

## GEAR DEAN RAZORBACK

£995

# DEAN RAZORBACK

DIMEBAG'S SIX-STRING METAL MASTERPIECE IS HERE AT LAST! 'WALK' THIS WAY... WORDS: ED MITCHELL

### > THE SIZZLE

A Razorback is one mean fucking pig. This anti-social porker has a fearsome reputation and doesn't take shit from anybody. It stalks the state of Texas brandishing a set of intimidating spiky bits and a high pitched squeal designed to put the wind up anyone who reckons they're tasty enough to have a go. It'll run you down like a fucking freight train. *Babe: Pig In The City*, this thing ain't.

So, as you can see, it makes perfect sense that the late Dimebag Darrell would name his self-designed six-string metal hog in honour of these badass bacon butties on legs. Like its porcine inspiration, Dime's swine has spiky protrusions, looks meaner than Hulk Hogan in barbed wire underpants and, in the right hands, squeals like an absolute bastard. We'll bet that's music to your ears. In fact, why don't we just end the review here and we'll see you down the guitar shop? We'll bet Dime fans have been crying themselves to sleep every night for the past six months thinking about this guitar: ever since we unveiled it in our NAMM Show report last year. Well, it's here at last. Trust us, we're as excited about getting our hands on the Razorback as you are. Oh, to hell with it... let's do this review anyway. £995 is a lot of cash so we need to know if Dime was as gifted working on a drawing board as he was shredding his bollocks off...

### WHAT'S IT GOT?

It's a metal maniac's wish list come true. We've covered the scary name. We all agree that 'Razorback' sounds hard as fuck, yeah? Let's get down to the lumber

### WHO'S IT FOR?

You know who you are!

### INFORMATION

**ORIGIN:** China  
**BODY:** Mahogany  
**NECK:** Mahogany, set-in  
**FINGERBOARD:** Rosewood, with razorblade inlay  
**FRETS:** 22 jumbo  
**PICKUPS:** Seymour Duncan SH-13 Dimebucker (bridge), Dean humbucker (neck)  
**CONTROLS:** 2 x volume, master tone, three-way pickup selector switch  
**HARDWARE:** Black licensed Floyd Rose vibrato with locking top nut, Grover machineheads  
**CASE:** Fitted hard case included  
**LEFT-HANDERS:** No  
**CONTACT:** Bill Lewington 01268 413366  
**WEB:** www.deanguitars.com

### ALTERNATIVELY

Dean USA Rebel Razorback – £4,359  
Dean USA Rust Razorback – £3,479

of the beast. How about a thick slab of mahogany fashioned into an extreme but strangely beautiful body shape? Check. Need something tasty in the engine room? Dime's got your back. The Razorback packs a pair of high output humbuckers including Dime's favourite: the Seymour Duncan Dimebucker model that he used to such devastating effect on all those Pantera and DamagePlan songs. This Chinese-made edition of the Razorback may cost much less than the US-built guitars, but Dean are still providing the tools you need to get a killer metal sound. If

your plan is to sound like Dime – a tall order if ever there was one – then the Razorback is surely the easiest way to get there. Please note that we didn't say this guitar could make you play like the great man. But at least you'll look cool as fuck trying...

The other sexy piece of the jigsaw puzzle is the Licensed Floyd Rose vibrato. If you like to divebomb then you'll be happier than a pig in you know what with this vibrato. It works in the usual way – with a locking top nut – and looks like a solid piece of kit. We're expecting great things like tuning stability



The Razorback's 'Dime Traction' controls feature non-slip nobbly bits

Dime designed the awesome headstock on the Razorback. How cool is that?

and a good easy action with this Floyd. We'll soon find out if it cuts the mustard. It's good to see that despite the fact that Dean has fitted a double locking Floyd they haven't skimped on the machineheads. Round the back of the headstock you'll find a set of chunky Grover machines in the same black finish as the rest of the hardware. The rosewood fingerboard is loaded with 22 jumbo frets separated with v-shaped inlays. Between the 11th and 12th fret lies a seriously cool razorblade inlay.

You can't have failed to notice the awesome V-shaped headstock. It makes this guitar look like it's 'throwing horns' to old

***"The bridge humbucker (or Dimebucker) was our first destination on the pickup selector. It howled into life and provided us with enough gain to blow a hole in a brick wall. And pinched harmonics – wow!"***

Lucifer himself. The head was designed by Dime. It's a cool variation of the original Dean headstock design. Dime also had a hand in the unusual 'Dime Traction' volume control knobs on the Razorback. They look like they've been punctured by red-hot needles to produce a smart gripping system. That should give you plenty of purchase – no matter how sweaty your digits get.

You'll also be interested to know that Dean offers the Razorback in a range of finishes. We're thrilled to bits with our Slime Bumblebee guitar, but we like our two-tone model too. There's also the 'Shard' that has a graphic of some lethal shards of bone. Take

a look at the other finish options on [www.deanguitars.com](http://www.deanguitars.com). More guitar porn than you can shake a box of tissues at. To finish up this section we should tell you that these Razorbacks come complete with a quality hard case with a Dean logo on the side. Well, you want people to know exactly what kind of weaponry you're packing.

