



We buy, sell, trade and consign left-handed guitars, basses, mandolins and ukuleles.

NEWSLETTER -- Nov/Dec/Jan 2009

Hello fellow lefty,

Three months since my last newsletter. I had hoped to do this every month, but until I get accustomed to all the ins and outs of this business, I can never seem to find the time to do everything I would like to accomplish.

I have photos of the 41 guitars that came in over these three months. Most, but not all, are on my website already and you can check them out there. The ones that are not there should be on my site soon.

I know many of you are curious about what I saw at NAMM this year. This was my third year attending the show. I tried to not get distracted by guitars, amps, and a million other things that I will not be a dealer for and concentrate on finding guitars that I want. I visited all the manufacturers I represent to place orders for what I will need for the coming year. Lots of discussions about what else that could be made lefty that has not been. I'll just randomly talk about manufacturers as I remember them.

Cole Clark: Acoustic Guitar has Jack Johnson and his Cole Clark FL2AC on the cover of the current issue with an interview inside. I visited the Cole Clark booth several times so I could hear the artists playing there. I saw my favorite music of the whole show here. They had a great blues player playing shows every hour or so. While I was there talking to everyone, a Hawaiian guy from one of the Hawaiian ukulele companies came over and ask if he could sit in. They jacked in a Cole Clark uke to the amp along with the guitar and away they went! These guys had never played with each other, never even talked about what they were going to play other than what key (the guitar had to be capo'd) and it was fantastic musicianship. I had never seen (or imagined!) blues leads on a uke. They traded leads and rhythm parts for about a half hour. People within hearing all crowded around. It was a great example of that wonderful thing called music. I want to play like that!

I was very impressed with the instruments I had not seen before from Cole Clark. I ordered 2 lefty lapsteel (the first leftys ever ordered) and 2 Culprit electrics. These are wonderful tele style guitars. I have 2 Angels and a FL2AC and FL3AC coming also. Oh yeah, a FL1A and FL2A 12 string are on their way also. The first guy to play the FL1A 12 string I had bought it.

Nik Huber: I looked at Nik Hubers guitars the last 2 years and talked to him briefly last year about making leftys. He said he had plans to do that this year. Three days before the show I got an email from Nik that he had a lefty for me at the show. He called the day before the show to confirm I was coming to see him. Now I've been told by a couple of manufacturers (one very famous manufacturer sends its "problems" to Nik to solve for them) that Nik is one of the top

five luthiers in the world. I had never been able to play his guitars because of no leftys. So sitting at his booth in the middle of all the incredible clamor and din of NAMM, I finally got one in my hands. Hmmmm. Certainly as well made as any guitar I've ever had. Far better than most. Best action I've experienced. Great neck. Bit of a C vintage shape. Wonderful fret work. Really impressive. Sound?? Well, that had to wait until I got home. You cannot hear ANY guitar in the place because your hearing EVERY guitar in the place. And 50,000 people all talking at once. Now the guitar and I are both here and I'm able to hear it. Sustain like it is a tuning fork. Incredible tone. Hand built humbuckers made exclusively for Nik. This guitar is at a level above just about anything I've experienced. The Collings, Andersons, and Suhrs are close. All have their strengths (I would not say any have weaknesses), but this Huber seems to be all strengths. And the body shape is my favorite solid body shape. Very tele like. Just super comfortable.

Teye Guitars: I briefly saw Bill Lawrence (of Bill Lawrence Pickups) play a Teye guitar at NAMM last year. Teye wasn't officially there with a booth, but one of their guitars was making the rounds. I was pretty impressed with the guitar. Really beautiful and unique looking. Interesting sounding from what little I could hear. So I've been in touch with Teye this last year as he comes closer to getting leftys built. He had no leftys at the show, but a solid lineup of rightys that were beautiful guitars. Turquoise inlaid tops, Red Coral inlaid tops, MOP tops, extraordinary hand engraved tops and bridges and headplates, all this and more. He has a lefty nearing completion now. I'm very tempted.

Peerless: I'm finally close to a deal with Peerless. A 30 guitar order is what I'm working on. They made the Epiphone Casino for about the last 25 years until Epiphone built their own manufacturing facility a few years ago. They made many other models for Epiphone as well. When Peerless made Casinos for them, leftys were always part of the production. No longer. Leftys have not been made since about 2004. So I'm having Peerless make Casinos with the Peerless name on the headstock. I'm also going to put better hardware and appointments (no fake MOP inlays) on them. And sell them for less. I'm working on the rest of the order also. Peerless also makes guitars for Gretsch, so they are experts at hollow and semi-hollow electrics. Their Jazz guitars are superb. They have widest selection of hollow and semi-hollow of any manufacturer I've seen.

