

September 2011

Hello again VASE people. This month Noel Bourne goes in depth explaining the differences (and similarities) between the Original Production Trendsetter and the Current Production Model. Our goal all along has been to retain all that was great about this VASE product and try to anticipate what the amazing Tony Troughton would have produced today with the knowledge and technology available to us now. We have a pricing announcement below that we hope will please. There's also a little piece about Ron Delbridge of the VASE team helping to make an old guitar new again. We do value the vintage here at VASE! Heck, a lot of us ARE vintage!

Something Old is New Again!

Original Production VASE Trendsetter 60 Deluxe vs Current Production VASE Trendsetter Deluxe: A Closer Examination
By Noel Bourne



The "cosmetic" differences are evident if you look closely. Read on to find out how the current line of Trendsetter 60 Deluxe amplifiers retain the best of the past and add transformations that insure VASE's reputation as a quality iconic product lives on.



Covers removed to reveal inner workings of old and new amps

We have sometimes been asked "What are the differences?"...this is a prudent question and we would like to detail these differences for the guitar players out there that seek not only an amplifier that performs up to their tonal and response expectations but an amplifier that will also perform reliably day in day out whether it be on the road touring, in recording sessions or at home...yes, there are still many players out there that will use a 60 watt amplifier at home...you know who you are and I would suggest that your neighbours from quite a distance away also know who you are when you feel the need to "stretch the legs" of your VASE Trendsetter 60 Deluxe.

First of all...a brief overview

The Vase Trendsetter 60 Deluxe is a 2 channel (Bright and Normal) amplifier featuring lush sounding global vibrato that can be switched on or off via front panel or included foot switch. The Bright channel features high and low sensitivity inputs, 3 tone controls (Treble, Middle & Bass) with pull treble boost. The Normal channel features high and low sensitivity inputs, 2 tone controls (Treble & Bass) with pull treble boost. It is important to recognise that the Bright and Normal channels are completely "discreet" separate channels and this opens up a few avenues about how you can use your amplifier. You can use it in a traditional manner and plug into your choice of either the Bright or Normal channel or alternatively:

- *Use a passive or active A/B foot switch to switch between the Bright or Normal channels.
- *Use a passive or active A/B/Y foot switch to switch between the Bright or Normal channels or drive both Bright and Normal channels simultaneously.
- *Use a simple short patch lead from one channels spare input socket to the other channels input socket to drive both channels simultaneously without the use of an external foot switch.

Other features include:

- Vibrato with separate Speed and Depth controls and foot switch.
- Rotary Standby / On switch.
- Dual Speaker / Combo speaker sockets.
- 60 watt output.
- 4, 8 or 16 ohm loudspeaker load selection via rotary switch.
- Red neon power indicator.
- Valve line up is 4 x 12AX7 and 2 EL34B

This overview refers to both original and current production amplifiers with the exception that the original production amplifiers had one only fixed impedance loudspeaker socket and did not have foot switchable vibrato, only front panel switchable.

Original Production

Transformers

Used Australian manufactured Ferguson brand transformers designed for upright mounting but had one bell cover removed and were mounted through chassis.

Chassis

Used aluminium which was folded and pop riveted onto steel end pieces.

Circuit

Circuit was fixed bias. Bias was HT derived. (Small bias transformer seen on some models) Diode rectification was used for the HT power supply.

Used a single fixed impedance loudspeaker 6.3mm jack socket outlet with the tap chosen to suit the connected loudspeaker load despite other taps being available on the Ferguson transformer.

Used unique tone stacks, not copies of the tone stacks from a couple of well known mass produced amplifier manufacturers.

Used global vibrato with separate speed and depth controls and this was activated via a rotary switch on the front panel.



Components

Used components which were not necessarily the same brand or type from amplifier to amplifier and we would suggest that it was whatever was available or on hand at the time of manufacture.

Used "mustard" capacitors which were the commonly used capacitors at the time and used in all types of electronic equipment from industrial, radios, televisions etc. They were polyester type axial capacitors in 250, 400 and 600 volt ratings with +/- 10% tolerance.

