

# Egnater Vengeance \$2,450

Egnater's departure into the high-gain market results in a remarkably versatile amp *By Steve Henderson*

**B**ruce Egnater's amps are starting to make quite a splash on the market. Not just because of their quality and power, but because they have stuff in them that guitar players want. Better than that, they have stuff that guitar players need, making the whole process that much more enjoyable.

With the Vengeance, Egnater has created an amp that addresses the "recto" player with genuine, tube-driven high gain sounds but with the addition of a true clean channel and, surprisingly, a nice reverb.

The Vengeance is no white noise maker. It has some serious sounds for the serious shredder but there's also a host of options on hand that make the Vengeance perfect for a wide range of styles. First, there's around 120 watts on tap, loud and proud, thanks to a matched quartet of 6L6 power tubes. Second, there's a half power switch to bypass the two inside bottles, creating a true 60w amp. It still has plenty of juice but it can be pushed harder. Third, the Vengeance will accept a variety of power tubes to tailor the output characteristics to the player's preference. EL34, KT88, 5881, 6550 and KT66 tubes will all work and offer more or less output, more mids, more bass, cleaner or crunchier sounds, and even the mighty 6V6 for that touch of tweed in your tone. The bias access is on the back panel and the valves are in the manual, so that switching tubes is a snack.

## Sounds

Other tonal options are in the preamp section: there are two channels that look identical but one is considerably gained up. Each has pre- and post-gain, the usual tone set and a channel-specific reverb knob (nice touch) controlling a spring that tails off through the channel changes (even nicer touch) but the real interesting

stuff is in the micro switches: Tight, Bright, Gain and Mids. These vary each channel's response but, it should be noted, they don't have a radical effect (as other manufacturers seem to require) but are designed to enhance rather than dominate the channel's sound. The Tight

switches, for instance, can eliminate the gain channel's flubbiness without changing the basic tone and give Ch 1 some chickin' pickin' focus. The Bright switches give a little sparkle without sounding harsh or edgy. The Gain switches add more drive but, again, it's not an

enormous boost. But it will give Ch 1 some genuine crunch or send Ch 2 to the next level of high gain nirvana.

The Mids switches is where the action is, in a subtle kinda way, because this is where we can boost or cut those critical frequencies. The clean channel can be warm or flat, while the drive channel can be honky or scooped as desired. Best of all, this function can be assigned via the footswitch or an outboard switcher. Someone's done their homework!

High gain amps usually work best with humbuckers but the

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Vengeance produced some great single coil tones. We used a few Strats and Teles - every one produced classic tones in either channel. Our EMG-loaded Anderson effortlessly produced some killer Clapton/Knopfler tones in Ch 1, our LP and 335 produced their customary midrange focus, and the Godin's P-90 setting reminded us what rock 'n' roll guitar is all about. It's a three-dimensional clean tone with no squeakiness, just a big round sound. With Ch 1's gain switch on and Ch 2's off, they still sound quite different - the crunch in Ch 1 isn't over done and even 7th chords remain tight and articulate. Ch 2 has some great tones - rich and focused with no white noise, even with the gain maxed out. It can punch out the mids for some West Coast fusion or scream with a scooped, heavy metal drive that retains loads of sustain, even with single coils.

When switching between the channels the LEDs let us know exactly what's happening. The footswitch (connectable with any XLR cable) also allows access to the reverb, the series effects loop (channel assignable), and that clever array of Mids switches. In addition, it'll kick in a second Master volume knob (also channel assignable) for soloing, which conveniently boosts the signal at the power amp. Very cool!

## Verdict

There are very few high gain amps that provide the kind of sophistication that the Vengeance displays: a buffered effects loop with in and out level controls; Presence and Density to control the highs and lows after the preamp; a speaker-simulated DI, and footswitch functions can be accessed via an external switcher. Most of all, it has a quality of sound that is completely infectious and works well with any guitar. In this amp, it's all a matter of degrees - the Vengeance starts with a great sound and the micro switch options then compliment rather than change that sound. With each flick of a switch, the subtle shifting of

the harmonic image tailors the tone to the player, creating a personalised sound that reacts to the player's nuances. This is the real thing: an amp that works with the player (rather than the other way around), an amp that is not stylistically confined, and an amp that has some truly brilliant tones waiting to be unleashed. **A**

## The Bottom Line

**We like:** The touch-sensitive, detailed tone at any power level

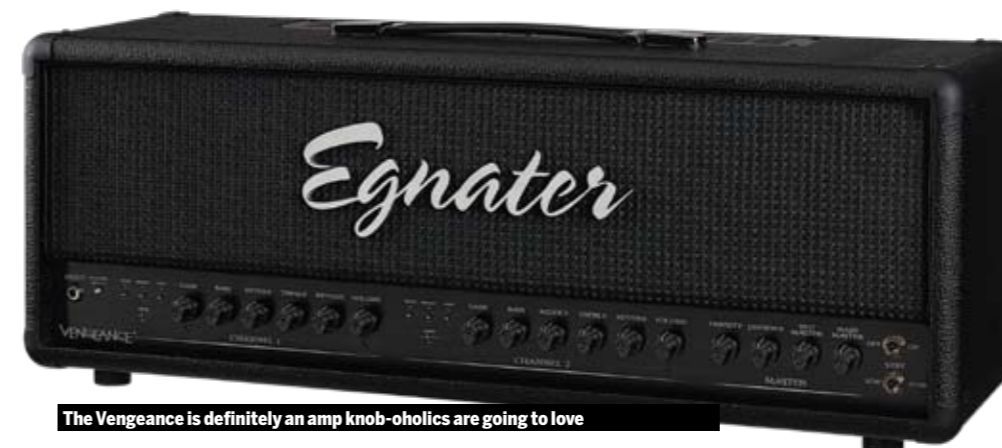
**We dislike:** Hmmm?

**Guitarist says:** A stylistically broad amp that oozes quality with every note



## Last issue: Egnater Tweaker 88 & 212CX

We reviewed a very different outing for Egnater last month, namely two products in the Tweaker line. We said: "The Tweaker 88 brings together a wealth of easy-to-use, real-world features that make it a great choice for any guitarist, though it's well-suited to old-school players who want a good basic core tone"



The Vengeance is definitely an amp knob-oholics are going to love



## Egnater Vengeance

**PRICE:** \$ 2,450  
**ORIGIN:** China  
**TYPE:** Two-channel, all-tube combo  
**OUTPUT:** 120/60w  
**VALVES:** 6L6 x 4, 12AX7 x 6  
**CHANNELS:** Two preamps, two master  
**FOOTSWITCH:** 6-button (included)  
**FEATURES:** Reverb (dual control), buffered effect loop, compensated DI  
**DIMENSIONS:** 260.35mm (h) x 717.55mm (w) x 234.95mm (d)  
**WEIGHT:** 21.77Kg  
**CABINET:** Vengeance 412 cabinet (custom Celestions): \$1250.00

CMC Music  
02 9905 2511  
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## Test results

**Build quality** ★★★★★  
**Features** ★★★★★  
**Sound** ★★★★★  
**Value for money** ★★★★★

**GUITARIST RATING** ★★★★★