

# GoldenEar Forcefield 30

The latest subwoofer from the American marque is an affordable, small cabinet design with an 8in active driver – but **Mark Craven** discovers it still packs a punch



**ONE OF TWO** new subwoofers launched by American manufacturer GoldenEar, the Forcefield 30 slots into its lineup to replace the venerable Forcefield 3 and is aimed at buyers seeking a compact bassmaker that's a cut above the budget competition – although its price tag of £799 still puts it on the right side of affordable.

Measuring 29x32x40cm (whd) it certainly hits the brief of being small and easy to

accommodate (its also-new sister model, the £999 Forcefield 40, is somewhat larger). It looks cute too. Sure, the aesthetic is a little unusual, with a curve to the top of the chassis borrowed from the design of GoldenEar's BRX loudspeakers (HCC #336), but I've grown

used to the brand's designs coming from somewhere out of leftfield.

Inside the sub are a front-firing 8in 'high-output' bass driver, while the cabinet is neither ported nor sealed in the conventional sense, as its underside features a 9in x 11in passive radiator. This approach, coupled to a 450W (1,000W peak) DSP 'Forcefield' amplifier, gives the sub a spec sheet claim of 25Hz lows.

The view around the back of this 14.5kg unit mirrors that of GoldenEar's costlier SuperSub X (HCC #272), with LFE/stereo inputs, crossover/level dials and an auto/on/off toggle, but no phase control or speaker-level connections. It's therefore straightforward to setup. There's no user EQ, app or wireless support.

## Accurate and attacking

From my experience of GoldenEar's BRX models, also tuned by passive radiators, the company has a certain way with bass that favours accuracy and an absence of the warmth that some rival designs introduce. It's the same story here, with the small

## SPECIFICATIONS

**DRIVERS:** 1 x 8in 'long-throw, high-output' woofer; 1 x 9in x 11in 'Quadratic Planar Infrasonic Radiator' **ONBOARD POWER: (CLAIMED):** 450W/1,000W (RMS/peak) **FREQUENCY RESPONSE (CLAIMED):** 26Hz-200Hz **REMOTE CONTROL:** No **DIMENSIONS:** 322(h) x 289(w) x 406(d)mm **WEIGHT:** 14.3kg

**FEATURES:** Stereo/LFE line-level input; level and low-pass filter control; Analog Devices DSP; auto/on/off toggle

## A curved top panel aims to limit cabinet resonances

Forcefield 30 providing a very accurate sounding, and subjectively distortion-free performance. This makes it good for displaying the bass details in a movie mix or piece of music, and it goes about its business in a controlled manner, the cabinet not appearing to add any 'colour' of its own.

Don't mistake that for me saying it sounds polite. *Au contraire*, the Forcefield 30 is a little rock 'n' roller, ably expanding the soundfield in terms of depth and scale when paired with a Q Acoustics 3000i satellite speaker array, and ranging impressively low for a sub of its size. The enjoyably breezy soundmix of *Operation Fortune: Ruse De Guerre* (Prime Video) has its moments of LFE lunacy, and GoldenEar's sub guarantees they arrive with a sense of drama. I've heard affordable models that aim deeper, but it doesn't disappoint in this regard.

The Forcefield 30's best attribute, however, might be its speed. Keeping the active woofer down to 8in has reaped rewards in terms of driver control. This pistonic ability leads to excellent attack of transients, and a sound that has plenty of slam. All those hard-hitting movie effects that sit somewhere above 'deep' bass are right in its wheelhouse, and when the action onscreen is coming thick and fast, like the beach assault sequence in James Gunn's *The Suicide Squad* (Sky Cinema), GoldenEar's woofer easily keeps up.

## Easy does it

This compact sub borrows design elements from its manufacturer's superb BRX speakers, and would likely make a perfect partner. It will also suit anyone after an affordable, easy-to-house subwoofer that comfortably performs to its price pint. The Forcefield 30 surprises with its speed, detail and slam, and drops deeper than you might expect ■

## HCC VERDICT ★★★★★

**GoldenEar Forcefield 30**  
→ £799 → [www.goldenear.com](http://www.goldenear.com)

**WE SAY:** Light on features yet high on performance, this subwoofer is a fine addition to GoldenEar's stable. And it won't break your back!

## AV INFO

**PRODUCT:** Compact subwoofer with 8in driver and passive radiator

**POSITION:** Middle of the Forcefield series, below the SuperSubs

**PEERS:** SVS SB-2000 Pro REL HT/1205 MkII