



# GUNNING FOR (MORE) SUCCESS!

## Mesa Boogie 50 Caliber Combo Amplifier

*Reach for the book of superlatives . . . the latest offering from Mesa Boogie has just arrived in this country, having already proven a big success in the United States.*

This is the '50 Caliber' – bigger brother to the Studio 22 we looked at in April 1986, but visually it uses the same sized cabinet and control layout.

As the name implies, it is a 50 watt amplifier, in fact, Boogie have actually dropped production of the middle amp from this range – the 38 Special – and now concentrate on the Studio 22 and the 50 Caliber.

### Construction

The whole amplifier is built with clinical precision – perfectly turned out from top to bottom. The cloth covered cabinet is the same size for all 12" speaker Boogies, even the prestigious Mark 3. It is fitted with a single carrying handle which easily copes with the 27 kilo weight, there are four substantial rubber feet and the corners are protected with the familiar steel protectors. The nameplate legend is now MESA/BOOGIE 'on all amps' – a sad farewell to the well known smaller

'Boogie' logo. The chassis is fitted 'upside down' by Boogie's SUS 4 mounts, which are effective little shock absorbers designed to eliminate vibration to valves and other delicate components.

The valves – 4 EL 84's and 5 ECC83's – are protected by a clamped and hinged steel pan with a sorbo rubber insert. This is easily undone for maintenance, but gives the valves extra firm support and protection when locked up. A very neat idea!

The Electro-Voice speaker is fixed to a substantial baffle board, and covered with black speaker fabric.

### Controls

On the rear panel we have two speaker sockets (4 & 8 ohm), plus send and return jacks, as well as a Direct Out socket with a variable control. The USA ground switch control has been blanked off on this model and a Slo Blo fuse holder completes the line up.

Over to the front, and the panel here is the same as the Studio 22 left to right we have Volume, Master, Treble, Bass, Middle, Reverb and Presence. Next along is the (optional) five band graphic equaliser and the three switches for e/q in, out or auto, standby and

lastly mains on/off. A small lamp glows orange on the extreme right of the panel, and the two front jack sockets are for the guitar input and the lead/rhythm footswitch. The Accutronics reverb unit is fitted on the side as opposed to the bottom of the cabinet, and is not footswitchable – just turn the knob to zero if you don't require reverb.

The amp is supplied with a leatherette slip cover, footswitch and detachable lead and an envelope containing a comprehensive set of instructions and suggested settings for many different sound combinations.

### In Use

I tested the amp with several guitars including the Schecter Dream Machine reviewed in this issue. The first impression is the fullness of the sound and the absolute quality. It's very subjective, I know, writing about sound, but playing through a Boogie even for a short time you instantly realise why they are so highly rated.

A list of suggested settings for different styles helps you start to settle in with the 50 Calibre, but even the slightest refinements of the various controls make subtle differences to the tones obtained. I

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