WAY HUGE
GREEN RHINO OVERDRIVE MKII

BY JORDAN WAGNER



In its original incarnation, the famed Green Rhino Overdrive II is nearly as rare as its animal namesake. Originally introduced in 1994, the Green Rhino helped set the standard for what would become the boutique overdrive bonanza of the late '90s and early 2000s.

Like many boutique overdrives of the period, the much-coveted Green Rhino was inspired by the Ibanez TS-808 Tube Screamer. But when Way Huge originally closed its doors, the Green Rhino became arguably more desirable to collectors than the pedal that it was designed to emulate—commanding prices of several hundred dollars. With Way Huge (and founder Jeorge Tripps) back in business with the backing of Jim Dunlop Electronics, the prospect of a reissue became a hot topic among gear hounds. With the release of the Green Rhino Overdrive MkII, the rumors have become reality. And the pedal we all have heard so much about is back, and better than ever.

A Legendary Pedigree

The Green Rhino Mk II is built as tough and sturdy as its name implies. The classic Way Huge enclosure—crafted out of 2 mm thick, brushed aluminum—feels weighty and solid, and is finished in a cool light green. Volume, Tone, and Drive controls are laid out exactly like the control set on the original Green Rhino pedal. But there are two additional small potentiometers on the Mk II for expanding the boundaries of the Green Rhino's tonal territory.

The first—and my personal favorite—is a control for the level of frequencies at the 100 Hz range. This addition to the circuit is a godsend, as any guitarist who has ever been frustrated by the inherent low-end cut in bluesy overdrive pedals can attest. The control has a massive range, allowing me to boost or cut the 100 Hz frequencies by a whopping 12 dB. The second small potentiometer—labeled Curve—cuts frequencies above 1 kHz by as much as 6 dB, though it's inside the clipping stage, so it's more subtle than a straight 1 kHz cut.

The Green Rhino's old-school, dark, warm overdrive and extra tone-shaping features make it hard to beat for the player after gritty, vintage blues tones with a little extra width and clarity.

Stampede!

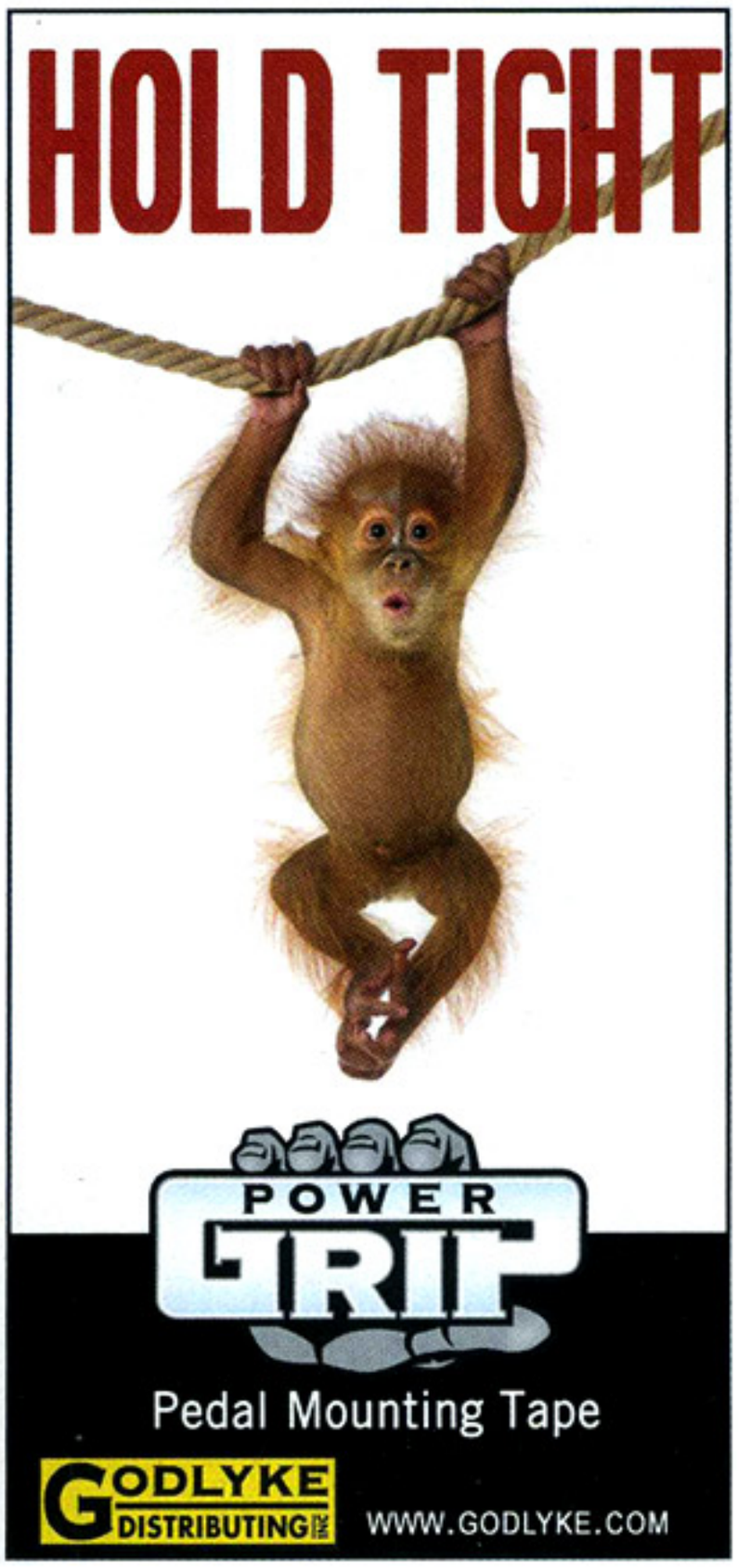
The original Green Rhino Overdrive pedals made their mark by jumping off from the bluesy, thick tone made popular by the Tube Screamer and adding a little more clarity, low end, and bite. The Mk II adheres to this design philosophy, making the pedal a beast, to say the least. Situated between a tried-and-true 2008 Fender American Telecaster and a reissue Fender Twin Reverb 2x12 combo, the Green Rhino demonstrated great frequency balance, girthy gain, and punchy midrange.

