M Britt - Line 6 Helix Preset Pack 1

After releasing presets for the Atomic Amplifire last year, I had numerous emails and messages asking me if I had any plans to do presets for the new (at the time) Line 6 Helix. I would work at it a while, shoot new IRs, work some more, shelve it for a few months and come back. It took a lot of trial and error to find IRs that I felt worked best with the built in amp models in the Helix. There were some that fought me along the way but I ended up finding some that I could work with and I've been working on this set of presets for about the last 6 months. I've tested most of these during soundchecks and compared the overall tonalities to my main Kemper rig. I think this is the closest I've gotten and hopefully some of you will find these presets useful in making some music/noise.

For Preset Pack 1 (Just in case there's any need to make any future presets, I'm planning ahead), I tried to concentrate on "meat and potatoes" tones. The main types of tones I typically need are a couple of blackface cleans, some nice Vox/Matchless cleanish, some mild/mid overdrive Plexi and/or Vox/Matchless rhythm tones, and some lead tones to cover everything from modern country solos to big, rock ballad solos. I made some slight variations of different amp models in all of those categories. There are effects included in all of the presets but for most of the sound samples I wanted to keep them fairly simple, with just reverb and maybe some delay or compression. I felt that many of the amp models needed a little goose on the front end, so I used the timmy model and the klon model as needed.

In addition to the meat and potatoes tones, I included a handful of wacky presets that I just had fun making. There are so many cool effects in the Helix that I just went nuts on a few of them for some variety.

Here's a rundown of the 32 presets included:

Britt Cln 1 – (IR: 3P B 212 10) This is a clean blend of a blackface deluxe mixed with a brt plexi. I was going for the main tone I get from my 3rd Power Dream Weaver prototype that has elements of blackface and plexi in one package.

Britt Crunch 1 – (IR: 3P Mars 5 4) I was going for my main mid overdrive rhythm tone that I use for about 60% of our live show. This is a jumpered plexi model which is similar to my '72 Marshall JMP after I goose it a bit with the timmy model and a bit of compressor to smooth it out a bit.

Britt Solo – (IR: 3P Mars 3 0 1) This is similar to the crunch 1 tone but with some more gain and stacked overdrive pedals and a bit more delay. This is something that I would use for modern country solos or heavier rock rhythm.

Big Solo – (IR: 3P Mars 5 4) This is for the big Journey or hair band solo, complete with slight pitch shift and a blend of a Mesa MKIV and a jumped plexi.

Black Lux 1 – (IR: 3P Cln Blend 3) This is my basic blackface deluxe clean(ish) tone. I find this type of tone useful because if you play a little softer, it stays cleans for chords but if you dig in, you can play a bit of country type single note stuff.

Vox A15 – (IR: Vox Blend 3) I'm a sucker for these little amps. This model is a tad darker than the real A15 that I used to have but it has a cool, kinda boxy sound that I like.

Match C30 Ch2 – (IR: Vox Blend 3) The Matchless Ch 2 is one of my all-time favorite rhythm gain tones. It has a clarity and sweetness that keeps it from sounding too angry but still has a beautiful break up. I set this one up like I'd use it in a live set with comp and delay on it.

Plexi Crunch – (IR: 3P Mars 5 4) This is a plexi brt model that I just tweaked to get a basic plexi crunch tone that I could use on a lot of different rhythm parts. I kept this one pretty bare and basic.

AC30 Fawn – (IR: Vox Blend 3) I used both versions of this amp combined (normal and brilliant) to get a nice rhythm blend that I could probably gig with most of the night by turning on/off the extra gain stomps. There are a couple of different delays waiting, too, in case they're needed.

Match 30 Ch1 – (IR: Vox Blend 3) This is a bare-bones version of the left channel of one of my favorite amps. Jimmy Olander from Diamond Rio is the master of this type of clean tone so I just wanted to try to capture something close to that.

Plexi Solo 1 – (IR: 3P Mars 5 4) This is another variation of the jumpered plexi but with the klon model for a midrange boost that works great when trying to cut through a band mix.

Mod Chicken – (IR: Vox Blend 3) Weird name, I know. Thanks to limited character space, it actually stands for modern chicken picking tone. I was going for a bit of a Brad Paisley type Dr. Z tone. It's really hard to capture how he can have a clean and dirty tone sitting at the same table, but I tried.

Strat Blues – (IR: Tweed V30 5) I was going for the more laid back side of SRV on this one with pure blackface fender and a klon model that makes single notes sound bigger and a little chewy as opposed to thin and wimpy.

Lux Chorus – (IR: Cln Blend 3) I know choruses are a bit dated, but I know I have a handful of songs each night that I need that 80's/90's Dann Huff chorus tone for some verse color.

Swing Sultan – (IR: Cln Blend 5) One of my favorite players is Mark Knopfler and I spend countless hours dropping the needle on "Sultans of Swing" trying to learn every lick. The bridge/middle position on a strat is just supposed to sound like that to me.

A30TB Crunch – (IR: Vox Blend 3) I often use a profile of a UK 90's AC30TB6 and I was going for that sound when making this preset. I like the way Voxes break up when hit with a little pedal gain on the front end.

JTM45 Cln – (IR: Mult 2 brt) This was my throwback to an old JTM45 bluesbreaker combo I used to have and I would just play it clean at home more than anything else at the time.

TX Blues – (IR: Cln Blend 3) This is for the more aggressive side of SRV. Of course I can't play like that but another one of my all time faves. I use a combination of a Dumble model and a brt plexi to try to get the SRV tone.

