narrower bored pipes. Preference of either would be a matter of taste. The tenors sound very cane like, but bright and vibrant, more the sort of sound cane tenors give at the start of a playing session, rather than a more subdued and smooth tone after they have been played for a significant time.

The black plastic bodied bass gave the biggest sound with a more refined sound and to our ear a preferable tone coming from the cellulose bodied bass. This again is certainly a matter of personal taste. Both bass reeds have a little more vibrancy and “grumble” than an Ezeedrone bass as an example.

The reeds were very air efficient and a good “oneness” of sound was achieved between the drones. Certainly there are suitable reeds for either band or solo purposes. The variations available also give the ability to match reeds to suit your bagpipe or personal tone preferences.

There are a lot of combinations available, including:

- Inverted reeds.
- The standard bass reed with matching blade to tenor reeds.
- The carbon bass with cellulose body.
- The carbon bass with plastic body.
- Full carbon set.

The reeds tested offered little by way of difficulties. They were easily balanced for strength and the bass reeds all struck in without fault. The tenor reeds do not have that gurgling sound on strike in that some small bladed reeds demonstrate.

Overall these are a very good product, with little fault, good tonal qualities and are very well made.

More reviews can be found at: <http://www.schoolofpiping.com/reviews.html>

More about MG Reeds can be seen at their website: <http://www.mgreeds.com/index.html>

MG Reeds can be purchased from:

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