

FIRST PLAY



**CRAZY TUBE CIRCUITS
HI POWER**
£235

WHAT IS IT? Dual-drive pedal
channelling Hiwatt amp and
Colorsound pedal sounds



Flying Hi

Crazy Tube Circuits presents David Gilmour-favoured amp and drive flavours together in one pedal

Words Trevor Curwen Photography Olly Curtis



CRAZY TUBE CIRCUITS HI POWER

PRICE: £235

ORIGIN: Greece

TYPE: Drive pedal

FEATURES: True bypass

CONTROLS: Master, Volume, Presence, Bass, Treble, Middle, internal EQ and Volume Boost trimmers, 103/504 switch, B/L/N switch, H Bypass footswitch, Master, Volume, Bass, Treble, Buffer/True switch, PWR/ODR switch, C Bypass footswitch

CONNECTIONS: Standard input, standard output, standard send, standard return, standard footswitch jack

POWER: 9V DC adaptor (not supplied)

DIMENSIONS: 122 (w) x 95 (d) x 53mm (h)

FACE bvba

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PROS Two respected vintage sounds in one pedal; effects loop; plenty of tweakability; compact size for a twin-footswitch pedal

CONS The Hiwatt side may need a fair bit of dialling in for optimum use with your own amp

1. Power Boost or Overdriver?

A drive pedal before such a thing was given a name, the Gary Hurst-designed Power Boost was an 18-volt orange pedal that was revamped as the Overdriver in 1971, grey with nine-volt powering

2. The B/L/N (Brilliant/Linked/Normal) switch

selects the Hiwatt amp's input channel. Linked represents the sound you'd get by connecting two channels on the amp with a patch lead

3. This 103/504 switch

refers to two different Hiwatt amps: the DR103 is a 100-watt amp, while the DR504 is a 50-watt amp

4. The send and return loop

allows you to add in other pedals or use the boost and amp sections as separate entities using a switcher. If you're a Gilmour fan, you'll know he used the Colorsound Boost along with a Big Muff, so this gives you two options for Muff placement to find what best suits you

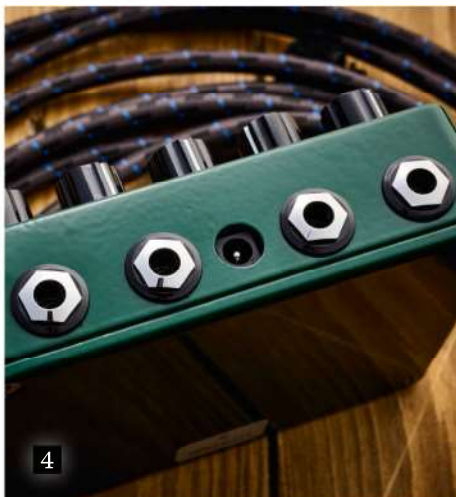
Crazy Tube Circuits has a penchant for creating pedals that pair classic amp and drive pedal sounds. The latest is the Hi Power, which offers tones from Hiwatt amps with a recreation of the Colorsound Power Boost pedal, a combination that David Gilmour was known to use back in the day, notably on the *Wish You Were Here* album. The two sections of the pedal are independently footswitchable and the boost comes before the amp, but there is added flexibility with a send and return loop between the two.

The Boost section has a toggle switch that lets you choose between the sound of the 18-volt Power Boost or the slightly later nine-volt Overdriver version. A Volume knob sets the gain and there's a Master knob for output volume, plus Bass and Treble knobs with which you can temper the boost/drive, which comes with a glassy top-end. There are various degrees of boost and drive to be had, although higher reaches of the Volume knob add a fuzzy edge to proceedings until it gets raucously fuzzy up full. It's here you'll notice the most difference between PWR and ODR settings, the latter being smoother and not quite as rampantly in-yr-face.

The amp section also has similar Volume and Master knobs, but you get a full quartet of amp-style EQ knobs. A toggle switch lets you choose Normal channel, Brilliant channel or a combination of the two working together for added gain. Starting with the recreation of a DR103 100-watt amp, there's really good dynamic response as the amp reacts to your playing across a range of authentic-sounding Hiwatt tones from clean to everything-on-10 crunch, the Master knob building in the sound of power amp distortion. You also get the choice to toggle switch to a DR504 50-watt version, which eschews the former's high headroom and greater dynamic response for more compression and gain. Both sides of the pedal work fine independently, but together the boost seems to be the perfect complement to the amp, pushing it into some familiar clear yet smooth lead tones.

Verdict

Another nicely thought out addition to Crazy Tube Circuits' twin-pedal range, the Hi Power has an obvious appeal to Gilmour fans, but from a wider perspective it combines two classic tonal flavours that are rare in pedal form. **G**



THE RIVALS

If this style of pedal appeals but you're looking for different flavours, Crazy Tube Circuits also bundles Dumble and Klon sounds together in the Unobtanium (£249), while its Crossfire (£189) pairs Fender 'black-panel' sound with Tube Screamer drive. For a Hiwatt-style pedal, check out the Menatone MenaWatt v.III (\$209), although you may have to import it from the USA. Macaris does modern recreations of the Colorsound Power Boost (£359) and Overdriver (£329). Also check out the Tru-Fi Colordriver (£199), Electronic Orange Bananaboo (£224) and, if you fancy building one yourself, Aion FX has the Nucleus Vintage Boost printed circuit board (\$12.50) but may produce a full kit if enough people are interested.



Crazy Tube Circuits' Unobtanium pedal combines Dumble and Klon-style tones