

# Zildjian

## K Cymbals

**From £422** | New hi-hats and extra ride models? The more the merrier, says **Adam Jones**.

### ESSENTIALS



#### PRICES

##### Zildjian K Cymbals

13" K Light hi-hats	£422
14" K Light hi-hats	£444
22" K Dark Medium ride	£444
24" K Light ride	£524

#### CONTACT

**Yamaha-Kemble Music (UK) Ltd**  
Sherbourne Drive  
Tilbrook  
Milton Keynes  
MK7 8BL  
**Telephone**  
01908 366700  
**Website**  
[www.zildjian.com](http://www.zildjian.com)

These new additions to Zildjian's K range all made their debut at this year's NAMM show. K cymbals are renowned for their musicality and tone and these new models are a continuation of this tradition.

Included in the offerings is a 22" ride that has been developed under the close scrutiny of Cindy Blackman, and a whopping great 24" ride that has found fans among some of Zildjian's highest profile endorsees.

### Lighten up

First up are two pairs of Light hi-hats. These have been developed in response to requests for lighter versions of the existing K hats. They are available in two diameters: 13" and 14". Both pairs of cymbals bear lots of tight, shallow bands of lathing on both sides (known as pin lathing) and have handsome flattish profiles.

Contrary to what you might expect, the hats are not especially thin. Paired as a medium thin on top and a medium on the bottom, they are substantial enough for most weights of players. This sturdiness also ensures that they generate a good level of volume.

The 13" models are bright, lively and respond very quickly. Played energetically, they sound surprisingly aggressive. Beneath the opening brightness is warmth and delicacy though, and gentle playing reveals more of their colour and depth. I found these hi-hats most pleasing when being stroked rather than bashed, but they are more than capable of coping with a wide range of dynamics.

The 14" hi-hats are immediately a mellower prospect, giving a deeper and darker response with a little more complexity as a result. There is still plenty of mid-range body to be found though, and the toppy clarity of the 13" models is also present when required.



**Cindy Blackman's**  
22" Dark Medium ride  
is as versatile and  
musical as Cindy herself.

As with the smaller versions, this makes for a thoroughly versatile pair of hi-hats that offer classic K warmth while still being able to project in many musical situations.

### Cindy's cymbal

Versatility was exactly what Cindy Blackman was after when she approached Zildjian with her idea for the 22" Dark Medium ride. Though best known for her work with Lenny Kravitz, Cindy is an accomplished jazz musician and solo artist in her own right. She was seeking a multi-use cymbal that would work across musical genres, with enough power to cut through in a stadium setting coupled with the colour and finesse required in an acoustic jazz setting.

Loading so many demands onto a single cymbal must inevitably build in compromises in some areas, but what Zildjian has come up with pretty much ticks all of the boxes. There is an unmistakable air of refinement about the ride. Heavily lathed, and also

sporting a good measure of hammer marks, its profile is crowned by a well-proportioned bell.

In play, the cymbal gives a strong, tight stick sound that sits over a lapping wash. The wash introduces shading and musical overtones without ever threatening to engulf the pulse. Moving onto the bell brings a more focused, driving response that adds authority. Bringing the shoulder of the stick against the bell delivers a seriously cutting sound that would force its way through most, if not all styles of music. The ride does open for crashing, but this end of its performance spectrum is better suited to rocky environments. Whacking it results in a full, loud and exhilarating crash, one whose reverberations continue for some time after the initial attack has decayed. This is a well-conceived cymbal that performs strongly in all disciplines and excels in many of them. Between



The 24" Light ride is the only 24" cymbal in the current K range.

The two pairs of Light hi-hats have been produced as a result of customer feedback.

them, Zildjian and Ms Blackman have come up with a good 'un.

### Light on two feet

The second new K ride unveiled at NAMM was the 24" Light model. Ride cymbals that crest the two-foot diameter are not so common nowadays and this new model is the only 24" cymbal in the current K range. Featuring the same neat, pin lathing as found on the Light hi-hats the ride is thin and feels quite light for such a large disc of metal.


In use, it gives a fat, almost expansive stick sound that is spiced by the faintest hint of trashiness. The edge of the cymbal wobbles

deliciously as a visual foil to the great surge of wash that it generates. Stepping up from clear sticking patterns to a rolling wash is easily done, but thanks to the lightness of the cymbal, coupled with its musical tonality, it doesn't tend to overpower other kit elements. The bell isn't huge and, as such, doesn't single itself out with a penetrating sound. This type of cymbal isn't about delivering commanding bell figures, though. If you like the warm, sloshy cymbal sounds that Ronnie Vannucci is fond of, then you will find this ride irresistible. It's not only the choice of Ronnie but of Joey Castillo and Travis Barker too. Good company to be in...

## RHYTHM VERDICT

Dark tonality and inherent playability is what you'd expect of cymbals bearing the fabled K marque, but where Ks have long been seen as the province of jazzers, there's a definite leaning towards contemporary musical environments with the new models. These cymbals are louder than classic Ks of yesteryear, and are also capable of showing a more aggressive edge, particularly the hi-hats. This is a good example of a classic product moving with the times. Cindy Blackman's 22" Dark Medium ride walks the line between past and present with even more poise, while the 24" Light ride has already impressed some of the hottest players out there.

 **Classy cymbals that are full of dynamics and musicality.**

 **This sort of quality doesn't come on a budget.**

**RATING**

