

Jim Dunlop JHF1 Jimi Hendrix Fuzz Face £179

The spirit of '69 harnessed in a stompbox? by Chris Vinnicombe



Fuzz Face: it's also been spotted in the skies above Nevada

JIMI'S USE OF the Dallas Arbiter Fuzz Face is well documented, and that pedal is probably second only to the Tube Screamer in terms of the sheer quantity of boutique imitations it has spawned. In developing this new unit, Dunlop examined numerous vintage units. The JHF1 generates dirt via a silicon BC108 transistor – a more stable option than

germanium and consistent with the Fuzz Faces that were being manufactured in late 1969-70. Vintage authenticity means that there is no provision for mains power, nor an LED indicator, and battery access involves removing the pedal's base plate. Inside, the hand-wired brown circuit board looks the part, but it would have been nice to see some sort of clip to stop the nine-volt battery rattling around.

SOUNDS: On plugging in, we cannot resist the temptation to crank both the volume and fuzz controls right up and unleash some mayhem. And what a sound! It's easy to forget just how much fun a thick, raucous fuzz tone like this can be; everything is filthier and more exciting with the pedal engaged. Rolling back the guitar's volume control it's surprisingly easy to clean things up, and experimentation with the level of fuzz dialled in yields appealing crunchy

JIM DUNLOP JHF1	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★

■ **WE LIKED** Lush range of meaty and organic fuzz tones; attractive vintage stylings

■ **WE DISLIKED** Some may find it a little prehistoric, and expensive

rhythm. We like the JHF1 best with single-coil pickups, just expect there to be a fair bit of extraneous noise.

Verdict

Some players will find the whole experience somewhat bewildering due to the distinctly old-school nature of the unit, but its lack of bells and whistles is extremely liberating. Turn on, turn up and rock out!

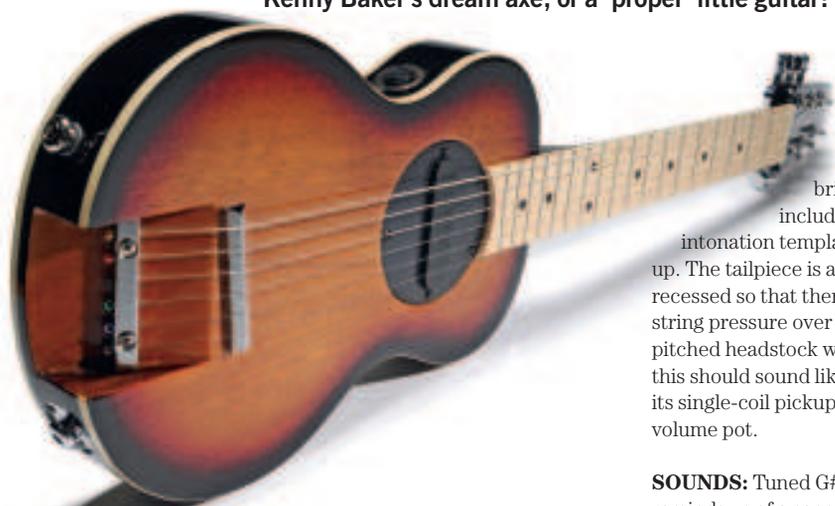
Guitarist RATING

★★★★★

KEY INFO JIM DUNLOP JHF1 **PRICE:** £179 **TYPE:** ANALOGUE FUZZ PEDAL **TEL:** JHS 01132 865381 **WEB:** WWW.JHS.CO.UK

Øivin Fjeld G Sharp £279

Kenny Baker's dream axe, or a 'proper' little guitar? by Mick Taylor



Pining for the Fjeld: a possible companion on your next voyage

THE G SHARP GUITAR IS designed by Norwegian luthier Øivin Fjeld, and was used as a project in first principles for his former guitar-building students. Following positive responses to the results, Fjeld has commissioned this Chinese-built production model.

We have a solid mahogany body, set mahogany neck with adjustable truss rod, and a flat maple fingerboard over a

530mm scale length. You position the single-piece bridge using an included plastic intonation template when stringing up. The tailpiece is a simple metal bar, recessed so that there's good downward string pressure over the bridge. Add a pitched headstock with a bone nut, and this should sound like a little belter via its single-coil pickup and push/push volume pot.

SOUNDS: Tuned G# to G#, the tone reminds us of a capo'd-at-the-fourth-fret Tele, but with better sustain as the open strings can ring out. There's natural presence and sparkle played clean, and the pickup positioning means depth in the bottom end too. That makes the G Sharp fun for chording and lead playing alike, or indeed slinging across your lap with a slide and tons of drive – Fjeld makes a nut and bridge extender kit for this very purpose.

