

GEAR

REVIEW

PRS SE MARK HOLCOMB



PRs SE MARK HOLCOMB £899

The newest member of Periphery's prog-metal guitar force gets an affordable signature model

MARK Holcomb is one third of Periphery's guitar triumvirate and a self-confessed PRS obsessive. Mark first began working with PRS on his signature model a few years ago and that limited-edition, USA-made model attracted enough attention to be rewarded with its very own SE equivalent, which bears a very similar spec to his pricey American counterpart, right down to Mark's signature Seymour Duncan pickups.

At its core, the Holcomb is basically a SE Custom 24 model, but with a number of significant differences: the mahogany neck has been replaced with maple; the scale length increased from 635mm (25 inches) to 648mm (25.5 inches); and the 'board

Those familiar with Periphery's brand of down-tuned prog-metal will be expecting an onslaught of high-gain attack when plugged in, and this SE certainly doesn't disappoint. Plugged into a Marshall JVM410, down-tuned riffs positively fly out of the speakers with a wonderful depth and resonance. Powerful as they are, they don't overwhelm the amp but instead output a punchy clarity that still offers articulation on even the heaviest of settings – no doubt the pickups are voiced to help showcase the open expansive chord work that Mark is known for. The coil-splits are also a joy, recalling the percussive distorted funk tones of Nuno Bettencourt.

With most signature models, the specs often reflect the sometimes

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radius has been flattened from 254mm (10 inches) to an almost flat 500mm (20 inches).

The Holcomb Burst finish is stunning: a patterned quilted top wonderfully camouflaged by a smokey black burst varnish with a tiny hint of purple, straddling the perfect middle ground between pretty boy and metal monster.

The overall build quality and setup is superb, as we've come to expect from the SE range. Although shipped in Mark's preferred drop C tuning (drop D down a tone, so low to high: CGCFAD), no special design considerations have been given to this lower tuning aside from the increased scale length, so it's no issue to choose standard tuning if preferred. The popular Wide Thin profile is the chosen neck carve, and it's been topped off with some chunky jumbo frets which, in conjunction with that super-flat fretboard, enable a low action.

idiosyncratic needs of their inspirer, but this isn't just a guitar for fans of Mark. The spec on offer here represents a high quality and, dare we say it, 'posh' metal guitar with a little bit extra under the hood thanks to those versatile split-coil tones. The pickups are the star of the show and, if bought separately, they'd cost a whopping £300 alone! So, considering the guitar's price, their inclusion makes this package excellent value for money. If you're a metal player in the market for a SE Custom 24, or indeed just something that's not too pointy, then this may well be the right fit for you.

Darran Charles

SUMMARY	FEATURES					
	SOUND QUALITY					
	VALUE FOR MONEY					
	BUILD QUALITY					
	PLAYABILITY					
OVERALL RATING		★★★★★				

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Mahogany w/ quilted maple top
NECK: Maple, 3-piece
SCALE: 648mm (25.5")
FINGERBOARD: Ebony, 500mm (20") radius
FRETS: 24
PICKUPS: Seymour Duncan MH Omega (bridge), Seymour Duncan MH Alpha (neck)
CONTROLS: 1x volume, 1x tone (w/ push/pull coil-split), 3-way blade pickup selector
HARDWARE: Sung-II BN-101 bridge, PRS tuners – black chrome
LEFT-HANDED: No
FINISH: Holcomb Burst (shown)
CONTACT: PRS Guitars Europe
01223 874301 www.prsguitars.com

Total Guitar BEST BUY

FRETBOARD

HUGE frets and a flat radius – the usual checklist for the modern shredder – are all present and correct

BODY

THE usual bevelled body shape found on the SE and S2 series features a stunning Black Smoke Burst with just a hint of purple

PICKUPS

MARK'S Seymour Duncans are powerful yet articulate, and great for expansive chord work, as well as high-octane prog-metal riffing

