

Pacific SX Series Acrylic Snare Drums

From £199 | PDP's new acrylic snares cement its reputation for cool gear at cool prices, writes **Jordan McLachlan**

ESSENTIALS



PRICES

Pacific SX Series Acrylic Snare drums
14"x5" Blue £199
14"x7" Mud Flap £299

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Coming up with an affordable product series that sits below its flagship lines is no easy task for a high-end manufacturer. If the cheaper stuff is no good it tarnishes the reputation of the posh stuff, and if it's too good there's a danger of big-money sales being lost to the value-for-money range. When it's done right, however, everyone's a winner.

Such has been the case with Drum Workshop and its respected sub-brand Pacific. DW kits are the stuff of dreams for many, and so the Pacific range allows access to some of that DW flavour at a price that's rather more palatable.

It's not enough simply to bask in reflected glory, however, and Pacific has had to win its own accolades. This the Mexican-built brand has done with a variety of excellent and well-priced kits and snares over the last few years. Added to that, one of the brand's greatest assets has been its emerging personality. Pacific has consistently come up with drums of real character, and with the recent introduction of an array of acrylic snare drums, the brand shows no sign of letting up in the entertaining instrument department.

Back to the Future

Drums are the most traditional of instruments, yet even today plastic has something of the future about it; acrylic drums were cool in the '70s when they

represented the cutting edge of design, now they're a retro statement that's often as much about influences and history as sound and aesthetics. Whatever, there's little doubt that they're still cool.

Acrylic drums were always popular with a wide range of players. It wasn't just blustering heavy rockers who appreciated their various attributes – Billy Cobham, Max Roach and Karen Carpenter all used them at some point.

And it's interesting to find that Pacific has seen fit to introduce a decent choice of sizes in its SX acrylic snare series, catering to a range of playing situations and musical genres: cute little 10"x6"s, wide-appeal 14"x5"s and whacking great 14"x7"s are all represented.

Loud Colours

There really is a rainbow to choose from – the pale blue 14"x5" and black 'Mud Flap' 14"x7" here are amongst the most sedate in the series. In terms of construction, the pair shares much in common, with divergence limited to snare throw-off, size and batter heads.

The blue beauty employs a neat throw-off whose lever operates in-line with the shell, Supraphonic-style. It's a smaller device than that on the 14"x7", and it's supremely positive in its action. Releasing and engaging the snare wires happens in slick fashion and there's a satisfying 'click' as the lever locks in place at the top of its travel (with wires 'switched-in'). The chunkier throw on the

The Mud Flap Girl

is a legendary US icon introduced on car parts in the 1970s. And she suits PDP's black snare perfectly





Fit and Finish is pleasingly clean on both drums, noticeably on the clear blue 14"x5". Neither looks like a budget option

Mud Flap snare is rather more prepossessing and arguably suits this bigger drum's dimensions better.

Again, operation is as smooth as you'd like it to be, and a drum-key bolt at the top of the tensioner allows for easier tweaking of tightness with the snares in the 'on' position.

Plastic Fantastic

The shells are beautifully constructed. Seams are sited next to the throw-offs, where they're unobtrusive and completely smooth to the touch. The tricky job of inlaying the bright green Mud Flap girls round the shell of the black drum is to be applauded, as is the sonic performance of both drums. The tight, dry, focussed retort that you'd expect from acrylic is all here, but there's also enough harmonic activity to ensure a nicely lively voice from each.

Unusually, the blue drum is fitted with a clear batter head – there's no doubt that being able to see all the clean, hazy blue

internals is a treat, and the choice of head also works as far as your ears are concerned. The 5" depth means that the extra openness offered by the lack of coated playing surface is kept under control. And of course it's a simple task to swap to something with a little added dryness if need be.

The black 7" is a belter, too. This time the coated batter is well-chosen (the overtones from the deeper shell benefit from being reined in a tad), and the result is a big, brash rocker of a snare, with plenty of gutsy mid-range to cut through guitars. While the 5" is a nice, well-balanced, funky all-rounder, the 7" is unsurprisingly the better choice for rude rock 'n' roll. In terms of sound as well as 'risqué' lady logos **R**

RHYTHM VERDICT

The sheer number of snare drums on offer to players at the moment is staggering, and often products (however decent) are released that seem to offer little new. With the SX acrylics range, however, PDP have done us proud. Wonderful aesthetics coupled with very nice build and finish, and lovely tones, make for very tempting propositions. And while some might shy away from using an acrylic snare as a main drum if they've not done so before, the price at which this pair is available makes them – almost – impulse purchases. Go on, treat yourself.

+ Great concept, well executed and at a good price

- Won't make you play like Bonham

RATING ★★★★★

Mansfield has its own Drum Store at last!

Mansfield's Drum Store on the 1st floor of Mansfield's Music Store - Mills Music; Just up from the Market Place

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