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RetroKing Tremolux

We've said this many times in the past 15 years – the early '60s Tremolux is one of the greatest guitar amps ever built. Why? What makes this amp so much better for so many different styles of music than any other? Well of course it comes down to a matter of taste... Some players really like the overdriven, busted up tone of the tweed Deluxe. They don't need or want the clean headroom that the Tremolux delivers. We do. The Tremolux indeed delivers clean tones at volume levels that are more manageable than a Bassman or a Showman, while being capable of spilling over into an overdriven tone merely by nudging the volume of the guitar up.

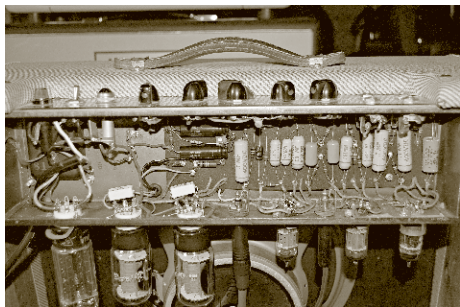


The Tremolux is a supremely toneful amp, graced with excellent low end, moderate midrange and soaring highs that create a captivating guitar tone. Just ask Mark Knopfler, who frequently uses a brown Tremolux in studio. You might say it's his 'go to' amp. Unlike the more diminutive tweed version, the brown Tremolux can hold its own with a hard hitting band, amplifying specific frequencies that both compliment the guitar while being vividly experienced by the listener against the backdrop of bass and drums. It is also extremely versatile and pedal friendly for those players that choose to rock a little harder. All in all, the Tremolux just seems to be perfectly voiced

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for these times in terms of volume, power and tone. Little Champs are great for the studio, and many 15 watt vintage amps are tremendous choices for recording, but for live performances where some headroom is required, it is still very, very hard to beat the Tremolux.

Not too long ago you could score a brown Tremolux for as little as \$1200, perhaps with a changed speaker and a little wear and tear. We bought many of them, simply because we wanted to experience them and their consistent tone. We were never disappointed. Some sounded slightly cleaner than others at high volume, a variation we attributed to slight differences in output transformers and speakers. The good news is that even if your output transformer has been replaced, many excellent choices exist today for replacement trannies that will yield an authentic, vintage tone. If critical tone caps have been replaced, which is not uncommon by this time, we also have excellent choices for those, too, which you will read about here. Speakers? There are more excellent speakers available today than at any time in the history of guitar amplification, and we have never had it better. The point is, should you be motivated to find a vintage brown Tremolux amp, yours can be easily restored to deliver stellar tones that match those of an original amp. And if you would prefer to acquire a new replica of this great example of Fender history, you can do that too, thanks to Retro-King amplifiers.



We're not gonna lie to you. We strongly urged Chuck Dean to consider building this amp, and when he heard it, he

agreed. It's just that good and that unique among all the classic amplifiers built by Fender. If you remain skeptical, just understand that the tone and power range of this amp make it a rare and very addictive choice for what we need and want today in an amplifier. Unless you are really into high gain amps with intense distortion at low volume levels, you will thank us for showcasing the vintage Tremolux. It's that good, which is to say, 'better than good.' You will find the power and volume range of this amp to be perfect for live performances with an extraordinary tactile feel that encourages truly great playing. You are completely connected to this amp as an extension of your guitar, which explains why it has been used on stage by great players like Doyle Bramhall II with Eric Clapton and Derek Trucks. When an accomplished player like Bramhall picks such an obscure vintage amp to lean on, these are the kind of clues that cannot be ignored. As we said, Mark Knopfler also uses a Tremolux live and in studio because

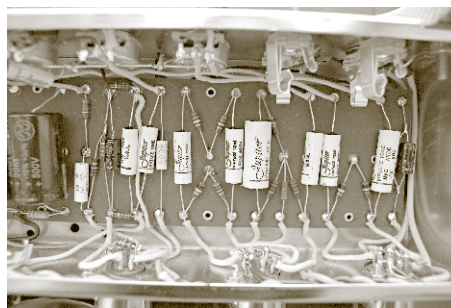
these amps simply stand out among all the vintage Fender models that have emerged over 50 years. You can count on adequate clean tones, yet they are draped in sultry and captivating bloom and sustain that are nothing less than inspiring, and you *will* be inspired. Quest forth...

Tremtone 5G9



Chuck Dean built the Tremtone 5G9 as a faithful recreation of the extremely rare Tremolux 5G9. Hard to find and now very expensive, the Tremolux is indeed a rare find among tweed Fender models, and it is equally unique. This amp was originally built in a tall cabinet that enhanced low end significantly when compared to the next smaller tweed Deluxe cabinet, and Chuck

has reproduced the original tall pine cabinet for the Tremtone. The cabinet is an essential feature of this model that produces a full, rich tone with outstanding low end and sustain.



Chuck also mentions the tremolo as being the best he had ever heard in this model, and we agree. Until you hear the Tremolux

tremolo you really haven't full experienced tremolo at all and the way it seems to surround you. Another feature that Chuck describes in his description is the long-tailed phase inverter that gives the Tremtone lush headroom. In our opinion this is one of the hallmarks of this Fender classic. The additional headroom makes this amp so versatile and unique among tweed-era amplifiers. You get all the tone of a classic Fender tweed, expanded and enhanced with true percussive headroom that is so essential to inspired rhythm tones and solos.

Ah, but it is the pure *tone* of the Tremtone that will really rock your world... If you haven't owned many original tweed or early '60s Fender amps this may be a sound that you are completely unfamiliar with, and even if you do own a few tweeds we're betting that you still haven't heard tones quite like this.

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Our review amp was originally equipped with an excellent Hellatone A25 25-watt speaker. To make things even more interesting we also installed a vintage Jensen C12N, Celestion Blue Alnico G12 and an Eminence Red Fang Alnico speaker. All of the speakers sounded truly great. The '60s C12N was the cleanest, with classic Jensen tones – strong low end, subtle mids and clear, vibrant treble in the style of a vintage Jensen. The Eminence Red Fang was strong, vibrant and well balanced with a nice edginess to the tone at higher volume levels. The Celestion blue was incredibly smooth with great overtones, bass, mids and treble, and it broke up earlier due to its 15 watt power rating. The Hellatone is equally fine, with great clarity, balance and attitude at higher volume levels. All of these speakers bring out the best in the Tremtone with subtle differences in EQ and power handling versus subtle break up. The stock Hellatone is a perfect choice. For slightly earlier break up we recommend the Celestion.

We asked Chuck Dean to describe how the amp was built and designed, and his description follows:

TQR: What inspired your development of this model?

I was thinking of building a tweed Deluxe or tweed low powered Twin when you mentioned the big box tweed Tremolux. The tweed overdrive with added headroom intrigued me.



TQR: For the record, can you confirm the model you used as the basis for this amp?

The Fender tweed Tremolux 5G9 circuit.

TQR: As a point of comparison, what does the overall tone and sound of this amp remind you of?

A tweed Super or Bassman but with more of a focused sound and a really nice tonal balance.

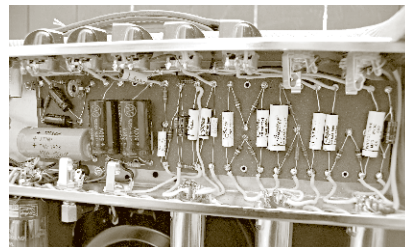
TQR: Can you describe the sound and construction of the amp and any unique aspects of the design?

It has a beautifully clean, chimy tone that blooms into perfectly drenched harmonic breakup and the perfect amount of compression.

TQR: In what ways did you depart from the original circuit if any?

The circuit is exactly like the original 5G9 with the addition of a standby switch and bias control. I also lowered the value of a couple of coupling caps to balance the low end for both single coil and humbucking pickups.

TQR: How did you choose the speaker for this amp?



I knew I wanted to use an Alnico speaker with tone similar to the original Jensen. Unlike the original, I wanted a speaker that

would handle lows better and have enough headroom for pedals and an overdriven tone.

TQR: What brand of transformers did you use and why?

I chose Classic Tone paper bobbin transformers because they have the closest specs and tone to the originals.

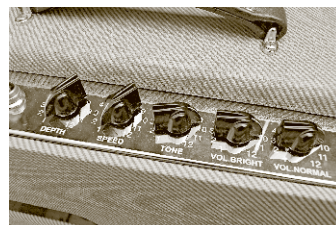
TQR: What type and brand of capacitors did you use and why?

I use Jupiter yellow caps. They have both the look and sound of the original Astron caps.

TQR: How does the build for this amp rank on a scale of difficulty?

The circuit isn't especially difficult but it is very important in this type of amp for precise wire routing and a good grounding scheme.

TQR: What do you like most about the sound and tone of this amp?



It has a very percussive sound with great headroom, great clean tones, a percussive quality with the perfect high-low-mid ratio. It also has a very sweet overdriven tone

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that you can access with just a swipe of the volume control.

TQR: What can readers expect in terms of lead times for construction and delivery?

6-8 weeks to delivery after payment is received.

TQR: Are you offering any options such as speakers or tubes?

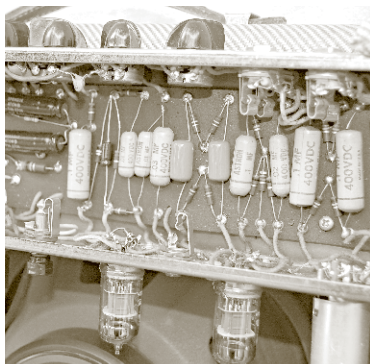
I do make specific recommendations for speakers and tubes depending on the needs of the customer and all brands of speakers and tubes are available as options.

Chuck Dean, retrokingamps.com
315-673-3435



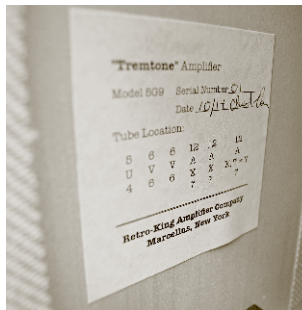
What can we possibly say to inspire you to experience this amplifier? It's our goal to do just that, because we have been completely committed converts for years. We were lucky to have had access to many of these

great amps over the years, and at times we were amazed at how cheaply they could be acquired. Every time a new, old Tremolux appeared we could barely contain our anticipation, and we were never disappointed. If you were to ask us what one of our most memorable experiences in publishing TQR has been we would rank the Tremolux experience as one of the high points to be sure. More than just a great amplifier, the Tremolux inspires great music that you wouldn't have otherwise conceived. Guitars routinely display a potential that might have well gone unrealized absent the Tremolux. Because of the clean headroom it is also a brilliant pedal amp. Dirt on dirt is rarely a good tone, and the Tremolux was made for your best distortion and overdrive effects. The tone



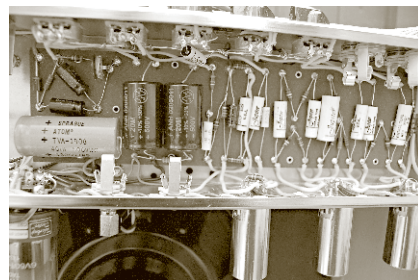
stack works equally well with Fender and Gibson guitars. This isn't strictly a 'Fender' amp when it comes to guitars, in fact, we can't think of an electric guitar that doesn't sound extraordinarily good with this amp, including certain acoustics

equipped with pickups like our '52 Gibson J45 and Martin CEO7. *Really.* The taller cabinet really works beautifully with acoustic guitars. Did the engineers at Fender know this? We wonder... with the number of instruments that it seemingly compliments so well, how has it been overlooked for so long? Well, who knows? We have discovered a lot of great amplifiers that don't seem to have received proper credit for their importance and value, so why should the Tremolux be any different? It isn't so hard to understand why an amplifier introduced over 50 years ago could be forgotten or overlooked. It is our mission to fix that here and turn you on to one of the greatest Fender amps ever built – especially for our needs in 2015.



Have you ever noticed how so many vintage Fender amps seem limited as far as tone control settings go? There often seems to be just one setting that works, and the rest are either too bassy, trebly, or just not quite right. Not so with the Tremtone.

You can actually use the tone control combined with the Bright and Normal channels to dial in varied tones that are all very usable, just like the original Tremolux. Add different guitars like the Telecaster, Stratocaster and various Gibsons and you are working with a true chameleon that can bring out the best tones in all of your guitars with just the turn of one control. This is the true purpose of a tone control isn't it, to enable your amp to compliment different pickups and bring out the best in them all? It's also the reason to design Bright and Normal channels in an amplifier, so that you can vary the overall tone and feel of your guitar for more varied yet very useful tones. The Tremtone is a truly stalwart rig, we promise. If all you really want to do is spew a heavily distorted signal stick with a Deluxe or a Champ, but those of you who enjoy plumbing the full range and potential of a great guitar, the Tremtone and Tremolux are your rig, we promise.



Tubes matter in these amps. Throw in a new set of JJs and your amp will work fine, but you may be missing a big, big payoff... May we

suggest that you consider going NOS or even UBG (used but good) in your Tremtone? Tubes are the heart of your tone, so

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please don't overlook NOS and 'used but test good' vintage tubes. Ebay offers a wide range of perfectly good used tubes that will outlive you, sellers offer test results that remove all doubt, and you needn't be an electronics geek to understand their significance. "Used but test good" is what you want, and reputable sellers will provide plenty of test data that will make your purchase stress-free.

In some cases you can also still buy NOS tubes for reasonable prices like the tubes we bought from Mike Kropotkin. Just know who you are buying NOS tubes from, because there are NOS tubes you don't want – rejects that won't deliver the tone you are seeking, even when new. Tubes are mechanical devices, and as such not all 'identical' tubes are created equal. Know your seller, know his reputation or feedback rating and you'll be just fine. A very manageable 40 lbs.

