

Michael

VAN HALEN

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA, 1992: "I'd like to introduce the fourth and fifth members of Van Halen," announces singer Sammy Hagar. "Prepare yourself for a pint-sized, whiskey-drinkin', crazy mother, because he's about to take the loudest, wildest, and most unusual rock & roll bass solo you've ever heard. Here they are—Mr. Michael Anthony and Mr. Jack Daniels!"

After a swig from a half-empty bottle of Tennessee sippin' whiskey, Anthony cruises into his solo extravaganza. As he lays

pick to roundwound, his trademark J.D. bottle-shaped bass pours out mellow, delay-enhanced notes that rise to the rafters. Moments later the serenity ends, as a brutal blow to the top of Old #7 sends a wave of flanged, fuzz-drenched riffs crashing into the gathering. But Mike's just getting warmed up: Scurrying back and forth on the stage, he quotes a phrase from "The Star-Spangled Banner," kicks a stranded beach ball off the stage-right riser, and makes a left-hand turn towards Mt. Ampeg—finding himself face-

to-face with 16 SVT 8x10s. (That's 128 speakers, kids!)

And then the crowd-killing finale: standing inches away

from the towering wall of cabs, Anthony lashes out and beats them with his hands until they howl with feedback, engulfing him in ear-shattering squeals. The crowd roars its approval. Welcome to "Ultra Bass," a foundation-shaking exhibition described by one writer as

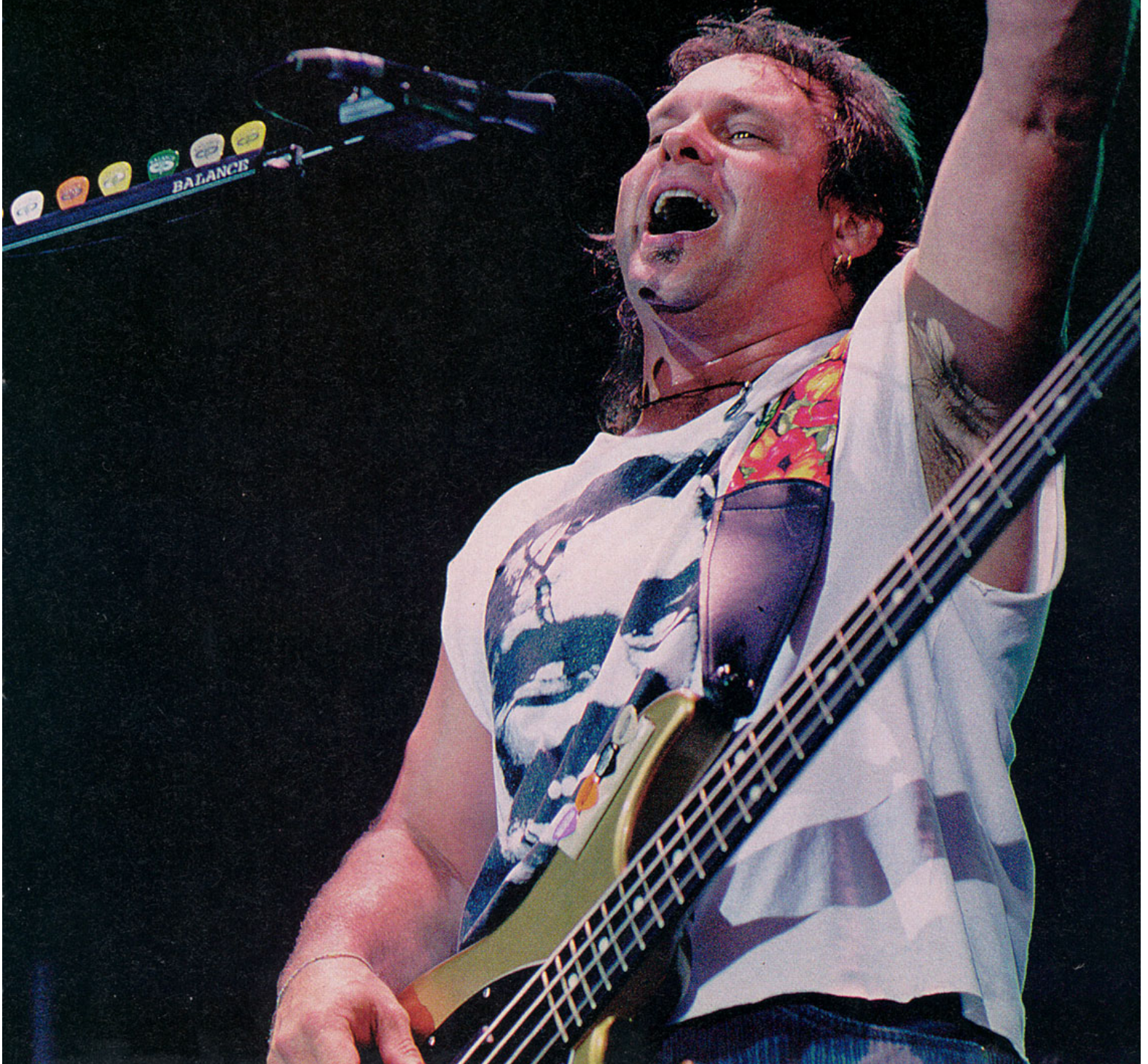
DI!



