



Speaker ■
This amp comes loaded with a 12" Eminence speaker

Design ■
The Blackheart reminds us of British amps of the 60s

■ **Back panel**
There's a socket on the back that'll drive a 4x12 cabinet

£189

Blackheart Little Giant BH5-112

At this price point, everyone can 'go' valve with a Blackheart...

We like it loud at TG; we're forever searching for a reason to crank it up. So, when this Blackheart amp arrived at TG Towers, it brought with it the best excuse ever: you have to turn it up to get the best sound. This baby is made just like the first valve amps – there's no distortion, but as you turn it up it adds crunch until it finally goes into meltdown. The BH5-112 is bullshit-free: you just get a place to plug in, a volume knob, and bass, middle and treble controls. It has a BS-free price too.

The sizzle: Blackheart is a new name on the amp scene, but it has serious old-school cred as it's owned by Crate Amps who make valve kit for the likes of ZZ Top and Dope. The website explains: "Blackheart designs begin as hand-wired, point-to-point masterpieces [and are] tweaked until they sing like little glass and

metal Gods." Guitar freaks will know that tube gear has very musical distortion, but that you'll also be looking at high prices and big-ass repair bills.

Not with Blackheart amps. Designer Pyotr Belov (the man behind mega-money boutique amps) sends his plans to offshore manufacturing plants, meaning you can get a real valve amp for 200 quid. A few years ago, all you'd get at this price point was an amp that sounded like the residents of a nursing home after too many figs...

We say: Normally, when a new valve amp shows up, TG has 10 minutes before the doorbell rings and we try to explain to the neighbours about power-stage overdrive. This evil little amp, though, is just five watts. While it's still louder than an angry redneck at full blast, it won't go breaking your windows, which makes it perfect for recording.

You can give it full wick and get all the benefit of the valves. Granted, it won't be enough for a gig, but hook it up to a 4x12 cab and it'll assault your eardrums. With the volume on 10, this amp crunches the way you only get from a small valve combo.

It's not gonna be for the amp of choice for metalheads (you will want more gain), but fans of rock, blues and indie will dig the Blackheart. Metallers who like the look of this beast can boost the gain with a nice overdrive pedal, but the sound is still quite squashy and vintage. Apart from that though, everything about the Blackheart is badass.

Jonny Scaramanga

At a glance

Blackheart BH5-112

BODY: China
TYPE: Class A 1x12 all-valve combo
OUTPUT: 5 watts/3 watts
SPEAKER: Eminence/Blackheart 1216A 75 watts
VALVES: 1x 12AX7, 1 x EL84, solid state rectifier
CONTROLS: Volume, Treble, Middle, Bass, Pentode/Triode switch
WEIGHT: 17.5kg
DIMENSIONS: [HxWxD] 473 x 460 x 280mm
CONTACT: Loud Technologies 01268 570808
WEB: www.blackhearteng.com

SUMMARY

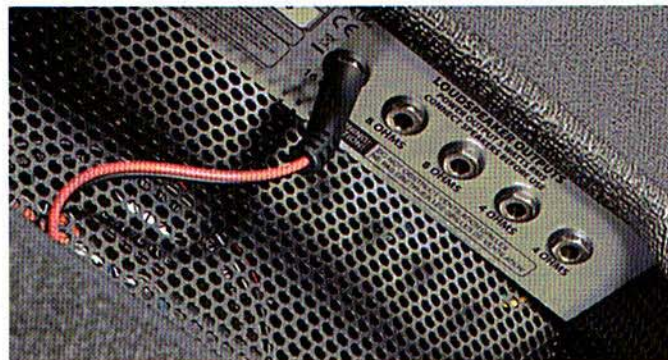
For: Vintage tones, simplicity, the killer price tag

Against: Not many features, can't do super-clean or super-metal



TG says... At this price, you could buy two

The control panel is basic and simple to use. We like that!





"WHILE THIS FIVE-WATT AMP IS STILL LOUDER THAN AN ANGRY REDNECK, IT WON'T GO BREAKING YOUR WINDOWS, WHICH MAKES IT PERFECT FOR RECORDING"