Waves iGTR | £69

Practice for the iPod generation. ***Tony Richards*** plugs into Waves' portable personal guitar processor

WHAT IS IT?

iPod-style personal guitar processor for practice on the move

CONTACT

Who: Sonic Distribution
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HIGHLIGHTS

1 Fits in your pocket
2 Cool sounding effects
3 Dead easy to use

SPECS

Connections: 1/4" jack guitar/bass input, 1/8" stereo aux input, 1/8" stereo line/headphones output x 2

Dimensions:
68 x 106 x 21mm

Weight:
85g

Well-respected for their professional studio plug-ins, Waves branched out a couple of years ago into amp and effects simulation, the latest version of which – GTR3 – offers fully produced guitar sounds for recording. The iGTR is a natural spin-off from the technology that powers GTR3 and aims to give guitarists an iPod-sized practice facility that can be used anytime, anywhere.

Running from four LR6 type batteries the iGTR can just fit into your pocket or sit in the supplied clip which will fit onto a convenient belt or guitar strap. If you are at home and want to save on the batteries, it can be powered from the mains via an adapter (not supplied). There's a single jack to take a guitar signal but two stereo outputs for connecting headphones, linking up to a larger system or recording the output. A stereo line input is also provided should you wish to play along with the sounds from, say, an MP3 player.

Operation of the iGTR is dead easy with just a volume control and three 3-way selector switches, each coupled to a recessed knob for selecting and tweaking the sounds. Switch one selects the amp model – either Warm, Normal or Bright – while the adjacent knob sets the amount of Drive. With the second switch you can dial up one of three effects – phaser, tremolo or wah, the speed of the effect being increased by the knob. The third selector chooses one of three ambience effects – Reverb, Chorus or Delay, with the knob adjusting either reverb, chorus mix or delay time.

In Use

The control surface might infer that the range of sounds is quite limited, but there are plenty of different amp/effect/ambience combinations available plus plenty of variations on each.

Of the amps, the main difference between the three seems to be an EQ thing with the emphasis on certain frequencies. Compared to the Normal setting, Bright is Fender-like while Warm has more emphasis on the mid-range frequencies.

The pure amp sound may be a little too dry in your headphones but a touch of reverb dialled in, opens the sound out nicely. The delay effect can do the same trick but, as it's a ping-pong delay, can get a bit annoying in the headphones.

The chorus, phaser, tremolo and wah are all quality effects that add interest to the sound, the wah in particular being a funky sounding auto-wah that can get really chewy.

The clean sounds and the more mildly-overdriven sounds are the most authentic when compared to a real amp but the more overdriven sounds have a harsh edge to them. In an ideal world those sounds would be a bit smoother like those in GTR3 but then the iGTR would have to be way more expensive. As it is, it's an affordable and neatly portable practice facility that should find its way into quite a few guitarists' gig bags. FM

FutureMusic VERDICT

BUILD
VALUE
EASE OF USE
VERSATILITY
RESULTS

If you want to practice with a full sound wherever you might be, the iGTR will certainly do the trick.

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