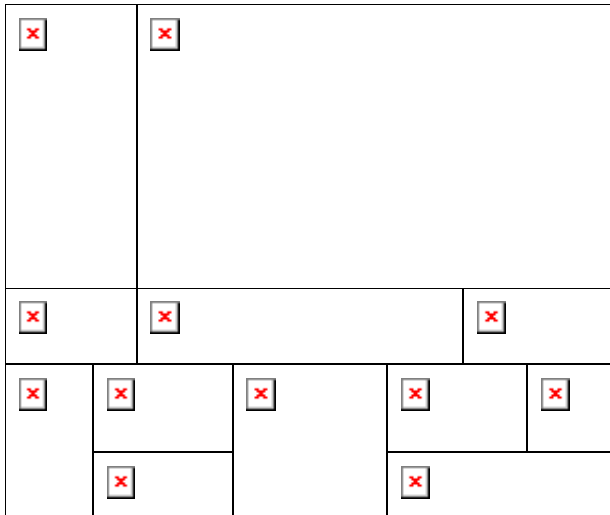


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Acoustic Guitar Magazine Review

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Luthier Tom Barth has taken the idea of portability quite seriously with the original TommyHawk, an instrument that is more like a six-string tenor ukulele than a guitar. The scale length is only 17 inches, and Barth, not surprisingly, recommends tuning it a perfect fourth (five frets) above a standard guitar. With a total length of only 24.5 inches, the TommyHawk will fit inside many backpacks and suitcases.

The construction (one piece of mahogany is hollowed out and shaped to form the neck, headstock, body, and fingerboard, and then a solid spruce top and rosewood bridge are added), the inexpensive but serviceable open-geared tuners, the natural tung-oil finish, and the hand-carved f-holes give this instrument a funky, natural, and rugged out-doorsy look and feel that should make it right at home at a remote campsite or around the campfire.

An interesting feature is that the bridge is fitted with six individual mini-saddles that allow each string's action to be adjusted separately with a screwdriver or coin. The instrument is available for \$395, not including an optional hard-shell case or gig bag. In addition to being highly portable, the TommyHawk has a unique tone that is sort of a cross between the sound of a ukulele and a mandolin, and it could add a different color to a jam session, performance, or recording project. It's available with either steel or nylon strings.

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