



SUHR

Suhr Riot Mini

It might be a smaller version but that doesn't mean that this Riot is quiet!

Words Trevor Curwen **Photography** Phil Barker

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Suhr may be best known for their classy guitars, which are enjoying a 20th anniversary this year, but they also produce amps and a range of pedals. The latest pedal on offer is the Riot Mini, launched at the NAMM show in January of this year.

The original Riot distortion pedal first appeared in 2009 and several years later spawned the Riot Reloaded pedal, which offered an extra 30 per cent more gain. The Riot Mini offers the essence of its siblings in a much smaller footprint designed for the modern pedalboard. The guts of the pedal are basically identical to the Riot, the only difference being that, instead of a three-way toggle switch, the one here has two positions that offer the two most popular diode selections from the original pedal, apparently the middle and right settings. In the overall cranked high-gain amp scheme of things that is the Riot's stock-in-trade, those two settings are not radically different, but offer very useful variations on the theme. The one to the left has a fuller mid-range and bottom-end, while to the right, the vibe is slightly less raw with more compression and a perceptible scoop in the mids.

There's plenty of output in this pedal allowing you to keep the distortion knob low and set the level for a gritty boost, which can work well

with an amp that's already cooking. However, we feel that its real forte is the rich distortion it can supply further round the dial to transform a clean amp into something altogether more aggressive rather than a slightly dirtier version of what you already have (think Marshall JCM800 and you wouldn't be too wide of the mark). At fully clockwise on the distortion knob you get the sound of a high-gain amp with glowing valves, touch sensitive with sustain and harmonics a-plenty. The Tone knob covers upper-mid and top-end presence and will match the distortion naturally to your amp settings or add that extra thing needed to cut through the mix.

VERDICT

A pedalboard friendly stack-in-a box for high-gain sounds. While the Riot Mini is a shoo-in for 80s rock tones it is not limited to those. Anyone who wants a rich and hard-edged distortion to suit other genres of music would find something to like here. **G**

PROS: Ultra-compact footprint, two voicings, full-on high-gain sound

CONS: It's missing one of the three original Riot voices and the FX link

Tech Spec

ORIGIN: USA

TYPE: Distortion pedal

FEATURES: True bypass

CONTROLS: Tone, Level, distortion, Voice switch, bypass footswitch

CONNECTIONS:

Standard input, standard output

POWER: 9V adaptor (not supplied) 8mA

DIMENSIONS: 44 (w) x 96 (d) x 47mm (h)



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SUHR

Suhr Alexa

You can't ask this Alexa box to turn the TV on but it will give you a double shot of analogue chorus

Words Trevor Curwen Photography Phil Barker

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When electronic chorus first appeared in the 70s it was created using analogue bucket brigade (BBD) chips and, although there are now plenty of pedals that can create chorus digitally, analogue is the preferred choice for many. If you are in that camp, the thought of two analogue choruses in one pedal as provided by Suhr's Alexa could seem enticing.

With mono input and either mono or stereo output, the pedal has a standard bypass footswitch plus a second A/B footswitch to select the active channel, both of which provide analogue BBD-generated chorus with added digital control for increased flexibility.

Both have an identical control set-up but channel A has an extra toggle switch, which loses the dry signal to provide vibrato rather than chorus. The basic chorus sound firstly depends on which waveform you choose from the six available for each channel (Triangle, Sine, Rotary, Photocell, Ramp Up, Ramp Down). Besides Speed and Depth adjustments, you also get a knob for the Delay Time that the effect modulates with – a range running from 10 to 40ms. This has an influence in setting the exact sound adjustment with the shortest delay times making an incursion into flanging territory, so while this is nominally

a chorus pedal, there's more than a hint of other modulation sub-genres available.

The quality of tones on offer is outstandingly lush with Triangle and Sine settings providing familiar vintage-style chorus sounds, while Rotary tweaks the waveform for more of the swirly flavour and can benefit from the fact that Speed control can be assigned to a Tap Tempo switch or Expression pedal to simulate fast and slow speaker speeds and the transition between them. The Photocell setting brings a little Uni-Vibe lopsided throb to the chorus equation while the Ramp Up and Ramp Down settings are more experimental and can offer a rhythmic effect that could sit comfortably with song tempo.

VERDICT

A touch of chorus can go a long way to adding an extra dimension to your sound, and this pedal goes further than many in the range. It's also perfect if you need to easily switch between two chorus settings during a show. **G**

PROS: Instant access to two different modulation sounds, six waveforms, expression/tap control facility

CONS: Some might want a Mix control for subtler chorus blends but Depth fulfils a similar function

Tech Spec

ORIGIN: USA

TYPE: Chorus/Vibrato pedal

FEATURES: Buffered bypass or True bypass, FX link (sets whether the pedal is active, bypassed or controlled externally when powered up)

CONTROLS: 2x Waveform selector (A&B), 2x speed (A&B), 2x Delay (A&B), 2x Depth (A&B), Chorus/Vibrato switch, Off/FL/On switch, internal TAP/EXT switch, internal True/Buffered switch, on/off footswitch, A/B footswitch

CONNECTIONS: Standard input, standard outputs (L/Mono, R), FX Link, EXP/Tap

POWER: 9V DC adaptor (not supplied) 55mA

DIMENSIONS: 126 (w) x 100 (d) x 54mm (h)

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