Now Quest forth...[To](#)

Matchless Brave



The Matchless DC-30 changed the landscape of custom amplifiers. When founders Rick and Chris Perotta, Mark Sampson and Steve Goodale de-

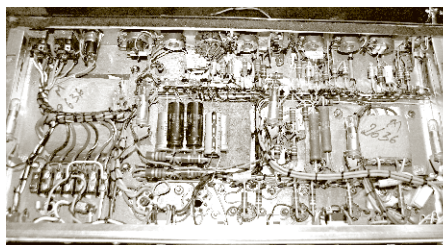
livered their first DC-30 (dual combo) amp for a Guitar Player shootout in 1991, they had no way of knowing if their obsessive component selection would pay off, but pay off it did with a first place ranking among all the boutique amps reviewed, effectively launching the Matchless company. Chief design engineer Mark Sampson soon developed additional models, including the Clubman 35, Spitfire, Tornado, Lightning, Chieftan, Super Chief and Thunderchief. A merger with U.S. Music Corporation occurred in January 1994 ostensibly to provide capital for expanded operations, but this relationship was short-lived, with founder Mark Sampson reacquiring the company in October 1995 where he remained as President and CEO until late 1999. Sampson worked for Bad Cat Amplifiers for several years following the end of Matchless, and went on to create Star Amplifiers. We featured an interview with Sampson and reviews of his Star amplifiers in the May 2007 issue of TQR, and we are revisiting his interview here...



Mark Sampson and Rick Perotta founded Matchless Amplifiers in 1989, initially building prototypes for friends and professional contacts in Southern California. Sampson had

previously been involved in importing and repairing original JMI Vox amps for re-sale, as well as working as an on call repair tech for some of the top recording studios in and around Los Angeles. The fledgling Matchless company received a major shot in the arm from a Guitar Player review in 1991, and the company grew at breakneck speed, adding additional models to the original 30-Series (DC-30, SC-30, HC-30 and 410C-30) such as the Clubman, Chieftan, Lightning, Tornado, and a rare beast that remained a favorite of the late blues player Michael Burks, the 120W Super Chief. In 1998, however, mounting pressures caused by the company's rapid growth and expansion ultimately brought the entire operation crashing down. Sampson went on to design amplifiers for Bad Cat, and in 2004 he began working on a new line of "Star" amplifiers. We spoke with Mark about his original vision for Matchless, and his newest venture with Star Amplifiers. Enjoy...

TQR: What was your original vision for Matchless?

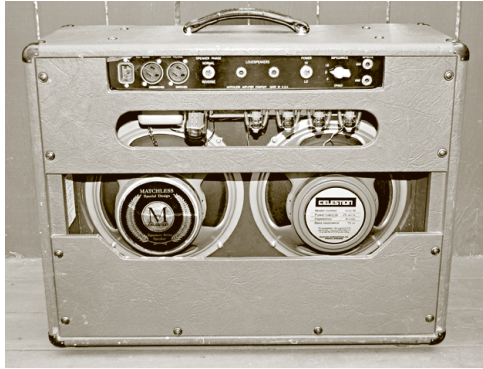


It changed over time, but the initial concept was to make a roadworthy amp that wouldn't

break down. At the time, I was doing a lot of repair work on JMI Vox amps and they were notorious for breaking. You would get one working great and take it out on the road and it would break down again – lots of problems with connectors and sockets and solid core wire... So the idea was to make an amp that could resolve that problem – not an AC30 clone, because I wanted to have a master volume and two channels. I always liked the AC15, but it only had two tone positions. So the primary focus was on building a really durable amp, and as time went on it became obvious that we could make this thing sound great and not break on the road, and these two goals were not mutually exclusive.

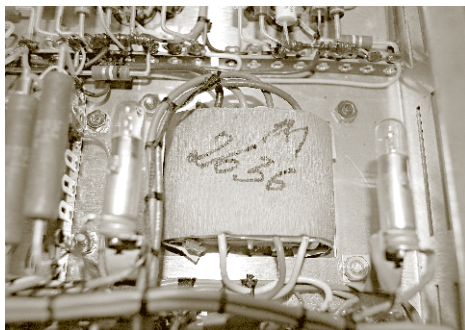
TQR: Were you surprised by the initial response to the Guitar Player review in 1991 that ultimately fueled the rapid growth of Matchless?

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Yeah, that kind of caught us off guard, although we knew the amp sounded great... I was working in

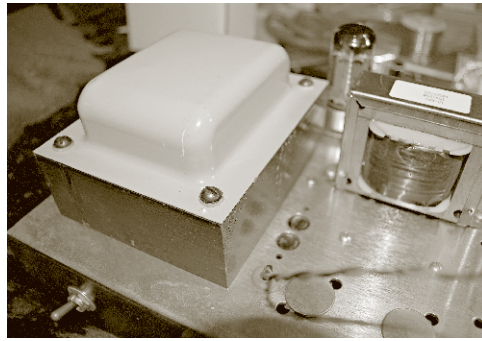
studios in L.A. doing a lot of repair work at the time where I would pick up amps, take them home and repair them, get them sounding great, and bring them back to the studio. So I had an advantage over a lot of other designers because I had the opportunity to hear the work I had done and how an amp actually recorded – how it translated to the recording medium, and how it sounded in a track rather than just listening to it in a room. I got to do a lot of that and it really helped. So we knew the amp sounded good, but we had no anticipation of winning the review in GP – in fact, we almost didn't send them an amp at all. The guy that was helping us with sales at the time insisted on it, and we were thinking, "Why do we want to send an amp to a magazine? We have a bunch of these that need to be built and people want them. The magazine will have it for months and we can't get paid!" But our sales guy wouldn't relent, so we sent an amp and it was six months before the review was published. At the same time, GP was changing their approach to reviews, writing them with no consideration for who was advertising with them. We hadn't spent



a dime on advertising, and I'm sure some of their big advertisers were not happy with our winning review.

Later on, I was able to hear the amps they evaluated in much the same context as the original review, and our amp really did sound the best. We assumed that everyone that sent an amp for that review would have sent the best product possible, spending days selecting tubes, etc. but that wasn't the case at all. Some of the amps didn't even work when they took them out of the box. That really surprised me.

TQR: And then Matchless exploded, and it seems that you rolled out new models in addition to the 30-Series like the Chieftan and Clubman with amazing speed.



It did happen quickly. Prior to the magazine review, we were building maybe one amp a week and

it was kind of a part-time hobby for us rather than a real business. None of us were taking any money out of the company – I'd do the metal work, we'd share in the wiring, we had a guy making the plastic panels and we'd get together at someone's house and put the amps together and I'd take it home and check the tubes. There was no business structure to it – we'd take all the money from the amps we sold and buy more parts. There was no rent, because we were working out of our houses. It's really funny looking back on it now. We spent every penny we had to exhibit at the January 1992 NAMM show, but the review article didn't come out until after the show. Although we took orders at NAMM, we didn't sell a single amp. When the review finally was published, within a week we had to hire someone to answer the phones and literally build a business within a month. 1992 was all growth, in 1993 we were trying to grow and also stabilize, and there was a period of about 16 months where we increased output almost every week. It was really hard, because we had to train people that had no idea what to do, develop systems where there weren't any, and build a business at the same time.

TQR: And remain hands-on... You couldn't simply show people what you wanted done and then walk away assuming it would be done right... People don't realize how complicated building an amp can be. You can't just assume that the work will be done correctly.

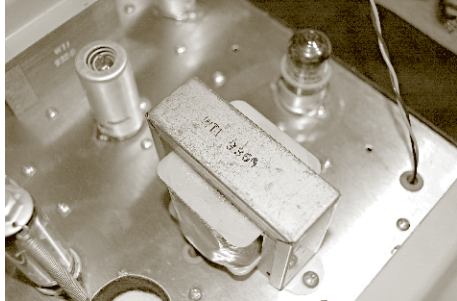
No, because it actually *wouldn't* be done right. But we developed systems to manage that.

TQR: Pull a chassis from an old Matchless and you'll see one of the most labor-intensive designs among all modern amps. There was obviously no way to build them quickly... and everybody looked inside them.

They are labor intensive, and there are no shortcuts building on terminal strips like that. Even turret boards are easier because you can build a lot of it on an open bench rather than working inside the chassis. You also have to develop some skill in making your work look good, creating apparent value to the consumer when they look inside the amp, and they always do look inside.

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TQR: But why overbuild to the extent that you did, and still do? Insulating every capacitor lead, shock mounting tube sockets, backlit control panels... Nobody does that today.



And it is a pain to do... but it truly does last longer. Fender used shock mounted tube sockets in the '50s because they don't

translate microphonics quite as much on the preamp tubes, and that's critical. And with output tubes, when the amp is moved and the tubes are still hot, it can get jarred and a tube will break. You load it up in the van or whatever and the next time you use the amp it doesn't work. Well, the guy playing the amp doesn't blame the tube, he blames the company that built the amp. Shock mounting just works better, so why not do it? You can't do it on a PCB amp, but you can on amps with turret boards, like Marshalls.

TQR: Are you as hands-on with the new company?

Yes, I designed all the amps, I'm here every day, and while I don't play every amp that goes out the door, I play a lot of them.

TQR: You're also a big proponent of Class A amps... can you explain why in terms that guitar players can relate to?

I believe it tends to generate better sounding harmonic distortion (everybody likes harmonics), and it tends to give the amp a spongy, compressed feel, yet you can still control dynamics and the whole of the sound chain. Everybody like to pretend they understand Class A amps, but few do.

The Matchless Brave



We had no recollection of a Matchless amp called the Brave when we saw it listed on eBay, so we contacted Mark Sampson, founder of

Matchless: "That was the entry level model of the series we named with Indian names. We were looking for a model that was an entry level amp but we never really succeeded. We wanted to whittle down some of the parts and labor costs."

TQR: Well, it looks as if you failed. It's still an impressive amplifier with lots of hand work, hand wiring and premium transformers and lots of back lit touches. It looks as if it was just as labor intensive as a DC-30 actually.

Yeah (laughing). It wasn't just me building it although I designed it.

TQR: The chassis is dated and it has the initials RSSR on it.



That's probably the initials of the person who wired it. We only made that amp for a very short time in 1997-98.

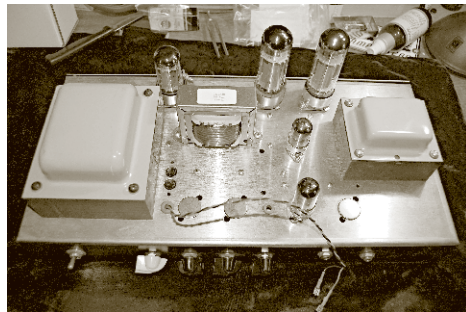
TQR: So what are you doing now?

I do a lot of recording engineering and I work on a lot of recording gear. Usually just a one-off when something is needed or a company needs something specific.

TQR: Well, thanks for shedding a little more light on the Brave. It's a great amp.

Thank you, I'm glad you like it.

And we do like it. A lot...



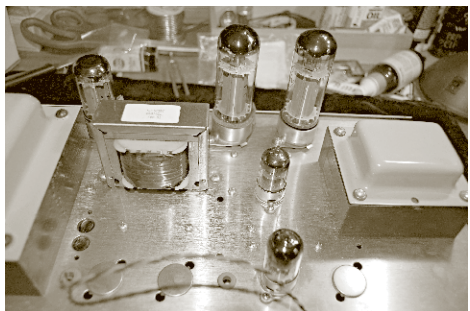
The Matchless Brave is an important piece of history first and foremost. The fact that we had never heard of or

seen one before said a lot. But its the build quality that will really knock you out. This 'budget' Matchless was built to the same exacting standards of the DC-30 using the same quality materials, including cabinet work, components such as caps, resistors, proprietary transformers, back lit lighting, pots and wiring. Clearly, Sampson was not capable or inclined to build a cheaper version of the Matchless. If that was the goal they failed, because the inside of the Brave is no different in terms

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of design and quality components than a DC-30. They used a few fewer tubes in the Brave, and that's where all imagined differences end between this amp and the other Matchless models. We have included pictures of both so you can appreciate the obvious commitment to overbuilt quality evident in the Brave versus the original DC-30. Will we ever see build quality in modern boutique amplifiers equal to Matchless? It's doubtful. The only modern amplifiers we have reviewed that come remotely close are the Magnatones being built in St. Louis by Ted Kornblum and crew.

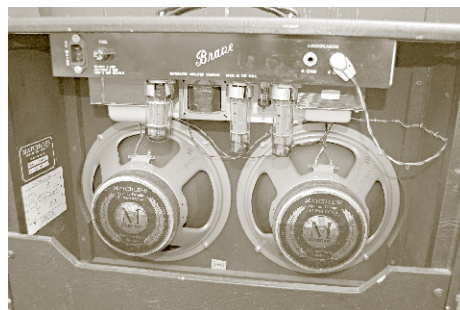
Tube Evaluations



Our amp was originally equipped with a pair of JJ EL34s of undetermined age, two modern 12AX7s and a current production 5AR4 rectifier. None of these tubes revealed signs of significant wear, but you can't always assume that cosmetic appearance is an indicator of quality and tone. Our original tubes were all strong and fairly toneful, but they did not compare to the NOS tubes we acquired from KCA. We bought a new pair of matched NOS EL34s branded RFT from Germany for \$160 including shipping. Measuring 32Ma the RFTs were a definite improvement over the JJs, with a warmer, silkier tone, more depth and bloom than the JJs. We replaced our preamp tubes with a NOS RCA 12AX7 and a Siemens RFT ECC-83. Once gain the tone was improved with more depth and harmonic detail within chords and lead solos. Overall, the NOS tube replacements added more depth, fidelity and harmonic detail than the stock tubes – definitely a move well worth the expense, since unless you will be taking your amp out on a 30-city tour, these tubes will easily outlast you, and the improvement in tone is entirely worth the one-time expense. Trust us, you'll agree should you follow our path to nirvana described here.

