

CUSTOMSFORGE'S

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Issue #11

ABOUT US

CustomsForge is a website created in 2014 by the Rocksmith community to make their own songs, communicate more easily and enjoy the game together.

Currently, we are approaching more than 40,000 charts made by the community, and have more than 299,000 members.

We welcome thousands more each month

WELCOME

Welcome to CustomsForge's monthly newsletter, where you can find the latest news about CF and Rocksmith 2014 Remastered.

Open your books

The class begins usually when the teacher says something along that line. Then, a few sighs are heard and most kids open their books reluctantly and start praying that the clock turns faster so the class can finally end. It seems like this is a universal experience so today we have gathered a list for those of you who feel the same way these artists do about school.

Back to School!

Tiny Moving Parts – Vacation Bible School
 Sithu Aye – Oh Shit, I'm Late for School
 Chuck Berry – School Day (Ring Ring Does the Bell)
 Alice Cooper – School's Out
 The Ramones – Rock N' Roll High School
 The Dead Milkmen – Violent School
 Stone Temple Pilots – Art School Girl
 Air – Highschool Lover
 W. A. S. P – School Daze
 The Ataris – San Dimas High School Football Rules
 Houkago Tea Time – Sakuragoka Girls' High School
 Britny Fox – Girlschool
 Kshida Kyoudan & The Akeboshi Rockets – Highschool of the Dead OP
 School of Rock – School of Rock
 Bowling for Soup – High School Never Ends
 Staley Clarke – School Days
 Joan Jett – School Days
 AFI – High School Football Hero
 Supertramp – School
 Deftones – Beauty School
 Pink Floyd – Another Brick In The Wall Part I/II
 Mötley Crüe – Smokin' In The Boys Room
 Van Halen – Hot For Teacher



Rocksmith2014 Remastered logo



Rodman's profile picture

An interview with

Rodman

It is said in the depths of the CustomsForge forums there is a user who has a white beard, as long as his guitar, who plans to take control of the website, with his plot to divide guitarists against each other with his malevolent competition...While everything I said is obviously a lie, what's true is that today he's our guest for September.

I'm Rodman and I love guitars. 41 years old now. Married, father of 2 great kids and an active participant and one of the organizers of the **RS Championships (CS)** now for over 5 years, and haven't missed one week of competition since then.

How did you get into Rocksmith?

Well, I always wanted to be able to play the guitar. Bought some 20 years ago (first a cheap 2nd hand Ibanez Gio, and after that as an Angus fan-boy a red Gibson Sg Special) **but I never got far on the playing side.** Then those great guitar games were released for consoles and I got really into Rockband and also Guitar Hero. **When RS was released, I instantly bought it for PS and was thrilled that it worked really well,** but it had its issues – mainly that it was not really beginner-friendly and not a really good

“If you download a CDLC, try it and please take the time to go back to the song's page and leave a comment”

learning tool for me. For RS2014 I did have high expectations, and it was released at a good time when I had passed a really big exam after one year of learning (besides working full time) and my kids had grown out of baby age. I bought it on day of release for PS, which I should regret after a short period of time...

Was it when you got into CF and the Championships?

June 18, 2014. I had bought quite a few ODLs, had no idea that customs or CF existed and was browsing the internet for no special reason. I don't remember my search terms but google led me to a strange google docs file where obviously custom songs were sorted into difficulty classes, there were scores, and it was called Rocksmith 2014 Championship. **It took me about 5 secs and I had decided that I was at home.** Did research, found CF, signed up, joined the CS in week 38, beginner class and joined the organizing team Oct 2014.

And here we are, about 270 weeks, 10 guitars, 2 basses, a few 1000 screenshots and posts later.

How does the championship work?

From a player's perspective: really easy - download the week's songs of the classes you want to join in (link always in opening post of that week's topic), play it, do a screenshot where accuracy (%) and streak is shown, do a post with a link to that and say hello. Update your scores as often as you like in the running week with new posts and join the ongoing conversations if you like. Everyone is invited and welcome, there is no one too “bad” or too “good” for our friendly competition.

