

DW COLLECTOR'S SERIES STAINLESS STEEL KIT

£8,086 DW delivers a kit with bona fide heavy metal credentials



WORDS: TOM BRADLEY

Name a material and you can guarantee that DW has at least thought about building a drum from it.

With their flagship Collector's Series featuring kits crafted from every exotic wood under the sun and specialist snares built from carbon fibre to concrete, steel seems like a no-brainer. Following on from its stand-alone steel snare drums, the Californian custom drum builder has built its version of a very Bonham-esque stainless steel kit.

Build

Our one-up, two-down review kit consists of a 12"x9" rack tom, 14"x12" and 16"x14" floor toms and a 22"x18" bass drum with matching steel hoops. We also have the separately available 14"x6½" snare drum to complete the set-up. Each shell is constructed from a single sheet of 1.5mm rolled stainless steel, of which the edges are folded over to create 45° bearing edges. The outside of each shell is buffed to a flawless mirror finish while the inside is left with a natural matte surface, which would make a very smart finish in its own right. From within, it's possible to see the seam where the two ends of the steel sheet have been welded together. On the outside, however, by an impressive feat of craftsmanship, there is no visible join whatsoever.

Unlike other Collector's Series kits, due to the more specialist nature of the metal shells, there is some limitation to the sizes that are available. In addition to the sizes of our review kit, it's possible to order a further range of rack toms (8"x7", 10"x8" and 13"x10"), a massive 18"x16" floor tom and a trio of larger kick drum sizes (23"x18", 24"x16", 26"x14"). The stainless snare drums are also available in 4½" and 5½" models in addition to our 6½". These depths are also available with 13" diameter models.

As standard, the Collector's Series kit is supplied with DW/Remo Double A two-ply

batter heads, triple-flanged True Hoops, single Turret Lugs (dual for the snare) and True-Pitch 50 tension rods. The snare drum sports a MAG throw-off, 3P butt-plate and 20-strand TrueTone wires. Hardware finish options include chrome (as review), nickel, gold, satin chrome and black nickel.

The rack tom is equipped with DW's proprietary Suspension Tom Mount (STM) system, although the drum is so weighty that it can have a tendency to droop somewhat. To ensure this doesn't become a problem, we've also been supplied with a DW 9000 Heavy Duty snare/tom stand, which provides ample support.

Hands On

The mirror finish of the stainless steel is absolutely gleaming and just oozes pure, gorgeous style. It's so nicely presented, in fact, that it seems a shame to get mucky fingerprints all over it. Whilst setting the kit up we can't believe the weight of each of these drums. The bass drum in particular can only be described as back-breaking; we tried (and failed) to imagine lugging something that heavy around on the road. A 1.5mm shell thickness doesn't sound like much, but when you're shifting a 22"x18" bass drum (or even a 26"x14"), it soon becomes apparent that there's a decent lump of metal there.

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Also try...

1 LUDWIG STAINLESS STEEL KIT

We say: "More user-friendly than its shell material and sizes might suggest, this super-shiny kit will have Bonham fans drooling."



2 DW PURPLEHEART KIT

We say: "The Purpleheart is an impressive kit both visually and sonically. It is rewarded by the generous low-end available, which provides the foundation for a full-bodied, versatile drum kit."



LARGE SIZES

There are a number of large drums available including an 18" floor tom and 26" kick

In terms of tone, the kit is as loud and punchy as one might expect. The relatively thin shells and folded bearing edges produce a rapid attack and a pleasing resonance with a



MIRROR

The steel shells are polished to a mirror-chrome finish

ROLLED

Each 1.5mm shell is rolled from a single piece of steel and welded together

METAL

The shell finish is complemented by the chrome hardware

warmth in the decay. These are proper 'tubs' and they sound right at home whilst laying down beefy Bonham-style grooves. Despite being standard sizes, as the drums are struck they give the impression of being twice the size. Tuned fairly low, the initial slap of the sticks connecting with the tom heads carries a considerable amount of volume with an aggressive edge. We would love to hear how these monstrous drums sound under mics.

With little dampening the bass drum is cavernous but never out of control, providing a gratifying thump under foot. The warm metallic hum of the steel shells is personified by the snare drum, which has a

huge open sound. As usual, the MAG throw-off and 3P butt-plate are a huge hit and make quick tonal changes a joy. From a medium setting, it only takes a second to switch it up to a tighter, more crisply responding snare.

Let's not beat around the bush and discuss the price. At over eight grand, this is an eye-wateringly expensive drum set, and that doesn't even include the snare drum, which will also set you back a four-figure sum. However, there's no denying that this is a beautifully-crafted instrument and you'd be hard pushed to find a stainless steel kit at a much lower price, let alone of a similar build

quality. Ultimately, though, this kit is beyond what most would deem a 'sensible' price point and as a result, it will likely be reserved for the collectors and the real die-hard fans. **R**

VERDICT: DW have once again shown what they are capable of achieving, but this particular achievement comes at a staggering price. A beautifully-built kit that packs a serious punch.

BUILD QUALITY ★★★★★
PLAYABILITY ★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★
RHYTHM RATING ★★★★★

Essential spec



PRICE

Kit, £8,086;
Snare, £1,074

SHELL MATERIAL

1.5mm stainless steel

SHELL CONSTRUCTION

Rolled

BEARING EDGE

45° folded edges

FINISH

Mirror polished stainless steel

HOOPS

DW True Hoops, available in chrome (as pictured), nickel, gold, satin chrome and black nickel

SHELL AVAILABILITY

Snare drums: 13"x4½", 13"x5½", 13"x6½", 14"x4½", 14"x5½", 14"x6½"; Rack toms: 8"x7", 10"x8", 12"x9", 13"x10"; Floor toms: 14"x12", 16"x14", 18"x16"; Bass drum: 22"x18", 23"x18", 24"x16", 26"x14"

SUPPLIED HEADS

Toms: Remo/DW Double A smooth batter, Remo/DW clear reso; Snare: Remo/DW coated snare batter, Remo/DW clear snare bottom; Bass: Remo/DW clear batter, Remo/DW gloss black reso

LUGS PER DRUM

Rack tom: 12 single turret lugs; Floor toms: 16 single turret lugs; Bass drum: 20 single turret lugs; Snare drum: 10 dual turret lugs

TOM MOUNTS

Suspension Tom Mount (STM) system

CONTACT

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