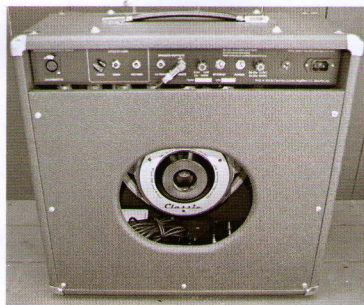


content and detail that many speakers mask or miss altogether. The EV doesn't growl, groan or moan, and you'll hear none of the nasty, dissonant overtones or brittle high frequencies that can plague some production speakers today. What you play is what you get, and like a powerful Twin or Showman amp, any weaknesses in your game will be amplified in glorious, polyphonic perfection. The EV hides nothing.



You'll recall that we like to consider the *intention* of an amplifier when we're developing a review... When compared to the vast number of guitar amps that have come before, what is the intended purpose of

the OD-2? Where does it fit among other custom amps built today? How does it shine? What does it do particularly well, and what are its limitations? Many master volume circuits have earned their bad rep because they produce a pathetic imitation of a big amp cranked, at theoretically low decibel levels. The Carol-Ann seems to conquer these potential handicaps as well as any master volume design can. If you're craving the big, bold clarity and clean headroom of a powerful amp purpose-built with a high threshold of clean tones, the OD-2 isn't it. The hook that defines the OD-2 is all about smooth distortion, fidelity, clarity and extreme touch sensitivity at usable and highly variable volume levels. It doesn't sound like a Fender, Marshall, Hiwatt or Vox, Selmer, Magnatone, Ampeg, Silvertone, No-Tone, Flot-a-Tone, Gibson, Peavey, Laney, Music Man, Stadel, Cornford or Dynacord. But if you wanted to... you could pull off a really bitchin' imitation of Robben Ford with this amp. Oh! Oh! Oh! Does this help frame the Carol-Ann within your consciousness in a meaningful way? We hope so. But if the considerable ink we've devoted thus far to this review has left you still uncertain of Carol-Ann's special charms, perhaps this will help...

*"In the land of the blind,
the one-eyed man is King."*

– Eelco Dykstra, Amsterdam

The OD-2 is available as a head or combo. The 1x12 weighs about 55 pounds loaded with the EV, and the cabinet appears to be built by Mojotone. Additional back panel features include 8 and 16 ohm speaker jacks, voltage selector, effects loop and XLR footswitch input with footswitch and LED channel indicator lights. Carol Ann rocks, but she's no cheap date... \$3695 street. **To**

www.carolannamps.com, 1-888-930-2226

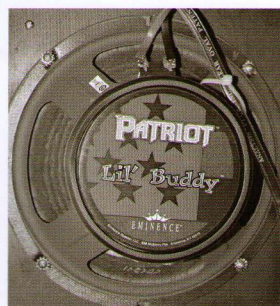
The Carr Raleigh

Big Tone, Small Box



Steve Carr has always built unique and interesting guitar amplifiers that present distinct departures from the replica & reissue' school of amp design in terms

of visual appearance, circuit design and sound. The new Raleigh continues in that tradition with a fresh retro cabinet design and switchable master volume and boost circuit. We often like to ask amp builders if a new amp has been significantly inspired by a vintage model that came before (it's a question we think you would ask – "Is it similar to anything I'm familiar with or may have heard before?") While you may be tempted to size up the Raleigh in the image of a Champ, Skylark or a Jet, it is a definite step up from vintage amps of similar size and output. We asked Steve to describe his vision and intention for the Raleigh, and our review follows...

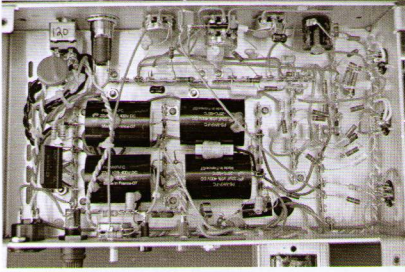


The Raleigh grew from the funky practice amps of the '60s – small, weird, both retro and futuristic, and small in size. I wanted to take the 'lunchbox' practice amp idea and throw our own spin on it with a wrap-around grille and '60s angles – the smallest 1x10 combo package possible

that would also be solid. The speaker was a very important choice, and once I had a skeletal amp circuit prototype assembled, I listened to a lot of different speakers in the cabinet. The Lil' Buddy hemp cone by Eminence was by far the best, with the full low end I wanted – not easy to create in a small cabinet. That speaker also has a nice, smokey, mysterious voice. Once I settled on the speaker, I started refining the circuit and features.