Eastman: Eastman is sort of a sore subject with me. Their guitars are all hand built in their own factory. Hand built as in even the necks and arched tops and backs are hand carved from solid wood. One of the best guitar values going I think. But getting leftys is frustrating. I've ordered guitars 14 months ago that I've still not received. Eastman has contracted with another factory to build a new line of flattop acoustics with "Potomac" on the headstock. These guitars will feature all solid woods in the "Deluxe" line and sell for about \$625 in righty. No word yet on leftys. Eastman is now upcharging \$200 for leftys on their Eastman labeled guitars (I have not had to pay any upcharges yet because I ordered all those guitars before that went into effect), but they could not possibly do that on the Potomac label because it would be a 33% upcharge.

Baden: I'm now a Baden dealer. I have the 3 "A" style and 4 "D" style guitars coming shortly. I liked the "A" model immediately when I saw it last year at NAMM in righty. The "D" seemed it would be a problem to sell because I personally didn't think it would be a comfortable guitar to play. They had both A and D at the NAMM show for me in lefty. I liked the A right away. The D was the big surprise to me. It felt MORE comfortable than a traditional dread. The lower bout

can rest on your knee (instead of the waist of a traditional dread) which moves the headstock and fretboard closer to you. Very nice. I liked what I was able to hear in that giant, loud room, and they will be here soon. The reviews for how these guitars sound and play has been uniformly positive. These first 7 guitars I get I will be selling at REALLY great prices. Call me.

Rickenbacker: Bad news everyone. Ric had been telling me since NAMM 2008 that they would be able to make me a dealer at NAMM 2009 and take orders for leftys. I've called them every few months since then and they have been repeating what they said. I called them in early December to make an appointment for the show and was told they would not be able to make me a dealer and they would not be making leftys any time soon. They said to come talk to them at the show anyway though (I was feeling a modicum of hope after that). So at the show, they told me not only were they unable to make me a dealer, it was going to be 2 YEARS more before they would be able to make me a dealer and make any substantial numbers of leftys. I cannot fault the Rickenbacker business model as far as growth (they do not want to increase production volume), or quality control (excellent), or keeping dealer numbers low enough to make sure each dealer gets all the guitars they want. I just wish John Hall was a lefty or his son was a lefty or someone close to him that could communicate the lefty frustration. Making thousands of rightys, for years, and no leftys. Do I sound grumpy?

G&L: The G&L lack of interest in having me as a dealer continues. I cannot even get an appointment with the area rep. The head sales guy is very nice and wants me as a dealer. The rep just doesn't seem to be able to find time for me.

Boucher: Boucher Guitars is bringing a couple of lefty guitars to me to see what I think. I've talked about Boucher in other newsletters. They are a Canadian company that only makes Adirondack top guitars. They have an extensive wood selection without huge upcharges like many builders. Maple, Walnut, Mahogany, Rosewood, Cherry, Bubinga, Alancia, Escrito, and Brazilian are all standard body woods. They even make an all Adirondack Spruce guitar. I'm looking forward to seeing and hearing some leftys.

St. Blues: St. Blues has added a couple of more lefty guitars to their excellent lineup. A 61 South with a Blonde finish and a new bass. They also have a 3 P90 model called the White Lightening that is, appropriately, painted white. They will be making this model soon in lefty also. I'll be getting the Blonde 61 South and the Bluesmaster Bass soon.

Goodall Guitars: Goodall Guitars has landed back in California after building guitars on Hawaii for many years. James and his son Luke will continue the unparalleled Goodall Guitars tradition. Every Goodall I have played has been a delight. The most musical, piano-like guitars made. I've ordered 3 more and I expect to order more later this spring (for those of you in the throes of winter, I guess "later this spring" just sounds wrong. We had the oak trees starting new leaves the 3rd week of December, so it seems like spring to me).

Composite Acoustics: Getting closer! My name is taped to the wall in the production room to call as soon as the first leftys are finished. I'm sort of expecting that to happen April or May. They ARE going to make leftys. An all weather, cutaway, small body guitar that sounds great and looks like the future of composite guitars.

Bourgeois: I was able to meet and speak with Dana Bourgeois at some length at NAMM. We worked out some details on a few of my upcoming guitars. Dana still has his hands in EVERY guitar to come from his shop. He still personally tone taps the tops and bodies to find the perfect match on woods for each guitar, while also visually matching the woods to get the perfect aesthetic balance. He also does all the sunbursts while still getting his hands in all the other phases of the guitar construction. I have a Signature D, a signature OM, and the first lefty Vintage Short Scale OM on order. This is with the first run of 5 of the new Bourgeois OM Short Scale model. We are also discussing a O or OO or Parlor model that I'm encouraging Dana to make. I think it will be their next new model.

Duesenberg: I've been told by Dieter himself (owner of Duesenberg) that I can expect Star-player TVs this month! Duesenberg invited me to a private party where Mike Campbell and the Dirty Knobs (what The Heartbreakers call themselves when they play without Tom Petty) and many guests (sometimes 6 guitarists on stage) played for hours. They played mostly covers of John Lennon, Bob Dylan (all the verses of Isis!), and Neil Young. It was great!

