Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **Pepe** » 12 Jul 2013, 21:07

The HM-2 is another legendary BOSS distortion pedal with a huge fanbase and sometimes it's ridiculously expensive on the second-hand market.
Can you justify the purchase of an HM-2 if you don't like *Swedish Death Metal* or Metal in general? Yes, definitely!

Personally I think that the name "Heavy Metal" is a bit irritating nowadays. The MT-2 is great for *Heavy Metal* as we know it. The distortion can be set in extreme ways that you almost cannot spot your original guitar sound anymore. The HM-2 is rather suitable for rock and hard rock. It sounds more natural and the EQ really adds "COLOR" as it is labelled. Especially the HIGH knob enriches your sound in a drastic, but harmonic way - I really love that tone control!

My least favourite setting is that *Swedish Death Metal* setting, that is said to be used by *Entombed* and other bands: all controls set to maximum. Sorry, but that sounds like arse to my poor ears.

Here is my favourite HM-2 setting:

Rock Lead (instant mid-80's Steve Lukather solo sound)
Can be used for power chords and solo lines. Sounds a bit grainy with more complex chord work, but that's due to the sound design of the HM-2! I use it with a Fender Stratocaster and a Marshall tube amp.
Rolling off the guitar's volume lets the sound clean up in a nice way.

What are your favourites?

Pepe

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **spiro74** » 13 Jul 2013, 00:34

Similar to your settings Pepe. I run mine in the loop of a 6505+ which seems to tame the high gain and give a real nice mid boost. The HM-2 has always had a soft spot in my heart for some reason.

spiro74

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **Pieces Of The Night** » 13 Jul 2013, 04:32

Level-Varies on the guitar
l-1:00
h-11:00
d-5:00

Pieces Of The Night

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **WhereBoysFearToTread** » 13 Jul 2013, 04:54

I picked up that pedal something like 2 years ago and its one of the pedals Im keeping if I ever decide
Im selling off some of my BOSS-pedals.

tone knobs and dist on max..
oh and of course it needs to be played with a Gibson tuned to C.

WhereBoysFearToTread

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **visserman** » 13 Jul 2013, 14:35

What is it about the HM-2 and the price? Must be some well-known bands who use them these days.
They used to be reasonable, even on the cheap side about 5 to 6 years ago.
Noticed one in a shop for an overinflated price.

I have a look at some settings later as there are so many. One I really like (and know by heart) is with the dist. hardly doing anthing, you'll get that classic Marshall sound with that setting. Probably a lot of people will overlook that sound when they first try pedal as you need the dist.control alsmost on zero, just dial in a teeny little bit and voila, sounds jumps out of your speaker.

When you look at Piece of the Night's setting you are almost there

visserman

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **sclitheroe** » 13 Jul 2013, 20:58

Busted out the ol' MIJ and tried some of these settings - you guys are right, dist down is pretty nice. Seems in fact that there's not much variation in distortion from say 9'oclock to about 3'oclock, and then it jumps up again towards the end of the knob travel?

sclitheroe

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **Pepe** » 13 Jul 2013, 21:13

Yeah, that's an odd behaviour and it is also mentioned at bossarea.com in the compact pedal area.

Pepe

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **Clean Channel** » 14 Jul 2013, 00:19

I personally LOVE the HM-2! There are some crappy settings, but when dialed in right, it sounds perfect IMO. I've convinced a lot of folks about the good tones you can coax out of this pedal.

I like it with both of the EQs pushed (around 1 or 2 o'clock), like in the pic in the first post in this thread. I typically leave the dist at 9:00 (again, like the OP), but sometimes set it to 3:00 when I want more compression. I find the 9:00 is nice and open, while still heavy and thick, but not as good for squeals/tapping type playing, so then I set to 3:00 instead. I usually set volume to unity or just a bit more.

