

## The Shorty Joe Bass

Less than a year after introducing the Shorty Joe Guitar, I'm pleased to be rolling out the Shorty Joe Bass. With its 30 inch scale it's also considered to be a 3/4 size instrument, but it is far from being just a "kid's" guitar. Let me tell you, it's a real kick in the pants to play! Every day I find more things to love about this little brute. The first thing I noticed was that it sounds... just like a bass! Low notes and all. I keep it tuned to standard E tuning and it plays and sounds just fine. Good intonation, good tone.

Then I noticed how easy it was to fret. As with the guitar version, every fret on a shorter scale is just that much closer to reach. Very little fatigue.

Now, I won't kid you, there are advantages to playing a full size bass. A longer scale means it takes more tension to get the strings up to pitch, and that translates to more energy getting to the magnets then on to your amp. But, face it, sometimes it's just a pain to carry those 4 foot long battering rams around on stage (and busses, subways, home studios...)

I'll be experimenting with different pickups and their locations, but this particular setup is going to be hard to beat. One singlecoil Seymour Duncan "Quarter Pounder" which is also known as the '51 P-bass model. With round-wound strings on this first SJB it reminds me of a Rickenbacker until you roll the tone pot off a little, when the tone becomes more Fender-like.

This first edition Shorty Joe Bass features a nicely figured soft maple front and back, sandwiching an alder core. I actually added the maple back to add a little weight to keep the balance right - and it's still only 7 1/2 pounds! I'm using my usual 5 piece laminated neck structure here, too. I don't see a need to glue the neck in, I'll stick with bolt-ons for now.

I first used the 30 inch bass scale on my recently completed double-neck guitar/bass. I chose it because I didn't want the two necks to be so different that it would be hard to switch back and forth between the two. I think that for the same reason the Shorty Joe Bass will appeal to regular guitar players. It's always nice to have a bass layin' around.