

Canning Drone Reeds

By Andrew Fuller

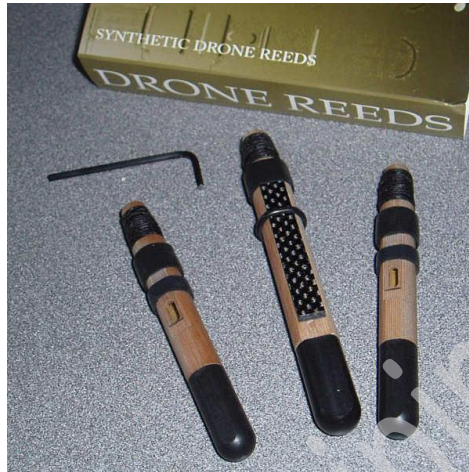


Photo by Chris (Tone Czar) Hamilton

It was with great interest that I took receipt of a set of Canning Drone reeds. First impressions being what they are, I was pleased with what I saw upon opening the parcel. Sensible and effective packaging (that ensured the product got to me in as many pieces as it left the store) was a good start, unlike some products!

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 finished and the tooling and machine work was 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.

Now it was time to play them in the pipes. 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. One tenor stopped, as did the bass. That's ok - to be expected, more often than not. Anyone who does, or can remember, playing cane reeds will not even blink at this minor setback.

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 bass is deep, albeit a little mellower and quieter than what I usually

prefer, and it had a cane-like quality to it. It was also very stable. I could see this was going to be my 'weapon of choice' for indoor solo contests.

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.

In summary, Canning Drone Reeds are a fine product that caters for all levels of soloists and bands. The initial set-up takes time but will rarely be revisited if time and care is taken in the initial setting-up stage. A warm and 'enveloping' sound can be expected and a good range of harmonics, especially with older/wider-bored drones.

(Tested in circa 1912 Lawrie Drones fitted with Ross bag/canister system.)

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