

Taye StudioMaple Bebop Kit

By Brad Schlueter

With more than 25 years experience crafting everything from drums to hardware to heads, Taye has carved out a comfortable position on the totem pole of high-end drum manufacturers. Remarkably, Taye makes everything in-house, from the shells to the hardware chroming — all the way down to the drumheads. No stranger to innovation, Taye garnered high praise at last year's NAMM show for its versatile and extremely adjustable Metalworks XP1 bass drum pedal. This year the company introduced a new StudioBirch line, along with the kit reviewed here, a new Bebop configuration in the well-established StudioMaple line.

DETAILS

SHELLS 100-percent sugar maple shells with 45 degree bearing edges.

CONFIGURATION 12" x 8" tom, 14" x 14" floor tom, an 18" x 14" bass drum, and a 14" x 5" matching snare drum.

FINISH (Reviewed), Classic Walnut high-gloss lacquer; also available in Black Oyster and White Marine Pearl wraps.

These drums have all the features a pro could want from a maple kit: 100-percent North American sugar maple shells, tom suspension mounts, high-wraps and finishes, and the handy Taye SlideTrack tom mount. The drums also feature 2.3 mm triple-flanged hoops and have Taye's tastefully understated badge.

SHELLS

The maple shells are some of the thinnest around without reinforcing rings. The 6-ply toms are just 4.5 mm thick. The 10-ply snare drum comes in at 7.5 mm. And the 7-ply bass drum is just 5.3 mm thick. I inspected the bearing edges on the drums and

FEATURES Suspension mounts; SlideTrack tom holder; ultra-thin, lightweight shells; SideLatch snare throw-off; PocketHinge claws with spacers.

LIST PRICE Shell pack only: \$1,919; shell pack with hardware pack G: \$2,339.

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found them to be buttery smooth. They're cut at 45 degrees with a 10-degree bevel. As the drum geeks out there are already no doubt aware, sharper edges offer a bit more attack, brightness, and sustain than rounder edges.

As you also may already know if you've been reading these reviews, thinner shells produce more low end than thicker shells. The tradeoff is that they produce a bit less volume and projection too. I'd gladly trade a fatter tone for volume at any gig. My reasoning being that situations where the drums are not miked require less volume to begin with, so a thinner shell is an asset. Conversely, miking drums removes the necessity for any inherent volume capability from the shell. But while their vol-

ume won't matter, their tone and low end always will.

Any drum can be tuned tight and high, but thinner drums can usually be tuned lower, so they offer a slightly greater tuning range. If you plan to use this Bebop configuration with a standard, higher jazz tuning, this might not be as much of an attribute, however, you will probably still appreciate the extra tone these thin shells offer.

FINISH

This kit is available in three distinct flavors: a Black Oyster or White Marine Pearl wrap or a Classic Walnut lacquer finish, which is what I received. This finish is a total knockout. The rich brown color enhances the visible wood