

SOCKETS

AN effects loop and 16-ohm speaker out provide more flexibility, but we'd also appreciate an included footswitch. Come on, Orange!

BADGE

WITH a badge that could have come from a medieval guild and a colour scheme from 1968, the CR60C looks the business



CONSTRUCTION

MADE in China sometimes means cheap and nasty, but not here – the CR60C is as solid as they come

AT A GLANCE

- TYPE:** Solid-state combo
- OUTPUT:** 60 watts
- SPEAKER:** 1x12" Orange Voice Of The World
- CONTROLS:** Master volume, reverb; clean channel volume, bass, treble; dirty channel volume, bass, middle, treble, gain; 3-way reverb mode selector switch, channel switch
- SOCKETS:** Input, 16-ohm speaker out, effects loop in/out, channel footswitch in, reverb footswitch in
- WEIGHT:** 20.25kg
- DIMENSIONS:** [HxWxD] 450 x 550 x 290cm
- CONTACT:** Orange Amplification 0208 905 2828 www.orangeamps.com

ORANGE CRUSH CR60C £349

Even with no valves, this fresh Orange is definitely not from concentrate

BRIT amp company Orange has built a name for itself as purveyor of trouser-flapping great rock machines, full of British valve tone. So, we were surprised to lug this brute home, peek into the enclosure and see not a single valve. This is – shock horror – a solid-state amp, from a company that has built its reputation on its distinctive crunchy valve sound.

But there's no need to fear. Orange's MD reckons the company hasn't produced a solid-state combo like this before simply because it couldn't make them sound good enough, and that makes us think that we might have something a bit special here. The Orange Crush 60C is based on the 50-watt combo version of the Rockerverb, and uses a two-stage circuit for the clean channel and a four-stage circuit for the dirty channel. It also weighs a ton, and feels encouragingly solid.

This isn't a straight substitute for a Rockerverb, though. For one, it isn't as loud. There's some weird voodoo that makes 50 valve watts feel a lot more powerful than 60 solid-state watts, and that's the case here. A Rockerverb would be rattling our teeth turned right up, and while this is loud enough

The CR60C apes valve tone with impressive accuracy

to fill a small hall, you might have trouble with anywhere bigger. Then there's the lost art of playing dynamics. With the right tone dialled in on a Tiny Terror, you can control the crunch by how hard you hit the strings. It's a glorious feeling that's missing here.

These caveats aside, the CR60C sounds wonderful. The clean channel isn't a sparkly Fender-like

clean; it's always on the edge of grittiness, and sounds great with a Telecaster's bridge pickup. It starts to break up about halfway round the dial, and turned all the way we got the exact sound of Ronnie Wood's rhythm part in *Stay With Me* by the Faces. Flick the switch onto the dirty channel and

you get a range of sounds filthier than the pavement outside Vodka Revolution first thing on a Sunday morning. The volume and gain controls impart varying degrees of fuzz and bark, so you can mix and match to find the level that's right for you, and with both turned up and a little mid scooped out, a searing metal lead tone is yours for the taking.

Best of all, the master volume control lets you get all of these tones at bedroom levels, so you can melt faces without annoying the neighbours.

It won't replace Orange's valve offerings, but the CR60C offers something different. We're impressed that the boffins have managed to ape the valve tone so accurately – the difference is one of feel rather than sound, and if your gigs are on the small side, or you just play at home, this might be the better option. It would be nice if there were a footswitch included, but if you ask nicely at the guitar shop, you could pick up a bargain.

Andrew Gregory

SUMMARY	FEATURES	■	■	■	■	■
	SOUND QUALITY	■	■	■	■	■
	VALUE FOR MONEY	■	■	■	■	■
	BUILD QUALITY	■	■	■	■	■
	USABILITY	■	■	■	■	■
OVERALL RATING	★★★★★					