

New Selbie Drone Reeds Review

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Selbie Reeds are made in Scotland by Neil Selbie of Neil Selbie & Co Ltd, Highland Dress Outfitters and Pipe Band Supplies. They arrive in a moulded plastic package which prevents any damage during shipping. They are almost a plug and play reed, but may need some minor adjustment of the bridle and lockable tuning screw to get the best results. This is of course to be expected with all reeds.

The reed body is made of a cellulose type compound and they have a small black plastic blade held in place by moulding on the reed body. Another silicon sleeve 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. They are not quite as finicky as others in this regard.



Original Selbie reeds with inverted bass.

For best results the rubber sleeve placed on the end of the reed to be seated in the drone should be removed and replaced with waxed hemp. I often see pipers who have hemped over the sleeve, or just use the rubber sleeve to seat the reed. These methods are not as effective and a much better result can be achieved by seating the reed properly. The end of the reed has a long tapered section for hemping and they do seat very well in the drone.

There is a tuning screw in the closed end of the reed. These are very effective and I often see pipers add a little Teflon tape to the thread. Maybe a good idea, however I have not found one that leaked.



The new design Selbie Reeds

The tenors remain a standard design, but the bass drone reed was previously inverted. The new design has a standard bass rather than the inverted of the previous model. One of the

main features of the Selbie Reed is the patented tongue system that is engineered to lock the tongue onto the reed body and allows it to be easily removed and replaced for cleaning.

They also do not like to get too much moisture on the blade, so an effective moisture control system is highly recommended when using with a synthetic bag.

The new reeds remain very stable, but have an increased strength of harmonics compared to the previous generation.

These reeds have excellent volume and a bright, vibrant sound. The tone overall is quite refined, but with good depth and would be suitable for band or solo work. The tenors sound very cane like and the bass has a very good depth of tone. This gives a real “oneness” to the drone sound.

This is an excellent product that is very easy to work with. We use these as our “go to” reed at the School of Piping Shop when we have a difficult bagpipe to work with. The Selbie reeds seem to be well suited to most pipes and are especially tolerant of a difficult bagpipe.

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

Selbie Reeds can be purchased from the School of Piping Shop



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!**

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www.schoolofpiping.com
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