Used high voltage disc ceramic capacitors in certain circuit areas.

Used two voltage doubler HT power supply capacitors mounted through chassis and retained by metal capacitor mounting brackets and insulated on the inside with masking tape.

Used chassis mounted metal 6.3 mm jack input sockets with solder lug tabs.

Used PVC insulated stranded wire.

Used no output valve retaining devices and relied only on the output valve socket pin tension to hold the output valves in place.

Used 24mm potentiometers with solder lugs, some with integrated pull or rotary switches.

Used a small open style cermet bias potentiometer. (enclosed on some models)

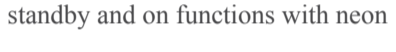
Used a generic matrix style perforated board to which eyelets were fitted, components soldered to and used interconnecting insulated links of tinned copper wire connecting the various circuit components on the rear of board.

Used a pair of 6CA7 (EL34) valves, each with a maximum anode dissipation of 25 watts.

Used an open "wafer" style 3 position rotary switch that switched the 240 volt AC power input and the HT for off, standby and on functions with neon power indicator.

Fascia legends were applied with stencil & architectural pen with clear coat finish.

Used solid ribbed aluminium knobs.



Amplifier Head Shell

Head shell that housed the amplifier chassis was fabricated from particle board (chipboard) and covered with vinyl. It had a slotted ventilation plate fitted to the underside and chrome "D" handles fitted to the top.

Assembly and Testing

Assembled in Brisbane Australia by hand, eyelet by eyelet, component by component, wire by wire with attention to detail.

Current Production

Transformers

Used Australian manufactured transformers specifically reverse engineered from samples of the original Ferguson transformers and specifically manufactured through chassis mounting and fitted with one bell cover allowing for tidier and shorter transformer wiring looms.

Chassis

Uses 1.6mm aluminium that is folded and butt welded allowing for a seamless structurally sound chassis and finish. We also additionally employ two chassis retaining brackets within the amplifier head shell

Circuit

The current production amplifier circuit is the same as original production.

Uses a high capacity recessed rotary switch allowing selection of 4, 8 or 16 ohm and two paralleled Speaker Combo connector sockets to allow the use of Speaker or 6.3mm jack plug loudspeaker leads.

Uses the same original unique tone stack configurations.

Uses global vibrato with separate speed and depth controls with the addition of a vibrato foot switch socket on the rear panel and a vibrato foot switch with lead is included.

Components

Uses metal film resistors and other types in circuit areas where more appropriate. The current production amplifier uses high quality BHC/Aerovox capacitors in the voltage doubler power supply and Sprague capacitors in the HT DC supply.

Uses high quality polyester type axial capacitors in 250, 400 and 600 volt ratings with +/- 10% tolerance.

Uses high voltage disc ceramic capacitors in certain circuit areas. We elected to continue to use this type of capacitor in the same values in current production amplifiers in lieu of silver mica types now favoured by some manufacturers.

Uses two voltage doubler HT power supply capacitors mounted and retained by nylon mounting flanges eliminating any potential risk of shorting to capacitor cases.

Uses metal bezel 6.3mm input jack sockets with solder lug tabs...not printed circuit board mounting type.

Uses military specification Teflon and Silicone insulated stranded wire of the appropriate ratings.

Uses spring retainers to securely hold and retain the output valves in their sockets.

Uses high quality CTS brand 24mm potentiometers with solid aluminium shafts that have been specifically and custom manufactured for VASE by CTS.

Uses a 24mm enclosed bias potentiometer.

Components

Uses a thicker fibreglass board that we actually manufacture in house, that is we lay up and fabricate the sheets from the raw fibreglass fabric and this sheet is cut to size and is specifically custom drilled to to suit component layout and to this the eyelets are fitted, components soldered to and interconnecting insulated links of tinned copper wire connect the various circuit components on the rear of board.



