

# EARTHQUAKER DEVICES

## AVALANCHE RUN

REVIEW BY **ERIC TISCHLER**

STREET PRICE **\$295.00**



Everything about Avalanche Run, the new delay-reverb from EarthQuaker Devices (EQD), screams, “I did this for you, o humble guitar player.” From the sound quality to the functionality, this pedal was made to play. There are a lot of features packed into this pedal, but virtually all of them are married to knobs that are on the surface of the surprisingly compact box, making Avalanche Run flexible and easy to use.

The top row of knobs control the delay: Time (which is the rate at which repeats are generated), Repeats (the number of repeats heard), Tone (which

adjusts the amount of top end, with interesting—and useful—side effects), and Mix (which blends the delayed signal with the clean analog signal). The bottom row controls the reverb, with controls for Decay (the length of the reverb) and Mix (which mixes the reverb into the clean and—when applicable—the delay signals). Below these controls are a knob which assigns functionality to an expression pedal; a toggle for Reverse, Normal and Swell functions; and a knob to determine what subdivisions—if any (there are six options)—are

applied when tap tempo is used. Finally, there’s the bypass footswitch and the tap tempo footswitch, which has some additional functionality depending on how the toggle is set.

The delay’s character is lush and gorgeous; tape-like in its depth and sheen, but not quite as “big.” That said, the Tone control is wonderfully voiced and, as it’s dialed back, the modulation in the delay’s decay becomes more apparent, adding texture to accommodate the decrease in presence.

The reverb on its own isn’t as complex as the delay—to my ears it’s voiced as

a dark hall—but it's likely more than adequate for those who are looking at the pedal as a two-in-one—assigning D. Mix to an expression pedal means you can toggle between straight reverb and reverb plus delay on the fly. But the reverb really shines when combined with the delay: with the mix low and the Decay set past noon, there's a phenomenal 3-D spatiality at play that's totally addictive. Imagine Narcissus looking into the pool! Imagine capturing your reflection on the semi-permeable membrane between Earth and Heaven! Imagine—sorry. The Avalanche Run has no modulation control, no alternate voicings (although the tone control is powerful and wonderfully versatile) but what it does have is gorgeous sound that can be tweaked to accommodate any mix.

Frankly, the above plus tap would be enough, but the additional features are icing on the cake and, again, are easily accessed. The Reverse delay—in which the delayed signal is backwards—setting

is a nice bonus, and the Swell setting—in which the attack of the note blossoms slowly—is very cool. Those who don't have, say, a volume pedal or elaborate reverbs may find these to be genuinely useful effects.

Most of the expression pedal settings are self-explanatory, but Time deserves a mention. When adjusting Time with the expression pedal, the Avalanche Run generates linear pitch shifting up and down, like a tape that's being sped up and slowed down. It's very cool and very musical and, again, easy to access for those who have an expression pedal.

There are more features, including multiple delay tail settings (as well as a true bypass setting that immediately kills the delay), and the tap function not only provides my beloved self-oscillation effect but, when the pedal is in Reverse, holding tap down will set the delay “forward.” But the greatest feature is the sound and ease of use. If you just need a delay

that sounds great and has tap, add this to your list. If you just need to save some room on your board and want an all-in-one reverb and delay that sound great together look here. If you just want a great sounding delay, check out the Avalanche Run.

## WHAT WE LIKE

If it wasn't clear, amazing sound and ease of use, including a dedicated power supply that has a blessedly low profile, meaning it's likely to fit on your power strip.

## CONCERNS

None.