BOTTOMS

BY SCOTT MALANDRONE

Anthony



MICHAEL ANTHONY *continued*

with a couple of guys on our crew, and we put together the first Jack Daniels bass. I had Charvel make the body and neck, and I added the tuners from another bass and got a Zeta piezo bridge. It was slapped together, but it didn't sound half bad.

The next thing you know, I had another one built by James Tyler in L.A. [Ed. Note: According to Paul Slagle of Tyler Guitars, Mike's second J.D. bass has an alder body, maple neck, rosewood fingerboard, and a Zeta piezo bridge connected to a James Demeter preamp. Anthony also owns another Tyler-built bass in the shape of a Tabasco bottle.] Originally, the J.D. bass was more of a novelty, but it was one of those things that caught on. All of a sudden, it became part of the show, part of my personality.

And free J.D. for the whole tour!

There you go! I'm a member of the Tennessee Squires, which is a club for dedicated J.D. drinkers; I get invited to all their 'coon hunts and special events. They have a museum in Lynchburg, Tennessee, so I sent them a blown-up photo of me playing the bass live, and they hung it on the wall.

How has Eddie's recent sobriety changed the band?

It started in the studio. The hardest thing for

A SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

With Van Halen: (all on Warner Bros.) *Balance*, *Van Halen Live: Right Here, Right Now*, *For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge*, *OU812*, *5150*, *1984*, *Diver Down*, *Fair Warning*, *Women and Children First*, *Van Halen II*, *Van Halen*.

him was realizing that he didn't need to drink to play guitar—and once that happened, he started playing stuff that surprised even himself. It also carried over live; after a week, we all said, "This is the best beginning of a tour we've ever had." It's like there are no bad shows now.

It affected me, too. Now I have maybe half a beer while we're playing, where I used to slam Jack during the entire show. I'd do it for the same reason Ed did it—I was nervous. When Ed stopped drinking, I took it upon myself and said, "I don't need to drink either." Maybe it's all a part of growing up; obviously the body can't handle it the way it used to. But I'm honestly having a lot more fun playing. Now we judge the shows by the audience, because we know we're kickin' ass every night.

Is Van Halen still the ultimate gig for you, or is there something else you'd like to try?

No, Van Halen is it. If there were no more Van Halen, I'd still be doing something musically—but as far as looking for another band to start, that's not for me. Maybe I'd get into producing, but this is *the* band.

What would a world without bass be like?

A world without bass? Hmm ... like a world without women. [Laughs.] You figure out how much you need it!

New Gear

By Scott Malandrone

1. Aria basses. The AVB-SB Series of basses was designed in conjunction with Steve Bailey. The AVB-SB-6FL is a 6-string fretless (fretted available) that has an ash body, a bolt-on maple neck with ebony fingerboard, two J-style humbucking pickups, and volume, bass, and treble controls with adjustable mid and gain trim. Black hardware is standard. List price is \$1,199.99. The series is also available in fretted and fretless 4- and 5-string models with J-style single-coil pickups; list prices are \$899.99 for the 4 and \$999.99 for the 5. Aria, 9244 Commerce Hwy., Pennsauken, NJ 08110; (800) 877-7789.

