

DW AND PDP MINI-PRO AND NEW YORKER KITS

From £509 to £1,379 Revamped street kits from DW and PDP should suit any budget...

WORDS: TOM BRADLEY

Since the popularity of Sonor's Jungle Kit in the 1990s, there has been an ongoing demand for scaled-down kits. In more recent years Ludwig released the Questlove signature BreakBeats kit, and now we see DW staking a claim with the high-spec Mini-Pro and the entry-level PDP New Yorker.

Build

Originally designed as a high-end kit for children (yes, you did read that right), the Mini-Pro allegedly caused a bit of a stir among DW artists and has been re-released as part of the Design Series. Aimed now, not just at the youngsters, but to more of a grown-up market.

WE'RE EVALUATING TWO DIFFERENT ENDS OF THE MINI KIT MARKET, LOOKING AT WHAT YOU CAN GET AT THE BUDGET AND TOP-ENDS

The four-piece kit for review comprises a 10"x6" rack tom, 13"x9" floor tom, 12"x5" snare drum and 16"x14" bass drum, all constructed using North American maple. The kit's snare features a 10-ply HVX construction, while the rest of the kit is an eight-ply HVL construction. The kit is also available in one other size option which incorporates a beefier 18"x14" bass drum and a slightly wider 13"x5" snare drum. Both configurations are offered in two available lacquer finishes: Black Satin or Tobacco Burst (as review). These are completed with the Design Series' own Mini-Turret lugs, True-Pitch tuning, Suspension Tom Mounts (STM - which minimises shell contact) and the white Design Series badge.

The basic shell pack is supplied with obvious essentials such as a rack tom mount for use with the drilled bass drum, extra long legs for the shallow floor tom, and low mass

spurs and ratchet bass drum mount for the tiny 16" bass drum.

The PDP New Yorker is presented in just one size configuration: 10"x8" rack tom, 13"x12" floor tom, 13"x6" snare and 18"x14" bass drum. The New Yorker is available in two sparkle wrap finishes. These are Diamond sparkle and Sapphire sparkle (as review). While the PDP comes with regular, telescopic bass drum spurs, the DW has removable, lightweight L-shaped spurs that work more like floor tom legs. The kit is made from six-ply poplar.

The New Yorker's mission statement is to offer a high quality mini kit with features such as the Teardrop Mini lugs at an entry-level price point.

Both the Mini-Pro and the New Yorker feature triple flanged chrome hoops for the snare and toms and wood bass drum hoops.

Hands On

In putting these kits to the test we are not looking at pitting them against each other. Instead we're evaluating two different ends of the mini-kit market, looking at what you can get in the budget and top-end reaches.

With that in mind we kick off with the DW Mini-Pro. As you would expect from a mini-kit carrying a £1,269 price tag, quality can be found at just about each and every turn, particularly when it comes to craftsmanship. This may be a shrunk-down DW, but the company's top bods have not let up on quality control at all. From the lacquer finish to the sturdy hardware, the Taiwanese-built Mini-Pro looks and feels beautifully well made. One quick bone of contention, >

MINI-TURRET LUGS

The Design Series mini lugs are a perfect fit for the scaled-down Mini-Pro





SIZE OPTIONS

The Mini-Pro is also available with an 18" kick and 13" snare



PRICES

New Yorker: £509
Mini-Pro: 16" kick config: £1,269; 18" kick config: £1,379

SHELL MATERIAL

Mini-Pro - bass drum: 8-ply HVL, snare and toms: 10-ply HVX maple; New Yorker: 6-ply poplar

SNARE STRAINER AND WIRES

Mini-Pro: Mag Throw-off and 16-strand TrueTone wires. New Yorker: classic-style throw-off and 20-strand generic

BEARING EDGES

Both 45°, slightly rounded.