Kala Ukulele: These guys actually make a couple of leftys as standard models. Both are tenor with cutaways! One is Mango/Mango the other Mahogany/Spruce. I have both on the way. They are also going to make me other models in Maple, Lacewood, Koa, ect. I want to stock a good selection of ukes.

Collings: I was speaking to Bill Collings and the Premier Guitar video team showed up. Exit stage left.

Santa Cruz: I was able to meet Otis Taylor (he is a BIG guy) after his great set on Friday. Met Willie for the first time (sales rep) who seems to have parted ways with Santa Cruz immediately after NAMM. I'm now dealing directly with Richard Hoover (owner) which is good. I like speaking right to the boss. I'm trying to be included in a very special run of guitars that I'll fill you in on next newsletter.

R.Taylor: This is a separate entity from Taylor Guitars. They have contacted me again and want me to become a dealer for them. They are okay with me not wanting to be a Taylor dealer. They believe R.Taylor belongs in the same shop with Goodall, Collings, Santa Cruz, etc.

This might be a good time to explain a little about why I'm carrying the guitars I carry and why I don't carry other lines. The Big Four manufacturers are Martin, Taylor, Fender, Gibson. I don't carry any of these, and probably never will. Reason 1) These companies usually have huge buy-ins. Either I have to guarantee a certain yearly sales total, or I have to buy a bunch of #%*& guitars that the company has to unload on dealers who don't want those particular models. It is funny talking to the sales people from these companies when they realize the limits of their available leftys and how I would have to buy a lot of the same model guitar to fill their opening quota. Reason #2) Guitar Center, Musicians Friend, and Music 123 (which is all the same company if you did not know) are able to negotiate lower prices on everything they buy. This means that I am helping the manufacturers sell guitars cheaper to Guitar Center by paying them more for the guitars I buy from them. No thanks.

Gibson and Fender are both selling guitars at Best Buy now. What kind of pricing do you think they get? A lot less than I could ever get them. So I'm sticking to the smaller builders who want to support the independent shop. If you ever see Collings or Bourgeois in Best Buy, let me know!

Who else did I talk to at NAMM? Larrivee is always a pleasant visit. Ordered the SD-60 that got here yesterday. Reverend guitars is working on getting some me some Manta Ray and Club King models this year. Tradition Guitars is hoping I will be able to get leftys this June. The last order was rejected in its entirety by Tradition as not good enough. That's why I've had none for a year now. Eastwood Guitars is ordering me a special run (12) of lefty Mandocasters. Eastwood is no longer carrying lefty Mandocasters and I have to order 12 at a time. Eastwood is closing out many of their leftys due to slow sales, so I have to order most guitars in runs of 12 if I want to continue to have them.

Thanks again for all the support I've received from many of you these last few months. Music is the one enduring quality that makes us all capable of grace and brotherhood, no matter the country, color, or politics. We are blessed more than most because we can can make a joyful noise, not just listen to it.

Until next time (I hope next month).

Love what happens,
Jerry Welch
jerry@jerryleftyguitars.com
<http://www.jerryleftyguitars.com>
941 504-2634



Anderson Drop Top Classic



Bourgeois Vintage D (sold)



Bourgeois Short Scale Slope D



Collings D1AV



Collings O1



Collings MT Mandolin
(used) sold



Collings 290 Tobacco Burst



Collings SJ (Small Jumbo)



Duesenberg 49er (used) sold



Eastman AC512 sold



Eastman AC610C sold



Eastman MD815 Blonde



Gretsch Duo Jet Elliot Easton



G&L ASAT Classic (used)
sold



Heritage H-137



Heritage Prospect Standard
sold



Heritage 150CM Custom



Heritage H-535



Heritage 150CM Custom
sold



Huss & Dalton TOM-R
(used) sold



Huss & Dalton DS sold



Larrivee OOO-50MT



Martin D-28 Marquis (used)-
sold



Martin D-35 (used)



Martin D-18GE Marquis
(used)



Nik Huber Dolphin II



Rickenbacker 355/6JL (John
Lennon) -on hold



Republic Resonator Ukulele



Republic Guitars Resonator
Ukulele



Republic Guitars Steel Tri-
cone



Republic Guitars Brass/Nickel Tricone



Santa Cruz Otis Taylor



Suhr Pro S1 Seafoam Green



Suhr Pro S2 Sonic Blue



Suhr Pro S1 Sonic Blue



Suhr Pro S5 Bengal Burst



Suhr Classic T Custom Seafoam Green



Suhr Pro S6 Blue Burst



Suhr Pro S6 Honey Amber Burst



Suhr Pro S1 Candy Apple Red



Taylor 712 (used)