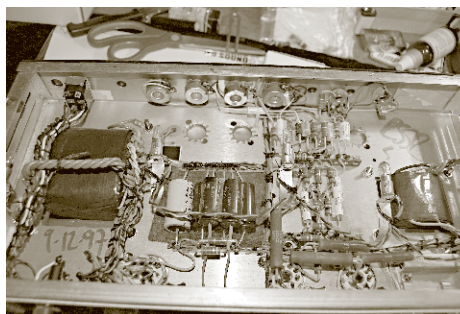
Of course none of this came as a big surprise... Solid NOS or lightly used tubes always outperform modern alternatives in terms of tone and feel, and the RFTs were no exception. The preamp tubes added still more depth and a 3D quality to the tone, and yes, reverting back to the stock tubes would be a big disappointment that wasn't going to happen. If you're going to invest in an amp like the Matchless, why would you not also invest in the best tubes available? A NOS pair of vintage RCAs will cost \$400 today, and we're not suggesting you have to go that far, but the \$168 RFTs are a solid buy

that will give you all the NOS tone you could want at a sensible price.



The Matchless Celestion 12" speakers are perfectly voiced for this amp, rich and amply supplied with

harmonic textures, they are clearly powerful yet capable of conveying the most subtle tones and musical textures. To say the Sampson and Co. really nailed the Celestion speakers in the Brave is an understatement. Unless you are simply interested in saving the original speakers for posterity, there is no reason to consider a speaker swap. If you do need to replace speakers because your original speakers are no longer present, we recommend a pair of Celestions. The Celestion G12H 70th Anniversary speakers would be a good choice.

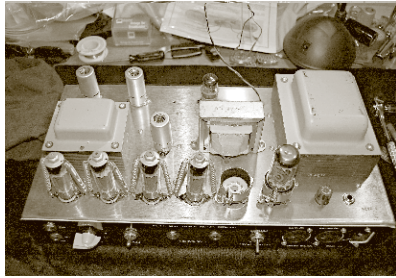


This Brave amp is wholly representative of Matchless quality, tone and workmanship. Twenty

years of use has had no effect whatsoever on the tone of the Brave, which is classic Matchless, otherwise vintage, boutique tone in every regard. The rich fidelity of the Brave defines the term 'boutique' in every way, satisfying with a vivid soundstage throughout the entire frequency range of the amp and dead quiet at idle. The low end bass is solid and satisfying. the mids are perfectly rich and balanced with a sweet treble character on the top. Hit a chord and you're thinking to yourself, "I wouldn't change a thing – this amp sounds perfect." And it does, rich, throaty and pure... so very tubey, you can hear the character of each tube influencing the tone and harmonic character of the amp. "I wouldn't change a thing." The mark of the builder's art is when you can design and build the perfect amplifier. Perfectly voiced with all of our guitars, the Matchless Brave defines the concept of a 'boutique' amplifier, one that has no equal in its ability to produce true head-turning tone. A tone that defies description by comparison, you can't really describe it as belonging to Fender or any other guitar tone. The Matchless is just so vivid, rich and tactile that you are left to simply explore the possibilities and enjoy it. Words are inadequate to express

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what it conveys through music and the guitar.



This is perhaps even more surprising when you consider that the Brave is limited to Volume, Bass, Treble and Master Volume controls.

Maximum distortion is achieved by keeping the Master volume low, yet no matter how much distortion you create the amp sounds clear, solid and toneful without any hint of clipping or dissonant distortion. The Brave simply doesn't have a bad tone in it regardless of volume level, in fact, it is very consistent along its entire power curve. Increase the Master Volume and the amp stays loud and clean with a more subtle overdrive tone that easily equates to the power of a 40 watt amp. Even at such high settings the amp gracefully expands in volume while retaining all the detail, harmonic texture and vivid presence of lower settings. In other words, you won't send this amp into clipping or hear dissonant overdriven tones at any volume level. Like a car that gracefully glides through its complete range of power, the Brave never seems to 'hit the wall' in terms of volume and power, you just run out of room on the two volume controls.

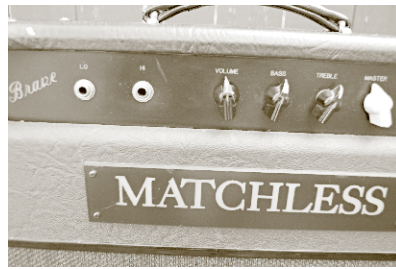


The tone controls work beautifully, increasing or decreasing bass and treble while preserving the beauty of the amp regardless of settings. It's as if the focus of the amp is shifted rather than merely dumping

bass or treble – a much more musical and graceful way too change EQ while maintaining the rich character of the amp at all settings.

The master volume is also very cleverly designed. The Volume control has more gain while the Master Volume increases overall volume. Decrease the Master Volume for more gain and distortion while increasing Volume. For a cleaner, louder voice increase the Master Volume. Both controls are interactive and very useful for dialing in just the right amount of volume and distortion. The Brave is not a gain monster. You can get a great overdriven tone with the volume control, but it isn't an extremely high gain sizzle, but more of a natural overdriven distortion. More than adequate, just not artificially jacked up with that zizzy distortion.

Lo and Hi Inputs produce a clear, clean tone through the LO



input and more volume and optional crunch through the HI input. If you wanted to play a pristine clean passage at moderate volume the LO input delivers.

Clean tones are, well, classic Matchless, with loads of harmonic overtones and depth. These clean tones will spoil you because they are so rich, full and vibrant. Really, this is a trademark of Matchless – vibrant harmonic overtones and depth of field that make your guitar just sound so much fuller and richer. Perhaps that's the secret? A rich, full tone loaded with harmonics set clean with enhanced sustain and even more harmonic overtones played loud and proud. With our guitars there isn't a bad tone in this amp – far, far from it. Just understand that this amplifier is richly endowed with smooth tones at all volume levels draped in beautiful harmonics. In other words, truly classic Matchless tone at 77 lbs.. *Quest forth...to*

Did You Jump Sturdy?



One of our all-time favorite guitars and one we have been playing through the Matchless is the Roadworn Strat we found and acquired last year for \$590. In May of 2014 we shared our past aversion to the Roadworn series of guitars and our unbridled enthusiasm for the *new* roadworn Stratocaster. It's one thing to mangle a guitar in an effort to create the impression of heavy use – Bill Nash has done very well with that concept even though we have

never seen an old Strat that has suffered quite the level of abuse equal to a Nash beater... But the sanding and aging on the Roadworn Strats and Teles were previously wholly unbelievable – amateurish and crude, as if to suggest "I couldn't afford a relic, so I settled for this." It's kinda hard to strut

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your stuff with a really bad parody of an old guitar hanging on your neck, eh? As we said then, as originally conceived, they weren't serious guitars. *But they are now, and if you are in the mood for a perfect Stratocaster for very low dough, it's time to bust a move.* The Roadworn Tele inspired us to look for a 2013 Roadworn Stratocaster.



Our search in early March failed to turn up what we wanted as new stock, so we trolled eBay and found a 2013 Roadworn '50s Strat described by the seller as having been bought a month earlier at Sweetwater, and his son had decided he wanted a Les Paul. Three bids were placed and we sniped it for \$590 – \$300 less than the actual \$899 street price. The Strat arrived the following week and

like our 2013 Roadworn Telecaster, the craftsmanship, fine details, finish, aging and overall appearance were equal to any Custom Shop guitar we have ever owned. Weighing 7.15 lbs., the body is finished in nitro and the neck in urethane. The 2-tone vintage sunburst finish really does do justice to an original '50s Strat, with the subtle alder grain highlighted within the burst. Whatever you may have heard about 'butcher block' bodies from Mexico assembled from glued up pieces of wood covered in a thin veneer, the body of the Roadworn is definitely solid. We have seen original '50s 2-tone bursts at guitar shows that didn't look nearly as good. The 2-piece alder body reveals a perfectly matched and barely visible single center seam – no 3-piece or off-center seams that you may have seen on other 'affordable' sunburst Strats. The slight aging is extremely well done, and far more subtle



and realistic than many of the Custom Shop relics we have owned from the past decade. The hardware is also aged very realistically with none of the chemically induced heavy corrosion that we have bitched about with relics in the past. It appears, at least, that the hardware is being aged by tumbling instead of being chemically treated. Like our Roadworn Tele, the

finish on the back of the neck has been lightly sanded to a matte finish without scraping the finish down to bare wood. The neck shape is a perfectly executed '50s V consistently measuring 13/16" thick with no taper, with a vintage 7.5" fingerboard radius and ample tall fret wire similar to 6105.



You'll note no heavy aging on the fingerboard – like the back of the neck, it has been lightly sanded just enough to take off the gloss, leaving a smooth surface that doesn't feel tacky like a gloss finish. Tone... Let's see... The stock Alnico 5 Tex-Mex pickups capture classic Fender tones played clean, with brilliant treble and mind-altering low end. The crisp and shimmering out-of phase 2 and 4

positions were among the best we have ever heard, the neck pickup is stunning, and the middle is brighter and more complex than most Strat middle pickups – often a weakness. The bridge is bright for sure, but not screechy or brash. This may not be your first choice for heavily overdriven rock where you want a thicker tone, but for cleaner tones and blues they are damn good and absolutely worthy of your attention. We were really quite impressed.



We happened to have a new, high quality USA CRL Centralab 5-way spring-loaded switch on hand so we swapped it for the cheaper, stock 5-way in the Roadworn.

The stock plastic covered wiring is substantial enough, but unfortunately they tightly wrap the wire around the lugs on the 5-way prior to soldering and the lead-free, environmentally PC RoHS solder is a bitch to melt where the three pickup ground wires are soldered to the volume pot. Junking the 5-way switch makes pickup replacement much easier than trying to get the wrapped wire and solder off the lugs. The stock 250K +/- 10% pots are CTS and worth keeping, and you can avoid burning up the volume pot by melting solder on top of the existing solder when removing the pickup ground wires. Not recommended with a low-wattage hardware store soldering iron, however. We also modified the wiring to add a tone control to the bridge pickup. If any

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of the pickups in a Stratocaster need a tone control, it's the bridge, yet adhering to 'vintage' dogma, few Fender production Strats are wired with a tone control for the bridge pickup. It's an easy fix, and in our opinion, essential.

Slider's Classic '57s



The review articles we present here often seem to write themselves. A certain degree of planning is required,

finding and acquiring a guitar and pickups in this case, but as we begin the process of comparative evaluation, the objects themselves seem to tell a story that we could not anticipate in advance. You kinda have an idea how things might stack up, but until you put in the time and effort to intently dig in and listen over several days in multiple sessions, you really don't know. We chose Slider's Classic '57s last reviewed in a Custom Shop Fiesta red Relic Strat in January 2009. Slider has sourced the only authentic '50s covers with those unmistakable rounded curves that we have ever seen, and while we really liked the Classic '57 pickups, the beautiful Fiesta red Strat became suspect the longer we kept it. Oh, it was an outstanding example of a Relic in terms of its classic appearance and appeal, but as we mentioned earlier, in hindsight it was too light, and in combination with the slim tapered neck something essential seemed to be missing. Like a personality...



So Slider's Classic '57s went into the Roadworn Strat with no preconceptions, although as we first observed, when you see those creamy covers, you do get the impres-

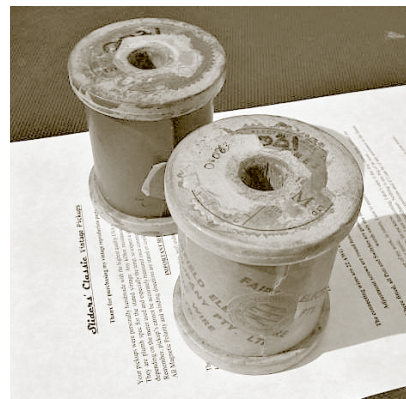
sion that a serious piece of work lurks beneath. Measuring 6.04K/Neck, 5.96K/ Middle, and 6.12K/Bridge, Rod McQueen's Classic '57s are wound with 42 gauge Formvar wire using artfully aged, beveled and staggered Alnico 5 magnets, and the middle pickup is not reverse-wound. We noted

that the middle pickup resistance was lower than the neck, and that the staggered polepieces revealed a slightly different height alignment, so we checked in with Slider, who updated us on what's new with Stratocaster pickups in Melbourne and answered our questions about the Classic '57s ...



Any variation was mainly due to the different batches of AlNiCo, 42g

Fmv-H wire, and very importantly, the individual operator that actually wound a particular set. I am also winding the slightly warmer/fatter '60s set in AlNiCo 2. These have about a 6% overwind compared to the 59/ SRVs so they are more in line with the 62/63 vintage sets and I am using AlNiCo 2 for warmth and fuller mids. I originally made these for an artist friend to help carry through his solo gigs where his guitar and voice are all that's up there, so we needed a full, warm and easily overdriven pickup set that could do everything at reasonable volumes, no icy tone or fear of going for the bridge position! Regarding the resistance and pole stagger in relation to positional placement on the Classic '57s... I vary my placement of a specific pickup within a set dependent on the balance between the resistance (as measured via a Ohm meter) and the actual magnetic gauss or strength and acoustic performance of a given pickup. I generally build my Strat pickups in small batches of 3 sets at a time. Once completed, including my special wax potting, each pickup is



extensively tested and plugged directly into a Class A tube amp and "tap tested." I treat each pickup batch like a chef testing his latest creation, tasting a spoonful and making any final adjustments by taste, feel and

experience. One of the adjustments I do is to select each individual pickup that will go into a specific set. Small variations in measured resistance are one of the least important of my placement parameters. As for pole length, I use an "adjusted" vintage stagger on my production sets which lends some tonal assistance to the lighter B/E strings. I do

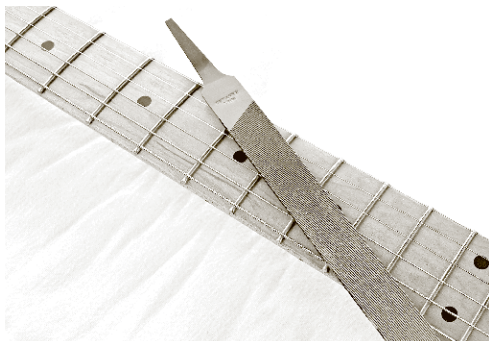
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use a totally vintage correct pole stagger, down to the 1/100" for my "Replique Elite" 100% accurate reproduction sets, which have the low E and even lower A pole you mentioned on the Classic '57 set. A true '54 stagger should also have the lower G pole.



