





HUGHES & KETTNER BLACK SPIRIT 200 FLOOR

£789

The amp heavyweights unveil their ultimate floor-based device

The unmistakable blue lights of Hughes & Kettner amps have been seen on stages for some of the world's biggest and best artists – from Rush, Kiss and Stone Sour to Pendulum, Al Di Meola and Elton John. In 2018, the German manufacturers announced their solid-state Black Spirit 200 head, the first to feature their revolutionary new 'bionic' Spirit technology – aiming to

pedals, two expression/controller inputs and MIDI compatibility, as well as three operation modes to best utilise the 128 presets on offer. Then there's the eight Red Box AE+ cabinet emulations, options for power sagging, switchable power taking it from 200 Watts at full pelt down to just two, further connectivity via the official app and more.

So clearly, it's a forward-thinking machine that offers

where the Black Spirit 200 Floor comes to life. The Ultra channel, on the other hand, sacrifices those mids for a scooped metallic harshness that much like the clean channel cuts through in the wrong places.

With built-in reverb, delay and four types of modulation, there are a lot of extras that make this unit appealing – especially for musicians who want road-worthy durability (its high-quality aluminium die-cast housing can take much more of a beating than any amp) and flexibility. Of course, while it could never have rivalled the world-class tones of Hughes & Kettner's flagship TriAmp Mark 3 – which, let's not forget, retails for three times as much – a more musical clean channel would have been a welcome addition. Overall, though, this new board can certainly get a lot done in a very small amount of space.

Amit Sharma

APPEALING FOR ITS ROAD-WORTHY DURABILITY

reproduce the natural response from classic valve amp circuits with effortless ease.

The brand-new, fully programmable, floor-based version offers much of that same ingenuity – even more, in fact – aimed at guitarists who want a fly rig-format super pedal to handle their amp tones and a variety of effects. The versatility is most impressive indeed: it has its own serial effects loop, two programmable true bypass pre-loops for your analogue

superior functionality to handle just about anything you could throw at it. But does it sound good? Well, truth be told, it's a bit of a mixed bag. The cleans aren't hugely inspiring, missing some of the frequencies you'd be hoping to hear from a unit made to mimic valve amps, with a noticeable digital shrillness. The Crunch and Lead channels fare much better, with thicker mids that capture the nuances in your riffs and solos to an articulate level – responsive as promised. This definitely feels like

1 SPIRIT TONE GENERATOR

H&K are clearly proud of their Spirit Tone Generator. Digitally controlled but analogue at heart

2 CONTROLS

Everything you could possibly need right there under your nose and lit up in that signature neon blue for good measure

3 PRE-LOOPS

Being able to program two independent true bypass pre-loops brings high-level functionality with your analogue pedals

AT A GLANCE

TYPE: All-in-one fly rig amp

CHANNELS: 4

BANKS/PRESETS: 32/128

EFFECTS: Reverb, Delay, Modulation (Chorus, Phaser, Flanger, Tremolo)

CONTROLS: Channel, Gain, Volume, EQ, Sagging, Presence, Resonance, Noise Gate, Pre-Loop 1 & 2 On/Off, Boost On/Off, FX Parameters, FX Loop On/Off, Cabinet Type

NOISE GATE: IDB (Intelligent Dual Breakpoint) Noise Gate

OUTPUT: 2, 20, 200 Watts (switchable)

WEIGHT: 4.1 kg

MIDI: In and Thru

CONTACT: www.hughes-and-kettner.com

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