



S Hoop

The S Hoop offers radical sound enhancement to your favoured drums

words: Ian Croft **images:** Eckie

I recall seeing the S Hoop at the 2005 NAMM show and thought, 'What's the point?' and 'Do we need this?' I simply dismissed the idea and moved on around the hall, getting excited by acrylic kits, fantastic hi-gloss finishes and some mad designs that only Californian custom drum companies could ever dream of, pushing the S Hoop firmly into the darkest recesses of my mind. So, some months later, an S Hoop lands on my desk and I immediately think, 'Oh no, what am I going to do with this?'

Simple really, you put it on a snare drum and check it out.

But first a little more background to the hoop and in particular, its unique design?

The hoop effectively starts out looking just like the bottom two-thirds of a regular triple flange hoop, but is possibly a little heavier than a triple flange hoop, but marginally lighter than a die-cast hoop. The base of the hoop sits over the collar of the drumhead, as a regular hoop would and rises vertically. But, and it's at this point that the S Hoop gets a little

radical. The hoop then features a beveled edge that is angled down towards the drumhead, instead of going out at right angles and away from the drums shell. This leaves a small gap between the heads surface and the underside of the hoop, protecting the drums bearing edge as this is now covered by the inward facing hoop edge. Clear? Well, I hope so!

Fitting the S Hoop to a Sonor Delite snare drum, the ten lug S Hoop dropped right into place and the tuning process began. Nothing changes at this point, as the hoop is as regular as hoops get. Once the hoop is in place and the head suitably tensioned, you then begin to realise just how effective and how unique the S Hoop is.

Inexplicably, the drum now possess a whole lot more musicality, not that it was overly lacking, but the sweet ring that the drum now emits, has put a definite sparkle into the overall sound. Cross sticking produces a crisp musical note that seems to sustain a little longer than with regular hoops, but with a clarity that I'd not enjoyed before. As for rim shots, well look out! The rim shot sound is now radically beefed up, sounding bigger and fuller, yet still

very musical. The overtone ring that the hoop produces is also very satisfying, providing a cool note that when the snares are dropped off, allows the drum to become even more musical.

It seems that the S Hoops construction allows for the extra steel used to offer a stronger, more rigid hoop, which naturally assists when tuning the drum.

Taking the drum to the local jam session allowed a handful of players to check the hoop out and they all commented favourably, even though their initial comments were 'What's this about then? Another comic idea?' However, all agreed that the hoop very definitely improved the sound of what was already a great drum, making it verge on the supernatural. Okay, that might be a bit excessive, but the hoop really is very impressive. I also noticed that my wrists suffered a lot less from fatigue and that rim shotting the drum did not cause me any undue concern over a long night.

The hoops shape does not affect the ability to use hoop mounted mic clamps and if you do use a thin dampening ring around your snare drum, it sits quite comfortably under the beveled dropped edge. **D**

Heads Up

PRICE:

14" ten lug S Hoop £31.99

UPBEATS

- ▲ Greater strength and rigidity to the hoop
- ▲ Musically very unique
- ▲ Prevents wrist fatigue

Downbeats

- ▼ None

CONTACT:

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Conclusion

It's not often that I get seduced by a product to the extent that I blab constantly to all and sundry, but the S Hoop really is a great idea and does produce a greater level of musicality from the drum. As stated, my wrists certainly benefited from using the hoop and sonically, it cannot be beaten by anything currently out there in the market place. If you need to refresh the parts of your kit that traditional hoops cannot reach, then the S Hoop will make a significant difference to your overall sound and the drums musicality. I should point out that the S Hoop is also available in regular tom sizes with a 10" S Hoop running out at £29.95 and a 16" hitting the £32.95 price point. So, you can fully equip your set with these delightful additions and cast some drum voodoo over your kit quite reasonably. I love being amazed.