As with the Fender pickups reviewed, we began with clean tones played through our '74 Princeton, '64 Pro with outboard reverb and the '65 Super Beater Reverb, and

the Roadworn Strat painted the room with deep, soulful tones entirely unique to Slider's pickups. We can only say that the tone of the guitar seemed more colorful and alive with rich harmonic overtones and an even deeper voice than what we had thought was deep with the Fender sets. The neck pickup is astonishingly good as only a Stratocaster can be, and for a long while we were happily stuck in a jazzy Jeff Beck groove playing a haunting, slowed down and less busy instrumental version of Blind Faith's "Can't Find My Way Home." The guitar inspired all of that, and we have no idea where it came from. Slider can also be credited for nailing the most difficult trick, which is to produce adequate treble in the 2 and 4 positions. Without it, you get a muffled, indistinct and rather useless tone, but when the treble is there, these two settings can be very cool indeed, as noted in so many of Eric Clapton's slightly tipsy recorded live solos from the '70s. The middle pickup is bright enough to cut, yet rich with mid tones, and one you will use often, clean or dirty. The guitar's bridge pickup is bright, clear and clean with none of the trashy overtones that are often produced by overwound or 'hot' bridge pickups. And again, adding the bridge tone control makes all the difference in moving from a trebly '50s traditional, Eldon Shamblin vibe to a heavier tone suitable for hard rockin.'




We have been playing the Roadworn Strat now for well over a year and it feels as if we have been playing it for years

– as if it had been made for us, perfect in all the ways that so many other Stratocasters had fallen short of what we had wished for, and yes, we have been pondering why... Mostly, it's the neck, although the entire guitar seems to fit us like a custom made suit. For whatever reason, the vintage 7.5" fingerboard radius on a Fender makes all the difference, where a 9.5" radius feels awkward and wrong. The slight curve to the fretboard makes playing seem effortless and easy. The neck shape on the Roadworn is equally righteous – an elegantly conceived moderate V that is neither too thick or thin at 13/16." Just perfect. No less important is the way the urethane lacquer has been sanded to a smooth matte finish that allows your hand and finger tips to glide along the neck with no fight whatsoever. The taller frets are essential, too. String bends are easy with just a little added tension from the curved fretboard, chords seem easier to hold and sustain, and playing this guitar really does feel completely effortless, natural and familiar. The tremolo is also uncannily precise, yet forgiving. It seemed as if we nailed the initial setup almost too easily, setting the trem just right (with a peek at



our picture of Jeff Beck's trem height), and we've been using the tremolo as a beautiful effect now where in the past we left the trem arm in a drawer. And the Roadworn comes right back to pitch every time. Bizarre, almost. In every respect, this Stratocaster simply feels and sounds right with absolutely no 'what ifs' or shortcomings. If not for the tiny Made in Mexico decal on the back of the Roadworn headstock, you couldn't tell the difference between

it and a \$3800 Custom Shop relic. What? You aren't swallowing that? Consider this – all those classic '50s Strats and Teles were largely made by Mexicans, too, like the famous 'TG' neck carver Tadeo Gomez and 'XA', Xavier Armente... It was about time we found a Stratocaster like this, and our advice to you? Set your sights on a Roadworn Stratocaster from 2013-14, and when you find it... Jump Sturdy. 

www.fender.com
www.sliderspickups.com

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Overdrive on the Cheap



We were trolling ebay not too long ago and a T Rex Alberta overdrive caught our attention at a sale price of \$60. That's dirt cheap for a boutique pedal described as, "A slick variant on the vintage Tube Screamer sound, this overdrive shares that classic pedal's simplic-

ity. Note separation is outstanding, as is the creamy crunch, and it cleans up nicely throughout the tonal range thanks to a smooth mid-boost. A cleaner alternative for blues-rockers in love with their little green boxes." That review came from the Music Radar pedal site where the T Rex is rated 30th out of 50 effects. We threw down our \$60 and bought the Alberta just for grins and giggles, and we're still grinning. This is an excellent overdrive with moderate intensity and distortion that sounds really good. It allows the tone of your guitar and amp to come through rather than obscuring the subtle nuances, and the overdriven character is very cool. Just understand that the intensity of this pedal is moderate to allow yer tone to shine through, so don't expect the intensity and attitude of a fuzz with the Alberta. For \$60 its pretty hard to beat, and you should be able to find them in this price range since the Alberta had been updated and revised to include dual overdrive modes now called the. Alberta II dual overdrive: \$279.

Quest forth. [to](#)

THE QUEST FOR TONE WITH...

Delta Moon Guitarist

Mark Johnson

We have known Mark Johnson for a long time now, and he has been playing the guitar in the band known as Delta Moon even longer. He never really stops thinking about playing, even during the four days a week that he is working as a physician at Kaiser Permanente. Mark is a good and conscientious doctor, but his heart was given over to the guitar long ago. He and the band have produced over ten albums and they tour Europe at least twice each year, from Italy to Spain, Germany and France. The entire time we have known Mark



he has remained a hopeless gear freak – guitars, acoustic and electric, effects and amps. We have observed various acquisitions of his and used them as a guide at times, and at other times he has done the same with us. Our jams here are often revealing and thought provoking, prompting deep thought into the art of crafting exceptional guitar tones, and little wonder, since the volume of new and vintage gear we have auditioned together over the years is truly monumental. You can imagine... Mark is a chameleon on the guitar. Where most slide players rely on familiar themes created by familiar players, Mark is a music historian with a deep knowledge of obscure and familiar players of the past. He can easily explain how a certain guitar player held and played the guitar to get unique tone, and he has studied different tunings and techniques as a means of understanding the past. He has done the same with gear, deciphering how certain elusive tones were squeezed from a guitar and amplifier until they become a part of his vocabulary. Thousands of gigs have honed his chops yet he still looks forward to playing every show as much as the last. Trips to Europe are always rewarding because he gets to see people who are very different from the crowds at home react to the music with the same unbridled enthusiasm and zest for life. When you play a gig in Atlanta and then in Germany with the same result, you begin to keenly understand the universal ap-



peal of music and how similar we really are.

I called Mark recently and said, "It's time we told your story the way it deserves to be told. When can you talk? We met for lunch and discussed how we might embark on such a quest, and the next day we

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spoke for the record. *Enjoy...*

TQR: When did you start playing in earnest and what was your first rig?



I started playing around 13 or 14 years old. I grew up in a trailer park near Kent, Ohio. Kent State University was a real

liberal place and was known internationally for its student activism in opposition to the Vietnam War. The Kent State students were shot in 1970 by national guardsmen deployed from Ravenna, Ohio, my home town. So protest, rebellion, and mayhem were in the air and in my young mind, the soundtrack to all that was happening was rock and roll. I wanted to be a part of it. That whole era including Joe Walsh was really important. My dad worked construction all week in Pennsylvania and he would often come home with a box of promotional records from a friend who owned a record store in Pittsburg and it was like Christmas morning. My dad didn't play, but I think he was a musician at heart, and the minute one of us showed any interest in music he was there. I have 3 brothers, so there are four boys and he wanted to keep us busy. My first real guitar and amp... I kinda struck gold right off the bat. My dad bought me a cherry Epiphone 335 and a Princeton Reverb amp. After a year, I traded the Epiphone for an early 70s, all maple Stratocaster with the big headstock and I played that for a long time. I took lessons and just worked on getting it together, and then that guitar was stolen and I bought another all maple one, but it never sounded as good as that first one.

I was playing in bands in high school and I bought a fawn Marshall 50 watt head and 4x12 cabinet. It was the late '70s but it was an early '70s amp and it sounded like God.

TQR: How did your understanding of the guitar begin to shape and change your choice of instruments, amps and effects? Were you paying attention to what players of the past had used?

I always thought the Stratocaster looked the coolest and Eric Clapton played one so I pretty much stuck with that for a long time. When I went to college I sold the Marshall, and I really didn't get back into playing and gear until I moved to Atlanta after seeing Bruce Hampton and the Aquarium Rescue Unit at



the Little 5 Points pub. It was Jeff Sipe on drums, Jimmy Herring on guitar, Oteil on bass, Reverend

Moiser on electric banjo and Hampton playing this crazy 4-string mando guitar. The whole thing just blew my mind and I decided I had to move there. So I moved down and I joined this band called the Rude Northerners that was made up of guys from Minneapolis. We started playing a lot of places like the Beacon Lounge on Sweet Auburn Avenue, where you could only buy beer by the quart. It was loose and crazy and I fell in love with playing music in Atlanta. That's also when I met Dave Tiller when he had his first music store on Cheshire Bridge Road. I bought an early '60s Vibrolux Reverb and that's the amp I used in that band and on into my next band that was called the Crawdads. I also bought a couple of early Fender '63 reissue Fender Stratocasters, and I had an early '60s 335.

TQR: Who were your most significant guitar heroes?



Well, Mick Taylor with the Stones for one, and David Lindley on Jackson Brown's *Runnin' on Empty*. I didn't know that he was using a lapsteel at the time but I learned that song note for note on the bottleneck and it sounded pretty good. I recently heard *Running on Empty* in a gas station on the road and it's still incredible, really the holy grail of slide sounds.

Another early one I learned was Mick Taylor's slide part on The Stone's cover of Robert Johnson's "Love in Vain" on *Get Your Ya's Ya's Out*. I read an article when I was in college about Ry Cooder and I got some of his records like *Into The Purple Valley*. His playing on the soundtrack to the movie, *Johnny Handsome* was real important and really blew my mind. I also heard the *Crossroads* soundtrack and I went out and bought a Telecaster. I learned "Feelin' Bad Blues" note for

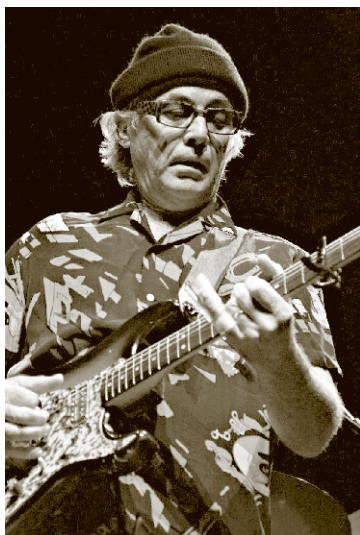
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note. That song and his sound on the sound track to the movie Southern Comfort...that was the sound I was searching for... so swampy! And of course, that's the sound of his Coodercaster. I think the Johnny Hand-

some sound is mostly the from the Teisco gold foil pickup. I actually tried to make a Coodercaster out of one of those '63 re-issues, didn't work. That's the last time I tried really modifying an already perfectly good guitar! Then when I joined the Crawdads, the bass player, Pete Fuller, was really into Little Feat and I hadn't really been exposed to them, somehow I missed it, but Lowell became a big influence, not just his slide playing, but especially his rhythm playing which is really percussive and minimalistic in open A tuning. So good!

TQR: And you were tuning to D and G for the most part?



Yeah, at this point I had abandoned regular tuning completely and was using open D and G. Early on in Delta Moon I used DADGAD a little, but for the most part I'll use D and G. Sometimes I'll capo up to the 5th fret in D tuning, to the key of G, while Tom Gray will be in open G on the steel. Or I will play in the key of C or D, but tuned to open G, no capo. You get cool

chord inversions against the other player and you think and phrase differently. That's another thing I got from Ry Cooder. It keeps things interesting – we call it cross tuning. We work really hard staying out of each other's way and really listening, playing off each other. We are going for intertwining parts with space, one big guitar sound like in the style of early Fleetwood Mack and the way Peter Green and Danny Kerwin put songs together. Listen to Fleetwood Mac Live at the Boston Tea Party Volumes 1 and 2. That's really where we formed

our sound – those records were a big influence.

TQR: Like many of us I would imagine Midtown Music was an important stop... Let's talk about the guitar and amps that you have really leaned on...



Dave's place was one of those incredible brick and mortar music stores and Dave made it really easy to trade. We would just hang out here all afternoon talking gear. I got a 3x10 Custom Shop Vibro-King and it was a great amp but just too loud for me. Then I started reading about Dumble amps which I couldn't afford. I talked to Sonny Landreth at Midtown Music Festival and I wound up buying an early Demeter TGA-2 head and ran that through a Matchless 2x12 cabinet. It had the Matchless signature speakers and it was great. That was heading down the Dumble path, still playing Stratocasters. It wasn't until I found an early Jerry Jones guitar that I departed from the Strat. I also bought a Two-Rock Opal, and it had a great lead sound, so I was using one or the other. But even though it had a great lead, Dumble sound it didn't really fit with the band. I was always into Fred McDowell, but I was getting more and more into R.L. Burnside and Jessie Mae Hemphill and all the other Mississippi Hill Country Blues artists and those amps sounded too good! Too smooth and refined, and not percussive enough. So I bought an early Victoria 3x10 Bandmaster and after about 6 months I



sold it and bought a Victoria 4x10 Bassman and that was a big mistake. The bandmaster was the perfect volume. About that time I walked

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in to Midtown and there was the Balls M18 2x12 amp. I asked Dave what it was and he said it was one of the best sounding amps he had ever heard. I played the shit out of that amp for 5-6 years.

TQR: Meanwhile you were experimenting with other things...

I bought the Divided By 13 amps and they were great sounding amps but at full power they seemed too loud and at half power it wasn't cutting it. I also had a lot of RF problems with the Divided By 13 amps that never got resolved so I eventually sold them. I had a Dr. Z Route 66 – another gorgeous sounding amp but again too squishy. A great lead sound but a lot of those amps just don't cover all the bases for me, I play a lot of rhythm guitar. I also had a Clark Beufort and sometimes I would run those amps together.