Uses as standard a pair of EL34B valves, each with a maximum anode dissipation of 30 watts. (shown at left)

Uses a high quality IEC fused socket with switch that is mounted on the rear of the chassis for the task of 240 volt AC power input switching with front mounted neon power indicator. An enclosed 2 position front mounted rotary switch provides the standby and on functions in keeping with the "rotary" style of the original production amplifier's standby switching as opposed to the toggle switches employed by the majority of present day manufacturers for the power and standby functions.

Fascia legends are two pack screen printed.

Uses solid ribbed aluminium knobs with two set screws.

Amplifier Head Shell

Head shell is fabricated from Finnish birch plywood and covered with vinyl with the original Vase stamping finish. It is also fitted with a chromed specifically manufactured custom ventilation plate fitted to the underside of the head shell and stainless steel "D" handles fitted to the top.

Assembly and Testing

The current production amplifier assembly procedure proudly follows and where applicable expands upon this tradition of workmanship and attention to detail followed by comprehensive electronic testing, biasing, burn in, playing and listening of each and every amplifier and the amplifiers are still proudly manufactured in Brisbane Australia.

When You're Ready to Play....

These Trendsetter 60 Deluxe amplifier chassis's (pictured at right) are ready to go and they are only waiting for you to let us know what finishes you would like on your Trendsetter 60 Deluxe amplifier head shell... choose between traditional or alternate finishes for your head shell vinyl and cloth.

Vinyl colours available to you include Black Stump, Great White, Full Cream or True Blue and for the fabric colour on the front of the amplifier head your choices are Black, Silver, Vintage or Heritage.

To help you visualise how your amplifier head will look you can make your colour choices on our interactive colour selector on the Vase website by clicking on the "FINISH OPTIONS" tab here:

<http://www.vase.com.au/index.php/products/amplifiers/trendsetter60> Let us know what you decide....



Now for the best part.....

Originally sold as a package, the VASE Trendsetter 60 Deluxe amplifier head is now available for sale on its own.

For a traditional Australian 60 watt amplifier head, true blue to the original circuit, design and hand wired production techniques, the **Vase Trendsetter 60 Deluxe amplifier head** represents outstanding value at just **\$1,995 inc GST** and including a **free flight case**.

The loudspeaker cabinet of choice for the original Vase Trendsetter 60 Deluxe was a 3 x 12" (Celestion Greenback) open back configuration....let us know if you need a cabinet.



VASE in Social Media

Paul Holland (see vintage Paul at left), Managing Director and Principal Consultant of Creativity Well and VASE Board Member keeps us up to date on Social Media and encourages us all to share!

Great to see the increase in visitors we've had to our Facebook page in the past few weeks. Keep coming and link it to your friends through cross posts and referrals in other social media like Blogs and Twitter.

We're looking at building more Followers on Twitter. Again come and visit and **Follow**. Tell your friends to do the same.

What we're really keen to see are homemade videos of yourselves and friends playing through VASE units. You can upload those onto Facebook currently. What we'd love to have is enough of these vids to start a YouTube Channel. To get an idea of what a video like that might look like, here are some YouTube examples:

Guitar World's gear editor Paul Riaro demonstrates the features of a signature Randall amp: <http://bit.ly/odXEB>

ProGuitar presents: The Gladius JTM 68 Amplifier <http://bit.ly/g12xG>

Rivera Jazz Suprema55 played by Mitch Holder <http://bit.ly/oinqmq>

You don't have to do a technical review (although we are thinking of starting a competition soon involving technical video reviews). Initially we'd just like to see you playing your favourite guitar or bass through a VASE amp (old or new).

Speaking of guitars, how about we start sharing our favourite guitar pics on Facebook? I'll kick off with a few of mine and we'll see what treasures and workhorses we unearth.

Keep using our social media channels to talk to us directly. By using our social platforms you can tell us what you want. Meet up with your fellow VASE tribe members.

