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sume their normal contours and to make them airtight on the sides. Prolonged soaking, however, especially in too deep water or in a tightly closed container, will make the reed opening too large. An over-soaked reed is unresponsive and encourages the player to bite in order to close the opening. This is dangerous because the player is usually unaware of the resulting em-

bouchure distortion. Flexible tone control by the lip muscles becomes restricted when the reed aperture is so large that excessive jaw pressure must be used to close it.

If the aperture between blades is too small, it can usually be opened sufficiently by putting the reed in the mouth up to the binding and then alternately sucking and blowing air through it.

Producing the Tone

With an adequate reed and instrument a player should be able to produce an acceptable tone. Whether or not he does will depend largely on the effectiveness of his embouchure and the adequacy of his breath support. Let us examine these two aspects of playing.

Embouchure

Webster defines embouchure as follows: "The shaping of lips, tongue, etc., in producing a musical tone, especially on a wind instrument."

What can embouchure do for the oboe player?

1. It provides an airtight connection with the reed.
2. It provides a flexible association between the lips and the reed.
3. It places the reed in a convenient position relative to the tongue.

It is very important to assume this embouchure as simply as possible. There must not be any tensing of the jaw muscles either by jutting the chin forward or by clamping the jaws together.

Let the lower jaw drop (Illust. 2). Then place the tip of the reed about a quarter of an inch in on the red part of the lip, just about where the two lips ordinarily meet (Illust. 3). The lips and reed are then rolled up into the mouth, behind the upper teeth (Illust. 4). Do not close the jaws any more than necessary and do not pull the lips from the reed, which should rest lightly but firmly on the lower lip, supported by the lower teeth. The blades of the reed are covered gently by the lips with only about a sixteenth of an inch of the tip free inside the mouth. The feeling of this embouchure should be one of roundness, with the lips as the smaller end of a funnel which channels air into the reed efficiently and without distortion. The funnel is supported by adequate pressure against the lower teeth.

This embouchure is fairly simple to describe and assume but is not simple to maintain. By

opening up the breathing apparatus and inhibiting the use of the throat and jaw muscles, we build up considerable air pressure against the lips, and this tends to force the lips out of position. The feeling of pressure is necessary and desirable in producing a fine tone, but discretion and patience must be used in cultivating adequate strength and endurance for lip control.

The lips should be placed symmetrically on the reed. Since the upper lip is shorter and less flexible, it will tend to assume a place too far down the reed, thereby exposing more of the upper blade inside the mouth. If the lower jaw normally recedes excessively, a conscious effort to push the lower jaw forward until the lips meet more evenly may be necessary. Otherwise, the upper lip will lose its correct place at the tip of the reed. The muscles that control the lips are located approximately where the red and white parts of the lip meet, and it is this portion which should be taken into the mouth to a position *behind* the upper teeth. When the "gathering" muscle is contracted and the lips puckered, the controlling surfaces or dry part of the lips will be within the mouth and in back of, rather than between, the teeth. The reed, pressing against the flesh below the lip, can and should continue to rest firmly on the lower teeth regardless of the amount of embouchure tension required on the tip of the reed inside the mouth. The embouchure should have a round shape of its own, instead of that of a tight unyielding slot or a soft spongy mass in which the reed is buried.

It is important to associate the tongue position with the embouchure formation, since its correct position is a prerequisite for adequate articulation. The tongue should lie low in the mouth with its tip resting gently against the top of the lower lip. Care should be taken to avoid setting it either under the lip or up in the way of the reed. It is imperative that the air stream have free access to the reed at all times without having to pull the tongue back in the mouth.

Fingering and Trill Fingering Chart

Only the less obvious trills are shown on this chart. Some of the trill fingerings are impossible unless the instrument has the indicated keys. Arrows indicate finger(s) to be moved for the trill.

† auxiliary C key may be substituted for the right little finger.

* if oboe does not have articulated B-C# keys.