

NEW GEAR

EXCLUSIVE



THE PILLOW
is an optional dampening extra and the Powersonics' pièce de résistance

TWO FOAM RINGS
aid in the production of muted, mic-friendly tones

REMO POWERSONIC BASS DRUM HEAD

From £36.40 Just how fancy can a bass drum batter head get? Geoff Nicholls marvels at Remo's latest creation

The past decade has seen a move by head manufacturers towards more measured, tidier methods of controlling bass drum boom. Evans' EMAD and Aquarian's Super-Kick set the pace, and now Remo has come up with the PowerSonic.

Build

The PowerSonic has twin plies of 7 mil Mylar, and is available clear or white-coated in standard sizes from 18" to 24". It employs a dual dampening system: two ¾" wide foam rings fixed to the inside of the head just in from the perimeter, and an optional 'pillow' - a doubled-over piece of thin foam with rubberised backing - fastened to the lower outside of the head by three press studs. Remo calls this its 'External Snap-on Dampening System', or ESDS. It's evidently a response to Evans' EMAD, which employs interchangeable foam rings that slot into plastic trays around the head perimeter. Each PowerSonic also

comes with a Falam impact pad to protect the head at the point of beater impact.

Hands On

So while Evans' EMAD has two interchangeable foam rings, Remo's PowerSonic has two permanently attached slimline foam rings. These apply edge dampening, subduing the higher overtones and leaving the darker tones behind. Ideal for a bass drum. The effect is that the note appears lower and throatier. And tuning is idiot-proof.

I previously had an Aquarian Super-Kick I on my 22" kick, so I was able to swap it for the PowerSonic and make a direct comparison. Significantly, the Aquarian is single ply while the PowerSonic is twin ply, and you really notice the difference. The PowerSonic has a more controlled sound, not so fat or wet as the Aquarian. It's punchy rather than flabby - taut and thick, albeit warm. Adding the Falam patch gives a sharper edge to the attack.

Remo's optional extra weapon is the ESDS 'pillow'. Many drummers who use a partially dampened head also put a pillow or towel inside their drum, up against the batter head. Adjusting the degree of this internal dampening is relatively easy, but with the PowerSonic's ESDS pillow it's either 'on' or 'off' - attached or not. In practice, attaching the pillow affected the sound less than I was expecting, as fixed to the outside it has a floating effect, which is less pronounced. With the already subdued response resulting from the double ply and foam rings, I doubt many drummers will need further dampening. I preferred the head without the pillow attached.

I tried both the clear and coated 22" PowerSonics and the difference is subtle, with the coated version minutely darker, warmer and edgier.

Verdict

Remo has benefited from Aquarian and Evans' lead in producing kick heads with in-built dampening rings, and the PowerSonic adds to the options with its optional external pillow. With twin plies and twin foam rings, the sound is microphone-friendly and muted, with a dark and shortened attack, requiring a heavy foot to extract the best tone. Adding the pillow has a more subtle effect than using an internal pillow, which may be a good thing. I'd like to see a single ply version, but in the meantime I'm sure the PowerSonic will prove a hardwearing hit. **R**

Rating ★★★★★

ESSENTIAL SPEC



PRICE

(Clear or coated):

18"	£36.40
20"	£38
22"	£39.60
24"	£41.70

CONSTRUCTION

Two plies of 7 mil MYLAR®

IN-BUILT DAMPING

Two fixed ¾" internal dampening rings with optional ESDS technology

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