The VASE FB page is: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/VASE/340145740765>

Follow us on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/#!/vaseamps>

Let us know your thoughts direct on FB and Twitter or at info@vase.com.au

Cheers, Paul



Don Betts who owns one of the earliest new release Trendsetter 60 head and cabinet duos was in recently with his cousin **Carl Rozsmann**. Name ring a bell? Carl is an Australian singer/songwriter notable for having his song "A Dose of Rock & Roll" covered by Ringo Starr in 1976 for his album **Ringo's Rotograver**. Carl also wrote Status Quo's "Down the Dustpipe" and the only non BeeGee penned song recorded by the Bee Gees: "Lonely Winter".

Carl was the owner of a 1962 Chet Atkins model Gretsch guitar. Although lovingly cared for in the past (originally red, it had been painted in the late 60's in a pink tone) it had fallen on hard times. Stowed in the attic for safe keeping before a trip, it lived there for quite some time before being retrieved. Don is familiar with our **Ronnie Delbridge**, a deft hand at restoring guitars, and brought it in for some TLC. There was a complete refurbishment with Ron doing all the electronics. A beautiful white paint job was provided by friend of VASE and painter supreme Jason (50 hours all told!)



Using lots of new parts but as many old ones as possible for authenticity, the guitar was renewed. One of the reclaimed parts was the hand made (by Carl himself) solid steel bolt bridge, shown in close up below.

“ Carl is extremely happy with his new white guitar. Has given him a new lease on life. ”

Don Betts



FEEDBACK

Hi guys,

I have a trendsetter 120 with the reverb on the back panel and KT88 valves. Is this standard for the 120's or is this also an unusual amp. Very hard to find any information about my amp. Cabinet has three original speakers and one Celestion in the "spare" hole.

Would love to know when it was made.

Cheers Charles Loch

Hi Charles,

Noel from Vase here. Great to hear from you.

The KT88 valve line up is normal in the Trendsetter 120...although I can't recall reverb in a 120 what I have seen so it is a little unusual and was most likely a special order. Reverb was more common on the Trendsetter 40 range.

What other loudspeakers are in your 4 x 12" cab aside from the Celestion?

Difficult to date although on "some" chassis's rear panel, a serial number was stamped into the chassis but is not all that visible.

Any photos of your amp and box would be welcomed for our library archives.

Cheers, Noel Bourne

Hi there all you wonderful people at Vase, I am sure that I have asked you this before??? But when are you releasing a bass head in the 150-300Watt size? I think that you told me you had a 1000W on the drawing board...way too big for me in a Swing Band (where we do NOT play Death Metal).

Great to see Vase back up there again!! Denis Bowman

Hi Denis, Noel from here.

Sorry dont have a 150-300 watt bass head design on the horizon for the time being.

We did complete a preproduction run of 10 off Vase Dynabass 1K heads...that have now all been taken and are out and about with bass players covering many genres of music.

The Dynabass 1K Bass Amplifier head is not only for players that need to fulfil high SPL requirements but is, as I said, suitable for all genres of music and allows plenty of clean headroom for those not needing the 1000 watts.

Many bass players "hear in their head" the tones they want to achieve but have been unable to find an amp to recreate those tones...the Dynabass 1K with it's Gain & Volume controls and unique 5 band EQ tone stack gives the player the very best opportunity to achieve those tones.

Sorry if this all sounds like an advertising spiel but the Dynabass 1K seriously really is that good and it is compact and light.

I would welcome you to have a play of one when the full production run is underway most likely late October.

Expected pricing for the Vase Dynabass 1K head will be \$1695.00 including flightcase.

I have taken this opportunity to attach a couple of pictures...head only and head sitting on top of a Vase 610 bass cabinet.

Cheers, Noel Bourne

That's it for another month. Thanks to Noel Bourne for his large contribution to this issue. The VASE Trendsetter 60 Deluxe comparisons will also be available in a brochure we're preparing and will also make it on to the web site as a printable PDF. Let us hear from you.

All the best, Carol

info@vase.com.au

