

November 16, 2006

Dear Tub-O-Tone Builder,

Congratulations on downloading plans for the fabulous Tub-O-Tone™ Model J. This cover letter, dated, includes updates and corrections to the Model J Manual pdf file from January 2003.

If you have access to a computer, be sure to visit the Tub-O-Tone page, on the Internet at <http://tubotonia.freehomepage.com/tubotonia/TOTMain.html>, which features a section of photos documenting the construction process. Also be sure to check out The Washtub Bass Page, at <http://tubotonia.freehomepage.com/Tublinks.html>. (Ironically, "tub-o-tone.com" has nothing to do with the Tub-O-Tone or with washtub basses at all!)

If you build the Tub-O-Tone Model J and like what you hear, you might want to take the next step and register your Tub-O-Tone. You'll receive a snappy 4-color Tub-O-Tone label to stick on your instrument, an official Certificate of Authenticity, and the plans and instructions for the Model L neck upgrade. Registration also entitles you to perpetual tech support (so long as it's on your nickel), notification of further upgrades in design, and news of wtb-related events.

Another good reason for registering, maybe even before you build the Model J, is that the Model L neck design is simpler (5 pieces and 10 screws vs. 7 pieces and 15 screws), solidier, better looking and easier to make and adjust.

For the Registration and Model L Upgrade package, send \$3.50 as cashier's check or money order to: Lauren Miller, 4839 Black Swan Drive, Shawnee KS 66216. Or you can use Paypal, a secure method of making payments via the Internet: go to <http://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=p/ema/index-outside>. You'll be asked to sign up, but that's free. Once you're registered, click Send and tell them you want to send money to Lauren Miller, e-mail address elefem@eliseray.com.

(Note that if you go directly to the Model L neck design, there are some items on the Model J shopping list you won't need, in particular the hose clamp, 1" pvc section, and aluminum bar.)

In addition to the updated web addresses given above, here are some other corrections and additions, keyed to their relevant paragraphs in the original manual:

(Paragraph I-A) Behrens customer service, with information on where to find their tubs, has a new e-mail address: behrenscs@chartermi.net

(I-C) Regarding tool handles for the neck, I've come to give a slight preference to straight over contoured ones, because of fewer problems with string buzz. They're also more likely to be straight, and less likely to have a hole drilled up the end.

(II-C) A very mellow and responsive back panel can be made from a salvaged wood-slat venetian blind. Clamp the strips together and sand the edges to square them up and remove the varnish, then glue them edge-to-edge into a sheet big enough to cut your panel out of.

(II-F) 1/16" stainless steel aircraft cable will work fine, at least for starters. But ultimately, if you stay with the Model J neck, you may want to switch to a standard upright bass string. The Red Label Supersensitive 7/8-Extra Long D bass string (SS8138), for example, would be somewhat smoother to play and somewhat better sounding, and cost ten times what you paid for aircraft cable. If you register your Tub-O-Tone and upgrade to the Model L neck, you can use a 3/4 size A string. (Strings from a 3/4 size bass are too short for the Model J neck.)

(III-I) People continue to report problems with spray adhesive not holding the rubberized insulation to the underside of the tub head. I have had good luck with Bul-Tac spray upholstery glue. Elmer's white glue is said to give good results (I haven't yet tried it.)

(Sections IX-XII) Most of these paragraphs will be irrelevant if you go to the Model L neck upgrade, which of course comes with its own instructions. XI-A and XI-C, concerned with making the tuning bolt and preparing the string, will still be relevant.

However, here's another tuning peg solution, easier and much more elegant than the tuning bolt described. Get a cello tuning peg (style P2C) online from Southwest Strings (<http://www.swstrings.com/Store/SiteSearchResult.jsp?jsessionid=D6D767D584D29C59056FFC44290E2A7B>). Drill a 3/32" guide hole directly across the diameter of the neck where you want the peg to be. On the front of the neck, use a 7/16" forstner bit to enlarge the hole to a depth of about 3/16", then drill in from the other side with a 1/2" forstner bit until the two holes meet. Test the peg in the hole, then with a rat-tail file (or sandpaper wrapped around a dowel) carefully taper the inside edge of the 7/16" hole to allow more of the peg to poke through. Test often, and repeat until the large end of the peg is snug in the 1/2" hole. There'll be about an inch of small end protruding. Drill a hole through the peg just large enough for the string, and about 1/8" away from the surface of the neck. (You can use this same peg and technique with the Model L neck upgrade.)

Plunk in Peace,

Lauren Miller