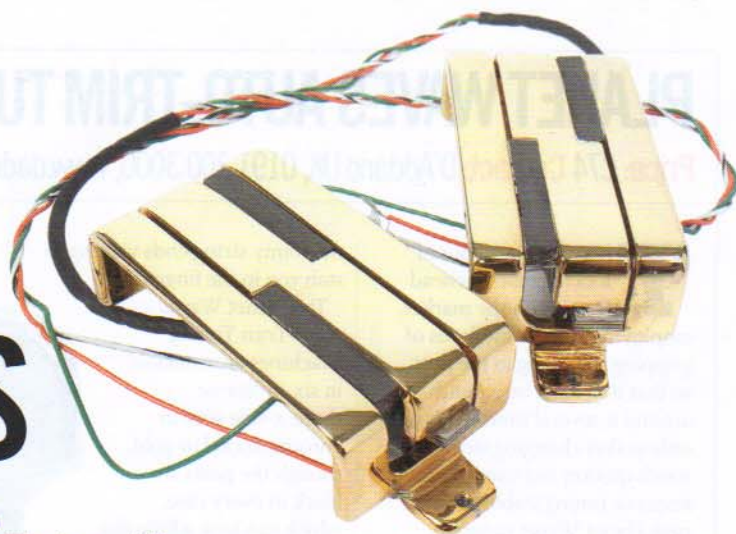


# LACE ALUMITONE HUMBUCKERS

PRICE  
£109.99



It's a pickup, Jim, but not as we know it. Hayden Hewitt pulls on an ill-fitting *Star Trek* outfit and checks out the Lace Alumitone humbucker

**B**ack in the 1990s, Lace pickups first came to the attention of the masses with the Lace Sensor noiseless single-coil pickups, which came as a standard fitting on certain Fender guitars such as the Strat Plus. The Lace Sensor proved to be a real love-it-or-hate-it affair. Purists complained that these units lacked the grain and punch of a traditional Strat pickup, whereas others simply enjoyed their pure, bell-like tones and the lack of hum. Over the years, Lace has refined and expanded the Sensor line, but with the Alumitone series it really seems to have gone to town. Available in both single-coil and humbucker sizes, these futuristic-looking units look to stake their claim over some uncharted territory.

## Construction & Features

First up, just look at them! The humbucker is actually the single-coil unit made larger, albeit with some modifications to the mid-range to give it more of that humbucker character. A full explanation of their construction would probably fill several white papers, but let's see if we can't condense it down a little.

The first thing to say is that Lace has almost completely discarded traditional pickup design here. Granted, the Alumitone does have two features in common with 'normal' pickups, in that it uses copper wire and magnets, but that's where similarities end.

The main body (or 'exoskeleton' as Lace refers to it) of the pickup is precision-cut aluminium. This acts

as one huge turn of wire around the ceramic 8 magnets held within. On the underside you might notice something that looks like a small rubber bag – this is where the secondary coil lives, and even then there is some 95 percent less wire involved than in a traditional pickup. It is this coil that is used to voice the pickup itself, allowing Lace to use this technology for single-coils, humbuckers and bass pickups.

All of this adds up to a pickup which, although rated at only 3.4k, is really quite high-output, almost silent in operation and ideal for recording.

## Sounds

Just like the construction, there is nothing instantly normal or familiar about the tone of the Lace humbucker. It's not quite a humbucker, not quite a single-coil, and (mercifully, in this reviewer's opinion) nothing like a P-90. What you get instead is something with the grunt of a full-on 'bucker but with the definition and character of a single-coil, with extremely defined EQ and buckets of clarity.

In the bridge position, the Alumitone is as happy with funk as it is with heavy rock, with plenty of grind yet while keeping that hint of single-coil character, even with the highest gain. This clarity means you don't really have any place to hide if you aren't on top of your game, but anyone used to something like an active EMG won't find this a new experience.

The highs are never piercing but they can be sharp through certain amps. While not a problem for us, anyone more used to something like a Seymour Duncan JB might find

themselves thinking they certainly aren't in Kansas anymore. Metal players might feel they need a little more grunt and savagery, however, but for this Lace has created a higher-output Alumitone, dubbed the Deathbucker!

In the neck position, the Alumitone humbucker is warm and exhibits all the same characteristics it does in the bridge but becomes more fluid and luscious without ever losing definition. The tone of your guitar really seems to come through, with each fretted note feeling touch-sensitive and breathy. Again, you won't get remotely close to traditional PAF tones here, but you get something equally as intoxicating. Move to the neck and bridge together and you get a tone not a million miles away from a supertough Telecaster, but with perhaps fewer ragged edges.

## Conclusion

Nailing down the tones produced by the Alumitone is difficult, mostly because there is no simple frame of reference that can be used. As with their looks, the sound of these pickups is like nothing else out there, with their tight bottom end, clarity and character all coming together in quite a heady brew. What can be said is that Lace's recipe has proven to be very addictive indeed. If you feel the need for something that little bit different both visually and tonally, and you are open-minded about having a *Star Trek* prop soldered into your guitar, you could well form a deep and meaningful relationship with the Alumitone. **GB**

## LACE ALUMITONE HUMBUCKERS

**Price:** from £109.99 each, £209.99 per pair

**Type:** Humbucker-sized noiseless pickup

**Features:** Aluminium frame, copper coil, ceramic 8 magnets, two-conductor wiring

**DC resistance:** 3.4k ohms

**Finishes:** Gold (shown, £129 each/£239.99 per pair), chrome (£129.99/£239.99), black (£129.99/£239.99) & natural (unplated aluminium, £109.99/£209.99)

**Options:** Single-coil & P-90-style formats also available, 'Deathbucker' high-output humbucker also available

## CONTACT DETAILS

Hinesite Distribution Ltd

Tel: 01634 241213

[www.lacemusic.com](http://www.lacemusic.com)

## GB VERDICT

### GOLD STARS

- ★ Unique look
- ★ Unique tones
- ★ Unique design

### BLACK MARKS

- None

### IDEAL FOR...

Most musical styles, apart from authentic 'vintage' tones or the more extreme areas of metal

### GENERATING

★★★★★