



Hey, everyone. My name is Jim McGorman, and I'm in the house band on the CBS TV show Rock Star. Last year we helped INXS find a new singer, and we're back again this year with Tommy Lee, Jason Newsted and Gilby Clarke of Supernova. If you've seen the show, you know that we have the task of playing cover songs from the 1950s to the present. This requires a tremendous amount of preparation... not to mention tons of gear!

I'm not going to lie to you: One of the best things about doing a show like this is the undeniable excuse to research and use equipment, and I've taken full advantage of that. As the rhythm guitarist (the utility guy, really, since I also play keyboards and sing), I felt that my main responsibility would be to capture the original tone of whatever song we were doing. So, first let's talk about some of the guitars. Because the amount of musical landscape to be covered is fairly substantial, I use quite a few guitars throughout the season. Let's put it this way: If I own it or can borrow it, I'll play it on

the show. I'm sure that, like most of you, I pretty much love most guitars, but there are a few go-to models that I rely on frequently. I have a '58 V.O.S. Les Paul that is great for many rock applications. I'm also a big fan of hollow-body Gibsons. I use a 335, a 336 and an Epiphone Casino. I also really like the LP Deluxe with mini-humbuckers. I have a vintage one from the '70s as well as a newer one, and they have a real bite to them. Still, one of my favorite guitars is a vintage Tele that I bought in Chicago when I was on

tour with Poison. (Admittedly it was a guilty pleasure, but hey, it was a gig!) I frequent that on Stones tunes. I also use a '62 Relic Strat. For acoustics, I use a Gibson J-200, a J-45 and a J-185 12-string.

Normally I like to use vintage amps.

However, with the skyrocketing prices and reliability factor, I've opted for something new. After checking out a bunch of amps, I decided to go with Matchless. I use three different models, but my main amp is the HC-30 (built in 2006). I also use a Phoenix. I run them through two ESDs, and run an Independence through a 4x12. All of the tubes are Tesla J&J's. The EF86 is a Svetlana. Still, I rely on pedals a lot in order to achieve the vast range of sounds needed for different

styles of music. (We have only about 30 seconds to switch between, say, The Who and Evanescence.) But while I was checking out amps I knew I wanted something that not only had its own vibe but would respond well to whatever I put in front of it. Also, because of the volume issues that we're presented with at the soundstage and in the rehearsal studio, we really have to be mindful of overpowering the singers. I needed to have a huge tone that wouldn't blow people away with volume.

Thankfully, the HC-30 has a Hi/Lo power switch that really comes in handy. I can switch from 30 watts to 15 watts and still have the tone I want. As far as pedals are concerned, I'm a big fan of the Fulltone stuff. I probably use the FullDrive 2 about 80 percent of the time. I also frequent the Soul Bender, Deja Vibe and Supra Trem. Occasionally I'll kick on the OCD for a little extra kick, but I'm usually holding down the rhythm. I use a Tube Screamer and the Menatone Red Snapper (this pedal sounds huge) for the heavier stuff. For Leslie and chorus effects I use the Arion Chorus.



Rock Star: Supernova