



Ernie Ball Announces Match The Master with John Petrucci

- Ernie Ball and John Petrucci team up to provide guitarists the chance to win a private master class with the acclaimed virtuoso backstage at a Dream Theater concert
- Winners will receive a VIP trip for two to see Dream Theater live and take home new gear from Ernie Ball Music Man, Sterling by Music Man, TC Electronic, DiMarzio, Dunlop, Mesa Boogie, Fractal Audio Systems and more

(Coachella, CA – January 29, 2016) – Ernie Ball, the world's premier manufacturer of guitar strings, musical instrument accessories, guitars and basses, has teamed up with legendary progressive rock guitarist and Ernie Ball Music Man signature artist John Petrucci on Match The Master, a new interactive online competition that puts guitar players skills to the test and offers a high stakes prize. Match The Master offers guitar player across the United States a chance to win a private master class with Petrucci himself, a VIP trip to see Dream Theater live and take home new John Petrucci signature instruments including his Ernie Ball Music Man Majesty guitar, and gear from Sterling by Music Man, Dunlop, TC Electronic, DiMarzio, Mesa Boogie, Fractal Audio Systems and more.

Starting January 29th, unsigned guitarists can visit music-man.com/matchthemaster to study exclusive videos of John Petrucci performing 10 signature riffs off of the new Dream Theater album *The Astonishing*. Contestants can then upload a video submission of their best solo impression. Each week over a two-month period, one winner will be chosen to receive a weekly prize pack and at the end of the contest one grand prize winner will be selected to win the ultimate John Petrucci experience.

Weekly Winners will receive:

- A Sterling by Music Man JP60 Series Guitar
- Brand new gear from Ernie Ball, TC Electronic, DiMarzio, Dunlop, Mesa Boogie, Fractal Audio System and more

Grand Prize Winner will receive:

- A private master class with John Petrucci backstage at a Dream Theater concert
- VIP trip for two to see Dream Theater live
- An Ernie Ball Music Man Majesty Guitar
- Year supply of Ernie Ball strings
- Brand new gear from TC Electronic, DiMarzio, Dunlop, Mesa Boogie, Fractal Audio System and more

"As a guitar player, you never stop learning, never stop honing your skills," says John Petrucci. "Even now, I'm still pushing myself to improve, and feel passionate about encouraging others to do the same. This program celebrates the hard work musicians put in to following their passion. I'm grateful that as part of the Ernie Ball family, I'm able to connect with my fans in such a meaningful way and hopefully inspire guitar players to up their game!"

"Over the course of the past 15 years the Ball family and John Petrucci have celebrated a partnership that has resulted in some of the best selling, most forward thinking guitar designs in the world, as part of the Ernie Ball Music Man JP signature line. His success as a guitarist, songwriter and instrument designer are the truest testament to his stature as one of the most influential guitar players of our time," says Sterling Ball, CEO for Ernie Ball. "It's incredible that John prioritizes programs such as Match the Master that are designed to inspire and encourage young players to push the boundaries of guitar playing. We need guitar heroes. I'm honored John calls Ernie Ball home and am committed to developing opportunities for guitar players across world."

About John Petrucci:

John Petrucci is the guitarist and a founding member of Dream Theater, the legendary progressive rock titans whose nucleus he formed in 1985. John has seen the Grammy-nominated band through many notable accomplishments, including multiple domestic as well as international top-ten releases, and

numerous gold- and platinum-certified DVDs. To date, Dream Theater has sold in excess of 12 million records worldwide.

About Ernie Ball:

In 1962, veteran player and teacher Ernie Ball created Slinky, the iconic light gauge electric guitar strings widely revered by hundreds of guitar greats including Eric Clapton, Keith Richards, Jimmy Page, Paul McCartney, Metallica, Brad Paisley, Slash, John Petrucci, The Edge and John Mayer. In addition to industry-standard strings, as well as hand-crafted high-end Ernie Ball Music Man guitars and basses, Ernie Ball Inc. offers state-of-the-art instrument accessories that are carried in more than 6,000 stores in the U.S. and 120 countries worldwide. The family-run company maintains its founder's dedication to preserving the musician's playing experience and delivering superior sound quality through the development of new products, such as Cobalt Slinky, M-Steel, Earthwood and the revolutionary Element Shield Packaging, which hermetically seals guitar strings to keep each set as fresh as the day they were made. The company also fosters artist development through musician-focused programs such as the world's largest and longest running Battle of the Bands, where unsigned bands compete each year for the chance to play live on national tours, festivals and events. Visit them online at www.ernieball.com and www.music-man.com