



# MXR DUKE OF TONE

The King is somewhat unavailable. Long live the Duke?



£179

**T**he Analog Man King Of Tone pedal isn't a question of hype for us – its presence on so many pro's pedalboards should say enough. Designer 'AnalogMike' Piera is dedicated to his craft and there's currently a four-year waiting list for it. Scarcity feeds demand, but this thing has substance. While the handmade in China Prince Of Tone allowed players to have, in essence, half a KOT; MXR, George Tripps and Piera have now shrunk that down for wider consumption with the Duke.

If you're feeling flush, two Dukes would equate to the \$325 dual circuit King (including the optional mode toggle), but how does this £179 mini pedal stand up

on its own? It packs in the same textured deep purple look and typeface of big bro, and also includes three switchable modes; the Boost is the main appeal here (called the Clean mode on the KOT and with op-amp clipping in this mode instead of diodes), alongside Overdrive and Distortion's harder clipping. We first need to dial in the Boost's unity volume at around 2 o'clock, while the OD and Distortion need it set around 4 o'clock. In addition to the Tone control there's also an internal trim pot for cutting the treble (we preferred it down to about 8 o'clock after experimenting).

The Duke can be a quality boost but loves its Drive being pushed well past midday and testing with humbuckers, Tele and Strat

single-coils and a P-90 we find there's plenty of the defined treble chime and mid definition of our guitars coming through we'd hope for from a KOT offspring. It complements the character of your rig and responds sensitively to a decent set of guitar pots.

We loved how much versatility we could explore in the three modes – it can get quite spicy for rock while still chiming in OD mode with the gain past 5 o'clock and an amp on edge of breakup, but the sense of clear, nuanced detail is always there. The Duke's size also offers a great excuse to stack it with other drives... we just wish we could afford two!

**Rob Laing**

## AT A GLANCE

**TYPE:** Overdrive pedal with three-clipping modes

**CONTROLS:** Volume, Gain, Tone, internal trim pot (turning clockwise cuts more treble).

**SOCKETS:** Input, output, power

**TRUE BYPASS:** Yes

**POWER:** 9v-18v PSU (running in the latter can offer extra clarity and headroom), 6mA

**CONTACT:** harleybenton.com

THE DUKE COMPLIMENTS THE SOUND OF YOUR RIG

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