



Dunlop CryBaby Classic

The timeless tones produced by the original CryBaby wah are an indelible part of the electric guitar lexicon. Numerous reissue pedals have promised to deliver the sweet, vocal-inflected sounds produced by the early Thomas Organ and Vox-made wahs on all those Cream and Hendrix records. But a key element missing from their circuits has long been the Fasel inductor—an Italian-made cylinder of iron and wire that, for some reason, became “unobtainium” decades ago. Now, following its purchase of the Fasel company, Dunlop has introduced the CryBaby Classic (\$196 retail) which features, what else?

A genuine Fasel inductor covered in wine-red plastic. Mama mia!

Okay, so an inductor isn't the most exciting thing in the world. But there's no denying that it makes this new Dunlop pedal sound like a million lira. The Classic offers just the right amount of high-end sparkle without being piercing, it has the pukey mids we all cherish, and its round, clear bottom makes working the low end of the pedal a total blast. Used on a recent club gig with a Les Paul and an old Fender Super Reverb, I could use the full sweep of the pedal without ever feeling like the lower-frequency tones were disappearing in the mix, or that the full-bore highs were pulverizing anyone's fillings—the balance was just right. Sure, you can spend lots more on a wah pedal and justify the investment, but, dollar-for-dollar, the Classic is simply the coolest new wah you can buy if you're after that *classic* sound.

—ART THOMPSON

Pros Fasel inductor. Ultra-smooth response. True-bypass switching.

Cons None.

Contact (707) 745-2722; jimdunlop.com.



Bad Cat X-Treme Tone Pedal

Designed by Matchless founder Mark Sampson, the all-tube Bad Cat X-Treme Tone (\$349 street) provides two footswitchable levels of gain boost and a hard-wire bypass. While its outward appearance resembles Sampson's previous Matchless pedals, the X-Treme Tone's circuit was derived from Bad Cat's high-gain Hot Cat amp. Protected by a rugged, chrome-plated steel chassis, the X-Treme Tone's circuit is wired point-to-point on terminal strips and features carbon-comp resistors, proprietary capacitors, and two Chinese-made 12AX7s.

The X-Treme Tone's Yellow mode employs three gain stages to provide textures ranging from

crisp and clear to raw and raunchy. The bass and treble knobs provide ample tone-shaping, and the treble-cutting Edge control is especially effective for subduing the top-end fizziness that can occur at high-gain levels.

While the Yellow mode offers plenty of bold and dynamically sensitive overdriven tones, the Red mode's additional gain stage (for a total of four) puts enough overdrive on tap to satisfy all but the most insatiable saturation seeker.

—TERRY BUDDINGH

Pros Two levels of high-voltage tube overdrive.

Cons Big and heavy. AC power only.

Contact (909) 808-8651; badcatamps.com.