

Sabian

Legacy HHX Cymbals

From £143 | Legacy is the next step on from Evolution. **Geoff Nicholls** joins the dark side.

ESSENTIALS



PRICES

Sabian Legacy HHXs
Hi-hats **£460**
Splashes **£143-£180**
Crashes **£302-£326**
Rides **£375-£445**

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Sabian's new Legacy series sees the company's partnership with master drummer Dave Weckl dig deeper into earthy, jazz-funky, drier tones – what Dave calls the “darker side” of his sound. The Weckl-Sabian collaboration has previously brought us the Evolution line. Evolution is described as “warmer and brighter” while Legacy is described as being “broader, deeper, darker and trashier”.

Both lines have their roots in Sabian's HH (hand hammered) traditional approach to cymbal smithing with the added X factor of ‘tone projection’. Therefore HHX cymbals are HHs with a touch of extra dirt and bite, this time referred to as ‘tone texture’.

Except for the 22" Heavy rides, all the Legacy cymbals are pretty lightweight. This means they are not the loudest cymbals on the block, but that's not the idea. They are subtle with a clearly defined frequency spectrum rather than being bright and obtrusive. Their relatively thin profile means they don't

hold a huge number of overtones. The sound is clean and dark with an individual character. Although thin, there is a springy, elastic feel to them so you get the impression that you could wallop them good and proper without fearing that they are going to break easily. Sabian are also obviously confident on this point since each cymbal carries a two-year warranty.

Appearance-wise they have traditional-looking medium-fine lathing on top and beneath and there are irregularly spaced hammerings which range from small circles

KEY FEATURES

The natural finish is satiny rather than brightly polished.

The neat ‘L’ logo is positioned opposite the ‘HHX’ logo, creating a minimalist look.

Dave Weckl says his new Legacy cymbals help bring out the darker side of his sound.

to largish ovals, giving the cymbals a dimpled look. The natural finish is satiny rather than brightly polished. It is a classy, understated image with the sweeping Legacy ‘L’ logo discretely positioned opposite the ‘HHX’ logo.

Riveting rides

First up we have two Medium Thin 20" and 21" rides. Most ride cymbals, however fashionably dark and deep, have a few lingering high-end overtones that grate your teeth and leave behind a slightly off-key hum. These two, however, have none of that whatsoever. This does not make them dull, though, there is a dark, slightly trashy character which is enormously pleasing. The two cymbals are pretty similar but I found I preferred the 21" example. That extra inch gives it a slightly deeper, buttery timbre, although the stick response remains ultra clear. It is a great cymbal



for crash-riding too. I particularly liked the way in which the flat shoulder of the stick on the broad attack, melting perfectly into the bell, with its harmonious tone.

The 20" O-Zone ride is essentially the same cymbal as the 20" Thin ride but it features five 1½" diameter holes cut into one side. These make the sound even drier, slightly darker and definitely trashier, while the already fairly clipped sustain is even shorter. It is undoubtedly a specialist cymbal, but one which you can have a great time playing around with, assuming of course that you are in a position where you can afford such a luxury.

The 22" Heavy ride is indeed markedly heavier than the previous trio. This results in a brighter, higher pitch, though it is still fairly dark by the standards set by most heavy ride cymbals. The bell is correspondingly elevated in pitch, and sounds pingier. Also included for review was a Heavy 22" with three small rivets fitted close together. It always amazes me how just one small rivet can increase the sustain of a cymbal by quite so much. In this case the three little rivets gave the massive cymbal an extra shimmer, but not so much that it detracted from the overall sound.

Crashes and splashes

There are just two crashes in the range, a 17" and an 18". They are both fast and clean, offering a swift interjection in the music without taking up a lot of space in the frequency spectrum. The overtones again are minimal so that these cymbals won't impede the flow or bleed over every other instrument. They are almost electronic in their clarity.

The cymbals being thin, the sound dies pretty quickly, so they are great for use in fast, jazzy tunes where a nimble flick of the wrist provides just the exclamation mark needed without overpowering proceedings. Since they are quite dark and soft, they can also be tickled and prodded in order to add subtle colours and beautiful sounds at lower dynamics. But do not get the impression these cymbals are mere softies. They can be played hard to produce a sharp and forceful edge with a fast decay.

Fast and perky

There are also two splashes on offer as part of the Legacy series, a 10" and a 12". The lathing and hammering on these two little fellas is subtle, barely noticeable. The 10" is extraordinarily fast and perky with a high after-tone which aids projection, while the 12" sounds deeper and fuller.

The 14" hi-hats have a heavy bottom and a light top. The latter results in a closed sound which I found verging on the lacklustre, lacking in cut. Likewise, the pedalled 'chick' sound is soft-tinged and relatively quiet. In fact, I found I had to be extra careful to set a sharp angle on the bottom cymbal in order to get enough of a pedalled clash between the two cymbals to hear anything at all. That's the price you pay for the dark sound. As usual though, when opened up and played with the shoulder of the stick there's a much louder, but still warm, burst of sound. **R**

RHYTHM VERDICT

Dave Weckl is one of the drumming world's most fastidious artists, and – in the nicest possible way – a real fusspot when it comes to sounds. Just the sort of bloke a cymbal company needs to help develop their ranges. I can't see him casting about in the dark saying, "How about if it sounded a bit more orange, man?". I'm sure Dave knows exactly what he's after, and after several years spent testing prototypes – live and in the studio – the results are mostly superb. The hi-hats were the only disappointment for me – overall the Legacy range is beautifully defined, crisp, dark and responsive.



Top draw cymbals with a bias towards softer and darker sounds yet nonetheless lightning fast.



I wasn't convinced that the soft, deep sound worked that well for the hi-hats.

RATING

