

GIBSON CHANTER REVIEW

I have never before had anything to do with Gibson Bagpipes. They are certainly not that common in Australia, however, Jerry Gibson seems to have a very loyal following and I was contacted by a customer and friend of his asking me to review his new chanter. I had certainly heard of Gibson bagpipes and knew that his drones were based on a set of McDougall's that belonged to John McLellan. So not having knowingly heard a set of Gibson's I was certainly familiar with the master set!

A parcel arrived containing a practice chanter, which was well made, bold with excellent volume. It was full length with quite a low pitch but was a really nice chanter to play. The Gibson's PC reeds are also excellent. Also included were two poly chanters and a wooden chanter. I was struck by a number of things. The first was that they are very well made and they are quite a handsome looking chanter. The second is that the holes in the poly chanter are quite large, particularly E and C. Not so obvious with the timber chanter.

So, I blow the poly chanter and the first thing that strikes me is the high pitch and the volume. This is a loud chanter, quite high in pitch and very bright. It does however still retain good harmonics. Despite the size of the holes, they remain a comfortable chanter to play. The chanters appear reasonable priced and would make an excellent band chanter. The consistency of manufacture appears to be very good and the chanters were very closely matched.

I inserted the wooden chanter into a bagpipe to see how it played. It was instantly up into the 480s on the tuner. I had some difficulty stabilising it with a used Gilmour reed, so I inserted a Warnock reed that I had previously been using and it locked in almost immediately. This is a bright, stable, free blowing chanter with good volume. It gives excellent value for effort.



The chanter had no obvious faults, was quite true out of the box and required minimal tape when changing between reeds. I tried a number of different reed types and they all went well. It is certainly easy to reed.

I did not put tape on high G or high A. The high G was true and pleasant sounding. I recorded a Piobaireachd with a high G without resetting the note. It was very close to true and quite stable. The G was maybe, a little harsh sounding on the recording, which would smooth out with some refining of the reed and a little use of tape.

The chanter has good depth and harmonics at a high pitch. I would play this chanter anywhere with pleasure and recommend it to pipers at any level who I am sure would be delighted with their purchase.

Characteristics:

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

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