
Subject: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [dkerwood](#) on Fri, 22 Jul 2005 23:46:52 GMT

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My sister has been looking for a Kustom bass amp for months now. We finally walked into our local "used" shop, and low and behold, a Kustom! It was a K200 PA head with 2 Kustom 4x10 cabinets. Unfortunately, the clerk discouraged us from buying it upon realizing that we wanted it as a bass amp. So my question is twofold.

First, can damage actually be done to a K200 PA head by running a bass guitar into it?

Second, can anyone suggest a quick fix to improve said amp's REALLY low range (it sort of loses punch around low G on the E string)?

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [BC](#) on Sun, 24 Jul 2005 22:21:32 GMT

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Welcome to the site! No problems with using the 200B-5 as a bass head. Cabinets are the critical thing. I prefer 2x15 4ohm loads to play bass with ANY of the 200 series heads. Yes, I agree you lose a little on the really low notes....but remember the 200 is a 100 watt RMS amp and that is at a 4 ohm load load. If the 4x10s are PA columns you will not be happy with them for bass....BUT THE HEAD WILL BE FINE. The columns may actually be 4x12s and look like 10s if you are measuring the speakers from the front. If you are playing a 5 or 6 string bass you will like an 18 inch speaker a cabinet. I have a friend who modified a Kustom 2x15 and loaded a 1x12 and 1x18 for a guy who played a 5 string....it really goes low now! I play bass in a classic rock and blues band and I have used vintage Kustoms exclusively for the last 6 years.

Tell us more...what color is the Kustom? What kind of music do you play? What size clubs or audiences? BC

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [dkerwood](#) on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 04:31:41 GMT

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Well, it was a standard black head and speakers, with a nifty purple jewel light. My sister plays bass in my band, Leave Thursday (www.leaveThursday.co.nr), and we play Christian alternative rock. Typically our audiences are 50-100 people, but we do want enough oomph to handle larger audiences if necessary.

We did take the head back into the store and played it though a 2x10 Hartke cab and a 4x10 Peavey cab, and through each, it began to break up at around 12 o'clock on the volume. Granted, each of these cabs were around 300W cabs...

My sis was really disappointed, because she fell in love with the look of the amp, just not the

sound through the speakers.

Would it be recommended to load up the 2 columns with 10" bass speakers? Might that improve things?

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [BC](#) on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 15:21:13 GMT
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Again I think the problem will be in the cabinets as long as the head is functioning properly. Typically you can not run the volume on a 200 above the 10 or 11 O'clock position without getting distortion and perceived power loss. With the proper cabinets, 10 O'clock is about all you would want! The ideal cabinet situation would be a pair of original Kustom 2x15 CTS loaded speaker cabinets. A single cabinet of the same type would also work very nicely and probably be all you would NEED. As an alternative a pair of the 2x12 CTS cabinets or the 1x15 CTS cabinets would be great and easier to move. The columns are not going to make you happy no matter what speakers you use simply because of their design. Personally I would stay away from the 10 inch speakers. They sound great with amps that are putting out 200, 300, 400 watts but I have not been happy with them and Kustom heads. I have a 2x10 Hartke that I tried with a 200 for a practice amp.....sounded dreadful! I now rehearse with the band with a Kustom 100 (50 watts rms) and a Kustom 2x15 CTS cabinet and the sound is great! If you cannot find a Kustom to try it with....and OLD Peavey 2x15 would be good to sound test it with....or an OLD Sunn cabinet. Essentially all the 200 heads are the same. Kustom achieved different functions for the amps by changing the speaker configurations. Refer to the literature section of this site and you will see different speaker types offered for different use. The secret to the Kustom sound is in the cabinets! Let us know what you find out. BC

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [stevem](#) on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 17:14:02 GMT
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It would help to change the tone caps in what ever channel she played thru, I would also think that their would be a gain structure difference in the PA. I will take a look at both schematics tonight and let you know.

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [dkerwood](#) on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 17:17:04 GMT
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Thank you!

Of course, the next (and more difficult) step would be to find a new speaker cab for it. We'd probably need to sell the 2 column speakers to pay for the new cab, and we'd almost certainly have to order the new cab online from this site or Ebay... Unless there's somebody near Wichita

KS selling...

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [BC](#) on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 17:57:46 GMT
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Seems to me there is always Kustom gear in the KS area...They were built in Chanute KS. Several in Nebraska too. First, try the head with a suitable cabinet and see if you like it. If it works for you, run an ad here and see what happens. Ask other musicians.... especially older country and gospel players....check pawn shops....ask music stores what they have in the "back room". Check with some churches that use praise bands...Lots of that gear was used in church for many years.