From our perspective: lucky wise we have a sensational team of more than 10 that help to keep it running on that level. **Every Saturday evening (CET) new week is started** with a new post, that means one of us organizers has done a selection for all classes and all paths, announces the winners of the last week, creates the new leader board sheet for the week. **Throughout the week all the posted scores are filled into the leader board**, most of the time only minutes to few hours after they are posted for every player to see the between standing. **Players are leveled to next class if they reach the criteria**, the scores from the last 10 weeks are used to calculate a ranking table, **awards are given** for 1-3rd place of last week and the leaders of each class, and – for a few weeks now we are proud to do player XP-Level calculation, something I have been thinking and fiddling about for years: The player's scores of the last few weeks are used to calculate a score which yields his playing level on lead, rhythm, and bass (like character levels in an RPG) independent of his/her opponents.

We have tweaked all the rules to a very good level by now, but we are all constantly working on possible improvements and expansions to deliver the optimal competition experience.

How did you decide what ranks are set and what songs are chosen?

The competition started with basically 3 songs each week: One for beginner, one for intermediate, and one for masterclass level players... there were 2 points that led to conversations about changes again and again. On the one hand, a song with masterclass difficulty lead path doesn't necessarily have a very hard rhythm or bass part. So, though it meant enormous additional effort we started to rate all the paths of each song independently.

On the other hand, time showed that **the intermediate category was a gap too big between really easy and really hard songs, so we additionally created the advanced class.** And because we also have real masters among the players that manage to even nail diff 9 songs with close to 100% in a few tries, **we also created the God of Guitar trophy** where competition is held playing the hardest songs we can find in the database.

For song selection: Every player is invited to put his song on our Song Selection List (SSL) and to rate each path for difficulty (1-10) not only for his presented songs, but also for songs that have been entered by others, and also leave comments regarding the quality of files – that creates a base for us to start from. For each week's selection, one of us organizers does a random selection process to get a song for each class then plays all the paths of each song testing them for difficulty and quality which includes tab accuracy, sync, tone, volume, scroll speed, working Riff Repeater, just everything to make sure the file is a very good one.

That way the paths can be put in the right classes, missing arrangements are filled from songs played in the past, and we are ready to start the new week.

We keep close contact with the charters and if there is an issue reported, very often the file gets updated within days to be used, or if it happens during the competition, within hours. Something that also has happened more

then once is that the original charter is not active anymore, but quickly a new complete version is charted to keep it running in the championship.

Do organizers decide who deserves to be in each class and who doesn't?

Not really. **The player chooses the class by himself separately for lead, rhythm**

and bass. He can ask for a change of class anytime, and he is automatically leveled up when he reaches 99%+ accuracy (99.5+ for bass) on a song of maximum difficulty of his class (3 for beginners, 5 for intermediates and 7 for advanced).

What's the thing you like most about the CS?

Well, you know we all are here at CF for more less the same reason – to have fun with our instrument and get better on it. **Everyone experiences drawbacks on that journey and it's natural to even lose interest from time to time and throw the gear into the corner** for some time because it is hard to learn to play guitar and bass. It just is. And a lot of players get stuck and lose interest for a long time, or forever – be it for lack of motivation of constantly sitting down alone and practice for no obvious goal or the common problem of constantly choosing songs that are just too hard for the person's level of playing - that also happened to me when



Some user's awards

I first bought a guitar, started to learn, couldn't handle it ... and came back 15 years later with RS.

Here is where the CS kicks in – **here every player gets a new challenge every week on all paths he or she plays** (lead/rhythm/bass) **meeting his or her playing level, and gets one week to get better on the new** (hand-picked, quality) **songs**, compete against the classmates, talk about issues and techniques to master hard parts, get kicked by the better scores and motivated to strike back hard and get a shiny award at the end of the week or on the long term climb up on the leader board, see his/her XP level rise and level up to the next class. **It's like a big playground where you try to master the same obstacle competing against each other and learning also by watching the others.** And very importantly every player gets the obstacle – or song – exactly fitting his level.

