

Cole Clark - Violap

reviewed by Todd Burman

Adam Cole and Brad Clark have teamed up to bring us the Cole Clark product range of guitars, featuring everything from electric to acoustic guitars, to Lap Steels. The former Maton brain trust has branched out to bring a new vision in guitar design. Australian hand-made and owned, these two are on a serious mission to cause a stir on the product market. There have been rumblings this year, with various Australian artists starting to play their product range at live gigs. With some tongue in cheek model names, Cole Clark is very proud to introduce its Violap Lap Steel product range. Available in both acoustic and electric, the Violap is an innovation in Lap Steel design, and incorporates beautiful solid Bunya woods and stunning Indian Rosewood fingerboards.

The Specs...

Acoustic Violap

- Bunya Timber
- Indian Rosewood Fingerboard
- Indian Rosewood Bridge
- Bakerlite Saddle and Nut
- Grover 102 Nickel plated Tuners
- Elixir 12-68 Baritone strings
- 984mm Length
- 367mm width at lower bout
- 51mm Nut width
- 632.5mm / 24.9" Scale length
- Pickup – Cole Clark "Horseshoe" replica. Single coil 5.6k
- Controls – 1x Volume, and 1x Tone

Electric Violap

- Bunya Timber
- Indian Rosewood Fingerboard
- Indian Rosewood Bridge
- Bakerlite Saddle and Nut
- Grover 102 Nickel plated Tuners
- Elixir 12 –68 Baritone strings
- 984mm Length
- 367mm width at lower bout
- 51mm Nut width
- 632.5mm / 24.9" Scale length

Lap Steel Heaven...

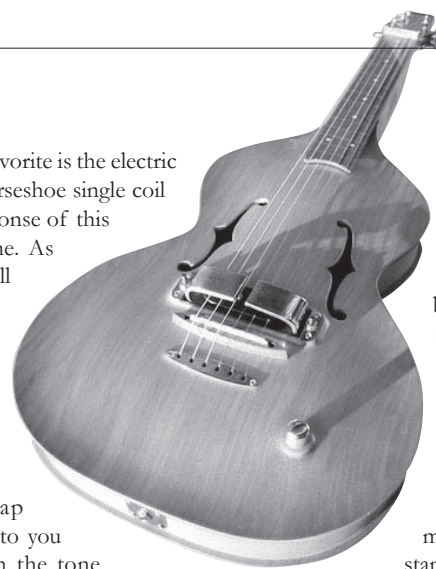
Both Violaps feature solid Bunya components, but are also available in these native Oz timbers: Blackwood, Queensland Maple and Silver Quandong. Straight up it is aesthetically an exquisite instrument, which basically comes down to exceptional wood selection.

Both the acoustic and electric Violaps are at the highest quality in design and

production standards. My favorite is the electric Violap, which features a horseshoe single coil pickup. The attack and response of this Lap Steel is second to none. As soon as you plug it in you will notice how brilliant the pickup is. Plug it into any amp or direct to a P.A and it has incredible depth, and the tone control is out of this world. The Tone control has been voiced to complement the Violap perfectly. I cannot express to you how impressed I was with the tone control, it is a work of art.

A major conquest for Cole Clark was being asked to build Lap Steels for the man himself – Mr. Ben Harper. A pioneer in bringing the Lap Steel into the modern era, and lay the foundations for future artists since he burst onto an unsuspecting audience years ago. You could not have a better ambassador for your product than this man; he has reinvented the instrument and graced us with both eccentric and smooth tones. Over the past few years I have seen different Lap Steels, but none have taken the instrument a step further. Ladies and gents, the Cole Clark Violap has shot straight to the front of the pack with an exceptional and stunning instrument, and made inroads in Lap Steel development.

It doesn't stop there; there are pickup variations as well. The electric Violap is also available in the single Cole Clark horseshoe, horseshoe and Cole Clark acoustic pickup and preamp (dual output), 2 x Cole Clark humbuckers, 2 x humbuckers and Cole Clark acoustic pickup and preamp (dual output). Each pickup variation can be made to suit your



individual playing requirements.

The top is carved with internal graduation, similar to a jazz archtop, and the acoustic Violap has the face and back 'free floating' from the main support, which continues from the neck to the bottom of the instrument. The electric Violaps back and face are not 'free floating' from the main support. If you are a Lap Steel player it will be virtually impossible to overlook the electric Violap, it is hands down light years ahead of the current Lap Steels on the market. To add to such a patriotic year, we should realize that some of the best product's available on the buyers market are Oz made, and made to international design and quality standards. If you don't play Lap Steel, this will make you want to start; I literally could not stop playing it!

I have no doubt in my mind that it was Cole Clark's mission statement to build the best Lap Steel on the market, and did they ever, it is sensationally priced and sounds phenomenal. These boys don't mind causing a stir, and good on them, because at the end of the day they have the product to back it up.

You will not need to look further than the Cole Clark Violap, aesthetically exquisite, exceptionally well made, beautiful native Australian woods, and brilliant electronic design. You do not need to wonder why Ben Harper plays Cole Clark; the proof is in the product. You will fall in love with the Violap and find it hard to resist. It is fantastic to play and exceptionally well-made Oz product, do yourself a massive favor and go and give one a test run.

For more information on Cole Clark Violaps log onto www.coleclarkguitars.com or call 03 9720 1696.