

# COLIN KYO CHANTER REVIEW

Throughout various places in the World there are a number of bagpipe makers that have sprung up in recent years. I don't know where many of them train. I see some really dodgy workmanship and I see some really bad chanters, even from some big name makers. Chanters are an art form. Copying a set of stocks and drones is one thing, but chanters are a different kettle of fish.

Small variances in throat and reed seat design can make huge differences to performance and stability. Of course hole spacing affects comfort of playing and pitch of notes. Put one note too far up the chanter and it will often affect others. An E that is set too high for example will make an F that double tones.

I have looked up Colin Kyo Bagpipes on the internet and the workmanship looks quite good from what I could see. I have had some dealings with Murray Huggins, the maker, who seems like a very nice chap.

So I get a parcel with a Kyo chanter in it and I am struck by a number of things. The first is it is very well made and quite a handsome looking chanter. The second is that it is short. I mean about 1cm shorter than your average chanter. Murray has also sent a reed and instructions. The reed is a Warnock and there are instructions on placing it in the chanter. OK, I'm not too proud, I will play the game. So I follow Murray's directions and have this reed standing out of the chanter by about 5 mm more than I would usually insert a reed.



So I blow the chanter and the reed is obviously dry and shrill on high G and F. I moisten the reed and it balances better. Piobaireachd high G sounds glorious and the chanter sounds true up the scale. It still liked a little tape on F and G.

I inserted the chanter into the bagpipe and the first thing that struck me was how comfortable it was to play. It had a really nice sounding high A, but overall the tone was very sweet and warm. Much like a Naill chanter in tone. This is without doubt one of the nicest plastic chanters I have played.



Speaking to Murray he advised he doesn't like tape. The chanter is therefore very true. He doesn't like to sink the reed far, so the chanter is short. The pitch is very similar to a Naill or McCallum solo chanter. He advises moistening the tips of the reed to bring high G and F into pitch. That's OK, but a little tape does the job also.

This is a really nice chanter, which plays really well. It is stable with no obvious flaws. It is easy to reed, I tried 5 very different reeds that all went well. I actually thought it went better with some of the straight cut reeds I tried. I would play this chanter anywhere with pleasure and recommend it to pipers at any level who I am sure would not be disappointed.

Characteristics:

- Warm tone.
- Good volume.
- True scale.
- Stable Piobaireachd High G.
- Good stability with no obvious faults.

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