

What follows is a customer review submitted by Bob Cisternas

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Next, my thoughts on the Siegmund Micro Tube Double Drive...you might want to REALLY pay attention if you play an amplified acoustic!

So along with my Midnight Blues breaker I also ordered the MicroTube Double Drive as well. There were a few reasons for this. First was that aside from the TS I didn't have any real tube over drive. Second was that since what I wanted was the ability to step up the gain & drive through the single channel MBB. Third was that I figured that since the same man that created the amps created the DD I could be reasonable assured that the DD & the MBB would be a tried & tested combo. I wasn't wrong!

Firstly the DD is built like a tank, seriously heavy duty stomp box. It has from left to right, Volume, Treble, Middle, Bass, Drive & Gain knobs, 2 switches led's that show Drive/Boost and By-Pass. There's a pre-amp out & a power amp out. The 110v power supply has a trim screw on it that can affect the overall tone of the pedal, & its proprietary connector means you'll need to be near an a/c outlet. (I drive it off the a/c socket on the Pedal Power.)

The tubes are 2 of these REALLY tiny military spec tubes that have an obnoxiously long life to them, and the sound is rather unique, yet strangely familiar.

I plugged in & hit the first stage & the sound immediately got fatter & darker. The tubes give a rather tight tone to the sound, and this tightness can be adjusted by the trim knob on the power supply. Turned down it's a looser warmer more relaxed sound. Turned up it's more along the Fender tight punchy coarser sound, though all the while remaining tighter than a typical 12ax setup.

Prepare to spend a lot of time with your tone control knobs, as they affect a wide range of sound, have that overlap to them, and need to be adjusted with some patience. As I said, the sound is thick & dark & if you're wanting a little brighter sound out of it you'll find the treble knob almost buried. I already have a great deal of mid-emphasis in my rig, so it wasn't that bad, but you might want to be careful with the Mid adjustment as with the overlap it's got a pretty solid effect of the darkness of the sound. Like his amps, it's probably the most effective & flexible eq section that I've ever used on an effect.

With the Drive activated sustain increases, and the distortion begins to take on a bit of a character that I would say is almost fuzz face like. This "fuzziness" can be fine tuned with the power supply trim screw once again. The place where it differs from a classic fuzz tone is it sounds more "organic" more component to the sound than what I would describe, not at metallic as a fuzz.

Driving harder & harder gets you a pretty healthy amount of distortion, thick, rich, dark as you like. Bridge pickup on my strat with the DD Drive cranked and the tone down some is a pretty classic haunting "slide" sound I've come to like A LOT!

Using the DD with the MBB means I can have the amp set with less drive or no drive even, set it up for a clean sound, then punch it up with the DD. The only downside to that is that I do love the sound of the amp itself being cranked rather hard, so there are times that I just use the DD as a one stage boost & have the amp running a little hotter.

My point here is that once again, any reservations that you have about using a single channel amp should be re-examined. There is more flexibility here than I've ever have with any lower quality multi-channel amp, with a sound quality they could never touch.

One thing that was not to my liking however was the fact that when I first got the DD, it wasn't giving me any real volume boost unless the volume & drive & gain were buried...and even then it was a slight boost.

So I entered into my first "customer service" issue with Chris. I thought there was something wrong with the pedal & sent it back to him after talking to him a bit. He checked out the pedal & confirmed that it was working the way it was designed, just wasn't doing what I thought it would. So I was screwed right? Wrong. After an email back about what I was looking for/ expecting, Chris modded the pedal & sent it back to me!

We decided to try about 50% more gain on it...and he loved the sound, so he sent it back to me & voila! It probably could have gone to around 75% & been even better, but I'm playing it now as is & its doing exactly what I want, and also too it seems to give me the ability to even more finely tune the gain & drive at that first stage.

Once again, I can't stress enough that this level of service, custom tuning & creation, just doesn't exist that much any more, and certainly not at this budget level. Chris' comment to me was that the pedal was working as designed, but as that wasn't what I needed that he would get it working the way that I needed it too, and that is exactly what he did.

In fact, he liked the overall results of the mod that he is now shipping all if his DD's that way.

Now if you play a plugged acoustic...pay attention C A R E F U L L Y...

You WANT a MicroTube Double Drive!

The about of depth, harmonics & just plain LAVISH sound created playing though the DD with both My Martin & My Ovation is AMAZING. Start out with the EQ on the middle for all 3 bands, flat eq on the guitar, and play, then dial in from there. I use the tone controls on my Ovation to adjust on the fly, & usually have the DD just a little brighter side.

(My Ovation is already a pretty dark sound...not the wirey jangley sound I was used to from them.

For some reason (which I'm sure Chris knows) having my amp set to max headroom & using the DD gives the acoustic a more harmonic, richer, fuller more vibrant tone that any 12ax I've heard. Just HUGE overtones & harmonics as if there were strings between the strings filling in more tone. Vary the amount of reverb here & you can get some wild echoing 12 string/choral type effects.

Turn up the drive on the double drive though & something amazing happens...a seed of rawness appears, and you can grow that seed into massive amounts of

vintage saturation type overdrive. The only word I can even think to describe it is "urgency." It's as if the sound is driving off your fingers & trying to get out of the speakers harder & harder. It's pretty wild.

So that's the experience with the MicroTube Double Drive...as always any questions feel free to drop me a note!