



Vintage Guitar[®] Gear Reviews

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OD For the L(ow)-E(nd)

Swell Pedals' B-TOD V2/B-Pro V2

If your taste in guitar tone often includes a healthy sprinkle of overdrive, odds are pretty good Swell has a pedal for you. The company recently moved to satiate the appetites of OD-loving bassists with the introduction of the B-TOD V2 and B-Pro V2.

Housed in Swell's traditional diecast aluminum boxes, both pedals' circuits are RF shielded and have true-bypass on/off switches, Switchcraft jacks,

Belden wire, Alpha potentiometers, and ceramic tube sockets to house their "bottles." Toggles let the user switch between their two channels, and each channel has its own Gain control, along with its own master Tone and master Volume. Other functions include a three-way Fat Switch, which controls a lower-midrange boost – Normal is closer to clean signal, while Thick

bumps up low-end response. Another nifty addition is the three-way Push switch – a level control that goes from Low (reminiscent of a low-watt amp, gritty but with a focused attack), Push (optimum output with tons of headroom and more-open tone), and Sweet (the happy medium).

Along with standard 1/4" input and output jacks on each is a front-edge-mounted Boost jack that can use any outboard footswitch to engage the Push circuit, which then essentially becomes a pre-set. The other jack is a dedicated Record out, which can send

the Push switch's Thick position – able to deliver a wall of drive when the riffs need to be *really* heavy. Best of all, even when dialed in for the highest of high-gain sounds, notes remain natural-sounding.

The B-Pro's focus is on clearer, more-open low-gain sounds. Also driven by a 12AX7, it's very quiet and well-mannered; even with its master Level control maxed and regardless of which bass is plugged into it – vintage, new, active, or passive – the pedal responds well



signal to a DI or front-of-house mixer.

The B-TOD V2 is Swell's high-gain box. Driven by a 12AX7, it delivers everything from a wonderfully warm tone with plenty of headroom (i.e. "Roundabout") to balls-out distortion ("Anesthesia Pulling Teeth") – extremely cool, versatile, and – thanks to

as it conjures low- to mid-gain tones ranging from cream to mean.

The only thing between these two boxes and true greatness is an XLR DI (instead of the 1/4") Record-out jack. Nonetheless, it's obvious that Swell's obsession with tone is alive and well. – Sean O'Bryan Smith VG

SWELL PEDALS B-TOD V2/B-PRO V2

Price: \$299 (each)
Contact: swellpedals.com.