

ROCKETTE ROLE



SESSION ROCKETTE 20
£120
QQ½ VW

THE ROCKETTE 20 combo - in catalogue nomenclature, the SG20 110 - is sometimes dismissed as just a less powerful version of its brother, the Rockette 30. Although both share a not dissimilarly sized grey-tweed covered cabinet and

panel. This kind of layout has its detractors, but one undeniable point in its favour is that all knobs, switches and connections are integrated in a single, visible line-up.

Rather than offer independent channels, the 10in Celestion-speakered Rockette 20 has two inputs - each with its own characteristics - tailored by a master set of controls. From left to right, they comprise Volume, a three-band EQ (Bass, Middle, Treble), and variable Overdrive. The inputs themselves are described as Normal and Super Drive, the latter giving greater signal strength and presence, and a more extreme overdriving potential. Whichever input is selected, the controls don't respond in quite the way one might expect.

The first discovery is that the EQ and Overdrive act, in part, as supplementary gain controls. For example, if all the EQ bands (which are post-Overdrive) are set in the admittedly unlikely position of zero, you won't hear a dickie bird - even with Volume and Overdrive

at maximum. As each band is introduced, gain is added in the relevant frequencies.

Similarly, having set up an initial EQ, you'll find that progressively bigger tweaks of Overdrive give corresponding boosts in overall volume levels. For instance, when Confusing at first, perhaps, but it's a circuitry that proves usefully interactive. For instance, when playing clean (via either input) with Overdrive at zero, the sound levels even when Volume's at ten, are not exactly earth-shattering. Add just the merest twist of Overdrive and perceived volume almost doubles. Equally important, the sound retains its clarity.

That this modest helping of Overdrive makes such a profound difference before the onset of distortion is, I suspect, no accident. For it's a feature inseparable from the Rockette 20's essential character. Continue to wind things up, and placed at the player's disposal is a spectrum of the distorted genre broad enough for all rock and metal preferences, although one, it has to be said, given, in *extremis*, to a

degree of fizziness.

This tendency, appropriate enough for certain overdriven textures, is partially traceable to a top-heavy EQ. There's so much treble on tap (aurally more so at higher volumes) that I'd be surprised if anyone - unless their guitar is hopelessly lacking or they themselves have cloth ears - would ever need to wind it beyond half-way. Strat and other single coil users will probably be able to keep within even more modest limits!

Even so, this profligacy of highs is infinitely preferable to an amp that can't deliver enough, which is infuriating. And if you ignore what, on other combos, might be normal tone settings and leave the decision to your ears, the Rockette's EQ will cater for most musical styles - from jazz to Jovi - with fairly effortless proficiency. On so modestly priced an amp, full marks to UK manufacturers, Access Electronics, for fitting an FX send-and-return loop. In practice, if your pedals are carried as a board system, you'd be better

served to route them through the front end, saving the loop to run, say, a reverb or delay line. Apart from normal FX looping, Send can be utilised for outputting to an additional power amp and thence to an extension speaker cabinet.

Adjacent to the illuminated Mains On/Off rocker switch are located an extension speaker output and socket for stereo headphones which, in the usual way, cuts off the amp's internal speaker for private strumming. The Rockette can also be silenced, if required as a pre-amp only, by inserting a non-connected jack plug into the Effects Return.

If some aspects of the Rockette 20's inherent sound character won't necessarily be to everyone's taste, the £120 price tag certainly should. This modest outlay buys a versatile rehearsal, studio and gig-worthy combo, professionally put together, with some useful ancillary features into the bargain. Oh, and a black leatherette transit cover!

JERRY UDWINS

A Rockette:30 opened up for inspection. Notice how it is all built directly onto the back panel of the cabinet. This construction was inspired by a Phillips TV, which I had looked inside.

Some of the early ones had a G12L 40 speaker, like this recently 'in for service' as new 1985 example. But later we switched to a custom G12C 30, which was a lot sweeter sounding.



TITLE ROCKETTE 20 + 30		SCALE 5:1	DRAW B.S.3
<p>LET'S HAVE A "PROPER" TRADITIONAL GRILLE CLOTH FOR PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE.</p> <p>FIT MODEL I.D. BADGE HERE</p> <p>MOST BE FITTED WITH HEAVY-DUTY CORNER PROTECTORS</p> <p>USE SAME PROFILE AS SESSIONETTE 15!</p>		<p>SEE THEM AT THE BRITISH MUSIC FAIR</p>	
<p>FIT LARGE STRAP HANDLE - AS ALL OTHER MODELS.</p> <p>USE OUR SPECIAL 'SESSION' DRIVERS FROM CELESTION.</p> <p>TO BE COVERED WITH EXCLUSIVE 'SESSION' HARD-WARING GREY TWEED CLOTH.</p> <p>SOFT ANTI-SLIDE FEET</p>			
<p>SG20-110 ROCKETTE 20 Features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Super sensitive BIFET pre-amp design. ● Double inputs allowing clean through to super overdrive sounds. ● Overdrive level control. ● Three band "Valve type" EQ. ● Master volume. ● Effects Send and Return loop. ● Headphone socket. ● Extension speaker socket. ● 20 watts RMS output. ● Special design 10" High efficiency speaker. ● Size: 435×375×250mm (17.20×14.80×9.80ins.) ● Weight: 10kg (22lbs.) ● Transit cover included. 	<p>SG30-112 ROCKETTE 30 Features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Super sensitive BIFET pre-amp design. ● Twin channel footswitchable clean and overdrive operation. ● Double inputs allowing independent clean and overdrive playing for two guitarists. ● Variable Harmonic Filter on overdrive channel. ● Two band valve amp type EQ circuit. ● ACCUTRONICS spring reverb unit. ● 30 watts RMS output. ● 12" custom speaker. ● Headphone socket. ● Extension speaker socket. ● Effects Send and Return loop. ● Size: 435×375×250mm (17.20×14.80×9.80ins.) ● Weight: 13kg (28.6lbs.) ● Transit cover included. 		
ELECTRONICS DESIGN	I.D. SW	©1986	DESCRIPTION
SPEAKER DESIGN	an. SW		These amps
CABINET DESIGN	SW		most sound, feel & look
PRODUCT CONCEPT	SW		totally professional. Stewart
DRAWING NO.	A 61261		
<p>AXESS ELECTRONICS LTD., MONITON TRADING ESTATE, BASINGSTOKE, HANTS, RG22 6NQ. TEL: 0256 58415. TLX: 858675 CS INIL G.</p>			
MADE IN ENGLAND - PROUDLY!!			