I have a nice black 2x15 cabinet now....but I already have a deal pending....if that falls through I will be in touch. Remember it is nice to match the colors on a Kustom but not essential. I mix mine up sometimes just to see how they look. I do not think there is much tonal difference in a PA head and a "Bass" (non Effect) head. We are using a K200B-5 PA head for a Keyboard amp in my band now and it is great with the low notes on the electric piano! BC

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [dkerwood](#) on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 18:45:16 GMT
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Another question I had. We noticed that while we were playing, the spring reverb unit was slightly noisy, especially as the bass started to shake the head. We turned the reverb controls all the way down on all four channels, but it didn't seem to help.

Is there a way to silence the reverb? Or would I just have to open the whole thing up and pull the spring reverb out?

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [BC](#) on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 18:54:55 GMT
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I think the simplest thing to do would be to remove the four screws on the bottom of the case and pull the chassis from the case and unplug the reverb unit from the board....Mark one of the cables and its plug with a marker in case you want to reconnect sometime.....do not touch the two large cans in there.....they are filter caps and carry lots of juice! Put tape over the plugs on the reverb cables so they will not hurt anything they contact and try to secure them out of the way with cable ties. BC

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [voided3](#) on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 20:51:12 GMT

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Hello. Your PA head should have a footswitch jack on the bottom right of the back panel. The footswitch would turn the reverb pan on and off. If you just want to keep the reverb off all the time, stick a 1/4" guitar cable in it and it will short it (i.e. the equivalent of having the footswitch in the off position). I own a K200-A5 and I built a footswitch for it using a square metal outlet box and a stomp on/off switch. Just hook one wire from the guitar cord (after desoldering or cutting the jack off and stripping it) to one pole of the switch and the other wire to the other. Instant footswitch! Good luck!

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [rodak](#) on Tue, 26 Jul 2005 02:57:11 GMT
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Do the PA heads have the separate "Lo/Hi" input jacks? If so, make sure you're using the "Lo" jack - it refers to frequency response, not signal level. If you sue the "Hi" jack for bass, you'll get a fairly anemic sound no matter what the speakers are.

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [BC](#) on Tue, 26 Jul 2005 03:30:42 GMT
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To answer Rodak's question.....No. The four jacks on the PA heads are used one for each channel.....no high and low jacks like the other models. BC

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [QModer](#) on Tue, 26 Jul 2005 13:31:38 GMT
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The head will have no bright deep switch and the cabs can't take bass. Even if they had bass speakers they have no room to reflex. The head will work for bass though.

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [dkerwood](#) on Tue, 26 Jul 2005 19:36:15 GMT
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So the concensus is that the head would work, but we'd have to find a different cab.

Side bar - what would 2 4x10" columns be super useful for? Could they be side fill monitors? Maybe monitors behind the drums? Are they 8 ohm, 4 ohm, or 2 ohm? I blew up a channel of my PA power amp because I didn't know that my old Peavey 4x12 column speakers were 4 ohm, and my old amp couldn't take 2 ohms for several hours.

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [dkerwood](#) on Tue, 26 Jul 2005 20:06:39 GMT
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I hate to derail this and go in a different direction, but we found another amp online and were sort of confused about what exactly it was. Here's the picture
http://www.marshallman.com/amp_pics/ampKustomBlueSparkle.jpg.

Let me know what you think about it for bass.

Here's where it was listed in the first place.

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [BC](#) on Tue, 26 Jul 2005 20:43:00 GMT
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The columns would be fine for sidefills.....or monitors. I have used 4x12s and the 2x10 3x8 columns for both. Nix on the blue. The head would be fine but a 4x12 is a guitar cabinet.....you would be no better off. BC

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [dkerwood](#) on Tue, 26 Jul 2005 20:44:34 GMT
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Ok, BC, I guess then we're in a holding position until you decide to sell us a 2x15 cab... lol...

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [BC](#) on Wed, 27 Jul 2005 02:19:38 GMT
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I will keep my eyes open for a stray 2x15. But first, I think you should try that head with any 2x15 bass cabinet and see if you are getting closer to the sound you want. BC

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [QModer](#) on Wed, 27 Jul 2005 02:50:04 GMT
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Old Kustom heads in some ways don't care what runs thru them they just power it. Today's modern amps are voiced for specific instruments. The old rule applies here you can use a bass amp for guitar but not a guitar amp for bass. It probably has its roots from way back in the early days from when guitarist ran thru 57 to sixties Bassman amps and loved the sound. But bass players running thru 57 Twins to Super Reverbs in

the sixties were less than thrilled.

The only thing you'd really miss in using the Pa head is the bright deep switch and hi low inputs that are on Kustom bass amps. I like the bright deep switch but could care less about the hi input. The Pa cabs could be used for guitar as well as Pa. They will run eight ohms by using four sixteen ohm twelves in each cab. Your total load on them with two cabs will be four ohms. They have lots of midrange. So they are fine vocal reproducing but not too good for micing other instruments. They do not have the internal room nor are they ported properly to be used as bass cabs. That blue amp is a Kustom 150. Kustom cabs like those can be bass cabs. Those are probably not but you'd have to check to know for sure. The speakers could be replaced on those if you get it cheap enough.

