You'll notice the difference when you pull these heads out of the box. They look different. They feel different. And when you put them on your drums, they sound different.

Evans has manufactured drumheads since 1958. As one of the pioneers in manufacturing Mylar drumheads, Evans has distinguished itself from other head companies by offering such innovations as dry vesting, oil-filled heads, CAD/CAM hoops and the EQ Bass Drum System. The popular Genera line of Evans drumheads has been revered for several years. The standard G1 (single-ply) and G2 (double-ply) versions of these heads have been clear and smooth, but now Evans has introduced a new version: coated Genera heads.

The coating and the coating process are the result of more than six months of prototype tests with various coating and application methods. The end result is quite impressive.

Evans has developed a new patent-pending water-cooled mold forming process and robotic coating technology used in the manufacturing of these heads. In addition, the company's hoop-forming machine now uses a closed-loop feedback system to cut the hoop to the precise length, down to thousands of an inch accuracy. Let's look at each of these characteristics and see how they play.

Water-Cooled Molding. The new low-temperature collar-forming system runs cool water behind the playing portion of the drumhead, protecting that area of the film against the heat that beads and forms the collar. One of the first things you notice when you look at these heads is the surface of the film. It's very smooth and very flat. While other heads may have slight wrinkles, dents, or pockets or puckers, these heads look perfect.

Holding a head up at eye level, you can see that the playing surface produces a totally flat line from collar to collar. At the collar, where the head turns down on its way into the hoop, the uniformity of the head is remarkable. Each plot into the hoop is perfectly formed and precise over the entire diameter of the head. Even before these heads are mounted, tapping one softly with your finger produces a very low rumble with a good deal of sustain and a whisper of pitch.

Robotics Coating. The coating on the new G1 and G2 heads looks a little smoother than other coated heads. Evans says that their new pneumatically-controlledentering systems apply the coating to the head with a tolerance of .0005. While I don't have the tools to measure the density of the coating, I can say that each head's coating seems consistent around the entire diameter of the head, and the coatings on the 12" to 16" heads that were sent for review exhibited an impressive consistency. In an effort to be "green," Evans' coating is an environmentally-safe, water-based material.

Hoop Forming Machines. Evans claims that their new hoop-forming equipment can
Crash Test #2

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produce hoopｓ that are perfectly round and seamless from one head to the next. When the test heads arrived, I marked the 13" heads (three GIs and two G2s) on top of another and they fit like a glove. To test the roundness of these drumheads without using expensive testing tools, I rounded one of the studied heads while keeping the other stationary. If one of the heads wasn't round, guys would appear at the panes where the hoops touched each other. In the past, I've mounted heads that are a little warped, which can produce a problem, since the counterhoop star can push down unevenly around the entire circumference of the head. If the counterhoop doesn't sit perfectly with the fixed hoop, you can experience tuning problems. But not only are these hoops mounted, they are perfectly fine, too.

Mounting & Tuning. Because of the consistency of their construction, the coated GIs and G2s tuned quickly and easily. I put them on a 30-year-old set of Slinger drums and, with very little tweaking, had drum sound good within minutes. Believe it or not, I was even able to tune the floor tom without a drumkey by just running the tension rods with my fingers, and still was able to dial-in a good sound that wasn't too loose or fluffy.

Second. The heads held their tuning very well — even days after they had been mounted and played a number of times — and retained a good stick response. They presented a nice balance between a ringing sound and a muffled tone, with a good amount of punch that cut well through a five band paˈroor. At one end, the coated heads were a little darker than their uncoated cousins.

The G2 heads rounded good, but were slightly more muffled and faster sounding than the G1 heads — just as you might expect when comparing a no-nonsense to a sleek, fast head. I liked the warmth of the tone and the moderate amount of ring, and was able to play the heads wide open, without any extra muffling. For my own personal tastes, I prefer the G1 heads, but I've always favored a single ply over a doubleply head since I tend to play lightly.

Durability. I'm not a particularly heavy player and didn't have any problems with the heads' strength during my regular practice routines. So here's what I did to test durability for you readers who hit hard: I mounted a 13" tom head and tuned it just past finger tight. Then I gave it 50 of my hardest whacks with a Regal Tip Trans stick and pulled the head back off the drum to check for dents and film erosion.

The results were mixed. The G1 head didn't flay very well and dented within a few strokes. However, the G2 withstood the barrage much better. While there were no dents, the film was slightly discolored at the buzzing spot. Yet another fact is that heavy players should pass on the G1 heads and try the G2 instead.

Our Other Problem. Peas were not several sets of heads, so I gave some to a couple of my students — Don Galindo and Jacob Sams — to check out. Both felt that the sound, tunability and construction were very good, but Don experienced a problem with the head causing. While playing with brushes he found that the crossovers would sometimes catch the heads wires when he dug the tips into the head surface. However, Jacob felt that the G1 and G2 coating wasn't as abrasive as the coating on his usual heads. So go figure.

Bottom Line. I like these heads. The positive factors of durability, sound quality and construction far outweigh the few minor negative features I encountered. You should try these heads out and see if they will give you the sound you're looking for. Personally, I like the heads so much, I'm going to keep them on my drums.