

rig into a MyMix, put on your headphones or in-ear monitors and you will have total control over how you hear yourself and others on the network.

Like JamHub and MyMix, JamLink from MusicianLink also allows musicians to connect, but with a kicker. Using the Internet, players can collaborate with each other in real time from up to 500 miles away. The JamLink device is basically an interface box that connects via Ethernet to a standard network hub. It also requires a high-speed Internet connection such as a cable modem. The unit contains a 1/4-inch input for an instrument and two 1/8-inch jacks for headphones and a talkback microphone. JamLink recommends using a gaming headphone, which has a hands-free mic built-in.

Setting up JamLink is incredibly simple. After making the necessary connections, you must register at the MusicianLink Web site to access other JamLink members. You can then connect to up to four users at a time. An onscreen mixer provides control over the session with adjustments for volume, panning and sampling rate. As with JamHub, JamLink requires some outboard signal processing in order to achieve satisfactory tone on your instrument. A microphone is also essential for communicating with other players.

Overall, I was impressed with the JamLink experience. After connecting to a fellow musician, we were indeed able to play music together with virtually no discernable delay or latency issues. Although we did encounter occasional static, fine-tuning of the settings kept the pops to a minimum.

—Keith Baumann

Ordering info: jamhub.com;
mymixaudio.com; musicianlink.com



NS Design NXT5 Electric Upright Bass

Tight & Resonant

NS Design keeps coming at bassists with new options in their EUB (Electric Upright Bass) line. The original was the U.S.-made EU model, which was terrific but a bit pricey. Then came the more affordable Czech-made CR model. The budget-conscious WAV bass, made in China, came out not too long ago and became a high-demand item with a street price of under \$1,000. The newest offering from NS Design is the NXT5 five-string bass, similar to the WAV but constructed in the Czech Republic using higher-quality woods.

The NXT5 comes with a maple neck and body and ebony fingerboard instead of the WAV's beechwood neck and body and rosewood fingerboard. It feels tighter and more resonant than the WAV. The test bass featured a nice amber burst matte finish with the grain showing through, making it resemble the

company's more expensive CR models.

The NXT5 features the all-piezo Polar pickup system. Controls are minimal: volume, tone, and a switch to go back and forth from pizzicato mode and arco/percussive-plucked-sound mode. This pickup system is passive, so no 9-volts are required. If you don't have a suitable amp, you may need an outboard pre-amp with EQ to really dial in your tone. Despite its simplicity, this pickup system gives the player a good deal of tonal flexibility. Within moments of plugging it in, I dialed up a great Eddie Gomez-like growly tone, and then with the flip of a switch and some treble roll-off achieved a Latin jazz-appropriate "baby bass"-like sound. I found the arco setting provided a nice, more traditional-sounding swing bass "thump." You can also experiment with strings to suit your taste, as it will accommodate most long-scale double bass strings.

The neck and fingerboard of the NXT5 feel great. Playing an electric upright can be a bit disorienting, but dot markers

helped immediately with navigation (no, I didn't feel like I was cheating). The NXT5 has very even tone and volume from string to string, even the low B. The extra width of the five-string neck was pretty easy to adapt to. Bowing was fun, though it took a while to get used to, but the nicely rounded fingerboard made bowing across the five strings relatively easy. I could see this being a good show/pit bass.

Like the WAV, the NXT5 comes standard with a collapsible tripod stand and gig bag. The tripod is easy to set up and completely stable. The gig bag holds the bass and tripod, and it has external pockets for a bow and cables.

With the NXT5, NS design has improved upon an already successful model. With high-quality Czech workmanship and better woods, this bass is still a bargain, going for only \$300–\$400 more than the WAV. Nothing can replace the "dog house," but if your musical situation works with an EUB, you need to give the NXT5 bass a try. —Jon Paul

Ordering info: thinkNS.com

Los Cabos Brushes

Clean Sweeping

Los Cabos Drumsticks has unveiled two new brushes.

The Standard model is a medium gauge, retractable wire brush with a soft rubber handle. At full extension, the brush offers a 4-inch fan, which produces full snare playing and bright cymbal voicings.

The Clean Sweep is a non-retractable nylon brush with a wooden handle, suitable for drummers who are looking for a softer brush tone with greater depth.

MSRP: Standard, \$19.50; Clean Sweep, \$16.10.

Ordering info: loscabosdrumsticks.com

