



# SUPRO DRIVE, FUZZ & BOOST

£189, £179 & £179

The Supro revival continues apace with pedal action joining the new amp and guitar releases from the Port Jefferson brand

Words Trevor Curwen Photography Joby Sessions

**W**ith its amps having a certain cachet, not least a Jimmy Page connection, it was no surprise that the Supro name was revived recently by the people behind Pigtronix pedals. The resulting series of new amps has quickly gained respect and one of their designers, Thomas Elliot, has now put his expertise behind a new range of Supro pedals, the first three fruits of his labour being these Drive, Fuzz and Boost pedals.

The pedals are workmanlike rather than boutique-slick with solid, if rather tall, brushed aluminium casings. All run from a standard nine-volt power supply but can also take 18 volts for extra headroom. All can also run from a battery that is housed in an easy-access slide-out plastic tray on the pedal's side. Another neat feature is that all have a socket to take an expression pedal to control one specific parameter.

## Sounds

The Drive pedal is designed to deliver the distinctive sounds of an overdriven Supro amp, a sound that

Supro says is largely down to the power amp inside, especially its old-school transformers. In the pursuit of that goal the company has equipped the pedal with an actual output transformer, complete with a large toggle switch to select between the different windings. Juxtaposition of the Volume and Gain knobs will take you from a clean-ish boost through loads of breaking up tones to low-wattage amp-at-full-throttle drive, all complemented by a Tone control that serves to focus the raggedy top-end presence. Exactly what you get is determined by the two switch settings: Bold offers a less-gainy take on things, while Rich is the higher gain setting, upping the compression and offering denser, harmonically richer tones. This is vibrant overdrive with a raw Supro flavour and we like it a lot, especially because the option of controlling gain with an expression pedal puts the dirt under foot-control.

Supro says that its Fuzz pedal design takes inspiration from three classics of the genre: a Fuzz Face, Tone Bender MKII and a Big Muff, although the Fuzz Face

**ABOVE** Hot on the heels of its revived amps, Supro has entered the pedal market with this new collection of stompboxes

seems to be the dominant DNA. The result is a pedal that uses a NOS germanium transistor in its first stage, followed by a silicon-based gain stage. Now, with some fuzz pedals it's true that they don't really come alive until you've cranked them a bit – and this pedal leans towards that characteristic. We like it best with both Volume and Gain knobs at the further extremes of their travel, backing things off from all-out fuzz assault with guitar volume. There's Bass and Treble EQ here, derived from the Supro amps, and at midway settings the pedal's voicing is full and fat, but you can roll the Bass knob back for a lean 60s *Satisfaction*-style buzz, while extra presence in the mix and harder attack are dialled in by taking the treble knob past midday – something that can also be controlled by an expression pedal to explore a more nuanced playing experience.

The large toggle switch seen on the front of the Drive pedal makes an appearance in the Boost pedal, too, but here it delivers different flavours of EQ. You can have a completely flat sound or bring in one of two 3dB/octave filters to tailor the 20dB of boost available from the single knob. The Bright setting is a high-pass filter that rolls off some bottom-end for more perceived sparkle. The Dark setting is a low-pass filter that tames the high-end if you're looking for a warmer sound, maybe from particularly spiky single coils. With unity gain on the Volume knob coming at around 11 o'clock, there's no sound at all fully anti-clockwise, so you can also use

the pedal as a mute switch; if you plug in an expression pedal, you can use it as a volume pedal. User-adjustable minimum (set by an internal trimmer) and maximum (set by the volume knob) settings give you full flexibility, so you can have conventional volume swells or a set range of boost under foot-control.

### Verdict

Here are three pedals in specific genres that go beyond the norms of that genre. The Drive pedal is an original design that offers a different and welcome slant from the large number of drives that are near-clones of others – it's also an amp-in-a-box for those gnarly Supro tones. As boost pedals go, Supro's Boost offers something different from the norm: there's plenty here to drive your signal harder, but those tonal options and the volume pedal capability add an extra dimension. While fuzz can be a very personal thing, this one offers extra versatility through its tone knobs. All are definitely worth a listen. **G**

**PROS** Solid build; 18-volt capability; easy battery access; expression pedal facility adds extra performance capability

**CONS** Knob design could be better as the white position markers are hard to see



### SUPRO 1305 DRIVE

**PRICE:** £189

**ORIGIN:** USA

**TYPE:** Drive pedal

**FEATURES:** True bypass

**CONTROLS:** Volume, Gain, Tone, Transformer switch, internal trimpot, bypass footswitch

**CONNECTIONS:** Standard input, standard output, expression pedal input

**POWER:** 9V battery/9V-18V adaptor (not supplied)

**DIMENSIONS:** 65 (w) x 120 (d) x 65mm (h)

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### SUPRO 1304 FUZZ

**PRICE:** £179

**ORIGIN:** USA

**TYPE:** Fuzz pedal

**FEATURES:** True bypass

**CONTROLS:** Volume, Gain, Bass, Treble, internal trimpot, bypass footswitch

**CONNECTIONS:** Standard input, standard output, expression pedal input

**POWER:** 9V battery or 9V-18V adaptor (not supplied)

**DIMENSIONS:** 65 (w) x 120 (d) x 65mm (h)

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### SUPRO 1303 BOOST

**PRICE:** £179

**ORIGIN:** USA

**TYPE:** Boost pedal

**FEATURES:** True bypass

**CONTROLS:** Volume, Bright/Dark switch, internal trimpot, bypass footswitch

**CONNECTIONS:** Standard input, standard output, expression pedal input

**POWER:** 9V battery or 9V-18V adaptor (not supplied)

**DIMENSIONS:** 65 (w) x 120 (d) x 65mm (h)

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