The Balls eventually got stolen in Ft. Lauderdale, and Danny Gork was so kind to build me another amp. I eventually got the original Balls back with half the tolex torn off. I still use it.

TQR: What was going on with guitars?

Always a Stratocaster in the mix, but I when bought a Jerry Jones at Clark Music and it eventually became my main guitar, old red. It sat in the closet the first 6 months, then I brought it out one night and Tom's wife Janet really liked it. She got me thinking about that Jerry Jones a lot, it sounded and looked different. I was so used to the scale and feel of the Stratocaster, but I eventually fell in love with the 25" scale, the lipstick pickups, everything. I love Jerry Jones guitars, especially the early ones, when he was tooling his own bridges, before he went to the string though, Strat style bridge. I now have six, two of the double cutaways and four of the single cuts, plus a 12 string mandoguitar. He's not making them anymore so I kinda freaked and grabbed them! They are semi-hollow – a Danelectro made right, really.

TQR: Back to amps...

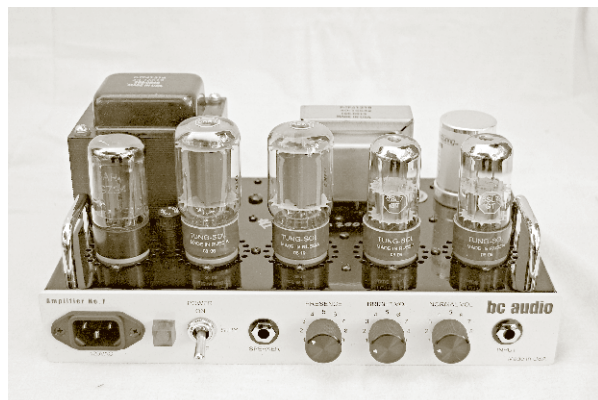
A couple of things happened. We recorded a live video in Athens, where I used the Balls and the Clark together, and I



wound up mixing the Balls completely out. I think I was getting tired of the EL84 sound. The second thing that happened was we did a gig with Damon Fowler at Skippers in

Tampa and he was using a blackface Super and just sounded so good. So I decided to go back to 6L6s and 6V6s again, and that's when I found the Headstrong Vibroverb. It's just a great package – 35 watts, and we still play some venues where we don't mic the amps at all. Tom is using a Fender Vibrolux Custom reissue and those two amps sound perfect together. That's my main amp now, but in smaller clubs or radio, I'll use my Swart Atomic Spacetone. They sound great and I got into those amps by going over to your place and checking them out. They are really hard not to like.

TQR: Now we're leaving out the amp you last took on tour in Europe...



That's my latest addition, The BC Audio Number 7. In the studio I'll use the Gibson GA20, and those larger preamp tubes really make the difference. You turned me on to the BC Audio #7 because you had one that I tried at your house. The interesting thing about the BC Audio amp is it sounds so good as a lead sound but it also has the punch and attack for rhythm. The big thing for me is amps with master volumes just don't work. It has to be the right wattage turned up and then I'll hit it with a Klon or my latest, the Analogman King of Tone, and that's really all I do. I'm also really into the Sacred Steel players, especially the Campbell brothers and I am into Earl Hooker, so I use a wah with the slide. The Jerry

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Jones with a wah into one of these amps and wow – that’s the set up. I’m 53 now and I’ve been playing since high school, and you go through all this stuff, but in a way I’ve come full circle. I also have a Gibson Skylark and a couple of Jeff Bakos amps – the Plus 45 which is a Marshall inspired beast and on this last record I used Jeff’s 8 Ball which is his version of a Gibson Skylark. Whenever we go in the studio I always bring the Skylark, a GA20 and I used the Atomic Spacetone on a couple of songs.



On this last record I used all kinds of stuff. An early 30s National style O, a Supro semi-hollow Ranchero guitar, and a recent custom shop Fender Esquire that is just incredible. I also used a couple of early Rickenbackers – an early B6 lapsteel that I played on, and I have a Rick Spanish-electro that I used. I also used a Kay Custom Craft with a gold foil pickup. I typically don’t use Strats in the studio and all this stuff from under the bed starts coming out. I actually used an Analog Man bicompressor on this record lot. I used an Crucianelli guitar, made in Italy in the 60s, which are also sometimes called Nobels or Imperial and you can still find them in two, three and 4 pickup models. They are really cool, although playing them live would be a problem with feedback.

TQR: It’s really interesting how you have chased your tone.

You are always searching for the holy grail and I’m not sure there is one! You just want something that sounds warm and can be heard, and I guess I’m into the classic American sound. I guess I’m always looking for a sound with an edge – kind of a gorgeous, juke joint sound. It has to have some edge to it.

TQR: You have never really leaned on a Deluxe Reverb very hard.

No, I’ve had them, and I have always liked the tweed Deluxe

but I prefer the Princeton. Your tweed Tremolux... I have an iPhone recording of you playing one of your Juniors through your Tremolux in Charleston and whoah! That’s a sound and I have never forgotten. I’m a big Mike Campbell fan and what’s he using? A Princeton. A tweed deluxe.

TQR: I remember him playing here and he had two big Vox rigs just for looks and a blackface Princeton miked in the back.

TC



I always used the Klon and now I’m using the King of Tone pedal a lot but, sometimes I use an original Way Huge Green Rhino, I got that from studying Campbell. Another great pedal always on my board, the Greer Ghetto stomp which Rick Holmstrom uses. By the way, I think a looper pedal is very useful. I use it for practice at home all the time. The TC Electronics Ditto X2 is the one. I used it live in Colorado with my brother and it was perfect. There is nothing like playing with your brother.

TQR: Well, you and I hear things pretty much the same. You’ve always been very easy to play with.

Thanks. I have always prided myself in being good support player. Listen to how Rick Holmstrom backs Mavis Staple on Live at The Hideout. That’s good guitar playing! [to](#)

www.cjguitartooling.com
deltamoon.com

2015

Gibson Flying V 120

When we told Mark Johnson that we had bought a Flying V for review his response was, “You’re gonna like it- they are the best sounding Gibson in my opinion – I sold a early ‘70s one and regret it.”

Hey, if you don’t have any regrets in the Quest for tone you aren’t trying hard enough. That’s our experience, and failures and misses along the way are always instructive. Fortunately, the new 2015 Flying V cannot be viewed as having a patch

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on its ass compared to any V that came before, including an original '50s model. The 2015 Flying V is simply as good as it gets, and why shouldn't it be? We are simply talking about a healthy slab of mahogany, a mahogany neck, two humbucking pickups, an ABR-1 bridge and stop tailpiece. And if you are weight averse, you'll be glad to know that our Flying V weighs in at a comfy 7lbs. even for a solid mahogany guitar.

We chose the vintage red finish over white, and this

is as good looking a vintage model as there is – a one-piece solid mahogany body beautifully finished in nitrocellulose lacquer with a smooth and even thin gloss. The pointed headstock is painted black on the front with precise Grover tuners, the neck is bound with single ply white binding featuring jumbo fret wire, pearloid dot fret markers and a 120th Anniversary pearl fret marker at the 12th fret. The neck shape is a classic C, not too big or too small – just perfect, really. We installed a set of Pyramid .010-.048 roundwound strings and the guitar needed no additional setup at all with the Pyramids.

We did plan to replace the Burstbucker Pro pickups with a set of Jim Rolph's '58 humbuckers, which required that the 12 pickguard screws be removed. While removing the three volume and tone knobs to remove the plastic around each shaft we cracked the knobs and ordered Gibson replacements on



eBay. In hindsight, we should have used a cloth wrapped around each knob to pull them instead of a flat head screwdriver. No biggie – the Gibson replacement knobs were only \$16.

Mark's comment about the V being the best solidbody Gibson electric seemed right on the mark the more we played the V. The string tension seems to be the most agreeable, less stiff than our Les Pauls and more forgiving. A real easy player... The unique combination of the mahogany V body and lower string tension pro-




duces an exceptionally resonant guitar and a great feel factor, too. The Flying V is an exceptionally forgiving and easy player with a dramatically different feel than any other guitar – again it's the neck shape, string tension and body style that lends itself to easy playing whether seated with no strap or standing strapped on. If you haven't played a Flying V the experience will be shocking. How did you miss this for so long?

The four Vs in our preferred finish available on the Sweetwater site ranged between 7 lbs. and 7.2 lbs. so clearly Gibson is monitoring weight closely for this model, and this is good – the way it should be actually, and *especially* for this model.

We swapped the Burstbuckers for the '58 Rolph set which is an easy swap as long as you pay attention to the original wiring scheme. Some of you are bound to like the original Burstbucker Pro pickups – strong and powerful, they push amps into overdrive quickly with lots of attitude and altitude. They don't sound trashy, just stout with an overdriven tone for hard rockin'.



The Rolph '58s offer a subtle and graceful tone with more headroom before spilling over into overdrive. The bridge is bright and sweet, the middle position perfect for rhythm tones, and the neck warm with just the right amount of attitude and bluster at volume. The V is a very unique sounding guitar, unlike a Les Paul or a 335 with a direct tone yet a woody voice that is very versatile. The sound is 'higher' than a Les Paul, but more direct than a 335. Overall,

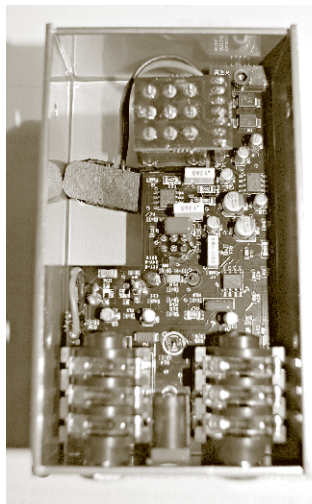
a very usable and alluring direct tone that works equally well for cleaner playing and overdriven lead tones. If you haven't spent much time with a Flying V you may be surprised by how comfortable it is to hold and play. We get it, and this being our first V, we like it a lot. You will, too. Quest forth... 

Rockett Archer



Jay Rockett builds 23 different pedals, many named by Matchless founder Mark Sampson and one by one of our favorite Nashville players, Guthrie Trapp. Experience has revealed Rockett as an entrepreneurial tone freak with a fine ear and a skilled understanding of professional tone. We have always liked his work, and you can test the waters with a high

degree of certainty that Rockett knows what he's doing. In other words, he knows great tone and how to build tools that deliver.



The Archer is Rockett's answer to the vaunted Klon Centaur, no longer made in its original design. Founder Bill Finnegan is building a new Klon, but it is quite different from the original. Why you would depart from a classic design that now sells for over \$1,000 a unit escapes us, but Bill has always been a finicky guy... As Rockett explained to us, when the original Klon was discontinued he figured it was

fair game to work on a viable, accurate (and \$179) alternative. That got your attention, didn't it?

The Archer is a much smaller and more compact alternative to a vintage Klon, easily one third the size of the original, which is not a bad thing. Like the original, output, gain and treble controls are all you need to fully exploit the full range of this excellent effect. For cleaner overdriven tones, use the Output control with the gain set lower at around 9 o'clock. This is where the similarity to the Klon is evident. Increasing the Gain control increases Gain, sustain and distortion. The Treble control does just that and it does so nicely. You can get a great, barely broken up fat sound with the Output control, or a more distorted and intense sound using the Gain control. This is a


very versatile and toneful effect that does a nice job of emulating the original Klon, while delivering a more intense overdriven tone as well, and it's all good. Highly recommended for its versatility and smooth and musical overdriven tones.

Headstrong Verbovibe



The Headstrong is their version of the 2x12 vintage Vibroverb, and it has become one of Mark Johnson's main performance amps for the past two years.

At 35 watts the volume is right, the clean/dirty paradigm is on the money and this is a perfect performance amp for clubs. The tone of this amp is cleaner than dirty, with breakup occurring after 6 o'clock on the volume control. The reverb and tremolo are both excellent, musical and pleasing, and the tone controls do a nice job of shifting bass and treble emphasis as needed. The stock Eminence Legend 10" speakers are also very good, balanced with just the right amount of warmth, mids and Fendery treble tones. Overall, this amp does a nice job of emulating the Vibrolux Reverb's versatility and toneful voice.

Fender players will really like the tone and moderate distortion characteristics of the Headstrong Verbovibe. It brings out the best in your guitars at all settings including wide open, with sweet sustain and overdriven tones that retain the character of your guitar. Weight is moderate, and this is an amp made for these times in terms of power, tone and portability. No wonder Mark bought two Verbovibes... Built from traditional clear pine, this dual 6L6 amp embodies everything there is to love about a traditional Fender amplifier except the repair bills. Outstanding in every way, the Verbovibe deserves our highest recommendation. Quest forth... 

www.headstrongamps.com 510-898-8123 Asheville, NC

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Don't miss your opportunity to save 10% on selected products offered by members of your ToneQuest Resource Directory!

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TQR Directory News! Check out Wampler Pedals and updates from Carr Amplifiers, Visual Sound, Toneman Don Butler and more!

AllParts: Top players and guitar builders rely on Allparts for the right guitar and bass parts they need, in stock and ready to ship. AllParts offers a complete range of finished and unfinished guitar bodies in a variety of premium tone woods, including alder and swamp ash, with optional highly figured maple tops. Finishes include all of the most popular vintage colors, including see-through blonde! Premium necks are also available with maple, rosewood, and ebony fingerboards in a variety of neck shape profiles, with or without binding. Custom design your next guitar with AllParts, including tailpieces, tuning keys, bridges, nuts and saddles, pickups, pickguards (that really fit), knobs, hardware, and electronics for many popular models. Bass players and lefties can also find the parts they need at AllParts! You can also rely on Allparts for hard to find parts, along with vacuum tubes and amplifier hardware.