G SHARP	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
Playability	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★

■ **WE LIKED** Original design; lovely tone

■ **WE DISLIKED** Sharp fret ends; a little on the pricey side

Verdict

The G Sharp's highly credible design and good tone certainly elevate it beyond novelty guitar status, which is reflected in the asking price. Cost-effective build and QC let it down, however, via a couple of very sharp fret ends and a number of cosmetic imperfections. Nevertheless, a quick fret job transforms the G Sharp into a loveable little guitar for travel, practise or indeed adapting wholesale into your music. Short on finesse, long on charm – and we know which we'd rather have.

Guitarist RATING

★★★★★

KEY INFO ØIVIN FJELD G SHARP **PRICE:** £279 INCLUDING GIGBAG **TYPE:** SHORT-SCALE ELECTRIC **TEL:** FSC MUSIC LTD 07771 638924

Fishman Neo-D Humbucker £79



Need to quickly amplify your steel-string acoustic? Fishman has the answer yet again by Dave Burrluck

THANKS TO FISHMAN'S RARE

Earth active pickup (originally conceived by British luthier Mike Vanden), guitarists have for nearly a decade been able to enjoy a soundhole pickup that captures an accurate acoustic tone but without any piezo 'ping'. Easy to fit, the Rare Earth can be either permanently installed (with dedicated endpin jack) or used when the need to amplify your acoustic arises. Both single-coil and humbucking versions, however, aren't cheap, which led Vanden and Fishman to develop the

FISHMAN NEO-D	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
Fitting	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
<p>■ WE LIKED Easy to fit; great all-round tone; no batteries</p> <p>■ WE DISLIKED Relatively low output but doesn't ruin the fun</p>	

passive Neo-D, initially in a single-coil format (reviewed *Guitarist* issue 234), and now humbucking.

SOUNDS: Fitted in seconds the Neo-D is perfect for the occasional performer. And if you've not experienced the sound of these modern soundhole pickups you're in for a shock. The Neo-D, by nature, is very quiet and free from hum pickup. Its output will need a little help as it's lower than a comparable active pickup, but the sound is beautifully balanced string-to-string producing plenty of zing and sizzle in the high end and surprisingly crisp low string response. The tonal balance too – as with so many Fishman products – is bang on the nail. Be prepared to be surprised, the Neo-D will give some older under-saddle picks a run too with such a natural thumb-print to the tone and a really appealing slight



The Neo-D has got plenty of zing and sizzle

electric edge that gives a firmness and fullness to upper lead lines – all without a hint of piezo-like zing.

Verdict

A very fine and affordable all-round pickup – just the ticket too for slide players and those leaning towards jazz and blues in their acoustic style.

Guitarist RATING ★★★★★

KEY INFO FISHMAN NEO-D HUMBUCKER **PRICE:** £79 **TYPE:** PASSIVE SOUNDHOLE 'BUCKER **TEL:** SOUND TECHNOLOGY 01462 480000

Sound Lab Pedal Power 450 £33

A simple and affordable solution for your pedal power needs... by Simon Bradley

PROVIDING POWER TO YOUR

pedalboard is the concern of every responsible gigger and, if you've ever had the misfortune of a mid-show battery failure, you'll certainly be aware of the importance of a consistent supply of juice.

This simple unit is designed to power six stompboxes with nine volts of power via six DC leads, each of which can be plugged into the supply itself and subsequently removed when the show is over for easy packing-away. The PSU is hard-wired to a mains lead and also features an on/off switch (but there's no power LED...)

Although there's no provision for

PEDAL POWER	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
In use	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
<p>■ WE LIKED The straightforward nature and consistency of power</p> <p>■ WE DISLIKED Same length DC leads and lack of an on/off LED</p>	

pedals that require 12 or 18 volts (products that do this, such as the admittedly wondrous Dunlop DC Brick at £133, cost significantly more), one issue is that the six DV connectors are all of the same length, which means that the supply needs to be placed virtually equidistant from your pedals.

IN USE: If, like us, you already have a working layout for your effects, this could prove to be something of a compromise, but after some re-jigging we were able to connect everything up. The unit is stable and silent in its power provision, and does exactly what it says on the box: just remember to turn the PSU on before you hit the stage...

Verdict

There is quite a wide choice of power supplies from such High Street outlets as Maplins and Argos, but we'd recommend opting for one that's designed specifically for guitar pedals as that way you'll be sure that the current won't cause any damage. The

Pedal Power 450: the stable and silent type



Pedal Power is about as simple as we'd like to get, but at the meagre asking price, this is a perfectly acceptable choice.

Guitarist RATING ★★★★★

KEY INFO SOUND LAB PEDAL POWER **PRICE:** £33 **TYPE:** PEDALBOARD POWER SUPPLY **TEL:** BARNES & MULLINS 01691 652449