Where do I begin?

Head Hunting

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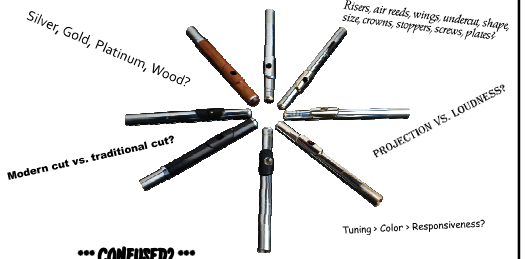
Prepared For 2011 NFA Convention:

The National Flute Association
Inspiring flutists. Enriching lives

What Brings You Here?

- You are the one looking for a new head joint for yourself
- You want to know how to help others find a new head joint (you are a teacher, colleague, friend, parent, relative)
- You need to determine how to choose who to help you
- You just need to know about this

Where to Begin



Preparation and Organization

- Know why you are looking
- Know the *lingo* & factors that affect head joints
- Plan your search
  - Options for testing head joints
  - Your Team
  - Additional Resources
- Try, try, try, try.

WHY are *you* hunting?

The 3Ds:

1. Dissatisfaction
2. Demand
3. Desire

Dissatisfaction

- Make a list of what you do not like with your current head joint.
- Determine what you would like a new head joint to solve.
- Determine if this is reasonable
  - Is it the head joint or the instrument
  - Is it the head joint or your proficiency
  - Make sure you don't try to solve player issues with equipment alone.

Demands

- A playing situation has changed or become more varied
  - Do you need to blend with particular instruments?
  - Do you need to have more power or projection – or less?
  - Do you need to match the texture of a new flute section?
- You have physical limitations that require a new approach

****** Be clear about your needs ******

Desire

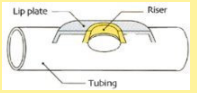
- Is it time for a new sound?
- Describe in as many ways as you can, what you want to sound like.
  - Be specific – color, projection, articulation, etc…

******This will serve as the compass in your search. ******

Know the *lingo*

PARTS OF THE HEAD JOINT

1. Tubing
2. Threaded rod, nut, and cork plate
3. Lip plate
   - Riser
4. Cork
5. Crown



More *lingo…* Parts of Head Joint

- Riser/chimney
- Embouchure hole and plate
- Cork (stopper) assembly
  - Cork
  - Screw (threaded rod)
  - Nut
  - Metal disk (cork plate)
- Wings (Adler wings for Lafin)
- Machined vs. Handmade

More lingo: Projection / Loudness

- Projection

  Projection is the characteristic of how the sound carries to the audience: control of volume, clarity and distinctness to gain greater audibility

vs.

- Loudness

  Loudness is a subjective term describing the ear's perception of a sound. It may or may not be related to projection.

Factors: The Cut

MODERN CUT

- Louder
- Quickly responsive
- Flexible and efficient
- Less overall effort
- Less potential for color variety

TRADITIONAL CUT

- More resistance
- Larger variety of potential tone color
- Flexible yet stable
- Rich full sound
- Requires effort (finesse)

****** Can also be a combination of these ******

Factors: Tuning

- Parabolic shape and taper
  - 150 mm from bottom edge of tube to center of tone hole
  - Enhances or Detracts from flute scale
- Cut and Response
  - Allows more flexibility for player to tune with embouchure adjustments

Factors: Tonal Color

- Factors
  - Material
  - Parabolic curves
  - Embouchure hole size, angle, depth
- Balance between resistance and ease of play
  - Color potential decreases with unbalanced cut for loudness

Factors: Responsiveness

The ease and clarity of articulation, flexibility and dynamics.

Factors

- Cut
  - Advanced players look for more color potential
  - More resistance in traditional cuts give more color potential
- Skill of maker combined with your unique characteristics

Factors: Materials Matter

Wood

Silver

Gold

Platinum

And any combination of the above

Factors: Body & Head

- The body of the flute and the head joint are interdependent.
- It is important to match density of materials between them.
  - Denser head on weaker body, better vibration
  - Too weak head joint for body = "dead" sound
- This also pertains to risers
  - Denser riser material makes head joint vibrate more intensely allowing the body to resonate more

What the head joint can / cannot do

CAN

- Affect projection
- Enhance your unique characteristics (resonators)
- Bring out the best in your existing flute
  - Tuning, color, responsiveness
- Bring out the best in your playing
  - Articulation, color , flexibility

CANNOT

- Make the flute sound like a flute made 100% of another material
- Make up for what does not exist (i.e., *your* abilities)
  - Leads to frustration, indecision, dissatisfaction

Plan the Search

- Gather info from research –
  - Makes, cuts, materials
  - record info in ONE place and keep any marketing materials with your notes for quick access
- Gather your team
  - Keep your help consistent…It is a big commitment.
  - *"Too many ears spoil the advice"*
- Determine your price limit *(this is important!!!)*
- Get out there and try some head joints

Try, try, and try again…

- Find ways to start trying head joints to see what appeals to you:
  - Is there a flute shop near you or within reasonable distance?
  - Ask for flutes on trial
  - Attend flute festivals with exhibitors
- Gather information on makes that get your attention:
  - Talk to colleagues and teachers
  - Talk directly to makers and their representatives

Trying Head Joints

- **Try HJ made of a variety and combination of materials:**
  - Gold, silver, platinum, wood, etc…
  - Get a feel for what the general effect of each material does for timbre
  - Understand that the cut of the head joint determines it flexibility, projection and color potential
- **Beware of making every head joint sound like your old one:**
  - *Allow time*: It will take time to get to know the possibilities of a good head joint
  - Let the head joint give you its sound

Many flute makers offer great suggestions for the process of trying new head joints.

Take notes (please)

Keep track of everything:
This will save you time and confusion

Record

- what you try and where
- what you like/dislike and why
- One notebook or binder for all notes and marketing materials you wish to keep

What's Next?

Additional Resources

- Flute and head joint Makers
  - Ads in flute-related publications
  - Exhibits at festivals and conventions
- Ask the Experts
  - Repair persons
  - Knowledgeable resellers
- Read
- Search the internet

Questions