

PEAVEY

We've come a long way since the first amp modeling skeptic scoffed at the concept of using ones and zeros to make one amp sound like another. Let's face it, some tone aficionados will never drink the modeling punch, and that's OK—the technology has survived long enough to become a formidable element of modern gear and the number of users continues to grow. Among the most buzz-worthy lines of amps to enter the modeling fray is Peavey's Vypyr series, which has been praised for everything from its tweakability to its convincing metal tones to its Peavey-proud "fair price" for what you get. Of particular interest to many players—and even some borderline modeling skeptics—are the tube-powered Vypyr's, which combine Peavey's modeling technology with those beloved tubes.

FEATURES

The Vypyr Tube 60 is a four-channel combo amp with a custom-voiced 12" speaker. It features 12 amp models, each with a clean and an

overdrive mode, and two banks of 11 effects called stomp box and rack mount. Each bank is placed where they would normally be in your signal chain—stomps in front of the tone stack, and racks where the effects loop should be. You can run five effects at a time and program up to 400 presets when using the optional Sanpera II footswitch. The amp has a 12AX7 preamp tube and two 6L6GCs in the power section. The amp is also practice-minded, with USB and headphone outputs and an MP3 player input. The Vypyr 60 weighs in at over 50 lbs.

SOUND

This is the point where many of you may be thinking, "Yeah, yeah—another bedroom wanker amp ... whoopee." I must say, however, that hearing is believing. The tones are quite convincing. This amp is actually gig-worthy, too. In fact, it's loud—not arena loud, but club loud.

The easy-to-decipher amp models cover the expected territory—Twn, Dlx, Brit, Plxi; Peavey's more notable amps—Classic, 6505, JSX, XXX; and some very relevant favorites that can now savor the honor of being cloned by Peavey—Rec, B-Kat, K-Stein, and Dzl. It's very cool that you can just bump the selector switch and throw the amp models into high gain mode. Peavey has even gone through the trouble of having the tone stack mimic the behavior of each amp being modeled (with some extras that weren't on the original amps).

Do the models actually sound like the ones they are copying? Well, let's be honest here. I don't think any simulation will ever sound exactly like the real thing. A 1x12 combo just isn't going to sound like a beefy head pushing a 4x12 cab. That said, these models sound quite good and are very usable.

I was quite happy to hear that the balance between different sounds is very even. You don't get those annoying volume jumps when switching sounds. Of course, you can program that in if that's what you want. It is also important to note that the Vypyr 60 is responsive. Unlike other modeling amps that have a bit of latency to the attack, its 32-bit processor doesn't have to think things over before spitting notes out. It models the amps and effects but not distortion. The amp's overdriven tones are created with Peavey's patented TransTube circuitry.

Effects-wise, this baby is loaded. You get 11 effects in the stomps, including the usual distortion suspects, chorus, a Beck-esque ring modulator, phaser, and so forth. The rack-style effects include tremolo, chorus, slap echo, flange, a reverse effect that is tons of fun, and,



Vypyr Tube 60

by Pat Smith

check this out—a 30 second looper. The built-in effects vary in quality a bit, but this is a very subjective topic because we all like different stuff. I like the reverb and the delay, which are the two I would use most. The MOG (monophonic octave generator), which gives you an octave up or down, is way cool. Overall, I felt the effects were pretty darn good. You'll have a good time going through them.

I do have three caveats that may or may not rub you the same way. First, this amp does have a learning curve. The amp's WYSIWYG interface (What You See Is What You Get) is true to its name, but you still have to read the manual and spend some considerable time programming it to experience its full capabilities. Second, there is some noise in the high gain modes, as there would be with most any amp set to achieve similar sounds. The noise is pretty well managed by the onboard noise gate, but if you want to record with this amp using a mic, you should try out the settings you need first. Otherwise, the USB output is recognized as an audio device when plugged into a computer for direct recording. Last but not least, in my opinion you really need to invest in a foot controller because the amp just isn't the same without it. Peavey makes two Vypyr foot controllers—the Sanpera I and the Sanpera II, which street for \$100 and \$200, respectively. The Sanpera II features two expression pedals with toe switches, tap tempo and looper control, easy bank selection, and access to pretty much any amp function. With the big pedal you can hit the stage for \$650, which is fairly cheap for this kind of flexibility.

IS IT FOR YOU?

Let's do the math: Take 11 stomps, 11 rack effects (plus bypass on each) multiply by a dozen amp modes times high and low gain settings, times five effects at once, and you start to get a feel for how many sounds this amp can make and how long it will take you to dial in your settings.

Obviously, this is an awesome amp for bedroom rockers, but it is much more than that. Distorted sounds are common in modeling amps, but this amp has them by the ton, and you can definitely tell which of its peers it is emulating. The Vypyr also delivers with its clean tones and mildly overdriven tones. I would have no problem playing fat-sounding jazz, twangy country, or reverb-drenched surf with this amp. You would be hard-pressed to find another amp with as many sounds and tubes in such a tight package for the price. **GE**



IN A NUTSHELL

- Extremely versatile
- Four channels
- 60 watts, one 12" speaker
- 1x12AX7 and 2x6L6GC tubes
- 12 amp models with 2 modes each
- 11 stomp and 11 rack-style effects
- Tap tempo
- Built-in tuner

MSRP: \$599
Sanpera II Foot Controller
MSRP: \$269.99
peavey.com



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