In other words, **it really makes the way the target and that way offers great fun.** In addition, you get a growing library of only quality tested CDLCs to come back to and have fun with.

What is amazing is the community and attitude at the CS. Everybody is helpful and there is a lot of discussion about new gear and setups and stuff.

There is just too much to tell, but **another brilliant point is that all sort of music genres are presented in the Championships**, and all the players are encouraged to bring in their favorite tunes to our song selection list to be chosen. So, taking part in the competition the players are forced to leave their comfort zone and compete and work on songs and techniques they would have never tried else

Have there been any major changes to the championship?

Yes. My main reason for joining the organization team was to find ways to improve the motivation of players to come back and continuously play from week to week, and we do have quite a well-developed environment with all the already mentioned tools to serve as that great playground. We all are still working on ways to push that, like for example: We decided some time ago after intense conversations with some players to simplify the leveling up rules and taking away the chance of demotivation of being leveled up to a

class above one's level too early by allowing voluntary down- and leveling up at any time.

Have there been any breaking points or moments where the championship changed forever?

When a long-term player leaves the competition for good. We had that a few times that a change of job or family duties or other personal reasons didn't allow the time to keep competing anymore and players had to retire or just disappeared. **It's like a big family, and one of the members gone leaves a hole, sometimes a very big one.**

But as sad as that is, it's as nice when one of them drops by to say hello or like recently when one of the original players from the very beginning comes back to start playing again regularly.

Have you ever thought about giving up organizing it?

Never

Knowing what you do know now, would you go back and do it all again?

Any time!

If you could say something to the whole RS community what would it be?

Two things: **If you download a CDLC, try it and please take the time to go back to the song's page and leave a comment.** The charter has spent many hours on that song so when you get it for free, constructive feedback becomes the only way to say thanks and contribute to an improvement of quality.

And:

Join the Championship, 'cause the Championship is good for you!

You can find Rodman at the following links below:

Rodman's email:

rodman.at.the.championship@gmail.com

Rodman's twitter:

[@R_o_d_m_a_n](https://twitter.com/R_o_d_m_a_n)

Discord:

[Rodman#9029](#)



CustomForge's profile picture in all social media accounts.

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Volunteer: <http://bit.ly/applytoCF>



BoomSoMuch repping us at TwitchCon 2019!

Twitter: [@BoomSoMuch](#)

Twitch: [BoomSoMuch](#)

Charter's tip of the month:

“Learn how to do custom fret hand positioning (FHP), it can make a hard riff or solo much easier to sightread, and looks a lot cleaner” – qt314xxx

Website Updates & Mac Beta

If you see a dead link, make sure to report it! Please remember that the website depends on donations. Any amount helps!

We're aware of the Mac Beta not working with CDLC at the moment.

A fix is on the way.

Moderators & Server Admin

We are looking for some moderators, if you are suited for these positions then follow the link on the sidebar.

Staff updates

This month we welcome Ffio & MTPenguin to the team!

PATREONS

An extra special shoutout to all of those who support us with a couple of bucks every month. You may not realize it but your kindness helps us more than you can imagine.

We would like to thank the following Patreons for the month:

Alex B, Amarillo114, Andy M, Bengris, Boris H, Cheechi, Chris F, Colin L, Dale R, Daniel F, Donald M, Doug W, Eddie B, Eduard K, Firekorn, Guilherme A. J, Henk v.d.V, Ippo I, Jacob S, Jay H, Joel H, John N, John W, Levente D, Lorenzo P S, Lysander, Mark S, Martin W, MattAttaq, Maurice C, Michael I, Michael W, MrGamy, Nick L, NuSuey, Pheasant, Rafael B, RegularIain, Roald, Roan A, Roberto S, Romali, Ronald, Sergi L, Shane S, T M, Tommy, Tysylio, Worgen

Thank you for reading CustomsForge's monthly newsletter. Keep on rockin'