Clean Channel

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **Guga Ramone** » 14 Jul 2013, 00:44

WHen I had a HM-2, I used it with:
Level: whatever is needed do match the clean sound
Low: Maximum
Treble: 1 - 2 o'clock
Dist: Maximum

Not as extreme as the Swedish Death Metal sound, but almost in the ballpark. With a lot more definition. hehehe

Also, this is the most beautiful pedal that Boss ever built, IMHO.

Guga Ramone

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **DB Cooper** » 14 Jul 2013, 02:31

> *Clean Channel wrote:*
> *I personally LOVE the HM-2!...I've convinced a lot of folks about the good tones you can coax out of this pedal.*

Well, I guess that explains the high prices! Way to go, CC!

DB Cooper

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **visserman** » 15 Jul 2013, 11:17

The pedal is an absolute winner. Is this new to me then? No, but I forget, or not really, but just do not use pedals as much as I used to.

The settings: Any setting is good really. The dist. control does not do that much, lower setting makes pedal sound a bit sweeter but really.....

For classic Marshall, dial in the High control 12. oo O'clcock and above, this will really bring out the upper-mids and treble.

For scooped mids (The V-shape on your graphic?) reduce High from 12.00 O'clock to anything below noon. This sound is less, traditional Marshall, and gets you closer to early Metallica sound (the reason why they called it Heavy Metal??)

The Low control can be left alone for more traditional Marshall (Marshall does not really do much low end in their amps, you have to pay extras to get them in there.....) But if you like, crank the control, and all will still be well.

Overal, pedal sounds very organic, not sythetic at all. Played it though P.A, now any pedal not being that good will let you down in that set-up, this one was a real winner.

High price worth it? Do not know, as with so many things, try to spot one which is a bit lower, if you loose your patience then just go for whatever they want you to pay.

What I think is great about the HM-2 is that it represents an amp sound, same as the OD-1 and SD-1 (to an extend)

visserman

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **Johnnyseven** » 15 Jul 2013, 14:07

I've just bought an HM-2 so thanks for all the suggestions, i'll be sure to try them all out when it arrives.

Johnnyseven

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **Pepe** » 15 Jul 2013, 16:18

Ah! Sweet G.A.S.!

And congrats to your Silver Member status!

Pepe

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **Johnnyseven** » 16 Jul 2013, 19:40

The HM-2 arrived and I tried it out this evening. I run a Boss CS-3 with Monte Allums Opto Mod at the front of my chain with the volume set at 3 o'clock, tone at 12, attack all the way up and sustain at 9. The setting I find that I liked was L = between 1 and 2 o'clock, H = 3 and Dist = anywhere from 9 o'clock upwards. It does seem a bit noisy though, is this normal?

Johnnyseven

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **Clean Channel** » 16 Jul 2013, 20:17

I don't consider the HM-2 noisy, but I don't run a comp in front of it. I've never liked comps stacked with high gain dirt or fuzz, so I'd recommend dropping the CS-3 when using the HM-2. With the HM-2 on, how much more compression do you really need?

Clean Channel

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **Johnnyseven** » 17 Jul 2013, 16:38

I only use a very small amount of compression, so little that you'd hardly notice. I prefer to use the CS3 to smooth the guitar out a bit and give my dirt pedals a kick up the arse - it tends to make them sound fuller and fuzzier, which I like.

Johnnyseven

Re: Ugly little duck #2 - your favourite HM-2 settings

by **visserman** » 18 Jul 2013, 09:48

It probably is normal to hear a bit of noise, since it is a distortion.

Just try the High control when you do not play, put volume at level as where you normally would have it when you play. Use the High Control from 0 to 10 and listen to what kind of noise you get: You will hear differences in the tone of the noise, as the high band is sweeping though its band.

I know what you are saying about "smoothing up the sound of the dist." I like that as well, and each distortion is different is terms of smoothness.
Been using the MD-2 for last couple of days, now that one is very smooth, even without a compressor in front of it.

It terms of noise and compressor, try the HM-2 without CS-3 and see how your noise is. The CS-3 will bring up the noise of the HM-2 a bit, but when you play all of this is not really an issue.

visserman