FINISHES AVAILABLE

Mini-Pro: Black Satin lacquer, Tobacco Burst lacquer (as pictured)
New Yorker: Diamond sparkle, Sapphire sparkle (as pictured)

HOOPS

Both triple flanged chrome for snare and toms; wooden hoops for bass drum

SHELL AVAILABILITY

Mini-Pro: 10"x6" rack, 13"x9" floor, 12"x5" snare and 16"x14" kick or 10"x6" rack, 13"x9" floor, 13"x5" snare and 18"x14" kick;
New Yorker: 10"x8" rack, 13"x12" floor, 13"x6" snare and 18"x14" kick

SUPPLIED HEADS

Mini-Pro: DW/Remo USA heads; New Yorker: PDP/Remo China heads

NUMBER OF LUGS PER DRUM

Mini-Pro - kick: 16 Mini Turret lugs, snare: 8 dual-rod lugs, rack and floor toms: 12 Mini Turret lugs;
New Yorker - kick: 16 Teardrop Mini Turret lugs, snare: 8 Dual Turret lugs, rack and floor toms: 12 Teardrop Mini Turret lugs

CONTACT

DW and PDP
dwdrums.com;
pacificdrums.com



Watch our DW & PDP kits hands-on video demo at <http://bit.ly/DWandPDP>

GEAR REVIEW

They say...

Beto Benitez *Media and Promotions Planner for DW*



There seems to be a real demand for mini/smaller kits right now, why do you think that is?

"Ease of transport is very important to drummers. A gigging drummer has hardware, cymbals and drums to transport. In playing smaller drum sizes you would often sacrifice the sound of your kit, thus the return of the Mini-Pro."

What sort of style do you see them predominantly leaning towards, eg: funk/hip-hop/breakbeats? Or could they work for gigging drummers?

"John Good and the DW Custom Shell Shop in California bring you HVL, the same technology that is standard on our latest Collector's Series Cherry drums. HVL grain orientation and slightly thicker 1/32" plies of North American maple are a potent combination that delivers a full tonal spectrum, attack, punch, and sonic versatility. Design Series shells are tailored for just about every style of music."

Am I right in saying, the Mini-Pro features maple shells manufactured in Taiwan? The PDP is a poplar shell, is it also manufactured in Taiwan?

"PDP New Yorker is made in China; DW Mini Pro is made in Taiwan."

however, is that the kit has a toothed clamp design, which despite feeling more sturdy than alternative designs, does not offer the same convenience when positioning the rack tom. A small gripe, but one worth noting. One piece of hardware for which the Mini-Pro does get full marks, however, is its baseplate. DW has opted for an adjustable ratchet mount here and right from the off it works without a hitch.

On a related note, both kits have had a semi-circular shape cut from the bass drum hoop which allows extra room for the bass drum beater stem. This eliminates any issues

of the hoop being in the way (which can be the case with some smaller bass drums), meaning the pedal can be placed closer, and a squarer contact between beater and batter head is achieved.

Now, onto the sound. The Mini-Pro is an absolute beauty to play all round. I also have the pleasure of taking this kit to a funk gig which suits it down to the ground. The kick drum could hardly be described as booming, but at a mere 16", it still packs a surprising punch. With one of the provided dampening cushions inside the unported drum, it produces more of a focussed thud that had

PDP NEW YORKER

Kit comes in just one configuration: 18"x14", 10"x8", 13"x12" & 13"x6" snare

FINISH

New Yorker is available in Diamond Sparkle and Sapphire Sparkle wraps

HOOPS

Bass drum hoops on both PDP's New Yorker kit and DW's Mini-Pro are wood





no issues in successfully cutting through the mix of the loud band. The toms have the ability to truly sing within a wide range of tunings. Super-low tunings don't really do much to complement the small, shallow toms, but with a quarter-turn or two the toms really come into their own.

I must admit, though, the 13" floor tom is an absolute devil to tune. In a hurry I settle for the best I can get and the trusty Moongel comes to the rescue. The cheeky little 12"x5" snare though is the crowning glory of this miniature kit. Once again, low tunings are not advised, however it's unlikely that anyone would want them from a kit of this nature. This snare is able to produce a healthy, balanced backbeat with a generous snare response, produced by the undersized 16-strand snare wires. For my money though, crank this bad-boy up nice and tight for an awesome Steve Jordan-esque open yet short snap. It's so good it would certainly make a fantastic, main or side snare in its own right.

