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UK £4.25 Issue 63 February 2011











# Mayones

## Patriot MR

Designed in conjunction with Italian bassist Maurizio Rolli, the Patriot MR looks to define a new sound in the low-frequency universe. **Nick Wells writes...**

**B**est known for his virtuosic bass work with the likes of Mike Stern, Hiram Bullock and Alex Acuna, not to mention his brilliant reinterpretations of Jaco Pastorius tunes from his 2001 recording *Moodswings: A Tribute To Jaco Pastorius*, the Patriot MR is a result of Italian bassist Maurizio Rolli's association with Polish bass builders Mayones. 'We met at the Musikmesse in Frankfurt,' recalls Mayones co-owner, Dawid Dzielwski. 'Maurizio wasn't sure if he wanted a new bass, but he was searching for something and so I offered to build him a custom instrument designed to his own specifications. We spent around six or seven months building it – we'd send him pictures and he'd reply with his comments, but we didn't get a chance to meet during the building process, so it was a real experiment. When we were finally able to send him the bass, he was amazed.'

### Body and Neck

The Patriot's curvaceous body outline is coupled with some rather specific features,

including a Gary Willis-style finger ramp, a distinctive f-hole and a creamy-white spruce top. More commonly used for its strength-to-weight ratio as an acoustic guitar top wood, the pale spruce is a far cry from the rich figuring of more commonly used exotic top woods but should oxidise and darken over time.

The slim and streamlined body profile is comfortable and well balanced, yet retains enough presence to not feel too lightweight. There's a nice cutaway and the neck-through design makes the higher register easy to reach. The body itself comprises a profiled flame maple back and a central wenge neck-through section capped with the spruce top. Two hollow 'tone chambers', each connected by a 2-centimetre hole through the central section, allow more air to resonate inside the body for a deeper bass tone.

The finger ramp is also spruce and marks another of the Patriot's player-friendly features. In most cases, playing with your picking hand positioned over a pickup produces a nice punchy sound and provides a convenient place to rest

your thumb, while moving your hand closer towards the neck gives access to a range of fuller sounds but can feel less secure. With the finger ramp you have the feeling of having something beneath your fingers in all of those different positions, making them just as comfortable. It may not be to everyone's taste, but we were very impressed.

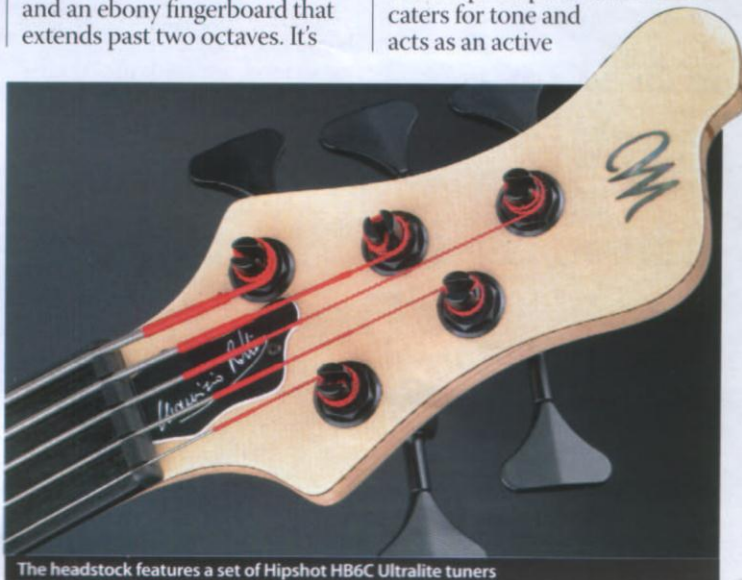
The 9-ply maple/mahogany fretless neck has a 35-inch scale and an ebony fingerboard that extends past two octaves. It's

unlined, but with short linear markers running along the bass side of the board plus side dot markers and mother-of-pearl dots on the lower edge. It's an ideal compromise for those after a plain unlined neck, but who wouldn't say no to a little help with intonation.

### Hardware

The Patriot is fitted out with Hipshot HB6C Ultralite tuners, Schaller straplocks and a Switchcraft locking jack input. The Mayones two-piece ebony bridge has RMC piezo saddles wired to a Gregory PreAmps GP-PB1 Mayo piezo preamp. There's also a single magnetic pickup, a Nordstrand Fat Stack, wired to an Aguilar OBP-3 active preamp. Both are powered by 9 V batteries housed in separate compartments on the rear side of the body.

