

SPOTLIGHT ON:

FRET King
by
Trev Wilkinson

Stunning new guitars, courtesy of ever-cunning Mr Wilkinson and co.

With the Vintage range of guitars, JHS and Trev Wilkinson rewrote a fair amount of the luthiery rulebook.

A lot of players have benefited from cutting edge ideas and technology based around solid principles of what makes a good guitar, and they come in at a bargain price, too. Imagine Fret King, then, as a brand to aspire and progress too once you've outgrown your Vintage model. Trev has applied the entirety of his significant guitar knowledge to a catalogue of guitars and basses spec'd to the nines and using only the best materials and components.

The range is split into two tiers, with an emphasis across the range placed on innovation, attention to detail and a real pride in the design and build process.

First up is the Blue label range: you can see a huge number of the models lined up below, and even from a quick scan you can see that every single guitar looks unique while retaining a blend of retro and modern style. It speaks volumes that many of the range

are named after various models of Lotus car, smitten as Trev is with their perfect aesthetics and internal design.

The Fret King Blue Label range comprises models that sit in the mid-to-high price bracket depending on the model, and each one is packed with distinctive features, although certain high standards are fixed across the range. Quality tonewoods, custom wound Fret King pickups and Wilkinson and Gotoh hardware all feature on every guitar, so you know that at the very core you're getting more than your money's worth. Then, it's just up to you to pick the model that fits into your mind set, and pick out specific requirements.

Take the Super 60, for instance, which you can see at the far left of the guitars assembled below. An American alder body, Canadian hard rock maple neck and Indian rosewood fingerboard form the core of the guitar, augmented with Trev's smooth, firm vibrato system and Gotoh locking tuners.

Then you'll choose between three single coils, two singles and a humbucker, or the very-unique-indeed combo of two single coils and a P90! The latter looks somewhat mind-boggling to begin with, and we absolutely love it.

Although the Super T, S and Esprit series all hold individual charm, our particular favourite in

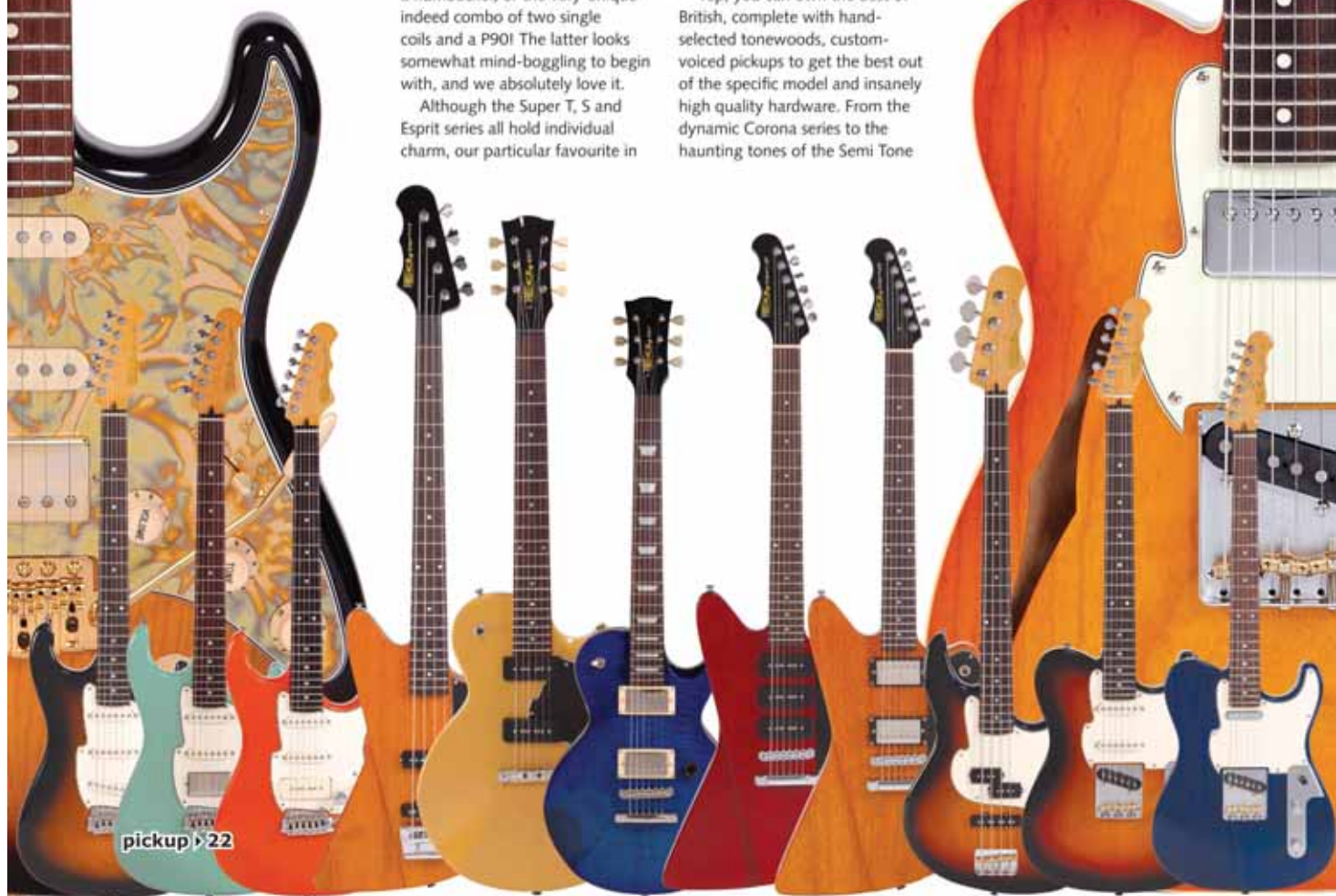
the Blue Label range, is the frankly freaking beautiful Fret King Eclat standard. With its distinctive body shape (including an awesomely comfy scoop in the body for your picking arm), beautiful trans finish onto flame maple (we're going nuts about the blue), mahogany body and neck and suitably pro-level hardware, we're smitten. Add to that a pair of PAF-style humbuckers for vintage tone, and you'd have a great guitar. But actually, that's not where it ends: patented Vari-Coil circuitry on a mysterious third control knob seamlessly blends single and humbucker tones to every extreme and middle ground you can think of. Blimey.

There will be those of you, however, with more cash than the Pickup team, so for all those players looking to purchase within the uppermost echelons of luthiery, Trev has created the Green Label range. Says he: "Fret-King Green Label series guitars and basses are hand-built in my workshops on the UK's West Coast, to painstaking, faultless standards of perfection."

Yep, you can own the best of British, complete with hand-selected tonewoods, custom-voiced pickups to get the best out of the specific model and insanely high quality hardware. From the dynamic Corona series to the haunting tones of the Semi Tone

hollowbodies, there's something for everything, and every one of the guitars is painstakingly constructed to be the perfect looker, player and tone-singer.

We'll be getting our hands on reviews soon enough, but for now why not check out the full range at www.fret-king.com and salivate endlessly! **PU**



pickup 22