



TRX OVERSIZE BRT SERIES CYMBALS

by Stephen Bidwell

Pardon the cliché, but for many drummers working today, regardless of genre, bigger really *is* better when it comes to cymbals. I've seen

many players resort to crashing on ride cymbals when a crash bigger than 18" is hard to find without placing a special order or settling for a cymbal that feels half an inch thick. TRX ("Turks") Cymbals, a three-year-old newcomer, has stepped up to fill the missing mega-cymbal niche with some unique plus-size offerings in its BRT series—24" rides, 22" and 21" crashes, and 15" hi-hats.

The BRT series is built to cut in high-volume situations but also to have the rich character associated with hand-hammered cymbals. The line has a brilliant, shimmering appearance that would look great under stage lights. In my opinion, TRX is filling some long-ignored gaps in cymbals marketed to heavy hitters.

MONSTER RIDES

We were sent two giant 24" rides (\$550 each), additions to the existing 20" and 22" rides in the BRT series. One was simply stamped "Ride" on

slightly odd—overtones. But any questionable sounds quickly disappeared when the rest of my band showed up and plugged in their guitars.

The bells on the 24" models were a bit smaller than I would expect with cymbals this large. They produced proportionately smaller sounds but were cutting and clear nonetheless. If you're looking for a washy Bonham-esque ride to bash, these might be a bit too much on the gongy side. But laying into either model with the shank of a big stick could certainly cut through the wail of a sizeable guitar rig. The decay from this kind of bashing was understandably long—these *are* 24" cymbals. On the other side of the spectrum, playing the cymbals with a smaller acorn-tip stick would suit a drummer who, say, swings a big band with a heavy K Zildjian or similar ride.

A CRASH, NOT A RIDE

TRX's press release on the BRT crashes calls these new cymbals oversize, but for some players they'll be a perfect fit. After all, for quite a few years, hardly any companies offered crashes larger than 18" or 19". If you wanted a bigger sound, you had to resort to crashing on a ride,

which doesn't always provide the right explosive sound or offer the proper "give" when you strike the cymbal. The 21" (\$475) and 22" (\$500) BRT crashes didn't feel like rigid ride cymbals when I gave them a strong whack. The first time I laid into the 22", it felt like I was playing a medium-weight 18". The 21", oddly, felt a little heavier under the stick. But

that's a welcome inconsistency with regard to hand-hammered cymbals—no two sound or feel exactly alike.

The 22" was a bit faster to open up than the 20" ride I normally use in a similar spot in my setup. Both BRT cymbals were a joy to play with

mallets at all volumes. While they worked well as huge, bright crashes, they still maintained some of the personality and warmth associated with hand-hammered cymbals.

Given the size of these crashes, I wondered how they might function as rides in jazz or Latin styles. Both were a bit too bright and shimmery for my jazz tastes, but drying them up with a Moongel pad on the edge made them sound great for bossa nova and samba grooves.

NOT-AS-HUGE HI-HATS

Though I've seen some drummers use 16" and larger hi-hats recently, 15" counts as oversize for TRX. The pair I received for review were thick, and they produced a clunky but effective "chick" sound when played with a pedal. If you like hats that have some flexibility and bend to them, these are probably not for you. But they sounded great when played half open and washy within a big backbeat groove. They also offered clean, glassy stick articulation when played closed. List price: \$550.

WHAT'S IT WORTH?

Out in the field, these cymbals fit best with the louder of my current projects. In an instrumental post-rock band, they worked very well for loud bashing as well as for dynamic mallet swells. I admit I've had a thing for larger crashes lately, so I enjoyed making the BRTs work in any situation, including an African-funk context.

One thing you should keep in mind is that these cymbals will add extra weight to your cartage. The five review models collectively weighed forty-one pounds, so you'd better *really* want that big sound if you're lugging such cymbals around town or through airports. Still, with the release of these oversize additions to the BRT series, TRX has succeeded in adding some unique—and uniquely big—sounds for today's modern drummers.

trxcymbals.com

WHAT HAVE WE HERE?

With new boutique drum companies and high-end cymbal makers surfacing each year, drummers have an ever-growing array of sonic options to accommodate our individual musical personalities. TRX aims to fill a gap in the marketplace with the BRT line, which is made with the B20-Plus alloy and designed for hard-hitting drummers who want high volume plus the complex sound of hand-hammered cymbals. The newest BRT models push that seemingly contradictory combo further, with even bigger possibilities for rides, crashes, and hi-hats.

the underside; the other was marked as a Heavy Ride. They occupied sonic territory somewhere between the thick, loud sound of most "heavy metal" cymbals and the dark, nuance-rich colors jazzheads go for. When I played the cymbals by themselves, they produced some complex—if