



Grille ■ Look closely and you'll see a genuine ECC83 valve glowing behind that grille

■ **ISF control**
The tone-shaping ISF circuit lets you dial up your own signature sound

■ **Chassis**
Blackstar builds its pedals to last. The DIST-X looks indestructible!



BLACKSTAR HT-DISTX

£99

Newcomer Blackstar is making waves with its pedals...

Assuming you're a tone-hungry guitarist and not a serial killer told to do it "by the voices" in your head, then you'll welcome the claims of Northampton-based pedal manufacturer, Blackstar, to replicate 'the sound in your head'. TG certainly did. The sound in our head is mental valve distortion, meaning that, of the five stompboxes in Blackstar's HT range, the DISTX was the one.

The sizzle: These days, you need a big pitch to get ahead in the distortion pedal market. "The HT-DISTX is a no-nonsense, ultra-high-gain filth machine," trumpets Blackstar's website like a travelling salesman. "The tone has been benchmarked against the best valve amps in the world and will transform your mild-mannered classic into a fire-

breathing monster." Bold words, but they're backed up with a genuine ECC83 valve (running hot at 300V), plus a tone-shaping circuit (ISF) that works with the EQ controls to dial up subtle bespoke filth.

"EVEN THE PUNIEST OF SOLID-STATE COMBOS CAN SOUND LIKE WORLD BEATERS WITH DISTX"

We say: On the face of it, £99 may seem steep for a one-trick pedal, but what you don't see is the sheer class of the tone. Set the gain to half-mast and even the puniest solid-state combo sounds like a world-beater, with the ECC83 supplying creamy character and dynamic response where lesser pedals trade in shallow fizz.

Pushing it higher, meanwhile, arms you with a skull-cracking

grind that suggests you'll want this pedal on the end of a recording desk as well as on your pedalboard. The icing is the ISF, which flavours the filth from a woody 'British' style distortion to the tight bottom-ended growl of

a traditional 'American' overdrive. And, to be honest, Blackstar's DISTX pedal never even sounded this good in our head.

Henry Yates

SUMMARY

For: Monster valve tones and great scope for tweaking them
Against: Younger players might prefer a multi-FX



TG says... Stomp on this best-of-British belter

At a glance

BLACKSTAR HT-DISTX

BODY: Korea
TYPE: Valve-powered overdrive pedal
FEATURES: ECC83 valve, ISF (Infinite Shape Feature), 3-band EQ, Gain control, Level control
POWER SUPPLY: 16V AC adaptor (supplied)
DIMENSIONS [HxWxD]: 80 x 160 x 119mm
WEIGHT: 1.2kg
CONTACT: Blackstar Amplification 01536 312620
WEB: www.blackstaramps.co.uk

