

Reverend Double Agent OG

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I'd been looking for something for a while, now. I liked the sound of both P90 pick-ups, with their "chewy" flavours, and humbuckers pickups, with their drive and I wanted something that could combine the two tastes into a musical stew I'd like. I have a Fender Pawn Shop 51, which has a single coil and a humbucker, and has a super sound, but I wanted something meatier, with a P90 sound I liked.



I'd researched the guitars with P90s and humbuckers, like the Duesenberg Starplayer TV I saw down at Sunburst Music in Coojee, but the price was out of my wage scale. Also, I wanted a pale neck, like a maple one as I find them easier to play under spotlights.

So, I thought I'd have to get a custom job done to get the guitar I wanted. However, when I sent emails off to different luthiers they seemed to ignore my email. I even sent one to Maton guitars and, once again, was ignored. If you don't like the exact design of most Australian luthier's guitars you are stuck with it. As well, the guitars were going to cost between \$4000 - \$6000. I got sick of being ignored, it seems that I was having no luck in Australia and was looking at getting a guitar made overseas.

Then one day, I was looking at guitars with maple necks, up popped a Reverend guitar. I'd seen various groups use Reverend guitars at the Bluesfest and I knew they were a very respectable make. Especially "Rick" Vito, when he was backing Mick Fleetwood.

However, on this day I noticed the guitar that had come up was a Reverend Double Agent OG, which has, yep, you guessed it a P90 with humbucker combo! But, what was the cost ran through my head. I could see it in US stores selling for \$799 US, but did anyone sell it in Australia. Yep, Better Music (<http://www.bettermusic.com.au/>), in Canberra did for \$1,349. Bargain I thought, but what would it play like I wondered. There was no store near me that sold Reverend so I could try it out.

Initially I was going to buy one in Metallic Alpine as it has a maple neck and Better Music said they could get one in for me. But then, I saw the Blue Burst, which also has a maple neck. Wow, so I asked Better Music if they could get that one in for me. No way, they emailed back, as its only available from one store in the world, Riff City, in Minnesota, in the US.

So, I contacted Riff City (<https://www.riffcityguitaroutlet.com/>) to find that they only deliver to addresses in the US. I get gear delivered from Sam Ash in the US, without a worry, so how do I get the guitar I wanted??

Then I got onto MyUS, (<https://www.myus.com/>), a company that specialises in delivering good from America, that only can be delivered to US addresses. I joined them and asked if I could get the guitar delivered through them. They checked and gave the go ahead. At the time the Australian dollar was 81 cents to the US dollar, so I thought I may be able to import the guitar for less than a thousand dollars.



So, I ordered the Reverend Double Agent OG in Blue Burst from Riff City. They wouldn't accept cards so I had to pay with PayPal, so no big deal. It also was free delivery to the address supplied to me by MyUS, which is in Florida. I could track the guitar as it travelled across the US.

Once it reached My US I had to pay freight to Australia, which was about \$150 AUS dollars. I could have gone cheaper, but decided to go better to help protect the guitar. I then watched the guitar on a tracker go through Hawaii etc to reach Australia. The slowest part of the journey was through the Australian sections.

Now we came to a snag I wasn't expecting. The dollar had dropped to 78 cents to the US Dollar, so that the guitar was now worth over a thousand Australian, so I was going to be taxed. As well, something I didn't realise is that they tax you also on the delivery cost! I would have had less tax if I'd gone a cheaper delivery.

C'est la vie, I paid the \$290 taxes and my guitar was released. From paying to delivery, from Riff City, through MyUS to me, took about 10 days. Luckily, I was on holidays so I could take delivery of the couriered package when it arrived.

The customs people had listed that the guitar was an acoustic, which worried me a little, so when the box was in my hands I knew it was too thin to be an acoustic. I opened up the first box, filled with packaging, then inside I found a second box, which I opened to reveal a beautiful object, a Blue Burst Reverend Double Agent OG! It had been so well packed by Riff City for delivery. Something Sam Ash could learn from!

As well, there was certificate to say the guitar had been properly set up – it was perfectly in tune! On the outside was a plastic bag with the tools and Reverend guitar pick, while inside was the paperwork. Amazingly, there was a big eatable cookie from Riff City! I wish we got service like that in Australia!





I hadn't ordered the distinctive Reverend case with the guitar as I was trying to keep the cost from the US down, so I ordered one from Better Music and it was delivered in about 2 days. I also attached Schaller Lock Nuts and brought a suede strap from Guitar Set Ups in Annandale as I'd heard the Reverends are slightly neck heavy. That's true I found out with a slippery strap, but the suede stopped any movement, so a worthwhile investment.



So, what's the guitar like I hear you ask. Very different in many respects. I'd heard it was cross between a Telecaster and a Les Paul in some ways and I agree, it has the smaller scale and body of a Les Paul Junior, but the playability of a Telecaster. I'd also read that at first the guitar will feel a little awkward, but as you play it, it really grows on you. I went down that path in about three plays and love it already. I wrote "*Hey, Mr Executive*" on it already! However, the Reverend Double Agent OG and myself are still getting to know each other, so lots of musical explorations still to come.

The features of a Reverend Double Agent OG are that it has:

- pin-lock tuners: a thumbwheel under the tuner pushes a steel pin up through the post, locking the string in place.
- custom Reverend pickups: Reverend pickups are specifically designed for each position, for balanced volume and tone when switching.
 - dual-action truss rod: this adjusts in both directions, allowing back bow or forward bow.
- korina body: korina (aka white limba) is a medium to light weight wood, prized for consistency and tonal qualities. Often found in boutique and vintage instruments, producing lively, responsive instruments that are rich in harmonics.
- Boneite: a graphite synthetic bone nut that reduces friction, allowing the strings to easily slide through the nut slots, improving tuning stability.
- bass knob: a passive bass roll-off for tightening up the low end, or re-voicing the pickups. it can make a humbucker sound like a single-coil, or give a p-90 that classic twang
- Tune-O-matic bridge with stoptail
- Maple neck: In satin amber finish
- 22 Frets: On a 25.5-inch scale

I love the sound of the two pickups, on their own and combined. The satin neck is to die for, as it is so playable. The smaller scale I'm getting used to very quickly, although the Bass Contour knob I'm not so sure of at the moment.

This instrument is beautiful and extremely well made. Reverend is an American company and the guitars are made in the US and you can tell. It is as though I'd brought that custom-made job I was describing earlier, but at a much cheaper price!

The next day after the Reverend Double Agent OG arrived I was in Allen's as they were having a closing down of the Pitt St store sale. They are still trading, its just the Pitt St store became too expensive to keep open. They hope to open another one in Glebe, or Annandale. Their Alexandria store is still trading in the change. They have some great bargain there, like the bottle of 40 egg shakers for \$15!



Looking around I saw a Gibson Es-339 Studio for \$2499. That's about \$2000 less than normal. I've always lusted after a Es-339, but they were out of my price range. So, I was tempted, and had a play, but like most Es-339s I've come across they play in a fairly average way and weren't in the same league as the Reverend.

I'd come in to buy some egg shakers for the Society's Concerts and discussed this with the person selling me the shakers. He smiled and agreed that the Reverends have it over the Gibsons in quality and playability.

So, a tale of how I got the guitar I wanted from a US store, who doesn't deliver to Australia, and some things to consider the next time you might purchase an electric guitar!

Ed: Still one of my favourite guitars. My only problem is the Bass Contour knob on the upper bout I tend to hit occasionally. I'd love a flatter control there. Looking at mentioning Allens brings back memories as that store has long gone. Their final store in Alexandria was taken over by Mannys Music.