If either one can be had cheap then you might think on getting both of them. You could then keep the Pa head and trade around for what cab that you want.

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [dkerwood](#) on Wed, 27 Jul 2005 04:04:09 GMT

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Ok, so we'll head back in and try that head with this great big old Peavey 15" bass cab I've been eyeing (my bass amp is a Peavey Combo 300 from the 80s - 230W expandable to 300W with an extension cab).

The amp and cabs are \$300. Pretty good condition, about 5 cigarette burns on top, one little rip on the bottom of the head. As far as I could tell, the cabs were near perfect. I was told the guy who sold it just kept it in his basement for a long time... Is that a pretty "cheap" price?

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [QModer](#) on Wed, 27 Jul 2005 16:39:59 GMT

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It sounds like your present bass amp may be more powerful though. But the price is not that bad as long as every thing works no blown speakers ect.. You have to listen close there too as a working speaker near by can fool you some times into thinking that they all are.

If your not interested in it what color is it? Whats the deal on the little blue one since your not interested in it?

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [dkerwood](#) on Wed, 27 Jul 2005 17:56:47 GMT

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Oh, shoot, the blue amp is just one I found online. I know nothing about it. The other one is actually at a local store.

Another question, regarding wattage. If we want a Kustom bass amp that will keep up with a 140W Fender 2x12 (mine) and a drumset in a rock band, what sort of wattage should we be

looking for?

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [QModer](#) on Thu, 28 Jul 2005 12:16:59 GMT

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Kinda depends on how much of that power (wattage) your guitar player is using. Most solid state will reach their full power rating before distortion and generally speaking two solid state amps watts equal one tube one. Why? Because wattage is rated at before distortion. Solid state amps don't distort very soon. Tube amps do so they are reaching distortion long before the full power of the amp is used. Guitar players don't mind distortion they can and will use the extra wattage a tube amp will generate.

Then there's the drummer is he a heavy hitter? If so then the rest of the band will have to match him. Things can then get loud in a hurry. My advice sell the 140 watt guitar amp and get him (the guitar player) a Deluxe reverb. He'll be at twenty two watts but the tube overdrive he seeks will come on early. In other words he's happy with his sound. So then a Kustom is quite adequate for the bass job. But if he uses that 140 watt Fender you need to be able to double his wattage. See what I mean by getting high wattage needed in a hurry.

I used to run thru a 66Bassman or my Twin, or my Tone Master. It was way too much it required a 400 watt bass amp to hang with it. But I have that 800 watt monster for bass. Now I use either a Deluxe Reverb, Pro Jr., or Cambridge 30. I'm happy with the guitar sound and the bass player using my Kustom's are happy even without the help of the monster eight hundred watt power amp that I can use thru my Kustom cabs with a Pa board as the premap section of that big old power amp.

The result is the band is plenty loud enough for any venue and the vocals can be heard as well as the rest of the band. Try and get the guitarist in the smallest tube amp you can while holding the drummer back or invest in some very good earplugs and about a three to four hundred watt bass amp.

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [dkerwood](#) on Thu, 28 Jul 2005 16:11:36 GMT

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I gotcha. Well, my guitar amp is a 140W solid state Fender. My 4 separate distortion tones come from 2 solid state distortion channels on the amp (besides the clean), mainly for slightly broken up "tubish" sound, and 2 from my Visual Sound Jekyll and Hyde pedal - a harder overdrive, like a tubescreamer, and a heavy distortion, like a Metal Zone, only without all the harshness.

Most of the time I'm using the clean channel, and I don't crank it to the point of distorting the amp. In fact, I rarely have to push it above 50 percent on my clean channel volume. Now, without some special electronic meters, I'm not going to be able to figure out how much of my wattage, on average, I use, but suffice it to say that my amp has way more headroom than even I probably suspect.

Our drummer is a fairly heavy hitter when he can be let loose. He knows how to pull back, but (in

my opinion) he sounds best when he can go full throttle.

So do you think that a K200 would fill our needs with a 2x15 cab? I'm beginning to figure out that certain Kustoms seem to be more common than others, and finding a K550 bass amp might take a long time of searching.

One more question, and I'll quit hogging the forum here... If I can find a 50W 2x15 cab, would that be louder than using an equal 100W 2x15 cab? I'm still confused on this whole wattage/power thing... Thanks, all!

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [dkerwood](#) on Thu, 28 Jul 2005 17:55:50 GMT
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How about this cab? for a K200 PA head? It's within driving distance for me, which is always nice.

