

## HIGH STREET VS INTERNET

The OFT steps in, **p21**



## GUITAR SPECIAL

Who's pulling the strings? **p30**



## CHINA CRISIS

Crisis? What crisis? **p36**



## NEW TRACES

The brand bounces back, **p50**



# MUSIC TRADE NEWS

THE BUSINESS MAGAZINE FOR MI PROFESSIONALS

## Achard returns with new line

Ken Achard, who retired as Managing Director of Peavey UK three years ago, has announced his return to the MI industry with a brand new venture.

Achard, who was responsible for introducing Peavey to the UK in the 1970s, is heading a new company called Ashton Music Ltd that will import and distribute a broad range of Australian-designed MI products from guitars, amps, keyboards and drums to wind and brass instruments.

Claimed to be the fastest-growing brand in Australasia, with the best-selling guitar range, Ashton's official launch date of 22nd March was marked by a reception at Australia House in London, where selected dealers were invited to view the range and meet the Ashton team.

The UK company is based near Peterborough, and Achard will be supported by his son, Arthur, who is leaving specialist engine building to enter the MI trade for the first time in order to handle customer services at Ashton Music Ltd. Achard Jnr is also a drummer.

"It's got more and more difficult for the specialist independent music store, which is the core and the lifeblood of our industry, to compete,"



comments Achard. "It's not necessarily about pricing so much as the margin, and I believe Ashton is offering a house brand that will offer a profit stream and a comprehensive range."

Speaking exclusively to MTN, Achard draws a parallel with one very significant previous experience. "There's such a sense of déjà-vu here," he says. "In 1973 I returned

from a trade show in America and I knew, with Peavey, that I was bringing home a range of products that would offer UK dealers profitability, offer consumers value for money and which had to fly - the rest, as they say, is history. I really do feel a very similar sense with Ashton."

**Gary Cooper**

▶ THE BOOMERANG EFFECT  
- News Insight, p21

## TRIPLE WHAMMY FOR KAHLER

The renowned Kahler brand of US-made tremolos and bridges returns to the Frankfurt Musik Messe this month with three new ranges - after a gap of 11 years.

The new ranges are said to offer players and manufacturers a choice of configurations to create their own personal tone and style, based on a universal template that includes onboard tuners and 6-way adjustable saddles: front to back for intonation; up and down for string action and radius matching; and side to side for string spacing.

The renaissance begins with the 2200 stud-mount series and the 2300 flat-mount series for guitar. The 2200 is designed to work with tune-o-matic style tailpieces, while the 2300 is for flat-plate bridges. Both series have the same optional variations, such as the 'Profiler' with a steel cam and stainless-steel saddles; the 'Vindicator' combining an aluminium cam and brass saddles for a lightweight alternative; the 'Special' with brass cam and stainless-steel saddles; and the 'Classic' with brass-on-brass.

The third new range is the 2400 Bass series of tremolo systems, featuring cams and



saddles hand made from 360HH brass and designed to drop onto any flat top bass. All models are available in both left-handed and right-handed configurations, and are all available in the company's three designated finishes: 'Bright Chrome', with the suffix C; 'Black Chrome', with the suffix K; or 'Gold', with the suffix G.

"Kahler truly can offer the end user the highest-quality product," comments General Manager Josh Vittek. "For the OEMs and luthiers they're products that are innovative, and for the retailers they're profitable. We have the willingness to take the instrument manufacturer, retailer and end user into account when making decisions on our products."

Kahler International is exhibiting at the Frankfurt Musik Messe on stand E20, which is in Hall 4.0.

www.kahlerusa.com  
**Phil Ward**

# CHAIN OF EVENTS

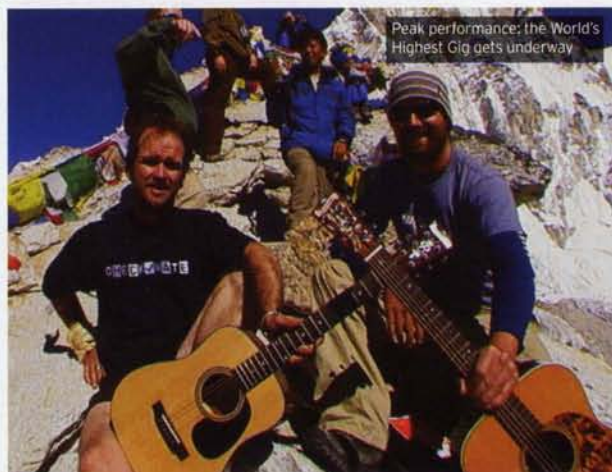
## Blueridge mountain, not Virginia: record

↙ A Blueridge guitar has played the highest open-air note on Earth by playing at an altitude of 5,540m at an event dubbed 'The World's Highest Gig'.

With no stage, no lights and a small crowd cheering on, Martin Harley played a Blueridge BR 163 guitar at Kalapathar on Mount Everest. The event took place 300m above the Everest base camp in the Himalayas to set the new world mark. Harley is an accomplished singer/songwriter who draws his influences from blues, folk and rock.

An award-winning model in the category for acoustic guitars under £500, the BR 163 features solid wood construction with a solid spruce top, solid rosewood back and sides, mahogany neck and a rosewood fingerboard.

"Playing in such thin air, the BR 163 responded superbly in the extreme conditions," says



Harley. "Battling temperatures of as low as -12°C, the BR 163 stayed firm with strings responding well, while still projecting a great sound and volume. I am impressed with the BR 163's versatility and sturdiness – it's a perfect little blues and bluegrass guitar."

Harley was part of a group of musicians who ventured to Everest to play the World's

Highest Gig in order to raise money for the Nepal Balbalka Trust, which aims to curb poverty in the Nepalese community through investment in education, healthcare, welfare and agriculture.

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## Violin factory takes a bow

↙ Stentor Music is celebrating the 10th anniversary of its violin factory in Jiangsu, China, during which time it has doubled in size. The factory now supplies distributors in all the developed markets worldwide.

"We were the first company to gain approval to open a 100%-owned subsidiary in China, and are very proud of the quality that we have achieved in this 10 years," says Stentor MD Michael Doughty. "The anniversary was celebrated with an

outing to a newly opened resort in a historic park, and the day was enjoyed by all."

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The three Directors of Stentor Music enjoy a day out with factory managers and department heads.



## New lines from Dixies

↙ Dixies Music, the UK distributor for the German-manufactured Duesenberg guitar range, has a new solid-bodied model, the 49 ER (pronounced 'forty-niner').

The 49 ER is the first design from Duesenberg's owner and designer Dieter Golsdorf to feature a set-in mahogany neck. Featuring a 68mm mahogany body with a 30mm maple top, the 49 ER also has a rosewood fingerboard with jumbo frets, a 12-inch radius and a 25.5-inch scale.

The classic Duesenberg pickup system offers a P90 at the neck and 'crunchbucker' at the bridge, but instead of a stop-bar design the 49 ER has a strings-through-body design with adjustable height ferrules, which allow users to adjust both string tension and angle.

The 49 ER comes in Amber (the 'Keith Richards' model) and Black at SRP £945, including hard case, with a Blue Pearl version available at SRP £995, also including a hard case.

Dixie Kidd has also secured the UK distribution for Delano Custom bass pickups, manufactured by Reinhard Jedamzik in Recklinghausen, Germany. Delano offers Alnico, ceramic and ferrite pickups for 4-, 5- and 6-string basses.  
Gary Cooper

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