

GEAR: EDEN DC-210XLT



Dual pre-amp offers channel changing facility.

Carpet covering is standard Edén protection.

Heavy duty 10" speakers plus HF tweeter cover a wide frequency response.

EDEN DC-210XLT

METRO COMBO - 600W OUTPUT - DUAL CHANNEL - £1599

Eden are currently one of the most popular manufacturers of high-end bass amplification. Established in 1976 by David Nordschow, the company has grown exponentially, and now boasts sophisticated yet approachable equipment that graces the stage with bassists such as Abe Laboriel, Aston 'Family Man' Barrett, Bakithi Kumalo, Mark Egan, Randy Hope-Taylor, and Rocco Prestia. With a goal of building the highest quality equipment possible, Edén have an enviable reputation for innovation, quality and tone, all of these a testament to their enduring popularity. With that in mind, the company's new combo, the DC-210XLT Metro has much to live up to, and it's with considerable glee that I made off with it, determined to put it through its paces on a busy series of gigs.

The DC-210XLT Metro is a combination of Edén's popular World Tour and David Series speaker cabinets in a single two channel combo. According to Edén, this comes as a result of repeated requests for such a combination. The result? A two channel combo that offers the best of both worlds, meaning it should be able to cope with just about anything.

First impressions are very good overall, but I have a few very minor aesthetic complaints. As you'll see from the photographs, the Metro sports the



INFORMATION

PRICE: £1599
ORIGIN: USA
POWER OUTPUT: 600W RMS @ 2Ω, 400W RMS @ 4Ω and 240W @ 8Ω
PREAMP TYPE: Tube & Solid-state
OUTPUT STAGE: Solid-state
SPEAKERS: EC-1060XL Cast Frame
TWEETERS: E-2700
DIMENSIONS: 23" W x 24" H x 18.5"D
WEIGHT: 85lbs

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familiar Edén good looks with the gold coloured brushed steel control panel and tweeter, and the red and blue controls. All of the controls felt well secured and turned smoothly, although the gain and enhance controls seemed a little less robust, possibly due to their added push/pull functionality. To my mind, the Metro logo seems lost in amongst all the space available on the panel, and could have been a bit bigger and more obvious. Conversely, I consider the logo badge on the grille to be too big! Nevertheless, the important thing is that the grille is tough and well secured - it looks like it could withstand a fairly hefty kicking, but I resisted testing this theory too strenuously. As with the Edén D210XLT speaker cabinet, the Metro is dual ported at the top and bottom, making for both a balanced appearance and adding to the combos forward throw. The enclosed Edén catalogue also promises that this results

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in a deep, focused bass sound, so I'll be listening out for that when using it live. The cabinet itself is constructed of AA void-free plywood and features the unique one-piece aluminum chassis found on all Edén cabinets. CAD simulations are used by Edén to determine the best relationship between speaker and cabinet. These are then tested the old fashioned way - by ear. The result of this marriage of technology and real world testing is presumably a positive one - we will find out!

Moving our attention to the front panel, we can clearly see that the Metro's controls are divided into two sets, one for each channel. The first channel uses solid-state technology and is my first port of call. From left to right the controls/inputs are as follows: a standard ¼" input jack, a *Gain* control with peak LED, *Enhance* control, and a 3-band EQ of *Bass*, *Middle* and *Treble*. The gain control is a push/pull affair which when in the out position adds a 12db pad to the input, ideal for use with higher output basses. The enhance dial is also a push/pull control, although here the push/pull function allows the user to bypass the *Compressor/Limiter*. The compressor/limiter has a fixed threshold and works in a slightly less intuitive way than some of the others I've seen. Compression level is adjusted with the gain control, meaning that for maximum

EDEN DC-210XLT: FRONT AND REAR PANELS



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compression, the control needs to be set quite high - the manual advises that the peak LED will flash more often if this is done. The enhance control is a tone shaping preset that can be either used alone or in conjunction with the other tone controls. It boosts the low- and high-end frequencies and scoops the midrange - apparently this is to give the user a quick and easy good quality modern bass tone - slappers will certainly love it. The 3-band EQ works just as expected. In between the two channel control sets is a channel selector switch, meaning you can use the same input for either channel. Fortunately, channel switching can also be done with the included footswitch. The footswitch is a two button affair, one button for channel selection, one to mute the output - conveniently, the tuner output stays active when the button is pressed, enabling silent tuning. This also makes changing instruments easier.

The second channel uses vacuum tube technology and has its own input, meaning that you can plug into either and select channels via the footswitch. This channel has the same *Gain*, *Enhance* and *Compressor/Limiter* controls as the first channel, but a different and more comprehensive EQ section. The EQ is made up of Bass and Treble controls, and a Semi-Parametric EQ for Low, Mid and High. The upper three controls allow the user to select the frequency range they wish to adjust - this is then done by moving the lower control. This means that it is possible to de-emphasise less desirable resonant frequencies in different rooms. The final control is *Master Volume* and is followed by a stereo headphone output - plugging

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in headphones does not mute the speaker output as happens on some amplifiers, but there is a *Speaker Mute* button above the socket to do this. The rear panel features the usual suspects - tuner out, speaker outputs, balanced XLR output (with its own level control), footswitch, and effects send and return loops - here, each channel has its own separate effects loop.

