

Jazz Axe, Plus Sadowsky Semi-Hollow

WITH HIS NEWEST creation, luthier Roger Sadowsky endows his entrant into the world of semi-hollow guitars with capabilities to cover the demands of blues, rock, and fusion. And while Sadowsky himself describes the Semi-Hollow Model simply as "a jazz guitar that can be played louder," there's way more under the hood.

The Sadowsky S-H is different from all its semi-hollow counterparts. Rather than re-purpose or recycle the ES-335 design, Sadowsky took the template of his Jimmy Bruno archtop as a starting point. He retained the single-cutaway shape, junction at the 15th fret and smaller 14³/₄" body but thinned it to a 1³/₄" depth. Then he deepened the cutaway to improve high-register access and added a spruce center block. The block is strategically chambered and has a two-fold result; it reduces the overall weight and imparts its own acoustical properties to the sound. Here, the S-H takes a deliberate turn to the hollow side of the equation.

The S-H has a 22-fret fingerboard of Amazon rosewood with dot inlays on a mahogany neck. The scale length is 24³/₄" with a 1¹/₁₆" nut width like a 335, Les Paul or 175, making it easy to switch from those axes. The tune-o-matic-style bridge and stop tailpiece lend the appropriate traditional touch to the instrument. All metal parts are nickel-plated.

Electronics consist of two Sadowsky humbuckers (built by DiMarzio) and a control circuit with master Volume, master Tone and a three-position selector toggle switch. This configuration can at first be off-putting despite its elegance, if a player is accustomed to the more typical Gibson circuit with four controls. But it's easy to appreciate the simplicity and functionality of Roger's design, including the location of the switch at the lower treble bout

instead of the typical placement at the bridge or the bass side of the upper bout.

The S-H maintains its elegance with subtle appointments. Like the Bruno, it has ebony tuning buttons, multiple binding on the body (back and front), double binding on the headstock, and an ebony truss rod cover. The S-H comes from the factory without a mounted pickguard; its ebony pickguard and hardware are included though, leaving the option of attaching it. Also noteworthy and thoughtful are the stock Dunlop strap lock buttons.

The S-H is offered in six finishes; Vintage Amber (aged natural), Caramel Burst (light ice-

tea SB), Violin Burst (orange Cremona-type SB), Sienna Burst (reddish brown to orange SB), Tobacco Burst (traditional vintage dark brown to yellow SB), and Transparent Black (see-through inky black). Each shows off the grain of its flamed-maple back and top. Construction and detailing on our review sample were flawless with no issues regarding paint spray, glue joints, or the like. It was shipped with Sadowsky medium/light roundwounds (.011-.050) with a plain/unwound G.

Taking the S-H through its paces involved a variety of amps, including a 1961 Fender Bandmaster 2x12 combo and '61 Fender tube-reverb unit, where the S-H's neck pickup had a full, fat jazz tone that belied its lighter strings by producing no tinny twang. With neck and bridge pickups engaged, the S-H achieved a vocal-like nasal tone, reminiscent of classic electric blues and R&B—shades of B.B. circa 1955. The bridge pickup has enough punch and bite to cut through a backing track with clean tone and is perfect for funk rhythm and Motown-style riffs. Similarly pleasing results can be



GEARIN' UP



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CARR VICEROY

Carr Amplifiers' Viceroy is a Class A 6L6-based hand-wired amp with Reverb, variable Drive control, and footswitchable Mid Boost. Visit carramps.com.



DEAN DIAMOND 10K

The Dean Dime Razorback 10K has a mahogany body, locking Floyd Rose vibrato, Duncan Dimebucker, black Grover tuners, and Dimebag Darrell Abbott's trademark traction knobs. Its mahogany neck is capped with the wing headstock bearing the Dime logo. Its rosewood fingerboard has a signature pearl razor blade inlay at the 12th fret. Check it out at deanguitars.com.



TAGAC SWR BASS

The Alternative Guitar and Amplifier Company's SWR electric bass has a 30" scale, heel-less maple set neck and solid agathis body with an ebony fingerboard. It also sports a set bridge, P- and J-style pickups, bone nut and mother-of-pearl diamond inlays. Other features include chrome hardware and nickel frets. Learn more at thealternativeguitarandamplifiercompany.com.

SADOWSKY SEMI-HOLLOW

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