



# Wood from the woods

*A massive guitar sound is always desired in the heavy sector, low tunings are utilized more and more often. Thus specialists in the form of bariton-, seven or eight string guitars are always worth a long look. Such instruments are not only available off the rack but also custom manufactured in Germany.*

**S**tefan Schäfer from Lengede, Lower Saxony, has his eye on the Hard'n'Heavy-sector, with his brand 666strings and his models specialized in modern sound characteristics. The guitars are individually built with a lot of manual work in his own workshop and sold directly. In general, Schäfer works custom shop style, but he also offers a limited choice of models - at present three guitars and two basses.

Customers get to choose body shape, headstock, woods, finishes, inlays, pickups and also number of strings and scales. An online configurator helps the customer compose his desired instrument, giving visual feedback and financial estimates. But Stefan Schäfer also lends an ear to people with individual ideas.

## The customer is always right

Our test object, the Deamon, shows a lot of courage for individuality with its seven strings and 27 inch scale. The shape is a less pointy variation of the Jackson RR with the output jack on top of the body, an extra curve on the upper horn on one end and a reversed headstock on the other. Clearly a statement, but also clearly a matter of taste. At the same time the transparent finish, the pretty Walnut top and the fretboard with reversed sharkfin inlays made of Maple are a homage to custom guitars. Such a combination is not only pretty rare, it also defines the instruments special nature and elegance.

In this case Stefan Schäfer intentionally passed on expensive import woods and fo-

cused on regional home dried wood. But still: The customer is always right. Once you get a hold of this guitar you immediately feel the high manufacturing quality. Visually, the body is a contrasty sandwich of Mahogany and Ash that provides definition and brilliance for the lower tunings, while the top is responsible for the classy look.

The neck, bolt-on with six screws, is composed of Maple and Wenge. The same hard Wenge wood was used for the fretboard. The bolt-on neck is not a dogma for Stefan Schäfer, who looks at this joint rather pragmatically, for example in case the instrument needs maintenance. Customers looking for neck-through can easily order such for a surcharge.

All noblesse aside, with the Deamon one definitely holds a piece of heavy metal turned wood in his hands. This also becomes clear when looking at the simplistic hardware: Two active EMG humbuckers, a three-way-switch and a volume knob do the job.

The neck is flat and wide, the string action is nicely low. The long scale and the seven strings wide neck make for a tight playing experience. Even unplugged the tone is already powerful and has a well-balanced vibration behaviour.

## Tight playing experience

In combination with the low ETS bridge you get an unobstructed playing experience. Nothing gets in the way of your hand when playing obligatory palm mutes. Not everybody likes playing a V-shaped instrument seated, but that's the way it is. The right arm can comfortably be rested on the upper horn. The accessibility of the higher registers

deserves nothing but praise because of the rounded neck joint. Still it should be clear that such a guitar belongs on stage and to a strap, from which it hangs nicely balanced.

The Deamon calls for a modern high gain amp, in this case a Peavey Triple XXX II. You'll be confronted with a massive broadside. The Deamon sounds well balanced, fat and tight.

### Tough guy at the bridge

The EMG 81-7 in the bridge position is a classic in this genre and delivers enough attack, definition and aggressiveness even in B-tuning. But not only the pickup, but also the whole construction makes this instrument the perfect choice for aggressive styles. It is essentially suited for tight rhythm work. At least i felt invited to stroke the strings powerfully, which the construction can easily take, thank to the highly stable locking tuners. On



Visually matched with the instrument:  
The flightcase

the downside, the longer scale and the hard woods make artificial harmonics more difficult.

The EMG 60-7 in the neck position is a rather tame pickup, well suited for vintage and clean sounds. Alone or in combination with the bridge humbucker it provides convincing, balanced sounds - if the amp is switched to an appropriate channel, while the EMG 81 sounds rather nasal in comparison.

At this point the big flightcase with perfect fit and multiple compartments should be mentioned, to which Schäfer will apply an individual bandlogo, if desired. Thus the guitar can travel around the world safely. For a short ride on buses and trains you might want to get a lighter gigbag, though.

### What sticks

666strings shows a lot of courage to fill niches. It doesn't always have to be a Strat or Les Paul. Especially metalheads show a lot of love for the extraordinary. The Deamon serves this target group very well with supreme quality and is much more than a simple Rhoads-variant. It is a premium quality guitar, with a clear specialization and real specialties, which not only show visually but also sonically and in terms of feel. The justified price of 3000 Euros for this model comes from the special combination of woods and the cusom flightcase. Usually the selection of 666strings instruments starts at about half of this price.

FACTS

666STRINGS DEAMON

Origin	Germany
Body	Mahogany/Ash
Top	Walnut
Neck	Maple and Wenge
Neck profile	C-D, low
Fretboard	Wenge with Maple inlays, coated
Fretbd. radius	16"
Neck width	Nut: 48 mm; 12th fret: 57,5 mm
Frets	2,4 x 0,9 Jumbo
Scale	68,58 cm/27"
Pickups	EMG-Humbucker 81-7, 60-7, active
Potis & Switches	Master volume, Pickup-switch (3-way)
Hardware	ETS-Bridge, Kluson locking tuners
Weight	3,4 kg
Leftie version	on request
Website	www.666strings.com
Price	2.999,- EUR, flightcase included

Preis-Leistung

Ulf Kaiser