Overall, it is fair to say that tuning-up will bring the best out of these drums given their dimensions. They would be well-suited to hip-hop, electro, Latin and funk styles. The bass and toms are also able to sound convincingly jazzy when tuned up high, although of course are much more focused than that of a bebop-style kit

As you may have guessed, I loved the Mini-Pro. Anyone in the market for a kit of this nature who has a few quid to spend should look no further than the DW Mini-Pro. After all, what's not to like about a kit that looks and sounds like a Collector's Series that has been hit with a shrink-ray?

Moving to the other end of the mini kit market, and we have the PDP. At just £509 the New Yorker is tantalisingly priced, but there are a couple of issues that quickly rear their heads. I refer to the sometimes crudely

overlapping sparkle wrap and the odd unsanded surface. Aesthetically not ideal, but when you're talking about a kit for just over 500 notes there are sacrifices that will need to be made.

On the plus side for the New Yorker, the L-Rod tom mount features a ball-and-socket joint which allows easy adjustment. The kit also has an extra in-built clamp on the tom arm which allows the use of extra hardware, like a cymbal boom arm. Moving on to the bass drum pedal mounting system, the kit is supplied with a metal arm and welded baseplate that is designed to attach to a wing nut on the bottom of the bass drum (much like a floor tom leg). This is of course necessary to ensure the beater can strike the centre of the drum. I must admit though, I find it to be an unusual solution. It takes longer than expected to get it set up perfectly to the point where any pedal tilting is eliminated.

Out of the box the New Yorker's 18"x14" bass drum sounds a little, to our ears, um... boxy. No amount of tuning and re-tuning can get it sounding how I expect it should. Using the provided dampening pillow strip against the batter head certainly seems to help in concentrating the sound and reducing unwanted overtones, though. As is the usual story, replacing the stock heads would inevitably be a good idea and will usually help to improve the sound dramatically.

There were no such problems with the toms, which were able to absolutely sing at medium to high tunings, with the poplar shells yielding a surprising amount of resonance for small, albeit deep drums. I did, however, find the floor tom fiendish to tune. Perhaps there is a special knack to 13" floor toms. Either that or it just takes a bit more finesse in comparison to the standard 16".

The snare, like the bass drum, is harder to



1 SONOR SELECT FORCE JUNGLE DRUM KIT
We say: "Truly a fun kit. I couldn't stop playing it and it always brought a smile to my face."



2 LUDWIG QUESTLOVE BREAKBEATS KIT
We say: "This kit will suit any style of 'groove' player and is even a great quality set for kids."

get an agreeable sound from. Even cranked as tight as it will go, it does not quite reach the snap that I am looking for, but I can't deny that it certainly gets the job done (especially considering its meagre price). Admirably, it also refuses to choke-out under pressure and delivers a sweet, snare-heavy backbeat. This is helped by the throw-off system which has the ability to sit between an on and off position - always a winner in my book.

I had fun playing this kit and I liked it. The sparkle finish also grows on me every time I look at it. It is perhaps not quite for me but it is potentially perfect for a youngster or perhaps a street player or busker, and you can't argue with the price tag. **R**

DW Mini-Pro

VERDICT: With excellent build quality and playability, the Mini Pro has everything that you might expect from a top-end DW kit, except of course the dimensions! It's undeniably cute, too.

BUILD QUALITY	★★★★★
PLAYABILITY	★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★
RHYTHM RATING	★★★★★

PDP New Yorker

VERDICT: The New Yorker is perhaps a little rough around the edges but certainly a lot of fun. It would make a cracking little club kit or an great first set for a younger player.

BUILD QUALITY	★★★★★
PLAYABILITY	★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★
RHYTHM RATING	★★★★★