Mars K Drive – (IR: Mult 2) This is another variation on the jumpered plexi with a klon pedal in front of it. Jeff Beck uses a klon with his Marshall amps and it just has that mid-forward tone that can be really expressive.

13 Cleanish – (IR: Mult 3) I used to have an /13 FTR and it had a stellar clean tone that I loved. I know this model is a bit different but that is the tone I was going for. The /13 amps have a unique, refined sweetness to them.

AC15 Cln – (IR: Mult 2 brt) Again, this amp model starts a bit dark so I had to find a brighter IR and push the treble up a bit to get the clarity I was looking for.

Twd Stones – (IR: Tweed V30 3) Of course I had to try to get a Keef tone in my arsenal. I can't believe Line 6 didn't put a tweed deluxe model in the Helix, so I had to use the tweed bassman instead. It's not quite the same on the squishiness but I got as close as I could.

Plexi Crunch 2 – (IR: 3P Mars 5 4) Another plexi variation but this time with the Park 75 model and the jumpered plexi combined.

JTM45 Drive – (IR: Mars 25 2E) I was going for early to mid 70's classic rock with this preset, using a brt plexi and boosting with both a timmy and an 808.

Dumbell – (IR: Cab Blend 1) I didn't find this model right away because it was hidden down in the list of seldom used Line 6 "amps". The model didn't have as much gain as a real d-type amp so I had to crank the gain and goose it with a timmy model.

Plexi Brt – (IR: 3P Mars 5 4) This is another try at a basic plexi sound. Can you tell I really like an overdriven plexi?

DC30 2 Cln – (IR: Vox Blend 3) The right channel of a Matchless C30 isn't really known as a clean type amp but it has a thickness from the ef86 preamp tube that the left channel just doesn't have.

Match 30 1 – (IR: Vox Blend 2) Another version of the clean left side of a Matchless C30 model. I would recommend using this as a nice clean pedal platform base and add some other fx.

Say Delay – (IR: Vox Blend 3) I was goofing around with stacking delays and the sweep echo and landed on this rhythmic sound that suddenly sounded like I was playing a Hall & Oates song. Rather than say it isn't so, I just used the name to remind me what rhythm I should play with it.

Wanged – (IR: Vox Blend 3) I've always loved that 80's over processed compressed sound with tons of gack so I thought I'd pay homage to the Chungers of Wang. You can play around with the delay times to fit whatever song you want to play and it sounds good for everything from spacious chord attacks to swells.

Brick Wall – (IR: Cln Blend 3) We've been playing a snippet of Another Brick in the Wall for years so I wanted to see if I could get a comparable tone in the Helix just in case I ever needed it. Of course I had to use a Hiwatt even though I think the original part was played direct into the console.

Rhythmystic – (IR: Vox Blend 3) I love the base amp tones I got from combining the Matchless and /13 and then I just went a little nutty with the delays and filter. I'm always looking for tones that become part of a song and this one just made me want to keep playing for a long time.

IR Assignments

Because the IRs are not actually part of the preset in the Line 6 Helix infrastructure, you have to actually import the IRs separately and call up the appropriate location number in the preset for you to hear the preset as I programmed it. Follow these steps:

Importing into the Helix

You will need to download and install the Helix Editor software from the Line 6 website: line6.com/software

You will need to read through all of the details on the Line 6 site regarding updating your Helix and which versions you need to go through, etc. based on what firmware your Helix is currently running.

Once you get everything installed and the Helix is connected and recognized by the computer you can import the presets.

1. Import the Helix presets into your Helix by using the Line 6 Editor software under the tab "presets". Navigate through your current Helix presets to a location you want to add a preset(s). Click "Import" and then navigate to where the presets are stored on your computer and then click "Open" to import the presets as you need them. The new preset will be stored over the preset you started from. You can upload more than one preset at a time by highlighting more than one in the open window. Just be conscious that they will write over multiple presets upon doing so. It might be a good idea to start with a clean, fresh folder.

2. Import the IRs you will need into your Helix by using the Line 6 Editor software under the tab "impulses" in the same manner as the presets above. Under "Impulses" select a destination location by doubleclicking on a numbered impulse on the Helix Editor. Click on the "import" tab and navigate to the stored files. If you just want to upload the 14 IRs used in the Helix Preset Pack 1 then just import the files with the * suffix. Or you can select all of them and click "open" to import them into your Helix.

3. Each Helix preset with an IR block will call up an IR l*ocation*, so this is very important. The locations where my IRs are saved on my Helix may not match up where you install them, so you will need to define those locations after installation and you will need to do this for each preset you installed. To do this simply call up a desired preset by doubleclicking on it and click on the IR block in the signal flow layout.

Using the up/down arrows, navigate to the desired IR that matches the IR listed in the description. They can be found wherever you assigned them in your list of IRs when you imported the new IRs.

For instance:
Match 30 Ch1 – (IR: **Vox Blend 3**) This is a bare-bones version of the left channel of one of my favorite amps. Jimmy Olander from Diamond Rio is the master of this type of clean tone so I just wanted to try to capture something close to that.

Wherever **Vox Blend 3** is currently residing on your Helix (e.g. IR location *xx*), then on the IR block edit screen, just change the IR select parameter to *xx* and save the preset with this information.

Remember, your Helix Preset Pack comes with my entire Custom MBlended IR Pack of 48k IRs. However, if you just want to import the 14 IRs that I used to make these presets, those IRs will be marked with a * in the list.