

BOB DAISLEY'S ROCKING YET SUBTLE WORK WITH SIR OZZY OF OSBOURNE MARKS AN ALL-TIME HIGH POINT IN FIST-IN-THE-AIR BASS THUMPAGE. GARETH MORGAN DISSECTS THE TECHNIQUE OF A MAN WHO NEVER LOST SIGHT OF HIS ROOTS...

# Wizard Of Ozz

## Bob Daisley Workshop

**B**ob Daisley has done it all – '70s rock bands such as Stan Webb's Chicken Shack; Mungo Jerry, Widowmaker and Rainbow; the early '80s version of Uriah Heep; with Gary Moore in '80s rock-god mode and his subsequent bluesier incarnation; and countless other projects. However, the quietly-spoken Aussie is probably best known for his work with Ozzy Osbourne, which stretched from the classic *Blizzard of Ozz* ('80) to *No More Tears* ('91). Daisley didn't just provide the bottom end; he wrote the majority of the lyrics and a fair proportion of the music, too.

Born in Sydney, Australia in 1950, Daisley started on guitar, switching to bass at age 14. Like many of his contemporaries he was a fan of Motown legend James Jamerson (for more on Jamerson see workshop, *Guitar & Bass* Dec 2004). At the age of 20 Daisley relocated to London, landing the gig with Stan Webb in 1972 that proved to be the catalyst for almost 35 years of work at the very highest level.

This issue we're looking at Daisley's work on the first two Osbourne albums. Ozzy's first band included a young guitar prodigy named Randy Rhoads and, with drummer Lee Kerslake on board, the quartet recorded two hugely influential contemporary heavy rock albums, *Blizzard Of Ozz* and *Diary Of A Madman* ('83). Both Daisley and Kerslake were fired four days after the completion of *Diary* (ostensibly because Osbourne's new management wanted Tommy Aldridge on the drum stool and Daisley wouldn't play ball) and in a turn of events that has resulted in an ongoing 20-year legal battle, both were uncredited on the album.

It gets worse: Osbourne re-recorded the rhythm section on both albums, and some fans feel this ruined their original vibe. If you have original vinyl copies of either album or the early CD versions,



Photos: Richard Galbraith

you've got the original Daisley-inclusive product. Stay away from the so-called 're-masters', though.

What made Daisley's playing so special on these albums is a perfect marriage of melody, support, chops and groove. Recorded using a Precision and a Gibson EB-3, Daisley's tone is tight,

warm and even across the whole range. He draws on his soul roots for many of the basslines: the key to the underlying funk in both of these recordings. Some of Daisley's 16th-note work, especially under some of Rhoads' solos, is scarily – proof that there's far more to rock bass than chugging away on the root note.



## Ex. 1

### NO IDEA

The wonderful *I Don't Know* opens the *Blizzard* album. Daisley grabs your attention with his opening salvo (see Ex. 8) and simply refuses to let go. His bassline, recorded using a Gibson EB-3 through one of Rhoads' Marshall stacks, is fundamentally a driving quarter-note affair



seasoned with a selection of juicy fills, some of which are a technical nightmare, but

this exercise should prepare you to take them on. The quarter notes in bar one

need to be punchy while the melody in bar two should flow smoothly.

## Ex. 2

### NOT GARY, ALISTAIR

Daisley's melodic excursions on *Blizzard Of Ozz* aren't simply confined to punctuating fills. He cleverly weaves a melody through the chord changes under Randy Rhoads' fiery fretwork on *No Bone Movies*, and adds meat by doubling the guitar lines on the superb *Mr Crowley*. This latter song



is an excellent example of Daisley knowing when to play solidly, when to leave gaps and when to

insert another killer lick. This example pays very approximate tribute to his line in the chorus section,

with note choices straight out of the soul handbook and tight phrasing keeping the funk bubbling away.

## Ex. 3

### BELIEF IN THE GROOVE

One of the most annoying things about Daisley and Kerslake's lack of credit as players on the original *Diary Of A Madman* album is the fact that the playing is every bit as good as on *Blizzard Of Ozz*. It's brimming over with superb bass grooves (this time played mainly on Daisley's trusty Precision)



and one of the highlights is the brooding introduction to *Believer*. The above two bars should serve to give you

the overall flavour. Simple note choices (root, fifth and octave) and a friendly tempo make this an easy part to

execute, but you need to be careful with the slides as they are the real key to the vibe of the bass part.

## Ex. 4

### OFF THE RAILS

It's obvious that Daisley found working with Rhoads a hugely inspiring experience, since it drove him to produce some of his best-ever playing. Check out the hyperdrive 16th-note accompaniment to Rhoads' solos on *Flying High Again*, *Believer* (both from *Diary Of A Madman*) and especially



*Crazy Train* (on *Blizzard Of Ozz*): highly individual and innovative, as are some of the basic grooves. If you

isolate the *Crazy Train* bass part it sounds almost like an aggressive disco line, but it works superbly in context.

Be careful with the 1/16th-note kick in the second bar – it needs to be clean and precise at 138bpm.



## Ex. 5

### HIGH FLYER

Daisley didn't just confine his 16th-note gear-change idea to solo sections: a couple of the recurring fills on *I Don't Know* and the third and fourth bar of the *Crazy Train*'s chorus section are superb (and quite different) kinetic punctuations. One of the most effective uses of this idea comes in the chorus

of *Flying High Again* (from *Diary*): Daisley keeps it simple under Osbourne's main vocal and then throws in a super-

charged scale run similar to the example above. Moving between the two rhythms is awkward, especially at the

required tempo, so keep your playing hand relaxed and resist the temptation to dig in too much.

## Ex. 6

### NOCTURNAL SHMALTZ

There was a time when Osbourne didn't turn to a Black Sabbath re-hash or a sub-standard cover of a Beatles classic when a ballad was needed. Songs like *Goodbye To Romance* (*Blizzard*) and *Tonight* (*Diary*) both feature Daisley in sweetly melodic mode, and both provide excellent

opportunities for you to wave your cigarette lighter as high as you can. The melody written out here

takes inspiration from the gorgeous bass part that recurs at the end of each verse of *Tonight*. Let each

note preceding a position shift decay to the next, and be careful to observe the 'staccato' instruction.

## Ex. 7

### GROOVE POWER

The single element that makes some of Daisley's grooves such a nightmare is their tempo, and it doesn't really matter whether he's meandering melodically or pounding away on root notes. *S.A.T.O.* (*Diary*) is a relentless, high-tempo shuffle/triplet affair with Daisley sticking to the

### Shuffle/Swung 1/8th Notes

root notes through the verse before getting decidedly left-field in the chorus. These two bars

will give you a taste of the verse part; it may look fairly straightforward but maintaining the swing feel

and keeping it going for four minutes is definitely no picnic. Again, keep both hands as relaxed as possible.

## Ex. 8

### THE END IS NEAR

Our final example highlights Daisley's use of higher registers via a version of the two phrases he uses in *I Don't Know*. Our first bar approximates the lick that brings in the groove at the front of the song and is fairly straightforward, but bar two, a tribute to

### All 8va.....

the lick that kick-starts the groove after Rhoads' solo, is a technical nightmare.

The '8va' instruction means 'play one octave higher than written' (the tab will confirm

this) and is basically used to keep the notation in a comfortably readable range.