

A VULGAR DISPLAY OF POWER

THE GUITAR RIGS OF THE STARS

DOWN SIZING

Down's Kirk Windstein delivers the lowdown on his minimal rig, his Fast-Fret fetish and his pre-gig regimen.

By NICK BOWCOTT

>>>DESIGN PHILOSOPHY "It's very straightforward," Down's Kirk Windstein says of his rig. "I'm an old-school guy who doesn't need any rack stuff. I still use a cord rather than a wireless because, to me, the tone is truer."

>>>CONTROL ISSUES Windstein does all his own switching. But why does he have two TU-2 tuners? "My tech, Bobby Landgraf, also does tech work for Rex [Brown, bass], and he switches basses a lot. So while he's busy doing that, I'll mute my signal at the pedal board and then go back by the amps and fine tune quickly. I do this pretty much between every song." In addition, Windstein

steps on a Dunlop Slash wah for reasons associated with sound and sanity. "It's got a blue light that comes on when the pedal's engaged," he explains. "With some wahs, you can't tell if you've hit the switch. The light eliminates the guess work and helps keep me sane."

>>>FAVORITE PIECE OF GEAR "My Maxon 808 Overdrive pedal. I'm really satisfied with it. It's a true representation of the amp's sound. Plus, it tightens up my tone and gives me a little extra crunch. It's on all the time except for a couple of places in the set where I need a mellower, dynamic sound."

>>>SECRET WEAPON "My [GHS] Fast-Fret [string lubricant]. I can't stand it when my strings feel dry and old. I like them

to be slick and feel like they're brand-new, and Fast-Fret does it. The guys made fun of me for it until we saw Tony Iommi using Fast-Fret. I said, 'There ya go! 'The Godfather' uses it too!'

"I've also started to do a proper warm-up regimen before each show to get the blood flowing and the muscles burning a bit. Plus, I absolutely have to watch an hour-long movie that we play before we go on; it opens with Frank Marino and Mahogany Rush performing 'All Along the Watchtower' live in the Seventies. I've found that if I watch that video, I play great that night, and if I miss it, I don't."

Special thanks to Kirk's tech, Bobby Landgraf, for his invaluable assistance.

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