

VG APPROVED GEAR



TONE OF THE BEAST

Tech 21's Steve Harris SH1 Signature SansAmp

Tech 21's Steve Harris SH1 Signature Sans Amp celebrates the tone of metal icon Harris, Iron Maiden's bassist, songwriter, and driving force.

For 40 years, Harris has delivered a brash tone via Marshall 4x12 cabs with 12" EV speakers and a Precision Bass with flatwound Rotosound strings, delivering more clank than you'd expect. For his side band, British Lion, he wanted to retain his trademark tonal voice without hauling Marshalls to clubs and other small venues. Jumping to his rescue, Tech 21

somehow miniaturized his rig into a purely analog SansAmp pedal.

Decorated with a tattered British flag and finished in bright West Ham blue (in tribute to Steve's favorite soccer team), the SH1 plugs in as a conventional stompbox or to an amplifier's effects return; for super-quiet signal, there's an XLR out for connecting to a mixer or computer interface. There's also a tuner, plus four bands of EQ (Low, High, and two powerful Mids).

The Blend knob dials-in the amount of tube emulation, and having two Gains and two Levels means you can use the SH1 like a two-channel amp with footswitchable boost to enhance solos and/or heavy riffs. The Bite switch adds the Harris thump you expect and, sure enough, the SH1 can get feisty; the Mid controls are critical for setting aggression, but don't forget there's also a range of clean settings, adding to its overall versatility.

Whether your bass has active or passive pickups, you can adjust the SH1 to taste, readily finding both warm tones and truly ferocious overdrive.

In all, the SH1 Steve Harris is a formidable bass preamp, offering a range of beastly direct tones for live, practice, and studio performance. Like all Tech 21 gear, it's made in America – or in this case, "Maiden USA." – **Pete Prown**

Price: \$329
www.tech21nyc.com