To thoroughly test the Metro, I elected to take it to two gigs over the course of a weekend, as well as use it for home practicing for a week. Both gigs were in large rooms, and with a five piece band, meaning that there was plenty of work for it to do. On the first night I opted to use the first channel, the solid-state channel. Plugging in, I found an excellent tone immediately. I usually leave my amp set flat, and make tonal adjustments from the bass and that's how I started here. I used the enhance control at the 2 o'clock position and found that I needed to do little else besides



dial in a little more low-end from the bass in order to get a very satisfactory sound. Eden believe in faithfully reproducing each instrument's individual sound - with no tonal colouration coming from the amplifier - and that was precisely what was on offer here. With my high output GB Rumour bass the tone was clean and modern, but tight and punchy and with a lot of balls. In all honesty, I was surprised at just how much air I was able to shift with just two 10-inch speakers, but it seems that the top and bottom porting really does add to the low-end movement as promised. The stage was certainly shaking at certain points, and band members all commented on the great on-stage bass sound. On the second night of the weekend I elected to set up one channel for a slap tone, and one for a fingerstyle tone. I used *Channel 1* for the slap tone, with the

EQ controls set in the center position and the compressor/limiter set high, with the enhance pre-shape dialed in at the 2 o'clock position. The resulting tone was punchy and tight, ideal for slap and pop, and if I'm honest, pretty decent for fingerstyle too. I then set up *Channel 2* to have more of a midrange 'bark' to it, so that the fingerstyle

would cut through in the mix. I also added in some low-end, and adjusted the volumes between the two channels so that they were more or less even in volume but with the slap channel slightly louder to compensate

SPECIFICATION

BUILD QUALITY 19

For the most part there's no faulting the build quality and workmanship here. My only slight complaint was that the dual function push-pull controls felt a little less substantial than their rotary counterparts.

SOUND 20

Excellent. I was extremely pleased with the sounds I was able to get from the Metro. Offering tube warmth as well as modern solid-state fidelity is a winning combination, and made for a happy weekend of gigging for me. Little effort is needed to get a good sound, but there's also plenty there for the 'tweakers'.

FEATURES 20

It's all here - two channels, tube and solid-state technology, Semi-Parametric Equalizers, Compressors, Limiters, the lot. What more can you ask for other than someone to carry it for you?

VALUE 15

It's very expensive, meaning it's one for the busy professional who won't mind parting with the cash.

WOW FACTOR 18

Amplifiers are never going to wow people with their looks as guitars are able to. The Eden was no different, but it has to be said that it's a nice tidy looking piece of equipment that has an air of quality about it. Most people, band and audience members alike were more impressed by the sound and presence.

TOTAL SCORE 92/100

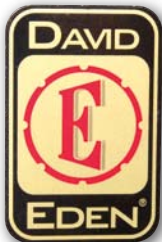
The Metro scores well, and deservedly so. There's very little at fault here, the only real downside being the hefty price tag.

ALTERNATIVES

SWR Redhead: £1399
Ashdown EVOII
500 2 x 10: £1199

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for the natural drop in volume when slapping. The combination worked well, particularly on tracks that featured a mix of both techniques since I was able to switch easily between the two with the footswitch. The second channel really has an added warmth to it, thanks to the vacuum tube,



and it's great to be able to choose between the two technologies - the differences inherent in each both lend themselves well to various sounds, and this combo is able to deliver them all neatly and with gusto. I had more than enough volume for both gigs - both were large rooms, and I would happily take the Metro along to any of the gigs that I do - I would argue that it can cope with most decent sized halls/rooms making it perfect for the gigging professional.

The Metro was fairly easy to transport to gigs due to the nature of it only having a 2x10 speaker configuration. Carrying it alone was possible, although a little uncomfortable because of its depth, whereas between two people it was a breeze. That said, it does lean heavily towards the front when carried thanks no doubt to the transformer. It was a lot easier on the arms than my usual setup however, so the band members that I coerced into helping me carry it were more than complimentary. It was good to see that the Metro came with a thoroughly decent manual that fully

explained its many features. It also gives excellent advice on finding a sound.

At a whopping £1599.99, the Metro is a serious investment, particularly for a 2x10 combo. You can't argue with the feature set though - a solid state/valve two channel amp with this amount of versatility is good

news indeed, and when you think about it, it was never going to come cheap. Still, I feel it is a little on the expensive side particularly since most musicians would also need something more for those bigger gigs, even if it was only another 2x10 cabinet. The size of the investment is a direct indication at who this combo is aimed at - the serious musician, the hard working professional who needs something reliable, versatile, and attractive with a reasonable weight. The Eden brochure boasts: 'The Metro outclasses any 210 combo on the market today'. No argument there, but you'll certainly pay for the privilege.

Stuart Clayton

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