

Hot New Guitar Products as seen in

# GUITAREEDGE

## HAGSTROM SUPER SWEDE

**T**he Swedish-based Hagstrom company, originally a maker of fine accordions, first began building electric guitars in the late fifties. Throughout the sixties and beyond, notable artists made use of these guitars, including ZZ Top and Frank Zappa. The company ceased production in 1983, and older models have since become collector's items. Now Hagstrom is back in full force and producing nearly a dozen models, including a few hollowbody jazz guitars. In this review we'll take a look at the company's flagship model, the Super Swede.

### FEATURES

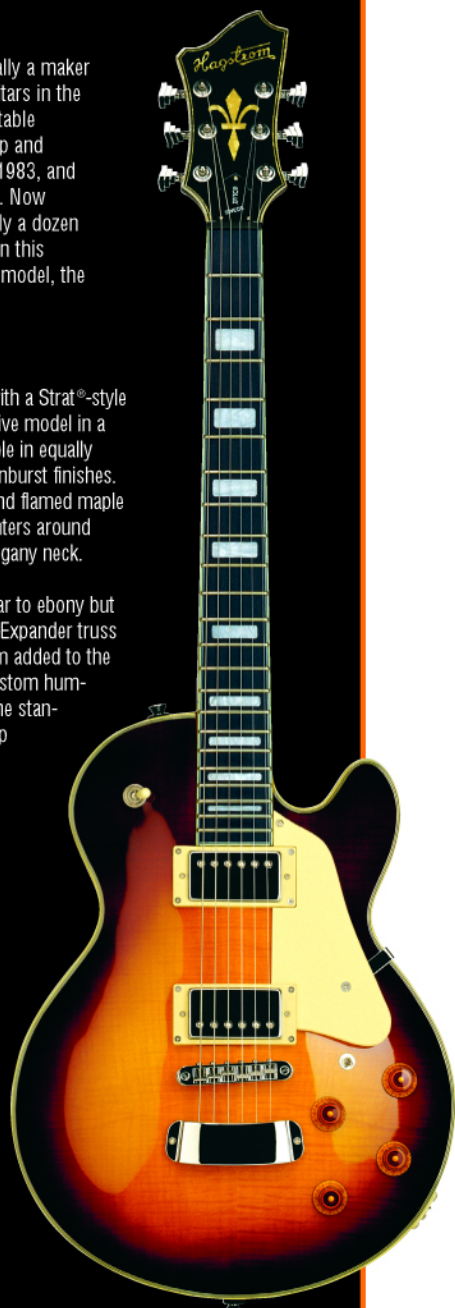
The Super Swede features a Les Paul®-style body with a Strat®-style scale length of 25.5". I received an extremely attractive model in a vintage sunburst finish, but the guitar is also available in equally striking black gloss, amber sunburst, and cherry sunburst finishes. The mahogany body is topped with carved maple and flamed maple veneer, but the real fuss about the Super Swede centers around what's happening inside and on top of the set mahogany neck.

The Resinator fretboard is a composite wood similar to ebony but purportedly harder and more reliable, while the H-Expander truss rod provides increased neck stability with an I-beam added to the traditional cylindrical rod. It's equipped with two custom humbuckers, with volume and tone controls for each, the standard 3-way toggle switch, and a mini-toggle coil-tap switch for added sonic flexibility.

### SOUND AND PLAYABILITY

Hagstroms are famous for their fast necks, and the praise is certainly worthy; the action felt smooth and consistent from top to bottom. For the price of this instrument, the attention to detail is truly impressive. Just about the only negative I can say with regards to the playability is the access to the upper frets. The Super Swede has 22 frets, but it may as well only have 20 or 21, as the 22nd fret is hardly reachable with standard fretting technique.

The Super Swede sounds like a guitar with a much higher price tag. The pickups are clear and precise, but with a little less edge and not quite as chunky as a PAF®, for example. The sustain is truly remarkable, and the high notes really sing in the bridge position. The coil tap was useful for getting a variety of rhythm tones or some interesting, scooped lead sounds. Well-built, great-sounding, and stylish, this guitar is the very definition of a bargain.



### IN A NUTSHELL

- Mahogany body, carved maple top
- Mahogany neck, Resinator fretboard with pearl block inlays
- H-Expander truss rod, 25.5" scale
- Two custom 58 humbuckers, 2x tone & volume, 3-way toggle, coil-tap switch
- Tune-o-matic bridge with Hagstrom stop tail piece

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