The first thing I noticed about the Mk II is that it retains its essentially dark voice. It's a great sonic companion for the twang-tastic combination of a Twin and Tele—taming the natural brightness of that setup. The pedal's Curve control made the Mk II even more flexible in this respect, enabling me to round off any biting frequencies without having to compromise any of the cut that I was getting from the Tone. It's a subtle control—one that in some cases seems more "felt" than heard, but it's likely to be an invaluable feature for players who use a wider variety of guitars and amps—particularly those that are hot in the high-mid zone.

How Low Does It Go?

One of the biggest complaints that blues and rock players have with pedals in the Tube Screamer vein is how they often cut low end—sometimes to the point of making the tone unusable for any sort of riffing or rhythm work. The 100 Hz boost/cut control is capable of transforming the Green Rhino from a blues lead powerhouse into a gutsy, stand-alone overdrive that preserves pick dynamics for everything from sixteenth-note riffage to Stones-y rhythm work. The 100 Hz boost/cut even makes the Mk II work great as a bass overdrive. And it imparted tones from a Kramer USA Striker bass into an Ampeg





GREAT GEAR GIVEAWAY PREMIERGuitar.com:

FREE THIS fano!

Enter for your chance to

WIN

this **Alt de Facto JM6 Shoreline**
(MSRP: $2,495) designed by
master builder Dennis Fano
of Premier Builders Guild!

ENTER TODAY AT PREMIERGUITAR.COM!

fano guitars



MSRP: $2,495.00

Read full rules at PremierGuitar.com.

BA115 combo with a tough overdriven grind that made me wonder why Way Huge just doesn't develop a bass counterpart to the pedal. Bassists take note: You *need* to give this pedal a spin.

The Verdict

The Green Rhino Overdrive MkII is another winner in the revitalized Way Huge line. Its old-school, dark, warm overdrive and extra tone-shaping features make it hard to beat for the player after gritty, vintage blues tones with a little extra width and clarity. Players who use darker-sounding amps and guitars might be best advised to try the pedal with their rigs before buying. For essentially bright rigs though, the Mark II can really open up the possibilities of even a simple guitar and amp setup—thanks in large part to the 100 Hz and Curve controls. Rock and blues hounds, mark this pedal on the map of your tone-search safari—the Green Rhino Overdrive MkII is a true big-game prize.

PREMIERGuitar PREMIER GEAR

Rating:

Buy If...

you've been lusting after an original Green Rhino pedal, or are a diehard vintage overdrive nut.

Skip If...

you need a brighter overdrive to counteract a dark-sounding rig.

Dunlop Manufacturing
Street $129
jimdunlop.com

HEADOnline...

or use a mobile device to read this QR code to download audio clips of the pedal at

premierguitar.com/feb2011