

# EBS OctaBass

*Originally published in: MM no 7, 1993*

*Author: Ulf Widlund*

*Translated by: Carl J. Feuk*

Swedish EBS has expanded their product line with yet another product. It is called Octabass and is a so called octave divider pedal, which generates a tone one octave below the pitch played. It is, as most of the other EBS products, designed to handle the low tones of the electric bass, but works just as good on other instruments.

It looks like an ordinary effects pedal with a solid metal casing that seems to be able to withstand all the bouncing around effect pedals has to put up with. Unfortunately are both volume controls "Normal" and "Octave" on the same level as the footswitch, which gives the possibility that they receive some accidental thrashing, something that, for example, Boss has solved by putting the footswitch somewhat higher. (I choose to compare it with the Boss Octaver OC-2, as it is the most common, and one of the few existing today).

The footswitch works fine otherwise and are quieter than the Boss'. The LED belonging to this switch has a finesse; it flashes when the effect is turned on. The knobs for the Normal and Octave levels are made of soft rubber, which makes them easy to handle, and the pots are of the usual (read: high) EBS quality, as all the other electronics, which makes the overall noise level low.

Regarding the power supply, EBS has done some thinking -again. You can choose between three alternatives: battery powering, which means that you have to unscrew the bottom plate (Boss has got a better solution here, where you with one hand screw will get to the battery), adapter (9V DC), or the Phantom Power System which comes included with all EBS amplifiers. The last options requires an ¼ " stereo cord and a small modification inside the amplifier to be done (a resistor has to be changed).

The separate volume controls for clean respectively octaved sound gives the possibility to use the box in several ways. The most common is probably to have both controls at the same level, but, by all means, try simulating synth bass by turning down the clean signal and put the Octave all way up. Another suggestion is to



set the clean signal to maximum, and only turn up the octaved signal that much, so that it's not noted as an effect, just adding some low-end.

Regarding the Boss pedal, you have besides these two controls an additional one for a tone two octaves below the one played, which is quite uninteresting for a bass player, but could surely be fun for a guitar player.

An octavider is a relatively simple construction and demands a clean style of playing. It's only able to "listen" to one tone at a time, and therefore it is important to mute the strings not being played. Sometimes it can even be sensitive to overtones, and normally it holds the octaved tone worse on an open A-string, than the same pitch played on the fifth fret on the E-string. The Octabass was less sensitive in this matter.

The sound on the octaved signal was more full-bodied with the EBS and somewhat hollow with the Boss. Further, the Octabass was triggering better and lower down in the frequency range without fluttering. With my test bass it sounded acceptable all the way down to low F#! In addition, it also triggers fast playing (slap) very good.

This is the best octaver pedal I've ever heard, and it is well worth it's price, even if it costs a few dollars more than the Boss OC-2. Congratulations EBS!