

SEYMOUR DUNCAN FORZA OVERDRIVE

REVIEW BY **DAVID PAKULA**

STREET PRICE **\$179.00**



When I think of Seymour Duncan, my mind immediately goes to some of its wonderful pickups, both stock and aftermarket. Seymour Duncan is also in the business of making guitar pedals, and I wasn't sure what to think when I was handed the Forza. Would Seymour Duncan be able to excel in the growing realm of pedals? Let's find out.

Opening the box, the first thing I saw was a product manual. The manual is nicely laid out, and provides a number of sample settings to try in different situations—very handy. Other niceties

include two sets of hook-and-loop fastening material, a Neoprene-like pad with adhesive (presumably for the bottom of the pedal), and a set of red pointer stickers that you can use to mark your settings on the pedal. Good thinking on all these additions.

The pedal itself is painted to look rather like a vintage Italian sports car. The bottom of the pedal has no feet or pads of any sort, so Seymour Duncan provides the Forza with the previously mentioned options to suit the consumer's needs. There is also an easy-access nine-volt battery compartment. On

the top edge, you'll find the input, output and power jacks.

The top of the pedal has two large, red knobs, "Level" on the left, and "Drive" on the right. Below those, and somewhat centered, are small black knobs for Bass, Mid, and Treble controls. These EQ knobs are all center-detented.

I plugged the Forza into my rig with a nine-volt DC adapter. With the Level at 10 o'clock, Forza reached unity gain. With the Drive control at 9 o'clock, I was able to just thicken the natural clean, giving a bit more . . . girth. Playing

with the Level and Drive controls, it became obvious that this pedal can do a lot, and do it well. I was able to dial in warm overdrive tones, treble boost-type sounds, and full screaming lead tones.

The EQ controls on this pedal are small in stature, but not function. I was able to use them to tailor my sound, and to compensate for the way that the Level and Drive changed the frequency response on the amp. Also, I used the EQ controls in order to affect the gain response. I don't know if the EQ comes before the drive in the circuitry, but to my ear, the EQ was able to change the character of the drive. That sort of control over the tone is great to have.

I would certainly call the drive on this pedal flexible; it played well with both clean and dirty channels on my amp. The Forza was able to smooth out the amp's distorted channel while keeping the fidelity intact. Notes were not overly fuzzed, but clear and

sustained. Chords sounded full, and the low end sort of tightened up a bit.

WHAT WE LIKE

The Forza's glass diode-powered drive is warm. The circuit is flexible and playing with the Forza for a short time made it obvious that this is not a single application pedal. The thought that went into giving the player the option to adorn the bottom of the pedal in a manner that suits their pedal board needs, and the markers for saving settings are also a plus.

CONCERNS

I looked, but just couldn't find anything about this pedal that gave me pause. The Forza is a well designed and built pedal.

