





FIRST PLAY



VICTORY V40 DELUXE
£1,569

WHAT IS IT? Revoiced version of the existing V40 Duchess, with added tremolo and reverb



**VICTORY V130
SUPER COUNTESS**
£1,329

WHAT IS IT? Adapted from the V30 Countess head with 100-watt output

Noble Victories

Victory goes large and loud with its new 100-watt head and 42-watt wide-body combo

Words Nick Guppy **Photography** Olly Curtis

Victory's British-made amp range continues to grow and generate lots of interest here and overseas, hardly surprising as its endorser list includes the phenomenal Guthrie Govan and Richie Kotzen. New off the release decks are the V40 Deluxe wide-body combo and the compact, very powerful V130 Super Countess head. Both amps sit in Victory's Heritage range, which means traditional wooden cabinets: our combo is in cream vinyl with tan leather corners and handle; the head is finished in black.

Victory's typically high build quality features heavy duty steel chassis supporting oversized Demeter transformers. Inside, the electronics are mostly contained on smart black printed circuit boards, with chunky Apem switches and metal film resistors used throughout for improved low noise performance. A large



The V40 Deluxe's cream-on-cream colour is a good clue to its warm, USA-inspired tones and smooth overdrive

main board holds most preamp and power supply components, including the front panel controls and valve bases, with smaller boards for the in and out sockets, which all benefit from gold-plated contacts, while the power switches are chassis-mounted for reliability. There's a fair amount of internal wiring, especially on the V130 with its extra pair of valves and dual footswitches.

The combo's wide-body cabinet and off-centre G12H-75 Creamback loudspeaker mean it's no lightweight and we think it should have a pair of side grab handles as well as the smart tan leather carry handle; 25kg is a lot of weight to have swinging on one hand. By comparison, the V130 head's compact dimensions mean it's very portable and not too heavy either, despite the substantial transformers.

The V40 Deluxe is essentially a revoiced adaptation of the existing V40 Duchess, with added tremolo and reverb. The controls are quite straightforward, with chickenhead knobs for drive, bass, mid, treble and master volume, plus speed and

depth controls for the tremolo with level and tone controls for the valve-powered spring reverb. There are two small tone-altering mini toggle switches: Voice I/Voice II swaps between a 'blackface'-type American EQ response and a slightly stronger midrange for more punch and drive, while Mid Kick is tied to the midrange pot and adds more focus.

Five speaker outlets cover practically every impedance need, together with external bias test points and an adjustment screw, as well as a series effects loop with a bypass switch and a jack for the two-button footswitch, which toggles reverb and trem. There's also a low power option switch that drops output from 42 watts down to around seven watts. A handy silkscreened info plate on the back panel makes it easy to tell where all the various sockets and switches are without having to turn either the amp or yourself upside down.

The V130 Super Countess head is adapted from the V30 Countess developed for Guthrie Govan as his 'flying amp', and



offers two channels, with separate gain and volume controls and a shared EQ. Both channels have two separate voice options: the clean channel can be switched to a crunch mode, while the lead channel has two distinct voices. Both are footswitchable. There's a high/low power option from the front panel standby switch, which Victory now calls 'Preheat' to avoid any legal ambiguity concerning EU legislation on electrical equipment standby modes. On the rear panel are five speaker jacks, with external bias test points and an adjustment screw, a series effects loop and a pair of sockets for the supplied footswitches, which change modes and channels.

Both amps exude solid reliability – they're built to handle the full-on assault of continuous touring and perform consistently night after night.

