

Quicktest

Tech 21 Boost Chorus £199

Capturing the sound of the seventies...

CONTACT: Rocky Road PHONE: 01494 535333 WEB: www.tech21nyc.com



For the design of the Boost Chorus, Tech 21 says that it has gone back to the seventies when “choruses were rich, smooth and manly”. We wouldn’t take issue with rich and smooth, but manly? Hmm...

Where many chorus pedals find themselves with just a pair of speed and depth knobs, the Boost Chorus pushes the boat out and adds another four – a mix control adds in the amount

of effect you need up to a 100 per cent wet signal, the tone knob operates an analogue circuit that offers treble boost or treble cut, while the level/boost knob adjusts the output to a predetermined level when the pedal is engaged, or can be used to set the amount of signal in a parallel effects loop. The secret weapon is the pre-delay knob, which sets the delay time of the chorus from 0-50ms – a range that will also conjure up

mild flanging and some doubled sounds. On top of this there’s a multi voice switch that creates additional choral voicings for a thicker sound.

Sounds

With so much tweakability, this is a very capable pedal that delivers myriad flavours of chorusing and, yes, it can do that seventies sound, giving a good account of itself next to our own vintage CE-1, CE-2 and Clone Theory.

Verdict

This is one seriously versatile chorus pedal, it’s certainly rich and smooth but we can’t decide whether it’s manly. The companion bass version may be that... it should at least have a deeper voice. [TC]

The Bottom Line

We like: Loads of controls to create a wide range of sounds

We dislike: No stereo output; battery compartment lid could get lost

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★



G7th Newport capo £24.95

Brit-designed capo that improves on the classic Shubb

CONTACT: G7th PHONE: 01328 878 931 WEB: www.G7th.com

G7th’s original Performance capo is unfeasibly stylish, functional and for a change was designed in the UK by Nick Campling. But for some it’s a little weighty and, with its instant grip, seems almost too magical in the way it works. The new Newport capo is lighter in weight and the release lock of the original is replaced by a tension adjustment mechanism that, once set, is easily installed and removed with one hand. Put another way, it’s a 21st century makeover of the fabled Shubb.

In Use

For someone who is joined at the hip to his or her beloved Shubbs, the Newport can seem like a futuristic pretender to the throne. But the Shubb is not without its idiosyncrasies and after just a couple of gigs with the Newport, well, to us

it’s faster to use, improves on tuning stability and frankly makes our trusted Shubb look rather old-fashioned. We tried it on various Martin, Taylor, Fender (old and new), PRS and Gibson acoustics and electrics. No problems.

Verdict

Stylish, elegant and extremely practical, the Newport updates and improves on what has been regarded as the ‘best’ capo on the market. It’s a tad more expensive, but its performance more than justifies it. [DB]

The Bottom Line

We like: Lightweight, highly function design; improves on our beloved Shubb

We dislike: Nothing

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

PrimeVibe Instrument Seasoning Device £99

Making your new guitar old?

CONTACT: Synergy PHONE: 0121 270 6485 WEB: www.prime-vibe.com

Anyone who's owned a well-made acoustic or electric will probably agree that the more you play it, the better it sounds. And while there's some complex physics involved, not to mention plenty of speculation, many players and makers have experimented with accelerating the aging or seasoning of their instruments. A lot of makers recommend simply standing your guitar in front of your hi-fi speakers to season it, while others use vibrational techniques.

PrimeVibe almost combines both. A simple 7W per side mini amplifier connects to two circular transducers that lay on the top of your instrument. Plug

in your music source – mp3 player or computer – and your acoustic acts like a rather funky speaker. Then you leave it gently vibrating the top with your music... for a recommended 100 hours.

In Use

Well, this is the longest Quick Test in the history of Guitarist magazine and it's far from conclusive. We've had the PrimeVibe pumping out music on a brand new Hofner nylon-string for some 100 hours, annoying ourselves and no doubt the neighbours. The result? No difference is what we'd like to say, but we actually heard a subtle sweetening of

the tone and with it a little added depth. We think.

Verdict

There are many ifs and buts with this, but having tried it we're intrigued. It certainly seems to do something positive. We have many more instruments to try – look out for part two shortly... [DB]

The Bottom Line

We like: Well, it's definitely doing something...

We dislike: ...though we're not sure exactly what!

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★



The transducer sits atop your guitar

Native Instruments Vintage Compressors £199

Three classic studio compressors modelled for Guitar Rig

CONTACT: Native Instruments PHONE: N/A WEB: www.native-instruments.com

Native Instruments offers expansion of its Guitar Rig amp and effects software via models from the Complete range, with

the latest offering being Vintage Compressors: a set of three studio compressors designed in conjunction with

SoftTube that can be bought as a collection or individually (€99 each). What you get are the VC 76, VC 2A and VC 160 compressors – models of classic units that have graced the processing racks of top studios for decades.

