

TAMA IRON COBRA AND SPEED COBRA PEDALS

From £139 *The famous Iron Cobra returns once again with a plethora of new tweaks and features*

WORDS: **TOM BRADLEY**

It's been almost 25 years since Japanese drum and hardware giant Tama set out to create "the ultimate drum pedal". Since then the Iron Cobra pedal has continued to evolve and improve to meet not only the demands of the modern drummer, but also its clear mission statement: "rock solid strength and versatility". So, how will the newest version compare to its much revered predecessors?

Build

At a glance, one could be forgiven for assuming that there is nothing particularly new and noteworthy on the new Iron Cobra pedal. The truth is though, as ever there are a host of improved features on board the

widened by 15mm from the previous model, along with 12mm in the baseplate.

The first thing to catch your eye with the new models will likely be the new beater design. The beater faces have a considerably smaller diameter than a regular sized beater (the size of 10p piece) yet are a lot deeper. The Power-Strike beater on the Iron Cobra uses a dense black foam which Tama claims will deliver a punchy low to mid frequency response from the bass drum. The Speed Cobra's Accu-Strike beater is almost identical except it uses a translucent Butadiene rubber which the company claims "offers strong resistance to wear, is lighter weight and provides consistent and articulate sound with strong

THE INNOVATIVE SWIVEL SPRING IS ALWAYS COMPLETELY IN LINE WITH ITSELF, RESULTING IN LESS WASTED ENERGY AND 'TURBULENCE'

brand new pedal; many of which are shared with the Speed Cobra.

Tama has more or less stuck to its guns with the aesthetic design of both pedals, considering little to no difference in the base plate or pedal board. That said, it is possible to see a couple of design embellishments in the form of a little red trim (Iron Cobra) or gold trim (Speed Cobra) on the beater and in the heel plate. The latter isn't just for decoration though and actually makes up half of the new two-part bearing hinge system. Designed to allow the pedal board to move more freely, the hinge has also been set back a little further than its predecessor which makes the pedal a little longer.

The width of both pedals has also been modified with the aim of completely eliminating any chance of side to side movement. The whole frame has been

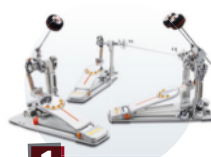
attack. The sound is fat yet focused even at lower volumes". As ever with Iron Cobra beaters, the angle of the face is adjustable to ensure a square contact on the drum head. The mechanism that attaches the pedal to the hoop has been completely overhauled (again for both pedals) which adds further support and stability to the pedal. The 'Para Clamp II Pro' has the ability to pivot quite freely in position which should help get a good fit from almost any angle using less pressure. It also has a much thicker coating of rubber which reduces, if not completely eliminates, marring.

Another upgrade that the Iron Cobra has been treated to is the Lite Sprocket. Originally exclusively a Speed Cobra feature, it has 40 percent less mass than the previous cam mechanism making the action feel smoother and lighter.

Saving the best until last, the real magic



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that takes place in the mechanical department has to be the innovative swivel spring. This feature allows the bottom of the spring to move back and forward in a pendulum-type fashion as the cam moves at its top. This means that the spring is always completely in-line with itself, resulting in less wasted energy and 'turbulence'. Tama claim that this will make the pedal smoother and result in an improved stroke.

In addition, both the Iron Cobra and Speed Cobra pedals are double chained, come with proprietary hard plastic carry cases and feature the patented Cobra Coil.

ACCU-STRIKE BEATER

Beater uses a translucent Butadiene rubber which is hard wearing, lightweight and provides consistent sound

STABILITY

The mechanism that attaches pedal to hoop has been overhauled to add further support and stability

PEDAL

Width of both pedals has been modified to eliminate any chance of side to side movement



IRON COBRA BEATER

Beater faces have a considerably smaller diameter than regular sized beaters but are a lot deeper

The Iron Cobra is available in the usual Power Glide (as review) and Rolling Glide options. All are available as single and double models.

Hands On

For review we have a single Rolling Glide Iron Cobra and a double Speed Cobra. Without a shadow of a doubt, both pedals are impossible to fault. The Iron Cobra feels smooth and agile but still manages to provide that familiar weight under-foot. Unsurprisingly, the Speed Cobra has a lighter feel to it which is especially useful for

double-kick playing. This pedal is a joy to play and lives up to its name with no difficulty. Simply put, it just did its job, as it was told. Genuinely improving my bass drum playing at the same time.

The sound of the new beaters is definitely worth checking out for yourself. The punch they bring to the table is simply immense, especially considering the size. The Power-Strike is a little warmer and has a bit more body whereas the Accu-Strike produces a more articulate attack. Both beaters also have a tremendously satisfying feel against the bass drum. **R**

Essential spec



PRICES

Iron Cobra Power Glide, £139; Iron Cobra Power Glide Twin, £319; Iron Cobra Rolling Glide, £139; Iron Cobra Rolling Glide Twin, £319; Speed Cobra, £159; Speed Cobra Twin, £359

CASE INCLUDED

Yes

DRIVE

Chain Drive

FEATURES

Swivel Spring Tight; Hinge Guard Block; Power Strike/Accu-Strike beaters; Super Stabiliser Design; Para Clamp II Pro; Speedo Ring; Cobra Coil; Lite Sprocket

CONTACT

Headstock Distribution
www.headstockdistribution.com
www.tama.com

VERDICT: To say that these pedals are buttery-smooth and flawlessly efficient wouldn't do them the justice they deserve. Tama has once again excelled itself with the upgraded Cobra family.

BUILD QUALITY	★★★★★
PLAYABILITY	★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★
RHYTHM RATING	★★★★★