

ACCESSORIES

Roundup

A fistful of cool bass-related products for the gigging musician

Bass, amp, cables, pedals, strings, picks, batteries, straps, wireless gear, tuner, cases? Tools to fix all those when (not if) they die on you? Backup tools? Backup bass? Backup amp? You see where we're going here. The stuff you need to have by your side to make the right kind of low note when you want it is endless, but fortunately we're here to help, with a tasty bunch of gear that has come *BGM's* way in recent weeks.

Preparing for a gig? The fragrant people at SIT Strings have sent over some of their **RB Stainless Rock Brights** (SIT Strings, www.sitstrings.com, £23) for us to strap onto the office Precision, and swipe me if they don't sound rather good. The brightness they talk about on the tin (well, packaging) is there in abundance, and there's warmth there which we enjoy too. Tune them up with the **TC Electronic Polytune Clip** (TC Electronic, www.tcelectronic.com, £35), a snip of a purchase. It sits on your headstock and cunningly informs you of each string's in-tune/out-of-tune status with red (bad) and green (good) lights. It has three modes, including the eponymous polyphonic mode that will do all your strings at the same time. Damned clever, if you ask us.

You'll need some big sounds when you hit the stage: the **Finhol Classic Overdrive** (Thomann, www.thomann.de, £101.99) is an interesting (if slightly expensive) beast. A simple three-controls guitar pedal rather than a bass-specific unit, it delivers a mids-heavy 'classic' tone that fits bass frequencies rather well. Of course,





dedicated bass overdrives don't cut out the low frequencies quite as brutally as guitar pedals do, but sometimes that top-heavy shriek is exactly what you need. We have a roundup of guitar overdrives for bass coming up, which may sound like an odd concept until you consider how many non-pro bassists tend to borrow their guitarists' distortion pedals, so consider the Finhol Classic an introduction to the subject.

To house said pedals, you'll need a product along the lines of the **Diago Sprinter Ultra-Portable Softcase Pedalboard** (John Hornby Skewes, www.jhs.co.uk, £39.99), an inexpensive unit that doesn't have the solidity of professional-quality pedalboards in the three-figure range but which, in its relatively rugged casing, is easily stuffed into a gig bag. A slab of MDF anchored with rubber feet and covered in a carpet-like material, the Sprinter can hold six mini-pedals or four standard-sized ones: a big old roll of Velcro is included for maximum stickability.

On the way home from the show, slip into a pair of **Phil Jones Bass H850 High-Performance Stereo Headphones** (Synergy Distribution, www.synergymusic.co.uk, £80 approx), a high-end set of cans that bring bass to the fore, whether you're listening to your own instrument out of an amp, or your actual pop tunes from a phone, iPod or whatever the young people use these days. We A/B-ed the H850s against a £150 pair of Sony headphones and they compared very well, given their much lower RRP. Well done, that firm. ■