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Subject: JBL vs Altec vs CTS vs Jensen

Posted by [daveobergoenner@gmail.com](mailto:daveobergoenner@gmail.com) on Thu, 04 Feb 2021 23:56:52 GMT

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Haven't posted here in a long time, but I had a question or two about speakers in the Kustom Cabs...

I know in the 70's Kustom offered 4 brands...

JBL (both in guitar (130) and bass (140) models)

Altec (which models I don't know)

CTS I think these were only in Bass amps...usually cheaper.

Jensen I think these were only in guitar amps...usually cheaper.

I've been a fan of JBL for most of my music playing years...which is since the 1960's. I presently have a Kustom 2x15 cab that's loaded with JBL E140-8's. It puts out an impressive amount of sound with my K200 head.

Lately, I'm also a fan of Altec speakers, specifically for bass. Usually the 421a or 421-8H. I have a 421-8H in my Ampeg B15n, and really love the sound of it. That was Ampeg's "optional upgrade" speaker. I've never heard a Kustom loaded with Altec's.

Through the 70's I played a K400 through two of the 3x15 cabs...loaded with six CTS drivers. They were indestructible, and sounded ok...but not much on clarity.

My question for the Kustom experts here is this...

Which speakers did Kustom think were best in their enclosures? Especially for bass guitar? I'm guessing either the JBL or Altec. And which model of Altec? Any advantages people know of here, one brand over the other? Perhaps it was just what Mr. Ross could get the best deal on that month.?.

Thanks,  
Dave O.

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Subject: Re: JBL vs Altec vs CTS vs Jensen

Posted by [sunhead](#) on Fri, 05 Feb 2021 18:07:46 GMT

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Kustom offered a 12 inch altec the 417 guitar speaker and in 15 inch the 421 for bass and the 418 for guitar. For Me Im a altec guy all the way for bass. I do have JBL bass speakers but I LOVE the 421's The altc guitar speakers are fantastic also, very efficient. But Both Speakers are great.

-S

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Subject: Re: JBL vs Altec vs CTS vs Jensen

Posted by [stevem](#) on Fri, 05 Feb 2021 20:48:30 GMT

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The Jensen speakers that were used were always the top of the line concert series models like the C15L and the C12N and such.

In 72 Bud Ross was gone as he had to sell and did so to the Baldwin Piano and Organ co. At this time and due to Jensen being in chapter 11 Kustom started to use Eminence drivers labeled as KEI as their standard speakers for non bass usage.

The reason you hear lack of clarity out of the 3-15" Bass cabinets is not so much due to the CTS made drivers it's loaded with, but for the fact that even the 2-15" cabs are too darn small, no less the 3-15" model!!

The 3-15" cab needs to be a minimum of 2.5" deeper and have another two port tubes stuffed in it!

I have one 3-15" Bass cab and 6 2-15" bass cabs loaded with all the drivers you speak of and for my bass playing needs in terms of the range of cover tunes that I play either with my fingers or as needed I pick I find that the one cab I have loaded with a EVM bass driver and a EVM guitar driver covers the whole sound spectrum I need.

The only down side is the cab weighs a lot , just as if it had Altec 421 drivers in it!

Altec 418 model drivers like JBLs have Alnico magnets, where as the 421 models have ceramic so to me you can not compare them because this fact alone makes them sound different and certainly respond differently when you A/B them close !

For me I do not like JBL bass drivers as they do not go up high enough in frequency response by any means, so in that light if I had to choose between Altec and JBL it would be Altec, the 421H model in peculiar, especially if I am playing my 5 string Bass!

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Subject: Re: JBL vs Altec vs CTS vs Jensen

Posted by [sunnhead](#) on Sat, 06 Feb 2021 17:03:59 GMT

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truth with the 200 cabs being too shallow. I mean there ok, but for bass the 250 series cabs are where its at.

-S

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Subject: Re: JBL vs Altec vs CTS vs Jensen

Posted by [daveobergoenner@gmail.com](mailto:daveobergoenner@gmail.com) on Tue, 09 Feb 2021 03:37:07 GMT

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Thanks Everyone!

I just received a pair of Altec 421a drivers I bought through ebay. Both are pretty poorly done re-cones, and one has a VC rubbing beyond about 1mm of travel. Of course, both were listed as being in "Fully tested and in excellent condition". So I'm really bummed-out now.

I may be done with buying used drivers. I've had some good luck in the past, but it seems like everyone is just dumping their junk now.

One one of the other threads, someone was talking about the Kappalite 3015lf. If I can get my \$ back for these lousy 421a's, I may just pop for a pair of those. I know the 200 series 2x15 cab is too small, but it's probably too small for the E140's I have in there now anyway. I was just hoping that the Altec 421a's would give me a little more deep bass out of it than the E140's. That was the case in my Ampeg B15...which is another too small for the driver cab.

So, any thoughts on the E140 vs the 3015lf in the K200 2x15 box? So much for trying to stay close to "factory/period correct".

Dave O.

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Subject: Re: JBL vs Altec vs CTS vs Jensen  
Posted by [stevem](#) on Tue, 09 Feb 2021 11:14:37 GMT  
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Sorry about your eBay experience! I have bought tons of drivers off of there and I only had that happen once and the damage was due to inadequate packing, and once again probably like in your case it's due to how heavy those drivers are.

I got smart after that and when buying heavy drivers I sent the seller a square, drilled out for speaker mounting 1/4" piece of plywood that fit in a standard size shipping box to bolt the driver too so it protected the face of the driver .

I found it well worth the added cost to buy them!

In regards to using different drivers for Bass in these cabinets you need to look at once of there stated specs in particular , that being something called VAS.

This is a Number in cubic feet that's needed on the inside of the of the cabinet for the driver to work as intended, and it's the minimum amount of cubic feet needed!  
It's time for some math I guess!

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Subject: Re: JBL vs Altec vs CTS vs Jensen  
Posted by [Cody UNO](#) on Fri, 12 Feb 2021 04:58:57 GMT  
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For what it is worth, I emailed Eminence last week and asked them if they had anything that would be close to the JBLs and Altecs that were in vintage custom cabs. This is what they wrote me.

Hello,

Thank you for the kind words !

If your amp can take a 4 ohm load, then the Double T-15 of our Pedal Steel offerings is the most voiced like JBL drivers we ever offered.

DOUBLE-T 15 - Loudspeakers | Eminence Speaker

If you have to have an 8 ohm load, then look to the PF-400

PF-400 - Loudspeakers | Eminence Speaker

Yes, these are both aimed at Pedal Steel, but either will be at home for bass as well.

If you want a driver with more grunt down low, look to these:

LEGEND CB158 - Loudspeakers | Eminence Speaker

KAPPA PRO-15A - Loudspeakers | Eminence Speaker

Thanks,

mcJ

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Subject: Re: JBL vs Altec vs CTS vs Jensen  
Posted by [steven](#) on Fri, 12 Feb 2021 11:04:33 GMT  
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Did you tell the Eminence folks how many cubic square feet of internal area your cabinet has when they then recommended that Kappa pro driver to you?

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