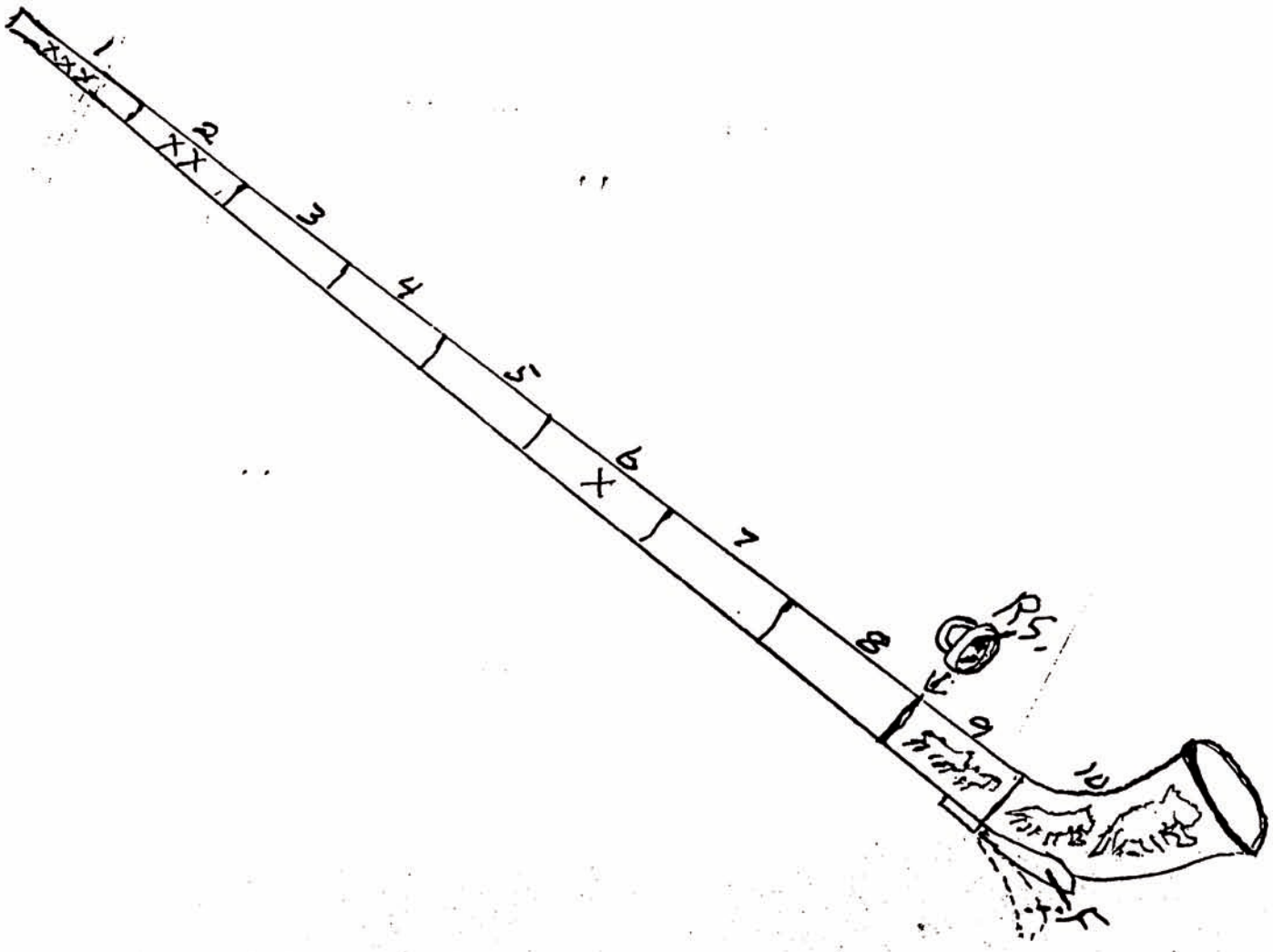
THE SWISS CARBON ALPHORN

ASSEMBLY AND DISASSEMBLY TECHNIQUES



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Sole U.S. Agent for the
Swiss Carbon Alphorn

