ed to a guitar and a high-gain amplifier channel. This phase of testing was conducted with the assistance of David Tarnowski at ADA Amplification Systems.

We plugged each cable into a '57 Fender Strat and a PRS Classic Electric, and listened to them through an ADA Barracuda, a reissue Ampeg Reverberocket, a Mesa/Boogie Blue Angel, a Vox AC15 reissue and a Matchless Chieftain 212. We also used a high-impedance, low-capacitance, ultra-low-noise Carrotron C-1023 preamp for critical listening.

To test jacket strength (always fun), each cable was laid uncoiled on a piece of shelving board and subjected to a direct hit from a 20" Zildjian ride cymbal dropped from a height of 30". Each bronze-guillotine survivor—there weren't many—was then given a one-minute jump-rope test to check strain relief and solder joints and expose unseen wire damage. To find out which cords survived these ordeals, see the "Chop Shop" sidebar below.

Bean spill. Rather than make you wade through all this to find out what we thought was the best-sounding cable, let's just say that nothing beat the 20' George L's. With its capacitance measuring an incredibly low 418pf (the highest was 2,150pf), this transparent-sounding cord was lively, immediate and totally revealing of every guitar we used. It was also very quiet.

Available in .155" ($.58 per foot) and .255" ($.82 per foot) thicknesses, the George L's cable features a solid center conductor and is designed to be used with special solderless 1/4" connectors ($4.75

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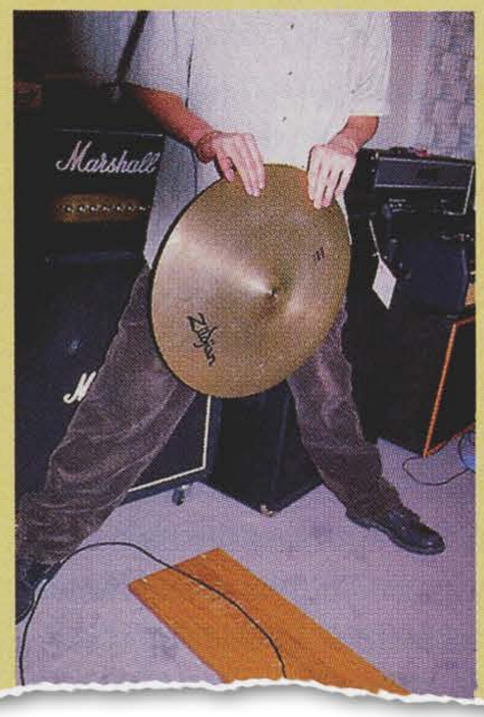
Chop Shop

Here's how each cable fared after being struck by a 20" cymbal. The survivors were then subjected to a one-minute jump-rope ordeal.

APC GC-20	**Severed**
APC GO-20	**Severed**
APC GP-20-BP	**Severed**
APC GP-20	**Severed**
APC GX-20	**Severed**
Belden 9395	**Died but wasn't severed**
Carvin SH-15	**Severed**
Carvin SH-25	**Severed**
[illegible]	**Severed**



The Meaning of Life

The cable equation is probably not worth losing a great deal of sleep over—after all, plenty of great guitar recordings have been made using whatever cord was lying around. That said, here are some guidelines to help you understand the interactive relationship between guitars, amps and cables. For purposes of this discussion, let's consider high amplifier input impedance to be 300kΩ and up. For more on impedance, see April '91 Tone Control.

Low guitar output impedance + low amp input impedance: Cable capacitance won't make much difference here, but standard guitar tone controls may seem ineffective. Increasing the tone capacitor's value will yield a more pronounced high-frequency cut. Keep this in mind if your tone control loses effectiveness after you replace your stock pickups with active types. Bottom line: Use just about any cord you want.

Low guitar output impedance + high amp input impedance: