



SADOWSKY

MetroLine

Verdine White

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Miss Disco bassist Dave Clarke puts Earth, Wind & Fire legend Verdine White's signature bass through its paces. Is this Sadowsky really a 'Shining Star'?

The wonderfully expressive bass-lines of Verdine White, the brilliant bassist in one of the greatest bands of all time – Earth, Wind & Fire – have helped to propel his group to worldwide record sales just shy of 100 million. Global hits such as 'Boogie Wonderland', 'September', 'Shining Star' and 'Let's Groove Tonight' have quite rightly seen EWF receive a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.

In addition, the band has been inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame, the Songwriters Hall Of Fame and the Vocal Group Hall Of Fame. They also have their own star on the Hollywood Walk Of Fame, among dozens of other notable accolades. Most importantly from our point of view, White received a richly-deserved Lifetime



£3099

Achievement Award from us in 2008. With all this in mind, you'd expect Sadowsky's MetroLine Verdine White signature bass to reflect his 50 years of playing experience and be equipped with a wide tonal palette. You'd want it to cover everything from the unapologetic heavy-funk filth of a back-in-the-day Fifties P-Bass to the more articulate, punchier sounds of a Jazz, which White used for many years.

After playing Sadowsky basses for the past 20 years, we're pretty sure that Verdine knows exactly what he wants – and this glittering instrument is it. For some extra proverbial icing on this cake, White's signature bass is designed as a tribute to his late brother and EWF bandmate Maurice, with a portion of the proceeds from each bass being donated to the not-for-profit Verdine White Performing Arts Center in LA.

Build Quality

Out of the case, the first thing I noticed was just how light this bass is. This is thanks in no small part to its undersized J-style body of chambered alder, weighing in around eight pounds. It's a joy to look at, too, with the classic solid Olympic white high-polish finish contrasting beautifully with the absolutely gorgeous 21 silver nickel-fretted Morado fingerboard. The six-bolt-on maple neck tapers down to a Jazz-sized 1.5" Just-A-Nut III nut, and the bass is fitted with Sadowsky chrome hardware, which includes open-gear machine heads, a bridge fitted with a quick string release facility, and S-security locks.

The chambered body is loaded with a passive P-style pickup at the neck and a passive hum-cancelling J-style pickup in the Sixties position near the bridge, with two-way active electronics.



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Price | £3099

Made in | Korea

Body | Chambered American Red Alder

Neck | Maple

Neck join | Bolt-on, six bolts

Nut width | 1.5"

Fingerboard | Morado (Pau Ferro),

34" scale

Pickups | Passive Sadowsky P-Style (neck), passive Sadowsky hum-cancelling J-Style (bridge)

Electronics | Active Sadowsky electronics (bass and treble boost)

Controls | Volume, balance, Vintage

Tone Control (push/pull), treble and bass (stacked)

Bridge | Sadowsky bridge with quick string release

Case/gig bag included | Sadowsky Portabag

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Sounds amazing, plays great, beautifully built, very light

Minus | None, although it's expensive

Overall | A truly beautiful instrument befitting a bona fide legend

BGM RATING

BUILD QUALITY



SOUND QUALITY



VALUE



Make no mistake, this is an awesome bass that's absolutely worthy of your full attention...

The control pots cover volume, balance, stacked bass and treble EQ, and Vintage Tone Control, which has a push/pull function to bypass the preamp. Under examination, if it sounds as good as the quality of its components, the large hole in your bank balance will be justified.

Sounds And Playability

With easy access to such a huge range of tones, it didn't take me long to appreciate the versatility of this bass. It's not an exaggeration to say I was able to dial in everything from cabinet-rattling dub tones all the way through to an extremely brittle top end. Personally, I don't know anyone who would choose to have that level of top in their sound, but that's not the point; with such a wide sonic spectrum to play with, I'd be surprised if you couldn't find a sound you really like.

Of course, by design the White signature model has P-Bass and J-Bass sounds at its heart, with the push/pull active electronics providing the boosted option should you prefer, as its owner himself does. Not surprisingly, the Sadowsky pickups sound fantastic; I found

myself playing very hard indeed, just for the joy of digging out the satisfying responses of which this bass is capable. On a personal level, finding the sounds I require – a thunderous bottom end, with added articulation from the midrange and top end accessed when required by playing harder – was a breeze.

Conclusion

Make no mistake, this is an awesome bass that's absolutely worthy of your full attention, with faultless build quality, superb playability and heavyweight sounds from a very light instrument. Its price point may be out of reach of many players, especially after a year and counting of no gigs thanks to the pandemic – but those who do decide to take the plunge can rest assured that they will be getting excellent value.

Verdine White wanted this instrument to replicate the sound of his bass on EWF records in a live setting – that's a lot of different sounds and a lot of different styles. His Sadowsky certainly delivers on that remit. It's also a fitting tribute to Maurice. Class acts all round. **T**

