

STATUS SYMBOL

The Series 3000 Status Bass

Traditionally Status basses, designed and made by Rob Green, have been built around a one-piece carbon graphite, central neck/body section. The latest idea however has reverted to the more standard arrangement . . .



The Series 3000 bass is of the bolt-on neck design, although in true Status style the neck is still of carbon graphite composite and finished in polyester. It is perfectly moulded and smoothed at every point, with a solid black, rather than a woven finish. The top of the neck tapers slightly, and attached to the front of the fingerboard is a solid brass string retainer/nut which sits directly behind the zero fret. There are two holes for string insertion; the lower hole (nearest the nut) is provided for double ball-end strings and the upper hole for conventional types, whereby the string is threaded through and clamped down by a grub screw – four of these are provided along with the necessary Allen keys.

The bridge and tailpiece are also brass and finished in gold EP lacquer. The design of the bridge, in user terms, is less than perfect; all four saddles are held in place by two, side mounted Allen bolts which keep the saddles in place by friction, when tightened. This means that on slackening, all the saddles fall loose, making intonation adjustments somewhat fiddly.

Four tuners sit behind the

tailpiece – the headless design's machineheads, in effect. I have encountered flaws in this design on other instruments. For example, I normally use a headless fretless bass, which uses similar knurled tuners with the addition of a centre Allen key adjustment. But such is the design that the bass actually has to sit on the tuners when at rest and one might suppose they would be moved slightly with the weight – and thus the tuning would suffer whenever the instrument is stood up or picked up. But because the tuners are so impossibly stiff, they don't move. I've found the disadvantages of these extremely stiff tuners far outweigh their basic advantage because tuning, on the whole, is extremely difficult and any degree of finer tuning is impossible. I've had to get used to balancing the bass and the inserted Allen key, while plucking the string each time I adjust the tuning – unnecessarily awkward I feel.

In contrast Status boast about the smoothness and efficiency of their end-pull tuners, and in fact these are sensitive and very easy to turn. Nor are they the main pressure point when the bass is upright – it stands on the two strap buttons positioned either side of the tailpiece and the bridge is recessed and well away from accidental detuning.

The fingerboard is phenolic, and houses 24 frets which are all beautifully seated (the scale length is 86.4cm/34½"). Various body materials are available but this particular model is built of 'American Cherry'. The three sections are glued and the wood sprayed with some sort of sealant. Despite this finish, the quality of which did meet with some disapproval from various quarters – Neville likened it to an MFI door! – the grain is perfectly presented. The lines of contour are angular rather than rounded, which is very stylish, and the front has been left nicely uncluttered with just three controls and a jack socket. The two single coil pickups are 'Status Hyperactive J Type'. Control cavity and battery compartment are housed on the back of the bass – the former is very neatly laid out and the latter set some distance away. Incidentally the 3000 takes two PP3 batteries.

Playability

My initial reaction on plugging this bass in was that it was the most perfect instrument I had reviewed. A rather extreme comment perhaps, as there might be shortcomings when used in a general application, but certainly for all the time I played it I was thoroughly pleased with the range and quality of sound.

With the volume up and the controls centred the tone tends towards the treble, but while there isn't a bass control, setting the pan pot more to the bass pickup and adjusting the treble control accordingly, you can achieve a wonderfully mellow and rounded sound. Indeed, altering the balance of the pickups and using the treble boost and cut gives a surprisingly wide selection.

Whatever the tone is set to, the sound never loses its marvellous ringing sustain (the strings were Bass Centre Elites), the sound always remaining very clear and uncluttered. Having a two octave range is so useful it makes you wish it were standard – there is so much you can do at the top of the neck to add interest and finish off phrasing.

At the danger of sounding completely sycophantic I must add that the neck is perfect; very easy, very fast . . . simply ideal.

However I can make one criticism – albeit small – the lower horn could be dressed further away from the neck as it does tend to restrict left hand movement right at the very top of the fingerboard, especially for chords.

Conclusion

To the uninitiated, Status basses join Trace Elliot amps in their general synonymity with slap bass playing. Reviewing this Series 3000, however, has quelled any preconceptions I had. It is a versatile instrument, with a beautiful, rich tone . . . and I want one!

RRP; £834.00 (inc case)

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