

Rolling In Clover

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A dive into the JHS Clover

THERE ARE more pedals out there than any of us will ever have. Hell, most of them you'll never even see in person. Collectors, hoarders, and those with highly disposable incomes snatch up everything before you get the chance to know it was even available. Never mind the limited run series or particularly rare classics, one of which JHS used to create something new. But we all know that JHS has a storied history of working with Boss pedals and true to form, they've resurrected a particularly rare classic.

The brand new JHS Clover is a Preamp/Boost pedal based on the classic FET Preamp from Boss, the FA-1. With a much-needed circuit upgrade, added 3-step EQ rotary selector, two dipswitches and a balanced XLR output (which is identical to the sound quality of the 1/4" output), the Clover carries the flame of the coveted Boss original into a new era of playing. Really easy to use, the Clover is a firm EQ pedal that can be dialed in for any instrument. The EQ selector knob sets the stage for whatever your intentions are for usability. Not surprisingly, that rotary knob is the bell of the ball for me. I love all three options.

In the 'No EQ' option, the Clover acts almost entirely as a Boost pedal. I found that the pedal didn't add any crunch or grit at all; it only pushed my signal further, which allowed my amp to grunge-out even more. The 'No Mids' and 'Full EQ' options are straight forward in their purposes. Personally, I love the 'No Mids' option because it gets right to the point. It also happens to be the setting that is more or less the replica of the sound of the Boss FA-1. Typically, I want heavy lows and piercing highs when I play, so I guess it's no surprise my strings are Skinny Tops/Heavy Bottoms. The 'Full EQ' option gives you complete control of a wide range EQ.

Searching around the pedal, you'll find the primary dipswitch, the 'Low-Cut', helps to boost or trim down the low-end frequencies. For myself, I want a punishing low-end that doesn't sound like the stereo bass system in my neighbor's car, so the added 'Low-cut' dipswitch is a considerate detail. With a pedal like this, placement in your chain is pretty important as the role of the Clover can shift really well. I'm a sucker for boost pedals but I don't want a one-trick pony. I want to dial in my amp and leave it alone, so to be able to balance the character of my tone but also heighten the volume is clutch. But y'all, the boosting ability of this pedal is formidable. I can't gush enough about how it makes me feel to stomp down and just melt faces.

Not to be overlooked, the 'Lift' dipswitch in addition to the XLR output is where JHS is flexin' on us. Having played in a roller skating rink for years (it was a growing mega-church) the sound guys always had to be creative in how to get the hum or the buzz out of the house mix. When you're mixing 6 instruments and 10 vocals things get over-encumbered real quick. I like to think if I could have had a ground lift dipswitch on a pedal it might have really helped those guys in the back of the house. Connectivity is something that I think we're all becoming ever more mindful of and the Clover's XLR output option is a logical solution to that. The fact that you can use this pedal to connect directly to a mixer (i.e. PA system) is an absolutely clever choice on JHS' part. (that's a pretty cheap pun) We all know the industry pushes forward and is leaning heavily into the digital world, which makes this pedal's connectively immensely more valuable. All in all, at the price of \$199, this pedal has some serious worth.

RATING: Mojo Rising

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