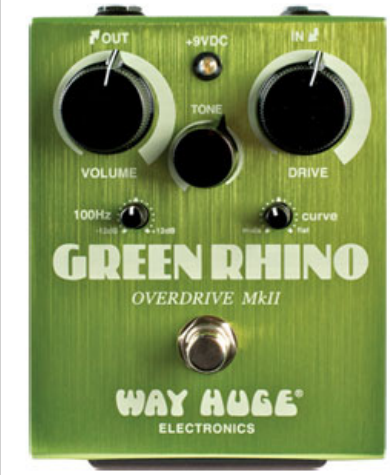


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By Scott Auld



I never used the original Way Huge guitar effects that were underground favorites in the 1990s. I heard about them after the company closed shop, and by then I was interested in very-small-shop builds. When I learned that Dunlop Electronics had brought Way Huge back to life, I thought it was a great idea but I didn't really set out to try the effects, assuming that they had nothing for me. What a mistake!

Dunlop sent us a Way Huge Green Rhino MKII overdrive pedal to look at. Expecting yet-another-overdrive pedal, my preconceptions were immediately set aside when I saw the control layout – in addition to the expected VOLUME/TONE/DRIVE knobs were two very small adjustment trimmers poking up through the enclosure. "What are these?" I thought. One is labeled "CURVE" and one is labeled "100HZ". Hmm, this isn't starting out as run-of-the-mill at all.

I plugged in and powered on the pedal – and was met with a very bright blue LED indicator – and started playing around. I set the TONE and DRIVE around the middle and started playing some leads, and was very pleased that the tone was not fizzy at all, the attack and decay of each note was preserved, but were warmed up and driven into a very nice warm OD. Boosting the DRIVE sent the tone into a great pushed-tubes feel, and I never felt like I needed to turn down the TONE knob too much, like some pedals force you to. The Green Rhino is not so bright that you feel like it's going to burst your eardrum – no, this pedal is nice and warm in all the right places. And by the way, the knobs felt very sturdy, not cheap at all.

I started playing around with the little trimmers poking up through the strong anodized aluminum enclosure. The 100Hz control allows you to cut or boost that frequency by 12dB – essentially, this is a bass-boost or a bass-cut knob. I found that I really like the way the pedal sounds with this control halfway up or more – it was a real tone fattener. Dialing it back did seem to allow for a more direct, cut-through-the-mix sound though. I can see how handy this control will be, allowing you to tailor your sound for the band situation you find yourself in.

I felt like my Gibson Les Paul R8's already stellar sustain was magnified with the Green Rhino MKII on. Leads just sang out and notes near the middle of the guitar's range had a nice clear punch – I suppose this isn't a surprise in a green-colored OD pedal, but that punch did not come at the expense of clarity. I ended up using the pedal with the VOLUME up and the GAIN down a bit – this seemed to allow the pedal and the amp (a Top Hat Super Deluxe) to work well together. The Green Rhino seemed to pull a lot of great creamy natural distortion out of the amp.

I found that the CURVE control is deceptively subtle. I interpreted the documentation ("fine-tune the corner frequencies of your tone") to mean that the CURVE control is meant to shape the knee in the response curve, to help remove harshness and brittleness from brighter setups. Obviously, a Les Paul into a Top Hat is not exactly the most brittle setup to begin with. I did play a friend's American Standard Tele through the

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Rhino, into an Orange 30 watt amp and found the CURVE to have more impact to the higher frequencies and harmonics. So keep in mind that the effect of the CURVE control is dependent on how hot your rig runs. If you run a bright setup then this control will be very, very handy.

I started out my time with the Green Rhino as a fairly detached participant – I went into the experience almost bored with overdrives before I started. What Dunlop managed to do was make an OD pedal exciting to use, and I ended up dreading the day I had to ship it out.

- Electric Guitar plays Blues Harmonica
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- Electro-Harmonix Effectology, Vol.5 "Autobahn "
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