

## *Vintage Revo Series Surfmaster Thinline Twin*

The 'Surfmaster™ Thinline' is an original Vintage REVO Series guitar, designed and created by the UK Vintage design team and Alan Entwistle. Since 1993, Vintage has enjoyed an excellent reputation around the world for creating guitars which use a blend of classic timber selection, premium branded components from some of the biggest names in pickups and hardware, and an approach to design which lets Vintage instruments perform way beyond expectation. **Nick Jennison** tells more.

**I**N the pantheon of “cool” guitars, the offset is king. Don't ask me why: I don't make the rules. Perhaps it's the bands that used them, the cars that inspired them or some law of nature we haven't decided yet, but whatever it is, the axiom of “offset = cool” is as close to a universal truth as “Hendrix = the GOAT”.

Renowned for pushing classic designs just far enough that they don't break, Vintage's latest addition to their REVO line is the beautiful baby of two of the best-loved offsets - the venerable Jazzmaster, and the oft-overlooked Charvel Surfcaster. Thus was born the Surfmaster Pro Twin, and (to misquote David St Hubbins) “he saw that it was cool”.

Resplendent in “Guitar Interactive” (Just kidding) Orange, the Surfcaster Pro Twin is a semi-hollow, bolt-on design with a double bound body, a pair of FilterTron-style pickups and a JM-style tremolo. I say “-style”, because both the pickups and the tremolo are optimisations of the originals. The pickups twang

and sparkle like a good FilterTron should, but with a little more meat on their bones. They're more than muscular enough for some serious high-gain thrashing, whether that's woolly fuzz or wiry metal tones, but they're perhaps most at home in low to mid-gain settings. Clean tones are articulate and shimmering, with just the right amount of bite in the bridge position for surf tones that are present without being unpleasant. Similarly, blues and slide tones are vocal and characterful, with plenty of sustain.

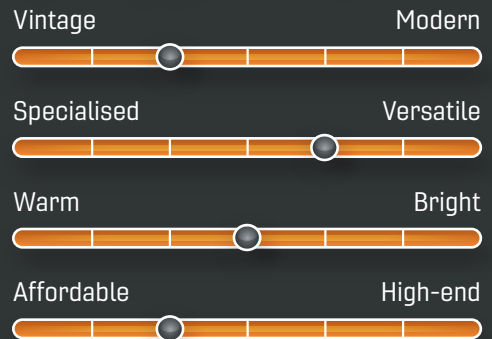
Perhaps the star of the show is the ATN-5 switch (which I may have mistakenly referred to as a Varitone). This rotary switch expands the three pickup selections available up to a whopping fifteen, using a filter matrix to produce everything from Knopfler-esque cocked was tones through to pseudo-acoustic sounds, all of which are hum cancelling. If you're willing to dig in with your volume and tone controls, this system yields a practically limitless sonic palette. ▶

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### *The Breakdown*



### *For fans of*

- » Offsets
- » Versatility
- » Tinkering with your guitar's controls

For more information, please visit:

[jhs.co.uk/collections/vintage](http://jhs.co.uk/collections/vintage)





*The Vintage Surfmaster Pro Twin is a fine addition to their growing REVO range.*

Playability is surprisingly excellent. Not surprising because I'd expect a sub-par playing experience from Vintage - quite the opposite, in fact. It's surprising because at first touch, the Surfmaster feels a little stiff... until it doesn't. Whether it's stretchy chord voicings or legato shred, the Surfmaster Pro *\*feels\** like it's fighting back, but it isn't. It's actually pretty effortless to play. Quite an unusual experience, but once you wrap your head around it, it just works.

The tremolo system is the Achilles heel of many an offset, and I can't lie, I felt a pang of dread when I saw the JM-style trem on the Surfmaster. I should have known better, because this system has been given the once over by Trev Wilkinson, including his staggered Kluson-style locking tuners. The result is a smooth, even tremolo with excellent stability and a surprisingly wide range. It does make that reassuring "clack clack" noise acoustically, but none of that makes it through your amplifier, even with a ton of gain.

The Vintage Surfmaster Pro Twin is a fine addition to their growing REVO range. It combines many of the best aspects of two of the best-loved offsets into one very cool, very versatile package. If you want a do-it-all guitar with a unique aesthetic, this is a guitar you should definitely check out.

