

## JW 4 STRING

This bass came about with the request of keeping it simple but giving it that *something*. The commission itself was a challenge, its owner has so many other basses but he wanted this Instrument to take centre place.

Quite a challenge as I generally don't do *simple*. Please visit your local music shop and buy something instead, plenty of simple available there!!

I decided to go against my instincts and opted for another piece of Northern ash. The body- a big thick 2 inch piece of Northern Ash, which I could carve and shape to hopefully meet its future owner's requests. I then married this to my usual extended neck joint and tuning fork neck construction methods.



The neck is a 9 piece laminate of Padauk, Purple heart and maple. I carried the overall purple theme forward onto the neck. The largely Padauk and Purple Heart neck tap and ring wonderfully together.



At first glance the bass is deceptively plain, until you study its details. Flip it over and the beautiful neck is revealed. Look closely at the body and its complex contours to reveal hidden ergonomics and deceptively clean lines.

The neck features a Madagascar Ebony fingerboard, with smooth rolled edges and blind binding. Internally sits a two way adjustable truss rod, wheel style at the heel. The neck is fitted using 8 screws and again features an extended footing. No inlays were requested on the face of the fingerboard-instead a flawless piece of jet black ebony sits proudly on the neck. The side position markers are solid mother of pearl, but inspection shows they are cigar shaped. These are clearly visible to the player.

The body's obvious simplicity understates its practicality. Northern Ash is not a wood of choice because of its weight, but often overlooked for its tonal qualities. Find the right piece for the right bass and it's a no brainer. In the end, the bass weighed 3.7 Kg but balanced perfectly.



The weight distribution ended up perfect, the bass sits solidly on its giant owner and the tone is tight, solid and focussed. Despite only a single pickup, the tonal variations and subtleties are almost endless and are still being explored. It turned out to be exactly what he was after. The hardware is all Japanese and features the Gotoh GB350 Ultralite machine heads along with a multi tonal bridge. Dunlop Flush mount Straploks round off the clean look. The bass is powered by 18 V and a dual flip out battery box, also flush mounted, makes battery change outs quick and painless.





Simplicity is rounded off by fitting an EMG MM style pickup. One single dual pot. Volume and tone thanks-oh and a blue light-so that the owner knows it's 'on'!

The finish is a 2 stage colour system and the deep Midnight Delight Purple just looks plain sexy.

The bass is relatively small itself-at first a bit of a mismatch to its near 6'8 owner. Upon delivery it almost seemed toothpick like, and I was horrified that just maybe, I had it wrong. However the story ends exactly as intended-the bass sits proudly amongst his collection-unmatched by all the others (the owners own words). Mission accomplished.

As a finishing touch I made a portable neck rest, made from left over neck blank stock as well as a stainless steel truss rod adjustment tool.

