

would say it is virtually impossible to get a dull or uninteresting sound from this amp, in fact, after a little familiarisation almost any sound or tone you imagine in your head can be dialled into the Boogie – it sounds that good!

Contrary to today's trends, I think I spent more time with the clean sounds than the overdrive settings, and with a good guitar (I used a Strat with Seymour Duncan, Alnico Pro's) the range of tones and the colours were superb. But there is more . . .

Switch in the graphic equaliser and the range is beautifully extended – Randall Smith and his team certainly did their research and homework to conjure up this little gem!

The usual function of the graphic is brought in when switching to the lead mode, but I experimented with several different settings in the clean channel. I found a 'sweetness' of sound in this Boogie – something I have never been able to obtain with other well known makes – difficult to describe, but some of the most incredible and pleasing tones to the human ear.

The lead channel is where all the singing and dancing starts of course

– I think everyone must be aware of Boogie's reputation for an awesome overdrive sound. Again, the graphic plays an important part here; in the auto switching mode, it comes in with a touch on the footswitch, and sliding the controls colours the boost and tone effectively.

MESA's own instructions suggest a 'V' setting on the equaliser, but I found this didn't produce the 'punch' required when footswitching from clean to lead. The centre '750' slider makes quite a difference though, so the graphic took on more of an 'S' curve to pack a kick – and what a kick! Blistering sustain at any volume means you can practise quietly (!) with the pre-amp up and the master low, or go the other way round when gigging, because there is plenty of headroom here – I think the 50 watt rating is fairly conservative!

I must confess, I haven't tried a Gibson with humbuckers yet, although one of my Strats has Duncan Hot Rails in the bridge position and sings away beautifully with this Boogie. I did, however, try an SG Junior with a single coil P90, and this combination produced a lovely liquid, sustaining tone too – send more guitars, quick!!!

## Conclusion

I don't think there has ever been a bad review on a Boogie amplifier, and the obvious reason is they are first rate pieces of equipment. Some people may twitch at the price, but as Boogie say in their brochure, you can spend and lose lots of cash buying and trading in other amps, looking for that perfect sound. I know, I've done it myself!

I still enjoy other amplifiers, each Fender, Marshall, Vox or whatever all have something magical about them, but MESA/Boogie seem to roll it all into one neat little combo – all the favourite sounds, and more besides.

I think the new 50 Caliber fills an important gap, between the excellent Studio 22 and the flagship Mark 3 in the combo range. If you are serious about your music, test a Boogie with your own guitar. I think you'll be hooked – I know I am.

RRP; £995.00

For more information please contact The Rocky Road Co, Unit 1, Horseshoe Close, London, NW2 7JJ. Tel. no; 01 450 6666.

Bob Hewitt

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