Sounds

To use one of the compressors you just drag and drop it into your virtual rig. There's loads of versatility here as you are getting three different approaches to compression – FET, Opto and VCA – and a range of ways for you to apply it. A wet/dry control lets you carry out parallel compression by adding a proportion of compressed sound to the signal, rather than squashing the lot. There's also a side chain facility

plus, on the VC 160 and the VC 2A, adjustable low-cut to stop lower frequencies triggering the compressor.

Among a huge range of uses for these three we've found that the VC76 is great for keeping a guitar present in a mix while adding a little grit, the VC2A is really smooth and works a treat on levelling out vocals and the VC160 can really improve a DI'd bass sound.

Verdict

Anyone who uses Guitar Rig for recording will appreciate the fact that these classy compressors add so much more scope for treating any audio – not just guitars. [TC]

The Bottom Line

We like: Three distinct compressor types; added utility via wet/dry; low cut and side chain facilities

We dislike: We'd like them more if the pound/euro exchange rate was more in our favour...

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★ >



The compressors can simply be dragged into your Guitar Rig workspace

Eagle Mountain Lock-It Guitar Strap £19.99

A strap with built-in strap locks. Does it work?

CONTACT: JHS PHONE: 01132 865381 WEB: www.lockitstraps.com

Usually there's little you can say about guitar straps – you like the look of the thing and you buy it. But this new idea from Eagle Mountain is a little bit different. It's certainly not the only locking strap that we're aware of, but it is unique in that fitted to the stitched leather ends of the tough, seat-belt-like webbed strap is a simple but innovative sprung locking mechanism.

In Use

Above the strap's attachment hole, at each end of the strap, is a small button that you simply pull back, fit the strap over your strap button and release. Hey presto, the strap is locked onto the button. It doesn't seem as

secure as the metal systems from Dunlop and Schaller, but in reality it works extremely well and fitted over all the strap buttons we tried, including those large-flange PRS buttons; the only thing it struggled on were a couple of large diameter endpin jack strap buttons. The strap ends are a little longer beyond the strap attachment point than most others, which can be a problem with heel-mounted acoustic guitar strap buttons. But again, it's no deal breaker.

Verdict

Just £20 for instant strapped-on security? You'd be daft not too. [DB]



The Bottom Line

We like: Neat innovation; good quality strap; saves cost of retro-fit strap lock systems

We dislike: Only the slightly extended strap ends that incorporate the mechanism

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

Inflector Saddle Setter Texas Blues £26.95

Need to set your action in a hurry? Take a look at this...

CONTACT: Inflector EMAIL: enquiry@inflector.com WEB: www.inflector.com

Dave Ellis is a professional guitarist who, frustrated by keeping six or seven Strats in fine fettle when on the road, came up with this: the Inflector.

It's a piece of machined steel that, when placed upright over your Strat's saddles, enables you to adjust each to a preset height. So, obvious questions...

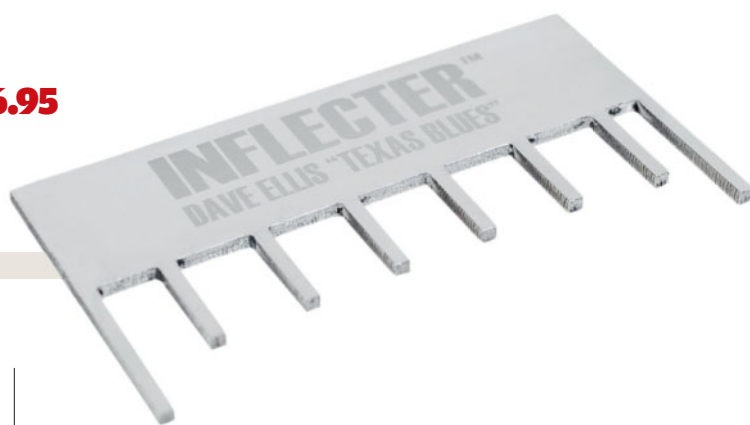
What about different kinds of Strats? It's designed for guitars with fingerboard radii of between 9.5 and 12 inches though Ellis says it'll be fine with vintage, 7.25-inch boards.

Height? There are a number of variants: our review sample

is 'Texas Blues' which is designed to give a high-ish action for heavy strings and E_b tuning. (There are also Voodoo Rock/medium and Swedish Neo-Classic/low versions). Can you use it with any saddles? As long as they fit between the outer legs, but be aware of very deep string grooves – prongs sit on the saddle, not the string.

In Use

Placed so the outer legs straddle the high and low E saddles on an American Vintage Strat, after adjustment the Texas Blues Inflector returns a string



height of 3.1mm/2mm on the low/high E strings at the 17th fret – SRV's preferred setup. It doesn't take neck relief into account (the other big variable in action height); it assumes your truss rod adjustment is in line with Fender specs. That may not be how you like to have yours set, of course.

Verdict

The Inflector does what it says on the tin: helps set your saddles to a predetermined

height. It's quick and easy to use and could replace your ruler and radius gauge... as long as you like one of the three available preset heights. [MT]

The Bottom Line

We like: Very well made; simple to use

We dislike: It only addresses part of the action equation

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★