

TWO FOR THE SHOW

Egnater Renegade 65-watt tube head



Tube Mix controls for each channel let you dial in a blend of 6L6 and EL34 tones.

Channel 2 looks identical to channel 1, but it is separately voiced like a classic British amp.

* BY CHRIS GILL

THE WORLDS OF the boutique amplifier and mass-produced products have remained mutually exclusive for the most part, although a few independent amp builders have either closed up shop to work for larger companies or collaborated with big music corporations to produce a handful of products. Bruce Egnater has bucked this trend by offering both mass-produced amps and high-end boutique products from his own company, providing everything from the affordable Rebel 20 head to the incredibly versatile MOD Series custom modular amps.

Like the Rebel Series amps and the four-channel Tourmaster, Egnater's new Renegade Series tube amps deliver the innovative features and tones that his company is known for, while they sell for impressively competitive prices. The Renegade features two fully independent and individually voiced channels, Egnater's signature Tube Mix function, and numerous high-end extras, like a cabinet-voiced balanced XLR line/recording output, a buffered effect loop and a versatile footswitch controller. The Renegade is available as a separate head (which is the version I auditioned) and in 1x12, 2x12 and 4x10 combo configurations.

FEATURES

THE RENEGADE IS a 65-watt two-channel amp featuring both a pair of 6L6 and a pair of EL34 power

tubes. Each channel includes its own Tube Mix control, which allows you to select either 6L6 or EL34 tubes or any combination of the two independently for each channel. Although both channels have their own passive bass, middle and treble EQ controls, channel 1 has a classic Fender voice, while channel 2 is more vintage Marshall. Each channel also includes its own 65-watt/18-watt, Tight/Deep and Bright/Normal mode switches, and individual reverb level controls for each channel are located in the amp's master section along with the master density, presence, main 1 (master volume) and main 2 (master volume "boost") controls. The reverb circuit is actually digital, but you wouldn't know it. Egnater spent a year designing it, and it sounds like a high-end spring unit.

The rear panel provides features not commonly found on amps in its price range. The Bias section consists of test points that you can easily access with a voltmeter and external bias adjust trim pots that you can tweak with a screwdriver, all without removing the amp from its chassis. This easy-to-use feature allows you to experiment with different tube configurations (5881, 6550, 6V6, KT66 and KT77), without paying a tech to adjust the proper bias each time. The buffered effect loop sounds great with any variety of effects, from pedals to pro rack units, and the XLR record/line out provides miked amp tones through a PA or when recording direct.

While most foot controllers provided with amps allow you to switch channels and reverb and little else, the Renegade's four-button foot controller lets you customize the amp's functions for live performance. Using its mini footswitches, you can assign the effect loop, reverb and main 2 (boost) separately to either or both channels. The digital reverb circuit incorporates a "spillover" feature that allows reverb tails to decay naturally when you switch from one channel to another instead of cutting off abruptly.

PERFORMANCE

THANKS TO ITS versatile Tube Mix controls and individually voiced EQ sections for each channel, the Renegade truly sounds and performs like two separate amps. Channel 1 can deliver pristine clean rhythm tones with the Tube Mix control set all the way to the 6L6 side, the Bright and Deep modes engaged and the reverb dialed in low. You can instantly switch to a dark, powerful distorted lead tone with channel 2's Tube Mix control set to EL34, the Normal and Tight modes engaged and the reverb turned off, for bone-dry punch. The 65-watt/18-watt switch further allows you to custom tailor each channel's tone. Use the 18-watt setting when you want power tube compression at more manageable volume levels, or leave it set to 65 watts when you need more clean headroom.

With a little careful tweaking, the Renegade summons a wide variety of classic tones that are ideal for almost any style of music, although it doesn't deliver the ultra-high levels of gain many modern metal players prefer. Even so, it still produces impressively aggressive distortion with all of the crunch or compressed singing sustain most players desire.

THE BOTTOM LINE

IF YOU WANT a versatile gigging amp that you can tweak to your discriminating tastes, and you don't want to empty out your bank account, the Egnater Renegade will rock your world. Going rogue never sounded so good, nor has it been so affordable. **SC**



SPECS

LIST PRICE: \$999.00
MANUFACTURER: Egnater Amps, egnatersamps.com
OUTPUT: 65 watts
TUBES: Two 6L6, two EL34 (power amp), six 12AX7 (preamp, reverb)
CHANNELS: Two
FRONT PANEL: 1/4-inch input, channel select switch, 65/18-watt, Tight/Deep and Bright/Normal switches (each channel), gain, bass, middle, treble, tube mix and volume knobs (each channel), channel 1 reverb, channel 2 reverb, density, presence, main 1 and main 2 knobs, on/off switch, standby/play switch
REAR PANEL: Two footswitch jacks, two bias test points, two bias adjust pots, four-/eight-/16-ohm impedance selector, 1/4-inch main speaker output, 1/4-inch extension speaker output, balanced XLR record/line output, 1/4-inch effect loop return, 1/4-inch effect loop send
OTHER: Four-button footswitch for controlling channel switching, effect loop on/off, reverb on/off, and main 2 (boost) on/off, padded cover



| +PRO | -CON |
|---|-------------------------------|
| INCREDIBLE VALUE • TRUE TWO-AMP PERFORMANCE • PRO FEATURES | NO EFFECT LOOP LEVEL CONTROLS |