Feel & Sounds

We tried out both amps in studio and live band settings with a variety of guitars. The V40 Deluxe's cream-on-cream colour



1. The V40 Deluxe combo uses Celestion's excellent G1275 H Creamback loudspeaker – a firm favourite with many top boutique amp brands
2. The V40 Deluxe features an old-school tremolo circuit as well as a valve-driven spring reverb, for authentic vintage USA sounds

scheme is a good clue to its warm, USA-inspired tones and smooth overdrive. The spring reverb adds an equally smooth halo that can be tweaked with its own tone control to add the right amount of warmth. The tremolo adds that Americana atmosphere, although like most vintage designs, the trem effect comes after the reverb, which is authentic but sounds a little odd if you're expecting to hear things the other way around. On this sample, the effect's lowest speed is okay, but we feel the high speed could be a little faster. Cranked up, the Deluxe sounds wonderful, although some of its subtle nuance tends to disappear when used with an averagely loud drummer.

By comparison, the V130's slightly edgy clean tones and punchy dynamics easily cut through any band mix, with headroom to spare thanks to the quartet of JJ 6L6 power valves. Switching into crunch mode adds a healthy dose of overdrive, more than enough to qualify as a great classic rock solo sound, while the V130's two lead modes add more of the same,



3. Both Victories come with external bias test points, making it easy and safe to keep your power valves operating properly
4. The V130's standby switch (Victory calls it a Preheat) selects either 100 watts or 30 watts of output power
5. The V130 Super Countess features a fixed series effects loop for getting the most from time-based effects



with overdrive sounds that borrow from the best of British and American, tweaked with Victory's own harmonic sparkle. Voice I is new and offers a tighter bottom end and slightly lower gain than Voice II, the classic heavy, thick V30 overdrive sound. Impressively, even on very high-gain settings, the guitar's character still comes through, making those bigger lead sounds great fun to use.

Verdict

These are impressive products. The Deluxe combo is full of creamy vintage American tone to match those good looks. It's relatively expensive for what's on offer, but makes up for that by sounding great, albeit with a somewhat limited range. The V130 head is the amplification equivalent of a Land Rover; you can take it practically anywhere musically, as well as geographically. We think it's the most versatile amp Victory has made so far, and with a proper 100 watts to get your point across, it's well worth the asking price. **G**



VICTORY V40 DELUXE 1X12 COMBO

PRICE: £1,569
ORIGIN: UK
TYPE: All-valve preamp and power amp, with solid-state rectifier
OUTPUT: 42W RMS switchable to 7W
VALVES: 2x 12AX7, 2x 12AT7, 2x 6L6
DIMENSIONS: 453 (h) x 598 (w) x 250mm (d)
WEIGHT (kg/lb): 24/53
CABINET: Birch ply
CHANNELS: 1
CONTROLS: Volume, bass mid and treble, master volume, reverb level and tone, tremolo speed and depth, voice 1/voice 2 switch, mid kick switch
FOOTSWITCH: 2-button footswitch selects reverb/tremolo effect
ADDITIONAL FEATURES: Series effects loop with bypass switch, low power switch drops output to 7W, external bias test points
OPTIONS: A head version is available at £1,249

Victory Amplification
www.victoryamps.com

8/10

PROS Authentic USA-inspired tone; lots of subtle nuanced response

CONS More headroom to make the most of those nuances; the trem could go faster; we wish that effects loop was footswitchable



VICTORY V130 SUPER COUNTESS HEAD

PRICE: £1,329
ORIGIN: UK
TYPE: All-valve preamp and power amp, with solid-state rectifier
OUTPUT: 100W RMS switchable to 30W
VALVES: 4 x 12AX7, 4 x 6L6
DIMENSIONS: 235 (h) x 480 (w) x 235mm (d)
WEIGHT (kg/lb): 13/28
CABINET: Birch ply
CHANNELS: 2
CONTROLS: Clean gain, master. Overdrive gain, master. Bass, mid and treble. Voice I/II switch, Clean/Crunch switch
ADDITIONAL FEATURES: Series effects loop, low power switch drops output to 30 watts, external bias test points
OPTIONS: None



9/10

PROS Big overdrive range that can handle practically any genre; massive clean headroom; compact and very portable

CONS It would have been a bonus if the effects loop was footswitchable