



1 PRE-BOOST

THE GLOBAL preamp boost gives you an extra push in the amp's front end. We preferred it on the Rhythm and Lead channels to the Clean

2 EQ PUSH/PULL POTS

BY PULLING the EQ pots, you can vary the frequency range that each one operates in, then push it back in for a level control. It allows for fine-tuning of your sound – just be careful not to pull the knobs off!

3 VALVES

THE IRONHEART uses 6L6 poweramp valves as standard, but you can swap them for EL34s. The bias switch on the back takes care of the technical business for you

AT A GLANCE

- TYPE:** Valve amp head
- OUTPUT:** 120 watts
- VALVES:** 4x ECC83, 4x 6L6
- CONTROLS:** Pre-boost, clean volume, lead gain, rhythm gain, bass, middle, treble, lead volume, rhythm volume, dynamics, tone, reverb, watts, boost on/off, clean/rhythm switch, channel switch
- SOCKETS:** Input, speaker outputs, FX loop, footswitch
- WEIGHT:** 20kg
- DIMENSIONS:** (HxWxD) 271x678x288mm
- CONTACT:** Headstock Distribution
- 0121 508 6666
- WEB:** laney.co.uk

LANEY IRONHEART IRT120H

£788

Laney returns to its metal roots with this affordable valve head

THINK of a few metal amp manufacturers, write them down and don't tell us what you choose. We're gonna guess: the Mesa/Boogie Dual Rectifier? Peavey 6505? How about any one from a list of Marshall, Orange, Blackstar, Engl, Bogner... we could go on. If you didn't write down Laney, point your pupils this way.

Laney knows a thing or two about metal: after all, Tony Iommi, who's credited with inventing the genre, is a long-term user. Thing is, in recent years Laney's been a bit light on the heavy front. All that's about to change as it releases the Ironheart range of amps.

As with its 60-watt head and combo siblings, the IRT120H is a three-channel amp, with three-band EQ (operated by push-pull pots), master reverb, and master dynamics and tone controls.

The Ironheart has a few other tricks up its sleeve too – a preamp boost with its own level setting, and Laney's WATTS control for lowering the output of the power

section to less than one watt. Around the back of the amp, you'll find the usual speaker outputs, effects loop and footswitch connections, but there's also a biasing switch that enables you to set the amp up for either 6L6 (fitted as standard), or EL34 power amp valves.

Powering up the Ironheart also brings in the fiery glow of its red

“The good news for gain freaks is it's swimming in the stuff”

lights, further adding to its metal appeal. Starting on the Clean channel, with the pre-boost off and the WATTS set to maximum output, the clean sound is not the most characterful, and we struggled to coax creamy Fender-style tones from it.

Engaging the boost on the Clean channel isn't our favourite setting either – it works for introducing a bit of grit, up to around the halfway mark, but push it too far

and the sound becomes harshly clipped; it's more like a fuzz than a subtle overdrive.

The Rhythm channel shares its EQ with the Clean, but the Lead channel has its own set of controls. The EQ's push/pull pots allow you to change the frequency range that each of the three bands is working in. It means you can get ultra-low lows, tightly scooped or boosted

mids, or piercing high end – or all of the above. We did manage to accidentally pull the control knobs off a few times when using it, but other than that it's built to last.

Switching to the Rhythm and Lead channels is where we're happiest with the Ironheart and, let's face it, it's where most people looking at this amp will spend the majority of their time. The good news for gain freaks is that it's swimming in the stuff, and its high-

gain sounds are aggressive, loud and powerful. Depending on how you like your setup, you can go from a mildly overdriven crunch or classic rock stack sound on the Rhythm channel, to an all-out metal slice on the Lead channel, then engage the boost to tip you over the edge for solos.

The Ironheart is one of the best-stocked metal amps in its price bracket, offering some nice 'extra' features – such as the preamp boost, comprehensive EQ control and power reduction – that you don't always find for this price. It's a shame about the Clean channel, but forget about vintage blues or polite jazz tones. It's all about the metal with this one, and that's exactly where it excels.

Stuart Williams

SUMMARY	FEATURES	GRID
SOUND QUALITY	5	5
VALUE FOR MONEY	5	5
BUILD QUALITY	5	5
USEABILITY	5	5
OVERALL RATING	★★★★★	