

TRX Crash-Rides

<< Designed For Double Duty

by Chap Ostrander

KEY NOTES

- Wide range of sonic variety between models
- Effective compromise of ride and crash functions
- Stick rebound is affected at high ride impact

Crash-ride cymbals came about in the early '60s for one simple reason: convenience. The idea was to reduce the number of cymbals a drummer needed to carry to a gig by getting double duty out of at least one of them. Most drummers at the time played jazz or light pop music, and they tended to ride and crash on all of their cymbals anyway. Why not have one cymbal actually designed to do both?

Convenience is still important to a lot of drummers. Versatility of sonic performance is also a desirable quality. With that in mind, TRX has introduced 20" crash-ride cymbals in each of their four model series.

First, Meet The TRX

In keeping with its overall brand name, each TRX model line has an acronymic name that describes its basic acoustic character. For example, BRT cymbals emphasize bright, high frequencies and cutting penetration. They're heavy and unlathed, with a brilliant finish. The ALT (as in an alternative to the BRT, but still pretty loud) models offer a small step down in pitch from the BRT cymbals. The cymbals have an unlathed bell, thin lathing on the body, and varied hammering.

The design of the TRX crash-rides combines the pronounced bell and low profile of a ride with the medium weight and taper of a crash.



The trick in making a crash-ride cymbal is that you can't make it too thick and still have it crash effectively, and you can't make it too thin and have it work as a ride cymbal the way you'd expect. TRX seems to have found the middle ground.



MDM (for “medium,” perhaps?) cymbals are the most “standard” of the lot, with the widest general application. They employ traditional lathing and hammering. The voice is clear, with a bright color. The DRK series features a mostly natural (“raw”) finish, with light lathing lines out near the edge and deep hammering. They also have a lower profile than the others. As their acronym implies, these are the darkest-sounding of the TRX lines.

Back To The New Guys

Now, the question: How well does each new crash-ride model from the various lines function in crash and ride applications? With some minor reservations, my feeling is that they do a good job.

Ride patterns came through with lots of

clarity, with only a moderate buildup underneath the stick patterns (much less than what you’d get when riding on a standard crash of the same size). The only concern I had was slightly reduced stick response due to the lighter weight of the cymbal as compared to a traditional ride. Soft riding was fine, with the underlying sound in control, but the stick tended to rebound less readily as I played harder and the cymbal started to wobble.

Crashing the cymbals resulted in full-bodied explosions of sound. (After all, these cymbals would qualify as pretty large, moderately thick crashes.) Drummers involved in punk, aggressive metal, and other intense styles would enjoy this, since they tend to ride on their crashes anyway. Jazz drummers and others in lower-volume situations would just need to be

careful about keeping the crash response under control.

Conclusion

In terms of acoustic character, each of the TRX crash-rides was fiercely true to its model name and sonic description. Accordingly, punk or metal drummers might opt for the BRT or ALT models, while other players might lean toward the MDMs or DRKs.

Given the right model for the application, I could easily see going to a casual gig with just a TRX crash-ride and a set of hi-hats. Can you say, “lighter cymbal bag”?

THE NUMBERS

20" BRT, ALT, MDM, and DRK crash-ride . . . \$450
(818) 753-1310, www.trxcymbals.com