

# SAXOPHONE

Life

April 2015

## NELSON RANGELL

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# ReedGeek

Review by Nigel McGill

If you ask just about any saxophone player on the planet what their biggest day to day gear challenge is, they would answer reeds!

The fact is, those little pieces of cane can make the difference between joy and pain in a practice session and although reed manufacturing has got so much better, we all

know that every box of reeds will contain a few "dogs" for every gem.

So as saxophone players we are faced with two options.



The packaging is excellent and the soft pouch is perfect for protecting the Reed Geek in your saxophone case.

Checkout the video review.



Well three if I'm really honest. We can either just throw away a lot of reeds (which is very expensive!) or invest some time learning how we can adjust our reeds to make more of the playable. Oh, yes and third, go for synthetic reeds - which are getting better all the time but for me sacrifice too much tone for convenience.

Over the years I've spent a lot of time learning how to make the most of my reeds. I'm no reed adjusting guru but I know how to get the majority of them working for me without spending most of my practice time fiddling with them.

I've also been through the gamut of reed adjusting tools from reed rush to knives and sticks, each of which require a little practice to use quickly

and effectively. The aim after all is to be playing, not tinkering with reeds.

I was therefore intrigued (if a little anxious) about checking out yet another tool for reed adjusting when the Reed Geek arrived this week.

First off, it's elegant. And it's simple. Although, like most well designed things, it has a few tricks up it's sleeve.

In it's most basic form, reed adjusting comprises a number of steps that address different parts of the reed. The back, rails and the tip may all need work to get a problem reed playing.

For this you generally need a few different pieces of kit - a file or sandpaper, a reed knife,

## REVIEW: REEDGEEK

a glass plate.

After a few minutes playing with the Reed Geek I quickly realised that I no longer need any of those, and actually I was getting results faster and more consistently than on any other combination of reed care tools.

Developed by Mauro Di Gioia, the Reed Geek is an engineered steel bar that has a neat cutting blade built into each edge. Although really effective on the reed, the edges are not dangerous to the fingers and don't need sharpening.

Mauro has also very cleverly incorporated a complex profile on one end which is perfect for precision shaping of the reed tip and rails. And at just 65mm or about 2 ½ inches

long it's extremely compact and portable. In fact you would have to be careful not to lose it in your sax case!

One of the features I most liked about the Reed Geek is how you can very quickly sort out a warped reed back with just a few simple scrapes. Even brand new reeds can be slightly warped and, in my opinion, this is one of the most common reasons why reeds don't play as expected.

In comparison to a box of Reed Rush and some sandpaper, the Reed Geek isn't cheap. However with just a couple minutes of experimentation and a read through the enclosed instructions I could easily get just about every reed in my "dog box" to work. I'm sure the Reed Geek would pay for itself many times over.



The optional Plaque and Gauge set is handy for identifying reed issues.

I think the Reed Geek is a truly innovative and frankly "clever" tool that really should be a part of every players' saxophone kit. I'm a fan although I'm a little concerned to find myself digging through drawers this week looking for boxes of old reeds to fix!

**NM**

The Reed Geek is £37 / \$58. More information at [www.reedgeek.com](http://www.reedgeek.com)



**Nigel McGill**

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