2. Aguilar Electronics preamp. Alex Aguilar designed the active electronics found in Sadowsky basses, and Roger Sadowsky says the Aguilar Tube Bass preamp is the "best piece of bass amplification equipment I've heard." According to Aguilar, the two-rackspace DB 680 (\$1,800 list) is an "extremely high-end preamp designed for studio and live applications." It features two switchable inputs, dual parametric EQs with variable FREQUENCY (180Hz–1.2kHz/ 1.3kHz–7.5kHz), BANDWIDTH (Q), and LEVEL (± 12 dB) controls; bass (± 12 dB @ 40Hz) and treble (± 12 dB @ 4kHz) shelving controls; and BRIGHT (pre-emphasis



@ 5kHz–7kHz) and DEEP switches (30Hz). A parallel, stereo effects loop, variable crossover (100Hz–1kHz), and balanced XLR and tuner-output jacks are also included. Aguilar Electronics, 1600 Broadway, Suite 1004T, New York, NY 10019; (212) 757-2823.

Surine bass. Surine's Protocol bass has been

Send info to:

New Gear
BASS PLAYER
411 Borel Ave., Suite 100
San Mateo, CA 94402

updated with a new body shape and a midrange-boost control. Standard features of the neck-through instrument include a mahogany body core with the customer's choice of exotic top, a five-piece flame-maple neck with 24-fret ebony fingerboard, Bartolini PJ pickups with active

TCT preamp, Gotoh tuners, and a Wilkinson bridge. The Protocol is available in 4-, 5-, and 6-string models; list prices are \$2,895, \$3,095, and \$3,295, respectively. Fretless and left-handed versions are available. Surine, Box 6440, Denver, CO 80206; (303) 388-3956.

3. Marshall combo amps. The latest additions to Marshall's bass-amplification line are the BS30 and BS65 combos; both feature the company's Valvestate technology, which is designed to emulate tube circuitry. According to Marshall, Bass-State provides a "fat, smoother, more rounded bottom end and strong, vibrant treble." The BS30 is a 30-watt 1x10 combo with gain and bass/mid/treble controls, as well as an effects loop and line-out/headphone jacks. List price is \$379. Its bigger brother, the 65-watt BS65, features a custom-built 12" speaker, master volume, gain, bass/mid/treble controls, 5-band graphic EQ, "soft-knee" compressor with LED, effects loop, and a line-output jack.

List price is \$569. Marshall, 89 Frost St., Westbury, NY 11590; (516) 333-9100.

Dave Maize bass. The Dave Maize Fretless Acoustic Bass Guitar features a cedar or rosewood top, a phenolic or wood fingerboard, and a variety of available woods for the back, sides, and neck. Other features of this handbuilt bass include Sperzel locking tuners, Stringsaver nut and saddle, and wood bindings. Options include a cutaway body, Highlander pickup with "easy-access" battery holder, and hardshell case. List price for the 4-string Fretless is \$2,025; the 5-string is



\$2,250. Dave Maize, 999 Holton Rd., Talent, OR 97540; (503) 535-9052.

Schack basses. The basses in Schack's Unique Bolt-On Series of basses are handcrafted in Germany. Features include a bubinga body, maple neck with ebony fingerboard, and Basstec

Tyler basses. The Tyler Five String features a mahogany/alder body, bolt-on maple neck, and 24-fret pau ferro fingerboard. Electronics include two "exclusive-spec" Tyler pickups connected to a Demeter preamp with master volume, buffered blend, gain (0dB–+10dB), and switchable bass (60Hz–120Hz), midrange (400Hz–800Hz), and treble (1.2kHz–2.5kHz) controls that offer ± 25 dB. Custom Hipshot tuning machines and a Wilkinson bridge complete the package. List price is \$2,925. The 35" Scale Five String (pictured) is similar to the standard Five, but features a different body shape to complement the bass's "extra, angry inch." List price is \$3,025. Options for the 35" include a 1/4" exotic-wood top with "bent-over arm contour" (\$300) and Tyler-spec Seymour Duncan/Basslines pickups. Fretless versions of both basses are available for an extra \$100. Tyler, 6166 Sepulveda Blvd., Van Nuys, CA 91411; (818) 901-0278.

