

TRACE ELLIOT AH600-7 WITH 1028H & 1518C CABS £1,099, £499 & £499
BASS AMPS



Trace Elliot AH600-7 with 1028H & 1518C cabs

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An increase in power and other upgrades means that this Trace Elliot classic offers more bang for your buck *by Roger Newell*

Without doubt, anything electronic these days is in a constant state of flux. Whether it be a domestic appliance, HD television or the latest mobile phone – as soon as it's on the market, the next version is already designed and entering the pre-production stage. Fortunately amplification design is far less prone to this constant reinvention, and yet nothing is immune to progress.

This new Trace Elliot head is a case in point. The original seven-band design was a big success, but with a few modifications and a hike in the power rating, this new version

leaps forward with new life and vitality. So what exactly is all the fuss about?

Well, although this is the 'baby' of the updated designs (the 12-band EQ designs include a valve drive circuit), it still offers a good variety of sounds with significant output and with an illuminated front panel, no-nonsense layout, and tough covering and metal corners for protection – this could be nothing but a Trace Elliot head. The general design has been well tried and tested and is in no need of an overhaul, but electronically it's now a more efficient and powerful beast than the original.

That illuminated front panel is eminently gig-friendly and the single input makes use of an associated Hi/Lo switch for bass-type matching. Control layout is traditional for the brand and logically arranged, but we would still prefer the connection points for effects, DI and Line Out to be at the back. Trace Elliot always supplies its heads and cabinets with slip covers and leads and here the head also comes with the BFC-4 four-function foot controller at no extra cost.

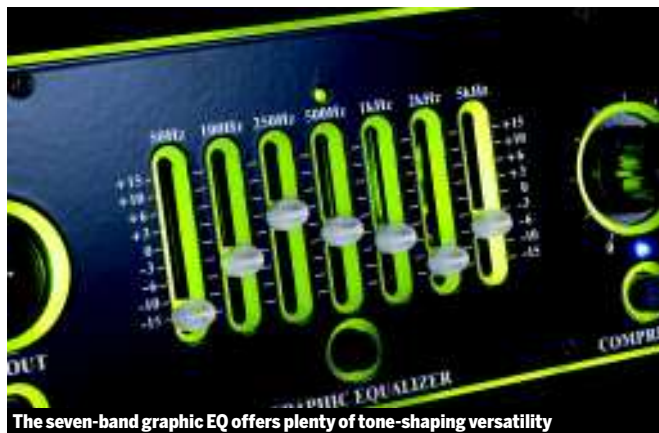
Sounds

In order to get the full benefit from this head, we've chosen

The Rivals

Ashdown's **ABM 500 EVO III** head (£699) comes close in power rating with 575 watts. With solid-state and dual-triode tube preamp stages, it has onboard compression and a sub-harmonic octave generator. The **Laney Nexus FET** head (£890) delivers 650 watts RMS and combines a valve preamp with MOS-FET output stage. It also offers a six-band EQ. We were mightily impressed by the tiny **TC Electronic RH450** head (£1,029) in issue 324, and although at 450 watts it's less powerful, it has a lot built into its small footprint – if you want portability then this is the way to go.

the 2 x 10 and 1 x 15 cabinets. Although you can achieve good results with either of these (or indeed any of the wide range of cabinets available) this combination offers excellent sound and style versatility. Both cabs have Speakon and jack sockets, they're front-ported, tuned and constructed from



The seven-band graphic EQ offers plenty of tone-shaping versatility

popular so are light in weight and relatively easy to transport.

Right from the start the sound is classic Trace Elliot, with clean note definition, plenty of available tone manipulation and plenty of trouser-flapping low-end depth. The pre-shape circuit is a great feature that provides a distinctive voice from the moment you switch it in. Whether traditional tones or a more edgy modern sound is required you can use this pre-shape as a start point then simply adjust the EQ sliders to fine tune to your preference. But, of course, the EQ is fully capable of providing a rich variety of tones with or without the pre-shape option.

The fully adjustable compressor is mightily effective too. It's immediately apparent even on the lowest of settings but it really tightens the sound as you pile it on, enabling you to play harder and get a real boost from your playing. But like the amp as a whole, everything works to the fullest extent – there are no extreme or unusable sounds, just plenty of manipulation throughout the sensible tonal range. What more could you ask for?

Verdict

Trace Elliot has provided this head with solid tonal response and clarity set at a new level. Coupled to the cabinets, this is one of the best Trace bass rigs we've ever tested. It's a real wall of sound from a medium stack and it possesses a size-to-sound power ratio that's extremely impressive. The bass frequency response is fabulous and when you consider this is the lower end of what's available within the range as a whole, you can't help but feel that the brand name has the potential to reach new heights. Go on, plug in. **G**

The Bottom Line

We like: Trademark Trace sounds; solid delivery; cabinet design; the extras

We dislike: The socket arrangement isn't great

Guitarist says: If a real bass stack does it for you then this is a winner, but if you want something more compact then the fresh combo versions of both seven- and 12-band EQ models will be available soon

Trace Elliot AH600-7 Head

PRICE: £1,099

ORIGIN: Designed and manufactured in UK, assembled in USA

TYPE: Solid-state bass head

OUTPUT: 600watts RMS @ 4 ohms

DIMENSIONS: 491 (w) x 335 (d) x 157mm (h)

WEIGHT (kg/lb): 15/33

CHANNELS: Single, with Hi/Lo switch

CONTROLS: Input gain, pre-shape switch, EQ switch/slider bank, compressor switch & rotary control, output level, mute switch

FOOTSWITCH: BFC-4 four-function foot controller for Pre-shape (yellow), Graphic (green) Compressor (blue) & Mute (red) is included

ADDITIONAL FEATURES: Seven-band EQ, pre-shape circuit, compressor, effects loop, mute, balanced line output

OPTIONS: None

RANGE OPTIONS: AH600-12 costs £1,199 and the AH1200-12 is £1,499

Trace Elliot

01536 461234

www.trace-elliott.co.uk

1028H Bass Cabinet

PRICE: £499

ORIGIN: UK

OUTPUT: 400 watts RMS @ 8 ohms

DIMENSIONS: 615 (w) x 435 (d) x 508mm (h)

WEIGHT (kg/lb): 25.6/56.3

SPEAKERS: Two 10-inch special design Celestions

RANGE OPTIONS: The 800W 1048H (4 x 10) at £649; the 1,600W 1084H (8 x 10) at £1,099

1518C Bass Cabinet

PRICE: £499

ORIGIN: UK

OUTPUT: 300 watts RMS @ 8 ohms

DIMENSIONS: 615 (w) x 435 (d) x 508mm (h)

WEIGHT (kg/lb): 20.9/46

SPEAKERS: One 15-inch special design Celestion

RANGE OPTIONS: The 500W 1518 (1 x 15) at £499; the 500W 1528 (2x 15) at £699 and the 800W 1015H (2 x 10 & 1 x 15) at £749. The 500W 1818 (1 x 18) costs £699



Test results

Build quality	★★★★★
Features	★★★★☆
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★☆

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

