

Student trumpets

Contributed by Colin Murray
Thursday, 05 July 2007
Last Updated Saturday, 12 September 2009

Student-model trumpets

This edition of the Mr.Equipment Test Lab examines six student-model trumpets from various manufacturers which are available in most markets. (We could have been more scientifically correct in testing a larger sample base, but since the evaluators gave their time freely, we didn't want to be greedy.)

The instruments

All trumpets are medium-large bore and lacquered with monel pistons (except Bach TR500, Blessing B-125 and Yamaha YTR2335). For detailed specifications, please click on the the model number. Prices indicated are manufacturer's suggested retail price. Check with your local dealer for their pricing, or check all over the Internet, which you're going to do, anyway.

Bach TR500- US retail: \$ 895 , made in China

Blessing B125- US retail: \$825 Made in USA

Jupiter 600ML- US retail: \$850 Made in Taiwan

King 601- US retail: \$950 , Made in USA

Mirage TR200- Canadian retail:\$290, Made in China

Yamaha YTR2335- US retail: \$924 Parts made in Japan, assembled in USA

Bach TR500, Jupiter 600ML and King 601 provided by Long & McQuade Musical Instruments (www.longandmcquade.com)

Blessing B125 and Mirage TR200 provided by Counterpoint Musical Services (www.counterpointmusic.ca)

Yamaha YTR2335 provided by Yamaha Canada Music (www.yamaha.ca)

The test panel

We chose three professional trumpet players, one classical, two jazz/commercial and two school band directors who happen to be good trumpet players. For reference, we've provided the make and model of their primary Bb trumpet and mouthpiece. None of the players is endorsing or connected in any way with any trumpet manufacturers.

Jason Logue- Jason is a Freelance Trumpeter/ Arranger/ Composer in Toronto and leader of his own band the Jason Logue Six. At Present Jason is playing with (in no particular order)

David Clayton-Thomas, www.davidclayonthomas.com

The Paul Read Orchestra www.paulreadorchestra.com

The Dave McMurdo Jazz Orchestra www.davemcmurdo.com

The Hilario Duran Latin Jazz Big Band www.hilarioduran.com

Andy Ballyntynes Large Ensemble www.myspace.com/andyballantyne

The Rex Hotel Orchestra (no link yet!)

Jason is also on the Jazz Faculty at Mohawk College in Hamilton and the National Music Camp of Canada.

Trumpet: Bach 180L (large bore, 25 bell, lacquer), Mouthpiece: Monette B6

Richard Sandals- principal trumpet, National Ballet Orchestra of Canada, Hannaford St. Silver Band, graduate of Indiana University.

Trumpet: Bach 180S-37 Mouthpiece: Bach 1 1/4C, 22 throat

Brian O'Kane- has performed with the Rob McConnell Tentet, the Peter Appleyard Big Band and the Don Thompson Septet. He is a regular member of the Hilario Duran Latin Jazz Big Band, John Macleod's Rex Hotel Orchestra and is in demand in the pits of such shows as The Producers, The Boyfriend, The Full Monty, Chicago and many others. Brian is on the faculty of Humber College in Toronto.

Trumpet: Bach LT180-72 Mouthpiece: Giardinelli 5M, Warburton backbore

Jeff Fong- senior instrumental music teacher, Crestwood Preparatory College, Toronto, formerly music director, Lower Canada College, Montreal, freelance trumpeter

Trumpet: Yamaha YTR6310Z Mouthpiece: GR 62M

Kelly Devenish- instrumental music teacher at Mayfield Secondary School, Caledon, Ontario (arts school), cornet, Weston Silver Band

Trumpet: Bach 180S-37, Mouthpiece: Bach 3C

Method

The trumpets chosen for the test were based on popular models found in schools and school rental fleets in the Toronto area. A different geographical area would likely have a different selection, and don't complain because your brand of trumpet wasn't evaluated- there will no doubt be a wider selection in future tests. (Please contact us if you'd like to submit an instrument in future tests.) The Mirage TR200 trumpet was chosen as an example of the lower-cost Chinese instruments found at small music stores and some mass merchants. Similar instruments (or the same with a different name) can be found all over, but we cannot say if they will be identical to the Mirage.

All instruments were new in box provided by the manufacturer or local dealer. The first panelist (Jason Logue) unsealed instruments to evaluate condition "out of the box";

Each panelist play tested the instruments alone in their own, familiar environment. (Practice room, studio, etc), and it was suggested they approach the evaluation as if they were trying trumpets for one of their students in a music store. Each test began with a warm up on their own trumpet, followed by a blindfold (or eyes closed) subjective evaluation of each trumpet (response, intonation, tone quality), giving each a score out of ten. The same tests were then repeated without the blindfold. The player could play whatever they liked to test each trumpet, and a two octave C chromatic scale tongued and slurred as a control.

Each trumpet was evaluated and rated out of a possible "10"; based on the following criteria: (divided between subjective-response, intonation, tone quality and objective ‐build quality, mechanical, and case). The blindfold and non-blindfolded scores of the subjective tests were averaged to obtain the subjective score.

Criteria

Objective

Build quality: overall design, comfort, balance, quality of soldering, polishing and lacquering

Mechanical action: valve action, slide action, fit of main and valve tuning slides, waterkeys

Case: durability, weight, portability, extra handles or straps, room for music, mutes or accessories, fit into locker

Subjective

Response: ease of tone production in all registers and at all volumes, consistency across registers

Intonation: how well the instrument is in tune with itself, and consistency in all registers

Tone quality: combination of players own taste and their opinion of the tone's suitability for student's situation (e.g. though some pro players would find a trumpet "bright"; for their situation, they felt that would be an asset to a student)

[Click here for the results!](#)