

DWARFCRAFT DEVICES

Twin Stags

BY YOEL KREISLER



CLICK HERE TO HEAR this pedal.

Eau Claire's Drawcraft specializes in funky, off-kilter, offbeat, maniacal, and adventurous pedals. On that count, they've struck gold yet again with the Twin Stags dual tremolo. But Twin Stags is also musical, functional, and even simple to use. And the two onboard LFOs drive tremolo textures that swirl and chop in rhythmically complex patterns just as easily as they create powerful, straightforward tremolo tones.

Warm Waves of Sine

The first thing I noticed when plugging in the Twin Stags was its incredible warmth. Although its LFOs are both triangle-wave oscillators, the shape control lets you shift from sawtooth to triangle, ramp, and all points in between. But whichever you choose, the pedal retains an analog glow that eliminates harsh edges without blunting the impact of the hardest pulses. This quality is most apparent in square-ish waves, which sound rounded-off enough at the corners to not be square at all. Regardless of the actual wave profile, it's pronouncedly staccato without the more jarring qualities of a hard, square tremolo. That makes it easier to incorporate the texture in unlikely places—soft jazz settings, for instance—when you roll the depth back.

Two LFOs Are Better than One

If the Twin Stags was a single-LFO version of itself, I would be quite happy to take it on the road or into the studio. But Drawcraft is known for pushing the envelope, and the real strengths of this pedal are revealed with both LFOs running together. Setting LFO 1 to a fast rate and a sawtooth waveform and LFO

2 to a slow rate and a sine waveform delivers choppy-like movement that's enhanced by an almost Doppler effect. The result was not unlike bobbing your head in and out of the ocean with a helicopter swirling overhead. Picking harder and turning the depth up on the second, slower LFO, made this effect even more dramatic.

Twin Stags goes beyond just adding texture. It's also a very powerful tool for adding dark percussive elements to your tone. Drawcraft designed LFO 1 to be faster than LFO 2 for the purpose of creating rhythmic subdivisions. But you can use the switch labeled 2MOD1 to invert the relationship so the second LFO modulates the first, which enables softer variations of the same rhythmic patterns. The rate of either LFO can also be controlled by an expression pedal, which makes dramatic rhythmic shifts and tweaks possible.

Synthpunk Star

Twin Stags is compatible with Eurorack modular synth systems—which brings us to the pedal's CV (control voltage) capabilities. Twin Stags can receive CV commands from a different source or send its own LFO signal to communicate with other Eurorack-compatible gear. This is great for guitar players who dabble in synthesis. From a purely guitar-centric perspective, the CV capability is less advantageous. At higher rates, the clock noise from the LFO is very audible. This is a quirk of many modular synth units, but you have to wonder if Drawcraft didn't err on the side of trying to satisfy too many players here. (A risk that we wholly applaud, by the way.)



LFO 1 does self-oscillate, creating its own wild tones at higher rates, which is great fun. I also generated very cool ring mod sounds, which sounded especially thick and metallic with a Pro Co RAT in front of the Dwarfcraft.

The Verdict

The Dwarfcraft Twin Stags is an easy pedal to love. The tremolo sounds are warm and rich. The LFO options give the pedal the tone-shaping power of a synth. And the rhythmic textures the pedal can produce are inspiring and musical—especially when other pedals are in the mix. If you need a tremolo that goes beyond simple amp tremolo sounds, Twin Stags is an excellent place to start.

RATINGS

\$250 street
dwarfcraft.com

Tones	★★★★
Ease of Use	★★★★
Build/Design	★★★★
Value	★★★★

PROS Fully featured dual tremolo chock-full of control options. Big and warm basic tremolo sounds with a ton of rhythmic and sonic territory to explore.

CONS Clock noise is audible at higher LFO speeds.