

LEFT OF THE DIAL

I got a '56 Les Paul," Paul Westerberg says, "my trusty gray guitar—and I've got a plexiglas Dan Armstrong, I think it's a '71. I've got a Yamaha acoustic. For keyboards Paul claims to have "a little Shittone, made exclusively by Shittone Incorporated."

What kind of bass is that, Tommy? "I don't know, it's been so repaired... It's a sort of a Fender, part Rickenbacker. Say it's 'hand-customized.'"

Paul says we should play it safe and say Tommy plays through an Ampeg amp, but that would be a lie. "It's yellow and orange and big," Tommy explains like a true technowiz. "It's a square thing with a bunch of tubes. You come over and try to describe it!" So we did and it was a big yellow and orange thing with a bunch of tubes.

Slim is still a Fender loyalist. He has a '61 Telecaster neck on a 1970 Tele body. "My '61 body got completely destroyed," Slim sighs. "Me and a friend one time, just in fun, started putting little hacks in each other's guitars with this ice pick. Then we got carried away. He took a chisel and a hammer and took a big hunk out of my Telecaster. I just about cried. So I took his Stratocaster and took a big chop out of that. Anyway, it got to where there wasn't much wood left on my Tele."

Remarkably, Slim turned down the band's offer to buy him another guitar for the road. "I've never had the need for multiple guitars," Slim explains. "I never really had a tuning problem because I play with a thumb pick which doesn't really push the string. A heavy pick will just knock your guitar out of tune. I get used to one guitar and it's hard to switch. I work it into the ground. You get better on one guitar than you are on others. Paul is really good at playing two or three guitars with really different necks."

"I can't play," Westerberg cuts in. "That's the difference! I can play 'em all *bad*. Bring 'em on!"

The Replacements will probably use a combination of Marshall and Fender amps onstage. They figure anyone who says you only need a small amp to feed the P.A. is a fool, a liar or a wimp.

Chris Mars says, "Sears drums—that's all I can say."