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BONADE

The Art of Adjusting Reeds

Mr. Bonade uses, endorses and recommends The Leblanc Clarinet

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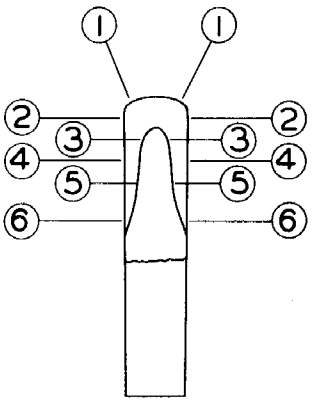
(3) When a reed sounds good while played forte, and heavy when played soft, a reed is too strong at tip or left upper side.

(4) When a reed whistles or squeaks, one side is too strong at the middle near the center.

Different places where a reed can be uneven --

1 - tip
2 - corners
4 - middle edges
6 - lower edges
3)
) sides of resisting points
5)



For the very meticulous clarinetist, I know the following observation will prove of invaluable help in adjusting and creating the "perfect reed." I have found that by fixing the reed just a little stronger on the left side than on the right, especially in the lower part (around numbers 5 and 6), the reed will have greater flexibility and be less likely to choke. The reason for this is that the clarinet is supported by the right thumb, causing the clarinetist to bite more on the left (unsupported side) of the reed. Thus, the reed requires more wood on the hardest pressed side. Thus, when fixing a reed that does not vibrate freely, it is safer to scrape the lower edge of the right side, and relatively dangerous to weaken the left, or resisting side of the reed.

Use of the Sandpaper File: The sandpaper file is used exclusively for rounding corners of the reed after cutting so as to match evenly the tip of the mouthpiece. Sometimes, square corners of a reed make a buzz in the tone. Use sandpaper file in upper direction of the reed. Do this lightly.

A reed, therefore, will not play well if:

1. The reed is thicker on the right side.
2. The tip is too thin or too strong.
3. The lower edge is too heavy on the right side.
4. The center does not sufficiently resist lip pressure.
5. The tip is uneven.