AllParts, Houston, TX
www.allparts.com 713-466-6414

Analogman TQR readers are invited to save \$25 on the Surface NKT with Sundial Fuzz, or receive free shipping on all handmade Analog Man brand pedals, Foxrox, Teese wahs, and the PedalPower2: Mike Piera is one of the premier guitar effects dealers and manufacturers serving professional players worldwide. Analogman is unique, since it manufactures, modifies, buys, sells, and repairs vintage and new guitar effects. Specializing in vintage and high-end effects, you won't find cheap Taiwanese "happy meal" style, toy effects there. Analogman is dedicated to helping you successfully pursue your quest for tone, and every customer is treated as a pro-

spective friend. Analogman can meet all your effects needs, including: Buying and selling vintage, new, and custom built effects, and modifying pedals to sound and function better. A full repair service, including referrals to specialists. Creating the best new effects with vintage values, schematics, and original owner's manual copies. FREE help with effects problems by e-mail or in our Web Forum, plus professional consultation and technical services. Analogman specializes in pedal modifications for the Ibanez and Maxon Tube Screamers and several Boss pedals (SD-1, DS-1, BD-2, DD5, etc). They also modify Fuzzfaces to vintage germanium specs. Analogman hand-built pedals include the Clone chorus, Compressors, and Sun Face fuzz pedals. There are 3 versions of the Compressors available, based on the Ross style and/or the Orange Squeezer style of compression. Other hand-made pedals available from Analog Man include the FOXROX Captain Coconut and TZF flanger, Teese RMC wahs, Z Vex, Black Cat, Tubester, Ultravibe, Pedaltrain and George L cables. Jim Weider recently collaborated with Mike on the King Of Tone overdrive pedal, which is being introduced in December 2003! Please check the web site for more information, and e-mail if possible. If you must call, please mention ToneQuest and they'll make time to help you.

Analog Man, Bethel, CT
www.analogman.com 203-778-6658

Callaham Vintage Guitars & Amps New from Callaham! Check out the new billet steel ABR-1 style 'tune-o-matic' bridge: Bill Callaham is a builder of exceptional electric guitars that exceed the original quality, tone, and beauty of the vintage models that inspire his work. "Better than vintage" is an apt description for the Callaham "S" and "T" model electric guitars that feature premium lightweight ash and alder bodies, custom hand-shaped rock maple necks, and cryogenically treated Lindy Fralin pickups specially wound to Callaham's specifications for true vintage tone. Bill also offers cryogenically treated, pre-wired vintage pick guards for Strat style guitars, and his exclusive formula for cold-rolled steel alloy tremolo blocks continue

to delight players around the world with improved resonance and sustain. Callaham vintage saddles also improve sustain while minimizing string fatigue and breaks. Additional Strat parts include stainless steel trem arms, string ferrules, bridge plates and mounting screws, and string retainers. Attention Tele Players! Callaham now offers a complete line of custom Tele parts. Please visit their web site for information on pre-wired control plates with premium pots, capacitors, and cloth-covered wire, specially wound and cryogenically treated Fralin vintage Tele pickups, compensated brass bridge saddles, bridge plates, knobs, jacks, tuners and string trees! The only thing better than Callaham parts is a Callaham guitar. We said that, and you can take it to the bank.

Callaham Guitars, Winchester, VA
www.callahamguitars.com 540-678-4043

Carr Amplifiers Check out the ALL NEW Carr Artemus! The is a single-channel 30-watt combo featuring a 15-watt setting, four EL-84 power tubes, three knobs (Volume, Bass, Treble), two mini-toggle switches (Mid, Edge), and an Eminence Red, White, and Blues speaker.

The Artemus offers a wide range of tones from the crunch of Classic AC style British amps to the glassy mid-scooped blackface sound. The asymmetrical, open-sided, Howard Roark-inspired cabinet design measures 24.25" wide by 17.75" tall by 9" deep, top to bottom.

Carr Amplifiers is a small company located in downtown Pittsboro, NC. With six dedicated full-time craftsmen Carr Amps kicks out some of the most well-made, professional and dimensional-sounding tools a guitarist can have, whether that means onstage or in the bedroom. All Carr models are:

- 1) hand-wired using true point-to-point construction.
- 2) loaded with premium electronic components, i.e., Solen capacitors.
- 3) equipped with cabinets made from local NC yellow pine using dove-tailed joints for tank-like sturdiness.
- 4) issued a lifetime warranty for the original owner.

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Resource Directory

5) made by Americans at a fair wage.

Carr Amps is one of the few (if not the only) amp manufacturer to make all its cabinets in-house. The intense quality control afforded by this alone has not been lost on the thousands of players who've bought and kept their Carr amp over the years, as well as those to come.

Do you want to stop buying amps that have no tone? Do you want to stop worrying about your tone altogether? Construction, playability, portability, lush tone, high-quality customer service, lifetime warranty for the original owner--Carr Amps has all that taken care of for you.

Carr amps are professional tools and works of art that will inspire you for a lifetime. Check out the many stellar reviews and dealer locations for Carr amps at their web site, and contact the boys at Carr for more information about which Carr model is best for you.

Carr Amplifiers, Pittsboro, NC
www.carramps.com 919-545-0747

Celestion Ltd. Nobody knows more than Celestion about guitar loudspeaker design and manufacture. Think of your all-time favourite guitar riffs and solos, chances are, they were played through Celestion guitar loudspeakers. For the last fifty years - since the birth of the Celestion Blue (the first ever purpose-built guitar loudspeaker) - our magical mix of metal paper and magnets has formed an essential part of the sound of guitar music.

Some of the greatest speakers available today are part of the Celestion Classic Series. Over the years, we've applied our design expertise to build a range of speakers that will give you classic Celestion tone, no matter what style you play. The Alnico Series and the Heritage Series, both hand-built in Ipswich, England, are the result of meticulous attention to detail, created for those who are absolutely dedicated to the pursuit of true Vintage tone.

For high-volume OEMs, Celestion Originals represent outstanding value for money. We have the specialist experience coupled with the most advanced, high-volume manufacturing techniques to

deliver Celestion tone, quality and brand appeal at extremely competitive prices.

Celestion International Ltd
www.celestion.com

For OEM Enquiries, contact Andy Farrow
at Celestion America, 732-683-2356

For all enquiries, contact John Sanchez
at Celestion America, 732-683-2356,
sales@celestion.com.

Collings Guitars: Bill Collings' story provides a classic example of what can be achieved with an engineer's brain, a machinists' hand and an experienced repairman's eye. After dropping out of medical school in Ohio to work in a machine shop, Collings moved to Texas in the mid 1970's where the experience he gained repairing and restoring guitars guided his design of the first Collings guitars. His understanding of the flaws and shortcomings found in production instruments was instructive, and he set out to eliminate those shortcomings with the very first Collings guitars

Today, Collings has 50 full-time employees working in a new, 22,000 square foot, state-of-the-art facility, and Bill Collings remains hands-on, building all the tooling used throughout the shop and personally working on guitars at his bench whenever time permits. As the business has grown and processes refined, there is one thing that has not changed...Bill Collings' commitment to building the finest handmade acoustic steel string instruments in the world.

Collings instruments have grown to include 32 different acoustic guitar models including the famed dreadnought and OM models, seven award-winning mandolin models in both lacquer and varnish finishes, three archtop guitars, and a new line of seven electric instruments crafted to inspire rock, blues, jazz, country, and your music, too.

Bill Collings work is respected by professional and amateur musicians alike... anyone on the quest for quality. Some of these include artists: Keith Richards, Lyle Lovett, Pete Townshend, Emmylou Harris, Andy Summers, David Crosby, Chris Hillman, Joni Mitchell, Don Felder, John Sebastian, Lou Reed, John Fogerty, Tim O'Brien, Pete Huttlinger, Kenny

Smith, Brian May, Joan Baez, John Prine, Nigel Tufnel of Spinal Tap, and Steven Spielberg to name a few. We invite you to play a Collings today.

For more information on the complete line of Collings instruments and dealer locations, please visit our web site.

Collings Guitars, Austin Texas
www.collingsguitars.com, 512-288-7776

Dave's Guitar Shop: Dave's Guitar Shop offers guitars by Fender, Gibson, PRS, National, Taylor, Gretsch, Ernie Ball, Rickenbacker, Martin, Santa Cruz, Suhr, Collings, Tom Anderson and many other fine new and used instruments, plus new and used amplifiers such as Fender, Line 6, Matchless, Victoria, Bad Cat, and Dr. Z, plus hundreds of guitar effects, and aftermarket pickups from Joe Barden, Seymour Duncan, and more. Due to their inventory of over 1,000 guitars, amps, and accessories, Dave's is an excellent resource for top of the line Custom Shop and Historic reissues, to intermediate new and used gear. Unlike some dealers' out of date stock lists on the web and in print, Dave's inventory is updated daily. The selection of new and used instruments is truly exceptional, and you can often select among several models of the same new guitars to find that special instrument that was meant for you. Dave's staff is friendly and extremely knowledgeable about the instruments and gear that they sell, because they are players, too. Please check the web site for current inventory, and you are welcome to call for more information or an accurate, in-hand description.

Dave's Guitar Shop, LaCrosse, WI
www.davesguitar.com 608-785-7704

The Echopark Guitar, Los Angeles

Echopark Guitars are uniquely designed, handcrafted instruments that vividly reveal the vision, skill and experience of master luthier Gabriel Currie. Following the storied tradition of luthiers who have collectively defined the modern electric guitar, Gabriel has attracted a loyal following in the American boutique guitar market among some of the most discerning and influential artists today.

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Resource Directory

Dedicated to preserving and enhancing the tradition and culture of American craftsmanship, Echopark Guitars offers a definitive line of custom instruments ranging from the revered Clarence models, to the Downtowner family and the Ghetto Bird. Cut, carved, shaped and crafted by hand, there are no limits to Gabriel's exceptional creativity. Each piece of wood is hand selected from private reserves for the most stable, consistent and toneful blend for each specific model. Currie also supports and works with custom pickup winders such as Curtis Novak, Arcane Pickups and Jerry Amalfitano in creating a dynamic voice and personality that clearly set Echopark guitars apart as both works of art and exceptional musical instruments. The highest quality accessories and electronics only work to enhance the individual characteristics of each guitar. From the tree to the stage, in the studio or as part of a coveted collection, Echopark heirloom guitars represent Currie's lifelong passion and respect for handcrafted quality in the quest for pure, unchained tone. For detailed information on the 13 Echopark models currently offered, options and to view our image gallery, visit our web site at:

www.echoparkguitars.com
626-536-3317

Eminence is proud to present the Patriot and Redcoat series of guitar speakers. Incorporating both British and American cone technology into speakers that we manufacture in the USA gives us the ability to provide you with virtually any tone you desire. Be it British or American, clean or dirty, big bass or screaming highs, we have a speaker that will allow you to "Pick Your Sound." Choose from one of seventeen new models! Eminence has been building speakers to custom specifications for nearly every major manufacturer of guitar amplifier and sound reinforcement products since 1967. Their new Legend Series of guitar speakers captures the essence of the vintage American and British speaker designs that are held in such high regard today by so many discerning players. The Legend Series includes classic British and American designs for 6," 8," 10," 12," and 15" speakers utilizing ceramic and AlNiCo magnets, British or American cones, and Kapton polyamide voice coils for superior heat dissipation and durability. Best of all, because Eminence has

been successfully competing for years with other speaker manufacturers as an OEM supplier, the Legend Series speakers are priced far below those of many other popular manufacturers of "reissue" and custom speakers. The Eminence Legend Series delivers all of the tone and durability you need, at a lower price, with no compromises in quality. To locate genuine Eminence dealers in your area, please visit their web site or call Eminence Speakers.

Eminence Speaker LLC, Eminence, KY
www.eminence.com 502-845-5622
Contact: Chris Rose

Evidence Audio: was founded in 1997 by Tony Farinella to supply the MI and Studio community with performance-based cables at reasonable prices. The most well-known cable is the Lyric HG (High Gain) guitar cable. Readers of Guitar Player Magazine voted the Lyric HG as "Best Accessory of 2004" supporting the opinion drawn by editors of magazines from around the world.

In simple terms, cables from Evidence Audio are built different; as a result, they sound different. The Lyric HG features two solid core high grade IGL copper conductors and a braided shield that is grounded at the amp end only. This is the correct way to "drain" spurious noise. By using solid core conductors strand interference is eliminated as well. Designed to be neutral and honest, the cables don't actually "improve" your tone, they simply replace a cable in your signal path which was likely destroying it. What you hear is a tighter more muscular bottom end, a clearer more complex mid-range and a sweeter more detailed high end. Dynamics and harmonics are improved and sustain is no longer masked. Overall the guitar becomes more three-dimensional sounding, cuts through clearer and at the same time takes up less space in the mix.

The Siren Speaker Cable and The Source AC Power Cable compliment the Lyric HG. They offer a solution to distortions cause by cables in other areas of the signal path and power supply. The effects of the speaker and power cable are consistent with that of the Lyric HG: you hear the guitar and amplifier, not the cables. While not inexpensive, cables from

Evidence Audio are still one of the most cost effective ways of improving your tone. It's like changing pickups or a bridge – a small detail with big results. Please visit the Evidence Audio website to locate a dealer near you and demand a demo!

Audionova Inc., <http://www.audionova.ca>
514-631-5787 ext. 22

Fishman: Widely recognized as the premier designer and manufacturer of acoustic amplification products, Fishman is committed to making acoustic musicians heard while faithfully maintaining their own natural tone, for the best possible sound.

The Fishman product line began with the BP-100 acoustic bass pickup, originally developed to meet founder and president Larry Fishman's own jazz performance needs. With a track record of quality engineering, reliability, functional simplicity and - most importantly - the natural tone it enables, Fishman firmly established a reputation of excellence that consumers have come to expect from the brand.

For acoustic guitar, Fishman offers the flagship Acoustic Matrix Series active pickup system, the Rare Earth Series active magnetic soundhole pickups, and the Neo-D magnetic soundhole pickup, as well as passive undersaddle, classical, archtop, and resophonic guitar pickups. Fishman's new Ellipse series combines the Acoustic Matrix pickup with our industry leading preamp design. Designed to fit in the guitar's soundhole, the Ellipse system provides volume and tone control at your fingertips and easily installs without any modification to your instrument.

