



NOBELS ODR-MINI

WORDS RICHARD PURVIS



The Nobels ODR-1 might be the most famous overdrive you've never heard of – and now it's gone mini

Despite appearances, this is not a green overdrive pedal. Well, it clearly is – but anyone who translates that as 'yet another wannabe Tube Screamer' is in for a surprise. Nobels has been making the ODR-1 since 1985, when Tube Screamers were around, but the only thing most people associated with the colour green was a frog called Kermit.

Designed in Germany, the original ODR-1 is known for its warm and natural drive, with a wide gain range and none of the bass roll-off or upper-mid pushiness of a Tube Screamer-type overdrive. But it's always been more of a secret weapon for session players than an all-round object of desire – so can this new titchy version help Nobels go mainstream?

IN USE

With drive at 10 o'clock, the ODR-mini growls into life with a sweet-sounding

low-gain tone. There's a fair amount of compression involved, giving it the soft-edged feel of a TS9 or a Boss SD-1 – but, crucially, without the same coloration of tone. If anything, in fact, the low end here has a tendency towards chubbiness.

As promised, the drive dial takes us all the way from mild crunch to roaring hard rock... with a little help from that intriguingly named Spectrum control. This is supposed to be more flexible than a standard tone knob – and while we can't quite get our heads around what it's actually doing, it certainly works. Increasing it adds brightness and gain without harshness, while dialling it back softens the top end for darker, more subdued textures. We can definitely conclude that this thing is smarter than the average green overdrive. **G**

9/10 A neat hybrid of fluffy 80s-style drive and modern transparent crunch

KEY FEATURES

PRICE £95

DESCRIPTION Overdrive pedal. Made in China

CONTROLS Drive, level, spectrum (tone)

FEATURES True bypass; powered by 9-volt mains supply only (not included)

DIMENSIONS 93 x 53 x 48mm

CONTACT Nobels
nobels.de



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