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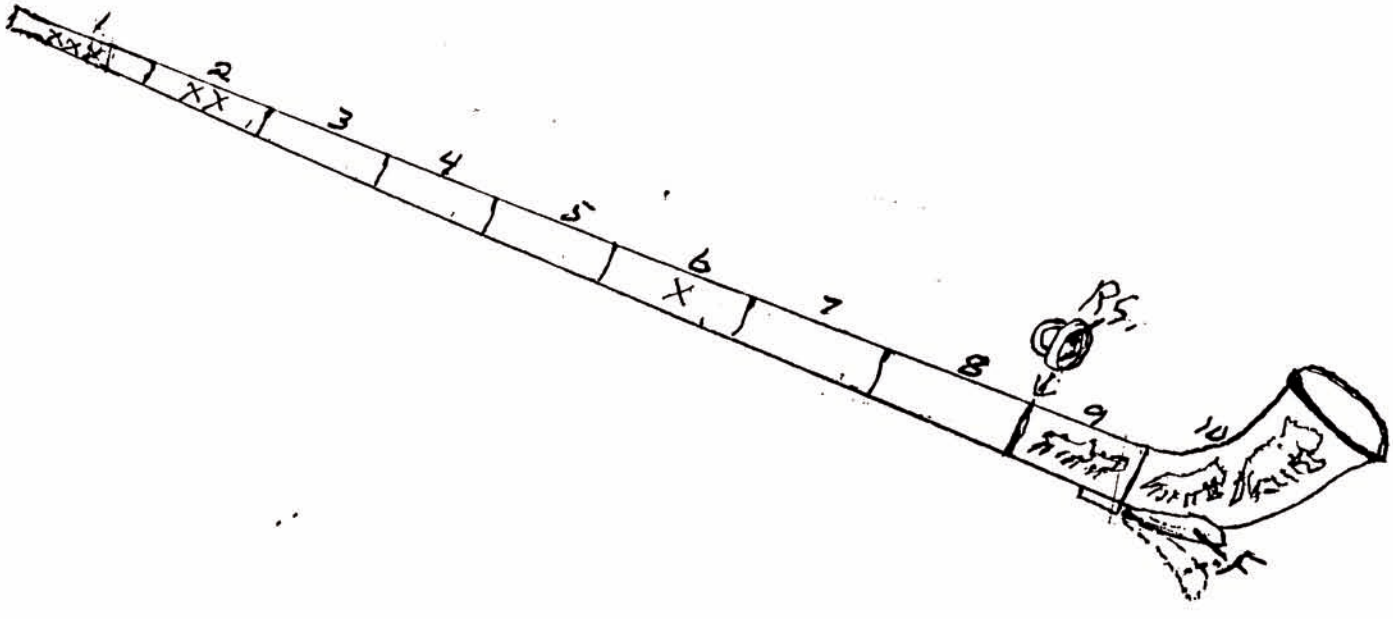

Familiarize yourself with the alphorn as received. Note that there are 10 sections. We will be referring to some of these sections by number.

As received, sections 1 through 8 are collapsed and stored in sections 9 and 10 with a rubber stopper (R.S.) installed in the small end of section 9. Note the pull rope attached to "R.S." This should be considered strictly a means of removing "R.S." and not a carrying device since, in cooler temperatures, it can become somewhat loose.

For shipping and placing the alphorn in its carrying bag, the pedestal or foot (F) follows the contour of the bell (section 10). For playing purposes pull "F" straight out, turn over and replace in receptacle as in dotted drawing of "F". With "F" removed, notice the Velcro tab attached to section 9. This secures section 10 to section 9. By pulling down on the tab, releasing the closure, section 10 may be removed from section 9. To secure section 10 to section 9, reverse this procedure, making sure to align the Velcro parts and fit section 10 into section 9 firmly and secure well the Velcro tab. Use extreme caution concerning the Velcro closure.

1. Do not try to remove section 10 without first making sure the Velcro tab is definitely released.

2. Do not replace section 10 without keeping the Velcro tab away from the Velcro strip attached to section 10.

3. In removing and replacing "F", keep the Velcro on "F" from attaching itself to the Velcro tab. The Velcro on "F" is simply to hold "F" gently in its receptacle.

To extend or telescope the alphorn, it is recommended that, once the R.S. is removed, a finger is inserted in section 1 in the nest of pieces contained in sections 9 and 10. Simply pull this section out. It will of course grip section 2. Secure this connection and continue to pull section 2 and it will grip section 3. Continue this procedure until the alphorn is completely extended (or telescoped). This is the safest method of extending the alphorn. Perhaps you have seen it simply tossed into position. Granted, this is a visual delight and surprise for the audience, but, if the alphorn is tossed too strenuously, a joint or two can become quite stuck. If the tossing method is used, it is highly recommended that it be done so lightly that one should secure each individual piece as needed.

NOW THAT YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE SWISS CARBON ALPHORN, LET US PROCEED!!