#### BUILT TO LAST?

You might remember that TG once had a rather, er, difficult encounter with Dime in a hotel room in London. Dime was in an advanced stage of alcohol-fuelled mischief. It was all 'pussy' this and 'muthafucker' that. Eventually, to TG's surprise a guitar was thrown across the room. It broke. There's a lesson in there for us all: abuse your guitar and it will become fucked. When you're dealing with a guitar with more points than a sheriff's badge, you have to take extra care. The Razorback is built to handle a sound thrashing, but in the hands of the feckless, the once pristine finish on the edges of the Razorback's horns will perish. So, if you want to keep your Razorback in good nick, keep a close watch on where you're pointing it. You could have someone's eye out.

#### HANDS ON

The first thing you notice when you lift the Razorback is just how much guitar you're dealing with. It's a big 'un, so if you're used to regular sized axes it might take a bit of getting used to. You have to be aware of where the back end is when you've got it in the playing position. Like we said, you don't want to damage the paintwork.

Playing this guitar is a joy. The neck is comfortable to grasp, but there's a

reassuring chunkiness that we really like. It actually has a V-shape profile, like some 50s Fender Stratocasters, and it fills your palm beautifully. The action on both Razorbacks we received was perfect, straight from the hard case. This quality set-up is something we've come to expect from Dean and they never disappoint. For our test we concentrated on the Green Slime finish model. Why? Well, it looked great in TG's bedroom mirror. That's all you need to know. So, we strapped the Razorback on, plugged it into our trusty Krank Distortus Maximus distortion pedal and headed to Dimesville. You surely won't be shocked when we tell you that the bridge humbucker – the Dimebucker – was our first destination on the three-way pickup selector switch. If you've ever tried the Dimebucker then you'll know what a meaty beast it is. It howled into life and provided us with enough gain to blow a hole in a brick wall. And pinched



## GEAR DEAN RAZORBACK

The Razorback comes loaded with Dime's signature Seymour Duncan Dimebucker pickup



harmonics – wow! Listen to James Uings putting the Razorback through its paces on the TG CD. Go on, listen to him squeal! This guitar is haunted by the spirit of Dime... his sound is in there. The other pickup positions are great too, especially the dark sustained menace of the Dean neck unit solo. It makes

***"The Razorback is another great addition to Dime's legacy. The guy so obviously loved the electric guitar and you can see it in every aspect of the design of the Razorback"***

the guitar pretty versatile. In fact, the Razorback cleans up nicely too. But that's hardly the point is it?

The Licensed Floyd Rose does everything that Uncle Floyd promised us. The example on our guitar came set up with a bouncy action. That means it'll do those fun Vai-style trills when you whack the bar. On the

flipside, bending two strings together will sound a bit out of tune. As long as you're not intending to play country pedal steel licks on the Razorback we reckon you'll be just fine. This is a shred machine, after all, and it does its job very well indeed.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

The Razorback is another great addition to Dime's impressive legacy. The guy so obviously loved the electric guitar and you can see it in every aspect of the design of the Razorback. It has everything that a modern metal player needs: awesome playability, crushing power and killer stage presence. We all knew he could play the shit out of the guitar, but who would've guessed that Dime was a great guitar designer? Not us, but we're sold on this particular labour of love. There is something truly wonderful about knowing your hero poured his own sweat and years of playing experience into the creation of your axe. In this case his efforts were well worth it. You may have noticed that the Razorback has picked up some celebrity fans recently. Zakk Wylde has added a custom-made Razorback with rusty bulls-eye graphic to his usual arsenal of Gibson Les Paul Customs. Trivium's Matt Heafy recently took delivery of a US Razorback Tribute model (see it on p.54!). Dime's Rebel Meets Rebel collaborator, David Allen Coe, is using a USA Rebel Razorback complete with a Southern Confederate flag graphic. Good enough for them, good enough for you...

We get the feeling that even if we hated this guitar it would still sell like hot cakes. Much of the first batch of Razorbacks was claimed before the folk at Bill Lewington, (Dean's official UK distributor) even got

their hands on them. We weren't in the slightest bit surprised. There has been a real buzz about these guitars since they were launched in the US. The great news is that they were worth the wait.

The Razorback is the kind of guitar that you gaze at adoringly before you go to bed. You switch off the light, and quickly turn it back on again for one last look before you get some Zs. It's all paid for, but you still can't quite believe that it's actually yours. Of course, £995 is a serious amount of cash, but in this case we reckon it's well worth the money and we've enjoyed the time we've spent with this fantastic guitar. It might be named after a pissed off piggy, but we can't help getting a warm feeling when we look at it. Speaking of pigs, we reckon you should route a Razorback out as soon as possible. If you don't, well let's just say it could be one of your 'rasher' decisions!

**FOR:** Awesome looks, playability and sound

**AGAINST:** Careful with those spiky bits!

**TG RATING:**



### COMING NEXT MONTH!

**RAZORBACK: THE BIRTH OF A METAL ICON**

**T**his is too cool! In next month's *Total Guitar* we'll bring you the full story of how Dimebag Darrell and the team at Dean Guitars created his awesome Razorback Signature guitar. You'll see backroom shots of Dime fine-tuning his design and we'll talk to the people who helped make it happen, including Dean's president, Elliot Robinson. We also got our hands on a pair of US Razorbacks and a bunch of Dean Art Tribute guitars – handpainted by the likes of Metallica's James Hetfield and Tom Morello of Audioslave. As if that wasn't exciting enough, Dean gave us one of Dime's own stage guitars to play with! We couldn't have been more excited if we won the lottery. You will not want to miss this amazing *Total Guitar* exclusive...



Now this is a cut above the rest! We love Dimebag's razor blade fingerboard inlay