

Simon Lee Cyclotron LB £715

Using recycled materials, another hopeful UK-maker goes forth by Dave Burrluck



Many brave plastic cups gave their lives so this guitar could be born

THERE MUST BE SOMETHING IN the stars, what else would explain the seemingly endless number of new UK-based guitar builders? London-based maker Simon Lee certainly has a novel approach by combining recycled plastic materials with conventional luthiery. His Cyclotron range comes in various shapes, this one with an obvious classic influence. It uses a sandwich-style body construction with two outer facings of

recycled plastic – approx 13mm thick, and made from recycled vending machine coffee cups, named Double Espresso – with a centre filling of maple.

This centre core runs under the strings/bridge and surrounds the control cavity, giving a modern look.

The rest of the guitar is traditional: the maple neck with quite a chunky 'D'-shaped profile, reasonably finished big frets, T-style hardware and Bare Knuckle Brown Sugar single-coil pickups. Let's plug in.

SOUNDS: Despite the airy construction it's a weighty guitar, around 9.5lbs, and while the acoustic response is crisp it lends a solid and not overly resonant foundation to the sounds. So clean tones ring out nicely, ideal for chiming rhythm and arpeggios, with the neck and mixed pickups sounding fulsome and thick. The bridge

SL CYCLOTRON	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
Playability	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★

■ **WE LIKED** Interesting concept; impressive clean performance
 ■ **WE DISLIKED** Substantial weight; 'tight' resonance restricts gained tones

pickup sounds a little thinner and over-bright and, compared to a stock 1969 Fender Telecaster, a little brash.

Verdict

An appealingly novel construction leads to a passable amped performance but one that lacks the earthy resonance of its inspiration. If weight can be reduced and resonance increased, Lee's unique blend shows promise. Here's hoping!

Guitarist RATING ★★★★★

KEY INFO SIMON LEE CYCLOTRON LB **PRICE:** £715 (INC HISCOX CASE) **TYPE:** PLASTIC BODIED ELECTRIC **TEL:** 0208 699 1661

The Wirething £2.99 each

Put the pedal to the metal with this unusual pick by Simon Bradley



Open-minded about your choice of pick? Give The Wirething a try!

WE RECKON THAT MOST seasoned guitarists are more likely to introduce a certain appendage to a rusty bread knife than consider changing their choice of pick. That unassuming sliver of plastic, or whatever, is any player's closest contact

with the strings and, as such, remains an intensely personal preference that, when compromised, can see a nurtured technique fly south for the winter.

For any change to be contemplated there must be serious advantages to be gleaned, such as those theoretically offered by The Wirething. The point of contact comes from a smoothly bent length of .035mm diameter wire affixed to an injection-moulded and contoured acrylic or nylon grip, with the choices of wire ranging between super-hard stainless steel to slightly softer yet non-magnetic copper.

IN USE: The wire itself is micro-smooth polished in order to offer reduced string wear, and we can confirm that The Wirething is simple to use. Of course, if you like lighter, more flexible, plectra then you may have a problem getting used to this pick's rigidity, but if you use metal or ultra-thick units there's very little adjustment

THE WIRETHING	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
In use	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★

■ **WE LIKED** Worth a try if you like your picks super-hard
 ■ **WE DISLIKED** Feels weird at first

required. The rounded wire rolls off the strings to such an extent that we found our speed increased slightly, while the precise attack does give a purer tone.

Verdict

We'd always suggest caution before changing such a vital part of your guitar set-up but, in this case at least, we can recommend The Wirething as something that could open up whole new avenues. £2.99 is a low enough price to ensure that little will be lost with an experiment, so pick one up when you can and give it a go.

Guitarist RATING ★★★★★

KEY INFO THE WIRETHING **PRICE:** £2.99 OR £7.99 FOR FOUR **TYPE:** GUITAR PICK **TEL:** SELECTRON 01795 419460

Nady TD-1 £135



The modern reissue of a genuine classic by Simon Bradley

ALTHOUGH THE COMPANY IS best known for its range of excellent wireless systems, Nady was one of the first manufacturers to produce a tube-loaded overdrive stompbox, which it did in the late eighties.

This modern version comes with all manner of tone and gain switches, plus the ubiquitous internal 12AX7 tube, and although it seems a similar concern to the range of excellent Radial Tonebone products, the ND-1 is half the size and approaching half the price.

As you'd expect, the pedal offers true bypass and the single switch simply

turns the effect on and off with the associated status denoted by the LED shining either green or red. The pedal comes with an external power supply that is connected not with a standard micro-jack but via a screw-in three-pin DIN: gone are the days of kicking the power from your pedal just before that important solo.

SOUNDS: Thanks to three levels of gain, alongside three choices each of high end and mid boost, we find that any dirty sound we can think of, from the subdued strains of the Stones and BB King, to the head-shredding drive of Dimebag and Mick Thomson, are effortlessly recreated with the TD-1. The overdrive is always smooth – unless you consciously wind up the treble, of course – and, as a booster to an already slightly crunchy amp, it works even more impressively.



Verdict

We think that the possibility of having some of the tone options available to call up via a second remote switch would be the icing on this particularly tonesome confection. Nevertheless we can heartily recommend trying one as soon as you can.

The TD-1 is one eighties throwback we're pleased to see

NADY TD-1	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
<p>■ WE LIKED The range of tones and price</p> <p>■ WE DISLIKED Very little but we'd like a second switch for recalling settings</p>	

Guitarist RATING



KEY INFO NADY TD-1 **PRICE:** £135 **TYPE:** TUBE OVERDRIVE/PREAMP PEDAL **TEL:** BILL LEWINGTON 01268 413366

Fender Premium cables from £17.99



You've bought that Strat and Bassman. Forgotten something? by Simon Bradley

OUR CABLE ROUND-UP FROM issue 274 showed that there is an exact science when it comes to designing guitar cables and, as such, it's in the best interest of your tone to buy and use the best ones you can afford.

Fender's Premium cables hide genuine thought within their differing sheaths, and there are three types for different instruments plus two choices of super cool (ie curly) Koil Kords in the range.

Each is based around what Fender calls Differential Cable Architecture, the assembly of which differs slightly with each intended use. For example, the electric guitar cable features a

three-way DCA and the Acoustasonic cable a four-way DCA for improved balance between frequencies, while the bass cables offer superior grade copper conductors intended for a clearer and more natural bass tone.

Each lead offers a straight jack at one end and a HammerHead right-angled jack at the end, for each type, you can choose between a gold version (£24.99) and a Platinum option with an improved spec (\$44.99).

Either Switchcraft, 24-carat gold or silver connectors, a nylon overbraid or PVC jacket, a quirky vintage look and double shielding are just some of the highlights and each lead is supplied in a hefty, Fender-branded display case.

IN USE: We have no complaints as to the performance of any of the leads, and rest assured that the HammerHead jack fits into all guitars – certainly each of those we have in our testing room.



Your tone is only as good as the cable it travels through...

If you value your tone to any degree we'd recommend these without hesitation. And if you can afford \$44.99 for a Fender Platinum electric guitar cable then buy one!

Guitarist RATING



FENDER CABLES	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
In Use	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
<p>■ WE LIKED A good selection of value for money, well-made cables</p> <p>■ WE DISLIKED The packaging is a tad over the top, otherwise nothing</p>	

KEY INFO FENDER PREMIUM CABLES **PRICE:** FROM £17.99 **TYPE:** GUITAR AND BASS CABLES **TEL:** FENDER GBI 01342 331700