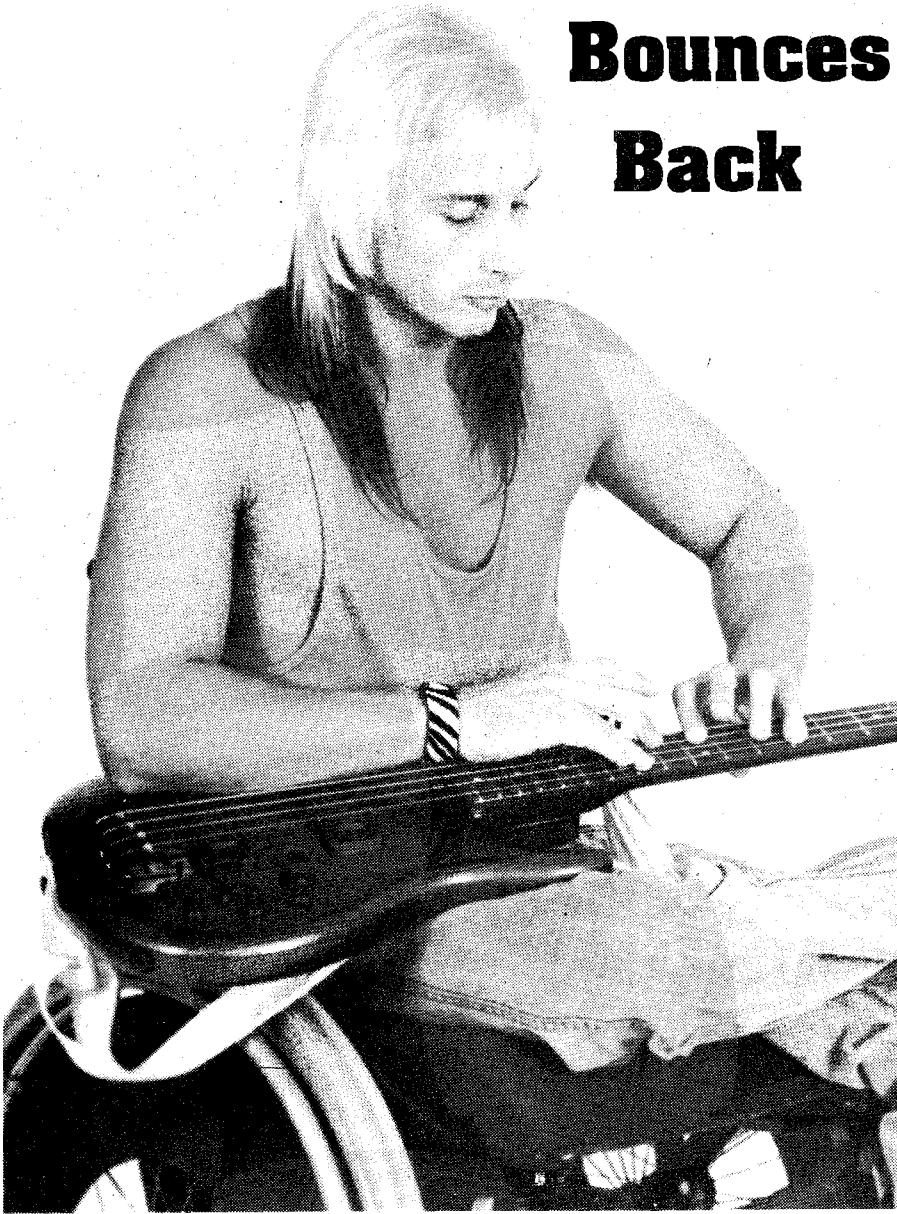


Beaver Bounces Back



It was 1985. For Fern Park resident Beaver Felton, the future was looking pretty bright. A popular bass guitarist, Beaver was an alumnus of local rock bands Mantra and Hoochie, and his current band Chimera, was in high demand for the 'A-circuit' clubs in Florida and the southeast U.S., clubs like the American Room, The Point After, Fern Park Station, Level 3, Brassy's and P.J.'s. He was well respected by the rock music community for his engaging personality and for the high caliber of his instrumental ability. He even got national recognition of his talent when *Guitar Player* magazine featured Beaver in its August 1985 "Spotlight" column. In that issue, writer Mike Varney wrote that Beaver "possesses a large vocabulary of stunning bass riffs that blend fusion, funk, and classical chops with wide-stretched

hammer-ons and outrageous harmonics." Beaver himself was quoted as adding, "My goal is to become a world-class player with a unique style..." It looked like Beaver Felton was on the right path.

Sophisticated reader that you are, you've probably guessed by now that the story has to take a turn. "Go ahead and drop the boom," you may say. Okay: On one of those typically warm and muggy Florida evenings in the summer of '85, Beaver was helping a friend transport a boat, pulling in on a trailer behind a car. Somehow, the trailer jackknifed. The car left the road and wound up in the ditch, demolished. Beaver wound up in the hospital, with a spinal cord injury that would leave him partially paralyzed. An injury of this severity could put the kibosh on Beaver's career. His friends in the Central Florida musical community, led

by his booking agent, Omni's Rick Young, held benefit concerts for Beaver in Tampa and Orlando. Some of the friends to come out and perform included the Pat Travers band, Danny Joe Brown of Molly Hatchet, Stranger, Four-in-Legion, and many others. Beaver, meanwhile, recuperated and began three months of therapy in an Atlanta hospital.

Beaver's injuries, though serious, weren't completely catastrophic- luckily, he retained use of his arms and hands- he could still play the bass guitar. The months he spent recovering from the accident gave Beaver time to develop an instructional course for bass guitar that he'd begun work on before his injury. The course, called "Superchops 4 Bass," consists of a series of cassette tapes that outline a program concentrating on specific techniques at specific playing levels. The tapes, designed for players at any level of ability, cover the styles and techniques used by such great bassists as Jaco Pastorius, Stanley Clarke, Jeff Berlin, and Billy Sheehan. "Superchops 4 Bass" has received enthusiastic response by students and graduates of many major music schools, and has been endorsed by such 'name' players as Will Lee, of the "Late Night with David Letterman" band, and Kenny Aaronson, of Billy Idol's band.

In June of this year, *Guitar World* magazine reviewed his instructional series, calling it "a valuable tutorial for all bassists," and in July Beaver was again recognized by *Guitar Player*, this time as a finalist in its "Readers Soundpage Competition." Since the spring of 1988, Beaver has been authoring a "Superchops 4 Bass" column as a regular feature in the Peavy Company's *Monitor* magazine, which has world-wide distribution of over 400,000 copies. In addition, Beaver just closed a deal on an instructional video put out by "Hot Licks:" (taped at WOFL-TV's Lake Mary Studios in June), and is working on a four-tape instructional series for "Metal Method," a west coast company.

The times and circumstances may have changed for Beaver Felton, but despite the obstacle placed in his path it looks like he's achieved his goal of becoming a world class player. Now his sights are set on his next goal: to develop further and gain recognition as a composer and performer. With this goal in mind, Beaver, who currently resides in Savannah, Georgia, is working out and gigging with his new band, "Shut Up and Drive." In a recent telephone conversation, Beaver hinted that he may soon take his new act on the road. He asked me to send greeting to all his Florida friends and said, "I'll be back- you haven't seen the last of me!"

You can correspond with Beaver via P.O. Box 22953, Savannah, Georgia, 31403-2953.