Fishman pickups are also available for banjo, mandolin, harp/piano, violin, viola, cello and acoustic bass. In addition, the Concertmaster amplification system for violin and the Full Circle upright bass pickup offer two elegant and cutting-edge string amplification solutions.

Utilizing cutting-edge Acoustic Sound Imaging technology, Aura features the most innovative acoustic amplification technology available today. This stompbox-sized unit captures your instrument's true acoustic sound with stunning, studio microphone quality. Anytime, anywhere.

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Resource Directory

Aura eliminates the boundaries of conventional acoustic amplification and gives the most natural, realistic amplified acoustic instrument sound available - both on stage and in the studio.

Joining the award-winning Loudbox and Loudbox Pro acoustic instrument amplifiers, the new Loudbox Performer completes Fishman's popular, highly-acclaimed family of acoustic amplifiers and represents the size, power and features that musicians demand. Setting a new standard in acoustic amplifiers, the Loudbox series feature a powerful tri-amped system that delivers sweet highs and undistorted lows-even at tremendous volumes.

As Fishman celebrates its 25th year as the leader in acoustic amplification, the company continues to redefine the benchmark of acoustic sound. For more information, please visit:
www.fishman.com.

Fishman Transducers Inc.
Wilmington, MA
978-988-9199

GHS – The String Specialists Who plays GHS strings: Artists as diverse as Eric Johnson, Martin Barre, Charlie Sexton, Will Ray, Warren Haynes, Tom Morello, Ritchie Sambora, Steve Howe, Brent Mason, Junior Brown, Zakk Wylde, Tommy Castro, Rene' Martinez and TQR advisory board member and AC30/Telecaster stud Mr. James Pennebaker, to name just a few! GHS has been manufacturing guitar strings since 1964, and whatever your musical tastes, GHS has the right string for you. You're invited to try a set of GHS classic Boomers, brilliant Nickel Rockers, Burnished Nickel strings for a warm, vintage tone, Compound Nickel strings for electric arch tops, and the recently introduced Infinity Bronze coated acoustic strings for extended tone and brilliance. All GHS strings are available in a wide range of gauges to appeal to every player. Refer to the GHS "Brightness Bar" found on select packages of strings and at our web site. It's your guide to determining which strings will produce the specific range of tone you're seeking.

Please check out the all new GHS web site at www.ghsstrings.com for expert

information about GHS strings, including technical documentation on the entire GHS line of strings for fretted instruments, tech tips, string tension calculations, the "Brightness Bar," and a comprehensive list of the top artists who play GHS strings. All GHS strings are manufactured to continually exceed your expectations.

GHS String Corporation
Battle Creek, MI
www.ghsstrings.com
1-800-388-4447

Jescar Fretwire Securely pressed into the fingerboard, the fret wire is the gateway between the musician and the instrument. It is one of the most critical components in the playing quality of the guitar. The interaction between the strings and frets determines the feel of the neck as much as the neck contour, fingerboard material, or finish.

There are many different fret wire profiles available, from small to large, low to high, narrow to wide, oval to round to triangular, all affecting the playing characteristics and feel of the instrument. Brass frets from days past have given way to today's standard material, 18% nickel silver, also called "German Silver." Our highly refined nickel silver consists of 62% copper, 18% nickel and 20% zinc. But even with 18% nickel silver, there are differences in hardness, tensile strength, surface quality, grain size, and other metallurgical properties that influence a fret's quality, performance and feel.

Beyond 18% nickel silver, new alloys have been employed in the production of modern fret wire that dramatically improves the performance and aesthetics of the guitar. Our stainless steel, with its greater hardness and tighter grain structure has much higher wear resistance for greater fret life. In addition, string bending is much smoother without the friction or grinding felt with traditional fret material. We have selected a stainless steel alloy that provides the best combination of fret life and installation ease. Most fretwire is manufactured in coils for ease of installation. Our FW39040 and FW37053 are only offered in 24" straight lengths to prevent twisting if coiled. Pricing is based on orders of one pound minimum quantity per size, plus shipping

via UPS, FedEx, or USPS. Gold colored EVO wire is available on selected sizes only. Individual frets cut to size, straight cut or cut and notched tangs, are available upon request. Minimum order quantity for pre-cut frets is 2000 pieces.

CAUTION: Jescar Fretwire will improve the tone and playability of your guitar.

www.jescar.com
877-453-7227

Just Strings.com: Now more than ever, guitarists are reaping the benefits of technical innovations in string making that have led to the widest selection of guitar strings ever available. JustStrings.com is dedicated to providing guitarists with the largest selection of acoustic, roundwound, and flatwound strings, complimented by exceptional personalized service and outstanding value. Trying different types of strings often results in amazing new discoveries that not only improve the sound of your instrument, but dramatically enhance your playing enjoyment. From traditional hand-crafted strings to high-tech exotics, **JustStrings.com exists to help you get the most out of your instrument. Try a new set today, or order your favorite acoustic or electric sets and SAVE!** Juststrings.com offers the best prices on all of the major and specialty brands, promptly delivered to your door. Shop online at JustStrings.com, or place your order by fax at 603-889-7026 or telephone at 603-889-2664..

JustStrings.com, Nashua, NH
www.juststrings.com info@juststrings.com

Keeley Electronics – Check out the new Keeley Katana Preamp! ToneQuest subscribers receive 10% off on all pedal mods and the Keeley Comp, Java Boost and Time Machine boost: Keeley Electronics recently won a Guitar Player Reader's Choice Award and Keeley is now the exclusive distributor for Framptone! Robert Keeley's Time Machine Boost, Keeley Compressor, and his custom, state-of-the-art modifications for vintage pedals continue to receive rave reviews from guitarists around the world. Keeley pedals are used by Aerosmith, Abbey Road Studios, Steve Vai, legendary producer Bob Rock, George Lynch, Peter Frampton, James Burton, and many, many

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Resource Directory

more guitarists and music pros around the world. The Time Machine Boost is a versatile 2 channel, 3 mode pre-amplifier designed to drive your amplifiers into overdrive or saturation. The two channels are labeled “Vintage,” and “Modern,” with the “Vintage” side inspired by rare germanium boosts like the Dallas Rangemaster. The “Modern” channel is a new +23dB gain, dual JFET transparent signal amplifier. The Keeley Compressor is a superb audiophile and studio grade compressor with true bypass switching and premium metal film resistors and capacitors for the cleanest Ross clone compressor ever available. Available with a standard Ibanez/Boss style adapter jack and/or battery power, you can say good-bye to that old red Dyna Comp!

Robert Keeley pedal mods include 2 versions for TS9’s – the TS808 mod, and the “Baked TS9” for searing hot Tube Screamer tone. Keeley uses the original TI RC4558P chip that appeared in the early TS808’s, while increasing the bass response and overdrive range. The result is a perfectly voiced 808 that’s cleaner when turned down and produces twice the drive/gain when turned up, with all of the stock 808 character in the middle. The Keeley modded BD-2 is not a fuzz pedal but has the best characteristics of a fuzz pedal, and it’s much smoother and more realistic sounding. Other exclusive Keeley modifications include the Boss Blues Driver BD-2 Tube Mod, the PHAT Switch BD-2 Mod, Rat Mods, Boss DS-1 Seeing Eye Mod, Boss SD-1, and Boss Chorus CE-2. For detailed specs, user comments, dealer information, sound clips, and ordering information, please visit the Keeley Electronics website.

*Keeley Electronics, Edmond, OK
405-260-1385, www.robertkeele.com*

Koch Guitar Amplification: was founded in 1988 by Dolf Koch in the Netherlands and are known worldwide as a manufacturer of high end boutique guitar amplifiers. They have many models for all styles of music from the new 20W Class “A” Studiotone combo to the 120W Powertone II head.

All amps are channel switching with two or three extremely versatile channels. They are recognized for having both sparkling clean channels and wide ranging

drive/gain channels. They were the first to utilize trim pots on their heavy duty circuit boards enabling anyone to adjust bias with only a screwdriver and voltmeter. Speaker damping switches which when toggled from high to low alter the tone to a more scooped sound. Rhythm volume switch on the footswitch (included) which when engaged drops the level to a pre-determined “Rhythm” level. It’s the opposite of a boost and does not alter the lead tone as a result. It so useful guitar players tell us that they’re surprised that no has done this before. All amps have Accutronics reverbs and Koch designed speakers that have a sweeter more extended high end. These speakers also handle more power and have a better bass response than almost any guitar speakers available. They are an integral component to the KOCH sound.

Other products include the Loadbox which attenuates a tube amplifiers output without destroying its tone, i.e. no huge loss of high frequencies. The Pedaltone is a semi-four channel, foot operated preamp which has four 12AX7 preamps tubes. One of these tubes acts as a .5W power tube! It has many patch points and output options for almost any application.

Some famous people that use Koch are: Paul Reed Smith, Al Di Meola, Randy Bachman, Buzz Feiten, and Jimmy Bruno to name a few. KOCH also manufactures the 300W EDEN VT300 all bass head and the 200W Sadowsky SA200 bass head on an OEM basis.

*Audionova Inc.
www.audionova.ca/
514-631-5787 ext. 22*

Lollar Custom Guitars & Pickups:

According to Jason, he never really set out to become a custom pickup designer and builder. Jason Lollar is a guitar builder on Vashon Island, Washington (near Seattle) who originally began building pickups for his own guitars and a few friends when he couldn’t find the tone he was after. The word spread, and now Jason custom builds over 30 different pickups, including Strat, Tele, humbuckers, P90’s, custom steels and Charlie Christian-style pickups, all personally designed and wound by Jason. He is especially well known for his P90, Imperial Humbucker and Tele replacement pick-

ups, but he has also designed pickups for many unusual applications.

Recently, Jason was acknowledged by gonzo pedal steel player Robert Randolph for having wound the pickups in his two custom Fessenden pedal steels. And the list doesn’t end there – Jason has wound pickups for guitar greats such as Billy F Gibbons, Peter Stroud, Kevin Russel, Rick Vito, Elliot Easton, Duke Robillard, and the Beastly Boys, among others.

Jason is always happy to personally consult with his clients via phone and e-mail to determine the pickups that are right for each player, and TQR recommends Lollar pickups without exception. His Lollar Special Strat pickups are standard equipment in our custom built ToneQuest guitars.

Call Jason or check out all the options available on his web site.

www.lollarguitars.com
206-463-9838

Mercury Magnetics: The basis of every tube amp’s characteristic sound is the unique design of its transformers. Mercury transformers are legendary for their stunning tonal superiority, build quality, consistency, and reliability. We believe in old-world customer service and single-minded focus. Transformers are our only business, allowing us to concentrate on providing you with the best-sounding guitar amplifier trannies in the world.

If your amp is suffering from bland and unexciting tone, then it’s time for a transformer upgrade or repair. Here are your options:

ToneClone™: Best-of-Breed Series Transformers: Behind every great-sounding vintage guitar amp is a piece of transformer history. Within any amp line there are usually a large number of transformer variations, inconsistencies and just plain ol’ building errors that affect their sound (good or bad). At Mercury, we seek out, study, blueprint and replicate only the best-of-breed transformer designs (including their all-important anomalies) and add these discoveries to our catalog. And we make these incredible tonal selections available to you through our ToneClone™ line.

Axiom® Series Next-Gen Transformers: Next-generation guitar amplifier trans-

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formers. The Axiom series are in a class by themselves. We've taken our advanced knowledge of modern transformer design and mated it with historically best-sounding designs of the past. Axiom trannys are hybrids that take vintage tone to the next level! More bloom, more overtone color, and awesome tonal depth. If you ever needed convincing as to how outstanding transformers affect your sound, Axiom trannys will astonish you.

Mercury Vintage™ Transformer Service:

Most vintage transformers have already outlived or are nearing the end of their life expectancies. That's the bad news – now for the good... Mercury will restore, rebuild or rewind your valuable original transformers. Or, we can clone your originals so that you can continue to play your old amp without fear of further "wear and tear."

Free Transformer Testing And Evaluation Service:

Do you think there might be something wrong with your transformer? Send it to us. We'll test it in our lab and report back to you. Our evaluation procedures are thorough, complete and reliable, and always free. The only transformers that come with a 10-year Manufacturer's Warrantee and a Money-Back Tonal Guarantee. Made entirely in the U.S.A.

Mercury Magnetics
www.MercuryMagnetics.com
Sales@MercuryMagnetics.com
818-998-7791

RS Guitarworks: RS Guitarworks is the your one-stop source for expert finishing, refinishing and aging, complete guitar assembly and repair, custom electronic upgrade kits, pickups, hard-to-find hardware, and more!

Located in Winchester, Kentucky, RS Guitarworks began as a small repair and refinishing shop in 1994. As the word spread among guitarists, our business rapidly grew and today we receive expensive guitars from around the world for aging and refinishing. We offer many hard-to-find vintage replica parts and other specialty items related to vintage Fender and Gibson guitars, and we also custom build complete guitars, including our "Old Friend" Series, "Step-Side" and "Artist Replica" models.

RS Guitarworks Premium Wiring Kits offer a dramatic and immediate improvement over the factory electronics found in even the most expensive guitars. During a year of research and development we tested over 20 different tone capacitors and nearly every type of potentiometer made before developing our upgrade kits, which feature measured CTS pots within 10% of their specified value, and RS Guitarcaps in .022uf and .047uf values made expressly for us by Hovland. Our customers tell us that our wiring upgrade kits impart a fuller, clearer tone than standard factory components, with a smoother, more even and responsive taper from each pot. Additionally, each potentiometer is tested on a digital meter, checked for the proper sweep pattern and sorted and labeled as a neck/volume, neck/tone, bridge/volume or bridge/tone control. Wiring Upgrade Kits are available in 5 different styles for various Les Paul type guitars, as well as Telecaster, Stratocaster, and PRS guitars, and Explorer and Flying V types. Nearly any other configuration can also be built with a call to our shop. RS Guitarworks is also an authorized Fender, Jackson, Charvel, Guild and Gretsch Service Center.

