

REDWOOD REED REVIEW

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The Redwood reeds (made by Jakez and Xavier Boderiou) arrived in some really spectacular packaging. The box contained some instructions printed on the underside of the lid, and the reeds were held in place by some custom made foam packaging. No doubt they will always arrive in good condition.



Each reed body is made from padouk (African Red Wood) which seems to be quite an absorbent material. The reeds look handmade, but despite a roughness to the cut into the bed upon which the tongue sits, close examination revealed excellent and consistent workmanship. The hemped sections are quite large and some pipers will find they have difficulty seating them fully into pipes with narrow reed seats. We tested in a number of pipes and had to use dental floss to seat the reeds as the supplied hemp (and also normal yellow hemp) was a little thick to get the reeds near full insertion.

The bass drone reed has a carbon fibre tongue and the tenors have glass fibre tongues. The tongues are held in place by a glued rubber sleeve. A clear plastic bridle then controls the tongue. The bass had limited available movement of the bridle, and more than a few millimetres down the reed caused the bass to stop. Tuning plugs are manufactured in metal. The tuning plugs give quite a significant range of pitch alteration.

Overall the reeds were quite low pitched and drones tuned down the bottom of the hemp on all test instruments. To raise the pitch a little the tuning plugs had to be well inserted and bridles moved down from the manufacturer's settings, otherwise the reeds were virtually plug and play.

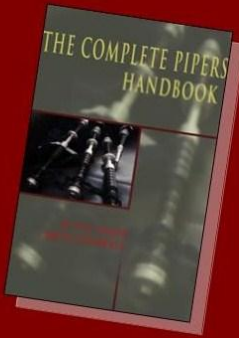
The strength of the reeds had to be finely matched to give a steady sound. The bass had to be closely matched to the tenors or blowing variations would cause the reeds to waver. (The method of balancing strength is explained in detail in "The Complete Pipers Handbook" from www.schoolofpipings.com). Overall the reeds were reasonably air efficient and tolerant of some blowing variation.

On striking up the bass occasionally gave an unusual tone, but each time the drones struck in well.

The reeds were stable and even responded well after being left and re-played after a period of time. They have good volume and brightness. The tonal quality of the reeds was excellent, producing a vibrant tone with very good tonal balance and depth. These reeds are easy to set up, apart from some strength balancing being required and will produce a sound that pipers of any level will be well satisfied with.

They are available from www.rwreeds.com and sound files are posted for listening.

More reviews can be seen at: <http://www.schoolofpipings.com/reviews.html>



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.schoolofpipings.com selected stockists.