The controls comprise a master volume push/pull knob that doubles to split the Nordstrand pickup coils, a second push/pull control that caters for tone and acts as an active



The headstock features a set of Hipshot HB6C Ultralite tuners





## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

### MAYONES PATRIOT MR PRICE: £ 2,995

Made in: Poland

Scale length: 863 mm (34 inches)

Neck: 9-ply, maple-mahogany, neck-through

Fingerboard: Ebony

Body: Flamed maple back, wenge middle & spruce top, semi-hollow

Pickups: 1 x Nordstrand Fat Stack

Electronics: Gregory PreAmps GP-PB1 Mayo bass piezo preamp, Aguilar OBP-3 active preamp

Controls: 1 x volume (push/pull for coil splitting), 1 x tone Contour (push/pull active/passive), 1 x piezo blend, bass, treble and mid (push/pull for mid selection) EQ controls

Tuners: Hipshot HB6C Ultralite

Electronics: Master volume, passive tone, stacked active 4-band EQ controls, 4 x 2-way push-buttons for active/passive, series/parallel, neck & bridge pickup selection

Bridge: Mayones 2-piece ebony bridge with RMC piezo saddles

Finish: Natural, matt

Weight: 4.01 kg (8.4 lb)

## CONTACT DETAILS

Bass Direct

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www.mayones.com

www.bassdirect.co.uk

## WHAT WE THINK

**Plus:** Nicely shaped body and a good range of tones. We loved the finger ramp.

**Minus:** Its player-specific design might put some players off.

**Overall:** A very playable and strong-sounding fretless.

## BGM RATING OUT OF FIVE

BGM RATING



The Patriot MR boasts a curvaceous body outline and a pretty specific feature set

bypass, bass, mid and treble EQ controls, and a blend control to balance the output of the piezo system and the magnetic pickup. It's a pretty specific set-up that gives the Patriot MR real identity.

## Sounds

The combination of hard maple, the two central tone chambers and the spruce top lend the Patriot a very balanced and natural bass sound. There's a nice open mid range too, with tight lows and plenty of high-frequency attack, which offset some of the compressed sounds you often get with neck-through basses.

There's a wonderfully smooth blend between the pickup and piezo level, and with the Aguilar three-band EQ, active/passive bypass and coil splittable Nordstrand pickup there are plenty of tone-shaping options available, but the sounds never become too extreme or lose the sonic character of the bass. The ebony board and roundwound strings give the fretless sound more bite, and using the ramp you can easily manoeuvre your playing hand to uncover a range of different tones. The ramp also prevents you from 'digging in' too hard, so you can play with a softer attack and crank your amp a little more. This way you still get the initial attack from the speaker, but the note

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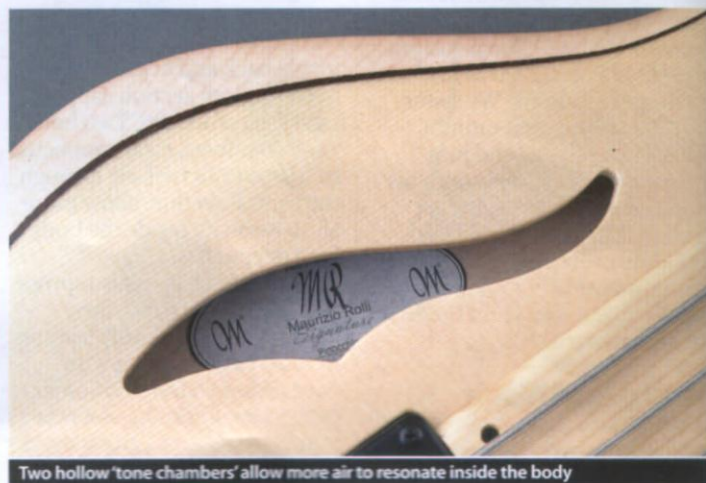
that follows is much louder as the string settles quicker and continues to vibrate for longer. It seems to work particularly well with the fretless neck.

## Conclusion

We really liked the Patriot MR, though it is quite a specific beast. We had some initial reservations in terms of its looks and some of the more quirky features, but it remains a great bass to play. The basic design is sleek and comfortable and the neck is very playable, though

some may find the 35-inch scale hard work. Above all, the Patriot MR has got identity and real character.

It's not the most resonant fretless tone we've ever heard, and at times the Patriot lacks a little low-end 'mwahhh', but it's articulate and dynamic, particularly in the mid range, and will be relevant in any situation where you're required to play more melodically or venture further up the neck without losing definition in the lower register.



Two hollow 'tone chambers' allow more air to resonate inside the body