Please call or visit our web site for complete information on finishing, refinishing and aging of new and used guitars, custom wiring kits, vintage repro parts and repairs.

RS Guitarworks
859-737-5300, www.rsguitarworks.com

Stewart MacDonald: Stewart-MacDonald offers a complete line of hard-to-find tools, parts, accessories, instructional videos and books for building, repairing, setting up, and optimizing the playability and tone of stringed instruments. Whether you are just getting started or you're a seasoned luthier, you'll find everything you need in the Stew-Mac catalog, including: fret wire, finishing supplies, glues and adhesives, wood, bodies, necks, binding, tuners, nuts and saddles, inlay, bridges, tailpieces, electronics, pickups, and free information sheets and professional advice! Their friendly customer service and technical support staff are trained to help you make the best product choices, and they also offer an Unconditional Return Guarantee. If you're not satisfied with an item for any reason, simply return

it.

Stew-Mac is the leading supplier of innovative products for guitarists and repair pros, and every thing they make is guaranteed to work well, because every product is tested by the professional luthiers at Stewart MacDonald first! The master builders and repairmen on staff include Dan Erlewine – well-known author of guitar repair books and magazine articles, member of the ToneQuest Report advisory board, and a regular contributor to TQR. Dan and all of the experienced luthiers at Stew-Mac personally develop and test every product the company offers, and they are also dedicated to education. The Stewart MacDonald catalog is packed with helpful tips, and the company produces an extensive series of training videos at their facility in Athens, Ohio.

For more information on the entire range of products available, please visit the Stewart MacDonald web site. In addition to their free online help service, your telephone call is also always welcome.

Stewart MacDonald
www.stewmac.com,
1-800-848-2273

Swart Amplification: Long before the first Swart amp ever appeared, Michael Swart had been playing through vintage amps for decades at live gigs and recording sessions as both a guitarist and recording engineer in Wilmington, NC.

Despite his access to countless vintage Fender, Vox, and Ampeg amps, Swart always felt the quintessential small recording/home use amp had yet to be built, thus begin the quest for the best tone via a small, manageable package. After a slew of suitcase amp wannabees, emerged the original Space Tone 6V6se, a Class A, 5 watt, Single-Ended, tube rectified beast with an über simple circuit revolving around the soulful 6V6. The amp delivered big sound with unmatched musicality along with amazing distortion. The 18w Atomic Space Tone soon followed to wide acclaim, and Swart amplifiers were quickly embraced by working pros and guitarists who shared Swart's appreciation for truly exceptional guitar tone.

Today, six different Swart models are hand-built to serve the needs of guitarists

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for live performance and recording:

Space Tone 6V6se - The amp that started it all. 5w, Class A, Single-Ended, Tube Rectified, 8" Weber, finger-jointed, lacquered tweed pine cab. Amazing STR-Tweed - Another BIG Class A, Single-Ended 5w w/extra stage, Swart reverb, and 12" speaker.

Atomic Space Tone - Perhaps the amp that REALLY put Swart on the map. Considered one of the finest made. 18w 6V6 or 6L6 with tube reverb & tremolo

AST Pro: AST circuit w/slightly larger cab, recessed knobs, 12" of choice
AST Head MKII - AST in a head w/ defeatable master volume and choice of cabinets
Super Space Tone 30 Head (SST-30) 30w of soulful 6V6/6L6/EL-34 mother of tone beauty. Richer than chocolate. Matching, custom tweed 2 x 12 Space Tone Cabinet

Head to Swart Online for the latest news, rants, photos, raves, artists, events, and dealer locations. Michael answers every call. Kelly responds to every mail. Personal service is #1 priority.

*Swart Amplifier Co., Wilmington, NC
www.swartamps.com, 910-620-2512*

Toneman: Veteran working guitarist Don Butler is an experienced tech who specializes in servicing, restoring JMI-era and modding Korg era Vox Amps to vintage specs. These, of course would be valve (tube) amps. As well as servicing & upgrading any '62-'89 era valve Marshall amps. He also services most other Golden era British valves amps like HiWatt, Selmer, Orange, Laney's and Sound City's. Also included are Tweed, Blonde, Brown and Blackface era Fender Amps.

Don offers a number of standard mods for reissue Vox, Fender and Marshall amps to bring them into "Vintage Spec" and achieve that original tone/sound that reissues sadly lack. These have earned him a solid reputation throughout the country for dramatically improved, authentic Vintage Tone from reissue amplifiers. Don has used the hand-made Mercury Magnetics Axiom/Tone Clone transformers for over 20 years along with vintage spec Sozo Premium caps (both the Iskra/"mustard caps" replicas and Blue Molded Fender types) and Carbon Comp

resistors in the signal path to bring reissue amps to Vintage specs. We also mod reissue Vox and Cry Baby Wah Wah's to original 1967 specs, Ibanez TS-9's and Upgrade Vox "Valve Tone" pedals.

Don is equally at home working on Gibson Historics and Standard Production guitars, Fender guitars, Rickenbacker, and of course, Gretsch Guitars. This applies to both Vintage models and current production guitars, electric and acoustic. Anything from re-frets & fret dressing, rewiring, etc. to simple set-ups and adjustments. Don was also the first dealer for German made Pyramid Strings, starting in 1995. Don does attend the NAMM Show and the Frankfurt Musikmesse for Pyramid. Providing his input, Pyramid has re-introduced the Round Core, pure nickel flatwound "Pyramid Golds" and the exceptional Round core/round wound "Nickel Classics". All Pyramids use a silver plated core of German Steel and pure nickel wire wrap. All plain strings are pure silver plated German Steel.

Also available now are the Bronze Wound/Round Core Acoustic "Pyramid Western Folk". These strings are reminiscent of the strings from the '50's & '60's before most manufacturers went to Hex cores and smaller wrap wires. Strings can be ordered securely online through the website!

*Toneman is open 10 am to 6 pm (Pacific Time), Tuesday thru Saturday!
661-259-4544, delb@earthlink.net,
www.tone-man.com*

TonePros Sound Labs & Marquis

Distribution: Since our first published review article, The ToneQuest Report has enthusiastically recommended the patented TonePros system of guitar components.

TonePros tailpieces feature a patented locking design. For years, guitars with stop tailpieces and wrap-around bridges have been cursed by "lean" or tilt on their stud mounts. Since string tension was all that held tailpieces on, the only contact area was just a bit of the edge of the bottom flange, just a bit of the lip of the stud top, and often just as little contact with the intonation screws. TonePros® Locking Studs provide 100% of the contact area of the bottom flange, 100% of the contact area of the stud top, no lean,

and dramatically improved sustain, resonance and tone.

TonePros bridge and saddle components feature the "patented pinch" - the lateral pressure that is applied from the strategically placed "tone screws" that greatly reduce the play or wiggle of the bridge posts in their inserts. The posts are frozen in place, resulting in a solid connection between the strings, bridge, and guitar top, transferring more string vibration and resonance to the guitar body, resulting in an audibly stronger, sweeter, woodier type of resonance and sustain. And once your guitar is set up, it's locked. Bridge height and intonation settings remain intact and exact, even after re-stringing. TonePros® System II Components are found on the world's best guitars, played by the world's best artists.

*TonePros Sound Labs International,
www.tonepros.com
www.guitarpartsdepot.com
818-735-7944*

Marquis Distribution: At Marquis Distribution, we offer the highest quality guitar parts to fit your needs. We specialize in guitar replacement parts, and hard to find, vintage-inspired and vintage replica parts, including aged TonePros and TonePros Kluson parts, emphasizing your desire to achieve a vintage look and tone at an exceptionally high level of performance. Whether you need to replace one part on your guitar or outfit many guitars with whole new setups, our focus remains on the individual customer and your unique needs. Be sure to request the 10% ToneQuest Discount when ordering!

*www.marquisdistribution.com
209-845-9579*

Truetone: formerly known as Visual Sound, was launched by Bob Weil in his apartment in 1995. With a mix of innovative ideas, and plain old hard work, Bob became a member of the vanguard of stomp box builders that in the mid 1990's turned the effects world on its ear with new and exciting designs that finally gave guitarists everywhere a new pallet of tones to work with. Weil amply did his part with innovative products like the Visual Volume, 1 SPOT power supply, Route 66 American Overdrive, Jekyll and Hyde Ultimate Overdrive, and the H2O Liquid

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Chorus and Echo. These products quickly made an impact with users and dealers alike. Visual Sound became known for having great sounding products that were backed up with top notch service and support. Visual Sound is now Truetone, but the people haven't changed and the products and service are still first rate.

Weil explains his vision this way: "We've worked hard for many years to make our products not only sound great, but also hold up to the demands of the working musician. The test procedures and quality control standards that Chief Engineer R.G. Keen and I have developed are extremely thorough. On top of that, we designed our switching system to pretty much last forever, and we're very picky about our critical parts suppliers, too. When it comes down to it, we hate to have our gear go down in the middle of someone's gig, so we've gone over the top with reliability. To prove it, we're now offering a lifetime warranty on all of our V3 pedals. And since we've been around since 1995, you can be confident we'll be around to support that warranty."

The V3 line of pedals began with the Dual Tap Delay, the first dual delay pedal with a tap function governing both delay circuits, followed by the Single Tap, which was half of the mighty Dual Tap. The line then expanded to the VS-XO Premium Dual Overdrive, followed by the V3 H2O, which both won the Editor's Pick awards from *Guitar Player*, and Platinum Awards from *Guitar World*. The latest in the V3 line are the new V3 Route 66 and V3 Jekyll & Hyde which are more than mere re-boots of signature pedals: they are carefully thought-out complete redesigns with all new features and additional tones.

Check out the Truetone website for information, videos and news about all the great Truetone products!

Web: Truetone.com
Phone: 931-487-9001

Warehouse Guitar Speakers® LLC: is an Internet-based retail speaker supplier and manufacturer based in Paducah, KY – an area of the country with a long history in speaker manufacturing that includes the original CTS company, Credence Speakers, Voice Communication Coil, and Hawley Products – the oldest cone manufacturer in the world. When an

OEM speaker manufacturer needed to clear warehouse space in 2006, WGS was born and began manufacturing and selling American-assembled guitar speakers to the public.

Today we build a wide range of high-quality and reasonably priced 10 and 12-inch Alnico and Ceramic magnet guitar speakers that celebrate and reprise the golden era of speaker manufacturing in the USA and England during the '60s and '70s, including the 15 watt Alnico Black & Blue™, 50 watt Alnico BlackHawk™, 60 watt Veteran 30™, 25 watt Green Beret™, 80 watt British Lead™, 65 watt ET65™, 30 watt Reaper™, and 75 watt Retro 30™, among others. WGS also builds high-power bass and PA speakers, and we are constantly developing and adding new speaker models to meet the demands of today's guitarists.

Why should you consider buying WGS speakers? At a time when speaker manufacturers have moved production to Asia, compromising quality and reliability while prices continue to increase, our speakers are proudly assembled in the USA by a team with decades of speaker design and building experience, at a reasonable price. Our employees take pride in building the very best speakers available anywhere. Selling direct via the Web enables us to keep prices low without compromising quality. You buy direct from the manufacturer, and we proudly stand behind our products with fast shipping and exceptional customer service.

For information on the entire range of WGS guitar and bass speakers, please visit our web site today.

Warehouse Guitar Speakers
www.WarehouseSpeakers.com
270-217-0740

WD Music Products: As a special offer WD Music Products, Inc. is offering a 10% off coupon to *Tonequest* readers... Visit us at www.wdmusic.com and enter coupon code TQWD at checkout. Please note: Coupon good for wdmusic.com web orders only, offer not valid on wdbiz.com orders.

For the past thirty years WD Music Products has been providing quality ser-

vice and parts to satisfied working musicians, discriminating builders and OEMs. WD Music pioneered the field of aftermarket pickguards and continues to lead the way in the niche we created in 1978. We have manufactured thousands of pickguards and if you need a replacement or something you envision yourself we can make it happen. For many years WD Music has also carried a full line of replacement parts for just about any stringed instrument.

WD Music is proud to continue the legacy of Kluson tuning machines, one of the most respected OEM and replacement tuners for decades. Replace or restore your vintage instrument with genuine Kluson tuning machines from WD Music. We stock Kent Armstrong pickups, L.R. Baggs acoustic gear, Q-Parts custom knobs and accessories, Bigsby tailpieces, Graph Tech products, Wilkinson bridges, Grover tuners and accessories, Big Bends maintenance supplies, Guitar Facelifts, effects and much more.

History is repeating itself with genuine Kluson tuners, continuing with WD's customer service, and...Stromberg Jazz Guitars. No one can attempt or claim to reproduce the prestige of the original archtop Stromberg guitars. But with history in mind WD is also proud to distribute Stromberg Jazz Guitars. With six models to satisfy everyone from the serious working jazz musician to the rockabilly king Stromberg offers an affordable, quality instrument for almost any taste or style. Stromberg jazz Guitars is a small, limited production archtop guitar company whose main goals are quality, playability and affordability. Play one and see.

WD Music Products. Thirty years of knowledge, service, quality parts and accessories waiting to serve you. Everything from pickguards, tuning machines, pickups, electronics, necks, bodies, bridges, prewired assemblies and hard to find hardware—if your guitar or bass needs it, chances are WD Music has it. Old fashioned customer service, genuine Kluson tuners, classic Stromberg Jazz Guitars, and so much more.

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www.WDmusic.com

ToneQuest



Pyramid Strings Now in Stock

New Pyramids are in! Pure Nickel Maximum Performance Pure Nickel (original hex core) sets, .010-.046 Light and .010-.048 Light/Medium roundwounds are in stock now, plus Pure Nickel Roundcore Classics, .010-.046 Light and .010-.048 Light/Medium. **To order, CALL 1-877-MAX-TONE or visit www.tonequest.com Free Pyramid/ToneQuest pearloid hard picks included with each order!**

the ToneQuest Report

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