At first the amp was very simple – just a straight, clean amp, but the thought of having a really sustainy and fun overdrive appealed to me. I spent a great deal of time getting the clean sound to be really chimey and the overdrive very thick – opposite sounds that took a lot of tweaking. The 'clean' is cut from Fender cloth with a few tweaks to keep the clean tones almost all the way up to '10' with single coils. I have set the power tube to remain mostly clean at all volume levels, and

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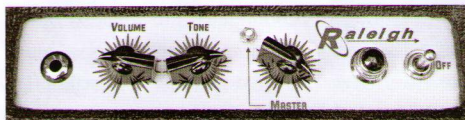


the overdrive comes from the preamp. The overdrive toggle switch engages another 12AX7 tube and adds the Master volume, so you can really get

the amp churning even at whisper-soft volumes.

This is our first E84 amp, and I am running it in fixed bias mode, which is not so common for EL84s. You have to adjust the bias when you change tubes, which is very easy with the external bias points and bias pot. The fixed bias really opened up the EL84 sound, while keeping its touch sensitivity. The Raleigh uses high order shelving of top end in the Overdrive channel to keep it smooth and rich (not zizzy), while having lots of sustain and overdrive, which is a new approach for us. The aim of this amp is obviously home and studio. It has all the high quality parts we always use, and the same terminal point-to-point wiring method. This is also a fairly low voltage amp – about 280 volts on the plates, and tubes should last a long time. Also, you'll notice no Standby switch... With the low voltage, it's not so important, in keeping with the funky fun of the '60s practice amps! Seems more manly, too...

The 3 watt, single EL84 Raleigh is indeed the first Carr to utilize this very popular tube, along with dual 12AX7s and the excellent Eminence L'il Buddy hemp cone 10" speaker. Obviously designed for low-volume dealing, the Raleigh's strong suit is its abundant supply of clean, crisp headroom, and a rich, full sound that seems to defy the capabilities of such a diminutive, 3-watt box.



Turning the Volume control to 3 o'clock

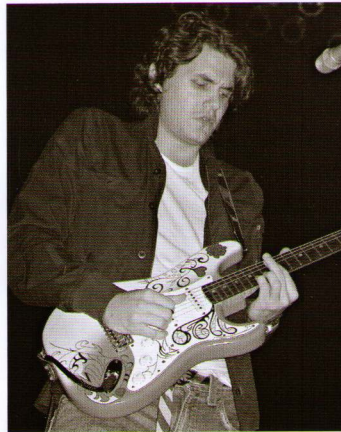
sends the Raleigh into natural distortion that is rich, warm and complex – even with our Nash Tele. Maximum clarity is achieved with both the Volume and the switchable Master set at roughly 12 o'clock. As volume on both controls is increased, the Raleigh burns with increasingly intense sustain and compression that can be maintained down to a whisper as volume is decreased. The Raleigh is, as we wrote in our review notes, a 'great little bedroom blaster' – but unlike most other little bombers from days past, the rich clean tones make the Raleigh exceptional in this class. You couldn't gig with it under anything but small ensemble and 'listening room' solo gigs, but that's really not what the Raleigh is about. We also like how the Eminence Lil' Buddy hemp ten adds a distinctive vocal quality to the voice of the Raleigh that is warm, but not dark, with plenty of sparkle on the top.

Like all Carr models, the Raleigh is handwired using top-shelf components, and the retro solid wood cabinet is built on the premises in Pittsboro, NC by Carr's own cabinet makers. In short, it sounds every bit as good as it looks. \$1250 list in black, \$1350 for two-tone custom colors, \$1500 with cherry or maple front panels. **To**

www.carramps.com, 919-545-0747

The Two Rock Jet Signature

Built to Burn



The two guys that founded Two Rock have been on quite a roll with their Custom Signature Reverb performance rigs, and having someone as visible as John Mayer among avid Two Rock players doesn't hurt (please reference the March 2006 issue of TQR for our exclusive interview with Mayer, and our review of one of his

Dumble amps and the Two Rock Signature Custom Reverb). The recent introduction of the low-power, compact Jet Signature has also been extremely well-received, and the first question we asked when our review amp arrived was, "Why did you build it?" Two Rock co-founder Bill Krinard replied with the following story...

The true story of the Jet really had a lot to do with me going on vacation, and at the time we weren't building a small amp. I have kind of a small trunk and a wife and a daughter and they all had suitcases for the trip, so I needed something smaller. I had some '64 Princeton transformers laying around, so I took an old Ruby chassis that was our Trainwreck clone and took it to a buddy and had him saw a chunk of it off and weld the corners back on, and I built an amp on that chassis. That's the real story. The original one was a little different, but the amps we make now are similar to the early Signature Custom amps. It has a little softer power supply, smaller transformers, and a little less filtering on the input because we wanted to make something that was more explosive for its size.

TQR: So you were trying to build something that was not as loud, not as big, but an amp that could still create the same type of big soundstage as the larger amps you build...

That's exactly what we wanted to do. There are a lot of guys

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