THE SIX (6) TONALITIES:

F - This utilizes the longer single-piece section 1. The alphorn arrives in this tonality.

F# This utilizes the shorter single-piece section 1.

With the alphorn fully extended, the key change from F to F# can be accomplished simply by loosening section 1 and letting it slide out the bell-end. Then by placing the shorter section 1 in the bell-end, holding the bell in the air, one can shake gently and the short section 1 will emerge. Tighten it gently and now the alphorn is pitched in F#.

To place the alphorn in other tonalities is somewhat more involved:

G -- With the alphorn collapsed, remove section 10, disassemble complete alphorn, reassembling and substituting the short section 6 for the longer section 6. Now, by using the shorter (F#) section 1, the alphorn is pitched in G.

The tonalities F, F# and G, as described above, are, like other alphorns, untunable. However, there is another section supplied with the alphorn which can be substituted for section 2. This substitution makes the alphorn infinitely tunable. Familiarize yourself with this section. Notice the rubber ring fitted to this section. Grasp the tube on each end and pull gently. You will find that this section is basically two cylindrical pieces which will act as your tuning device. The rubber tuning gripper ring fits firmly on the smaller diameter tube. By grasping the rubber ring firmly and pulling the tube in the direction of the mouthpiece end of the alphorn, the length of the alphorn is increased, thus lowering the pitch. In reverse, the pitch is raised. The rubber ring secures the positioning of this two-piece section.

To install this tunable section into the horn, the horn must be disassembled and the regular section 2 removed. It will be apparent that this tunable section 2 will not fit through section 3. Therefore, separate the two pieces of this tunable section and insert the lower piece through section 3 and then fit the upper piece into the lower half from the direction of the mouthpiece.

USE EXTREME CAUTION to insure that this rubber ring does not come off the top half of this section, since it could be difficult to reinstall. Actually, there is no reason that it should ever be removed.

THREE TONALITIES REMAIN: E, E^b, D.

These are all made and installed in the same manner so we shall treat them as one.

Examine them, find that each is made of three (3) parts, and that each is tunable in itself -- much like tunable section 2. Also, prevent the rubber tuning gripper from coming off the first part. However, if one does come off, a special delrin tool and instructions for reinstalling or replacing is included with each alphorn. Do not misplace this tool. It may prove invaluable.

To install thee tonalities, simply remove the bell section 10, remove whatever tonality section 1 is in the horn, and install E, E^b or D. I highly recommend removing the mouthpiece receiver part of these sections before shaking them through the horn, and then install this tunable receiver part into the end. However, the rubber tuning gripper should fit through section 2.

Since these three tonalities are tunable in themselves, it is never necessary to use the tunable section 2, unless, of course, with experimentation, the playing of the horn seems more suitable to use in this manner.

Note: Use the regular section 6 with these three tonalities; the shorter section 6 is for the G tonality only.

A Few Precautionary Notes:

Remove the mouthpiece after each use to keep it from becoming stuck. It is a good idea to collapse the horn after each use -- also, to keep the sections from becoming frozen in place. The horn is completely washable. It is a good idea to occasionally dismantle the horn and wash and dry inside and out. I find on sections 1 and 2 that it works well to draw a silk bassoon swab through it for drying. Some of the larger sections you can simply push a cloth through them using a wooden dowel or fashion your own swab.

Do not use a wax on the alphorn -- only soap and water.

The worst scenario can be that the sections do become frozen so you can't move them by hand. If that happens, it is a good idea to disassemble the horn to the extent that you can, and then, with the larger of the other sections placed flat on a wood surface, using a wood block to cover the complete circle of the smaller joint, tap it with a hammer, and it will simply fall out.

An aside: The Swiss carbon alphorn is extremely durable. About the only thing that can damage it is really applying great pressure to the bell section or dropping it on concrete. Of course, it could be scratched with a metal object.

Happy Alping!

Use of the "Tuning Gripper" Installation Tool

For installing or reinstalling the small black rubber/plastic "Tuning Gripper" found on the mouthpiece section of the mouth pipe assembly . . . . E, E^b and D tonalities only.

I - Insert Installation Tool (A) as in diagram above.

II - Push the Tuning Gripper (B) over the tool in the direction of the arrow as in diagram above, until it is well onto the tube. Then remove tool.

Be extremely careful that the "Tuning Gripper" does not come off the pipe. If it does, however, this Installation Tool will prove invaluable. **DO NOT MISPLACE IT**!!

Wishing you hours of enjoyment!!

Marvin M McCoy

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