We're also looking at this cab on Ebay. As far as I can tell, we'd just have to replace the fabric on the front of the cab to get it back to the "Kustom look". Let me know what you guys think.

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [BC](#) on Thu, 28 Jul 2005 22:19:07 GMT
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The cabinet is the right one.....but I can tell by looking that those are NOT the CTS speakers that came in it. SO....I do not know how it will sound. My Advice...keep looking! BC

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?
Posted by [QModer](#) on Fri, 29 Jul 2005 05:01:46 GMT
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No casters, Hmmmm! not good. You gotta wonder why someone would rip them out and what shape the wood is in under there. Might even be a fake cab. I know a guy who made two. Kinda reminded you of Scarlet in gone with the wind with the dress made out of curtains. He covered them in curtain material LOL..

As for the speakers they are Jensens. Most of the time Jensens in Kustom cabs are guitar speaker now all the time but usually. It does'nt matter what kinda power level speakers you use it won't get any louder. The greater the power rating on the speakers is the more power that they can handle being put into them by and amp head.

Most CTS speakers (the standard Kustom Bass speakers) are rated at sixty watts a piece. A 2x15 CTS bass cab can handle 200 watts with no problem though. Your 140 watt Fender guitar amp is equal to about 70 tube watts. Thats pretty darn loud and if the drummer is that loud too. Your gonna be pushing the Kustom head hard. They are 100 watt heads not really the 200 as the model would suggest. Remember my two watts to every guitar player watt for bass rule and judge for your self. You can use and LPB1 or 2 power booster or something simular and usually make

up the difference.

Other thoughts are that 100 watt rating is only good if you use two cabs. Kustoms are four ohm heads. But their single cabs unless fitted with replacement speakers are eight ohms. That means with only one cab it puts out around sixty five watts. Thats by the usual factoring.

But it seems to come up more than that 100 watts with two cabs. Why do I say that? Well in theory doubling your wattage is only supposed to increase your volume by only three Db. Thats hardly doubleing the volume. But I can tell you from lots of experience with Kustoms it is like double the volume with two cabs. That set up can take on your Fender guitar amp.

Other ways I use to get loud Kustoms is make the cab a four ohm cab by using efficient eight ohm speakers (Kustom use sixteen ohm speaker to get eight ohms per cab not four). That saves you needing two cabs. But I'm with BC this one does'nt look like it will be that cab.

I have also used a memory man pedal. No not for delay. But because it has a Stereo out. Why? Well then I can run two Kustom amps at once and the memory man has a built in power booster for the second amp. That would keep up with your Fender and your drummer no matter how hard he hits.

However there is loud and then there is loud. If a guitar player used a 100 watt tube amp like Twin or something. I pull out the big guns. Four Kustom cabs, powered by and eight hundred watt power amp, the preamp controls are provided by a little mixer. You can boost any frequency you want with that thing and or take away from what ever frequency you want. But I like it just fine with the controls flat. I can't invision any scenaro that can out do it.

I have even ran my Twin with my Tone Master by A/B switch and the bass rig was just fine. So hang in there it will work out.

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [dkerwood](#) on Fri, 29 Jul 2005 05:32:57 GMT

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Well, you guys are gonna hate me. After lots of searching and trying to figure out what to do, my sister has decided on a brand new Behringer 300W bass head running into a vintage Acoustic brand 2x15 cab (with a METAL horn!). We know next to nothing about the Acoustic cab, because no wattage or ohm ratings exist on the back...

Anybody know anything about how to determine those little details? Some research I found tells me that occasionally the Acoustic amp cabs would be wired as 2 ohm cabs, which apparently can melt the speakers??? That'd be nice to know.

Anyway, she bought the Behringer head today, after thumping it through a Peavey 4x10 for a while. Earlier, we had played the Acoustic cab (at a different store) with a 400W amp head, but couldn't crank it up yet. We plan to head back there tomorrow with the Behringer head and my sister's bass to double check it, but so far so good.

Well, except for the fact that we won't end up with a Kustom in our backline. I may break down and buy a Kustom stack for guitar one of these days, though. I hear they sound amazing... lol...

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [voided3](#) on Fri, 29 Jul 2005 07:17:33 GMT

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Hello. Go to <http://acoustic360.homeunix.net/index2.html> for your Acoustic needs. I own a huge 406 2x15 cab and it sounds great with a K200 (and it's four ohms). The site should have catalog pictures and what not. Good luck!

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [QModer](#) on Fri, 29 Jul 2005 07:33:02 GMT

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Well what color is that Kustom Pa. Congrats on your amp even though its not a Kustom.

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [dkerwood](#) on Fri, 29 Jul 2005 17:28:32 GMT

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Hey, but at least it's still in the same era as the Kustoms... The PA was black, but the reason we ended up going with something else is because the Kustom sold before we could get back there.

I discovered using that site that the cab we're looking at is actually a GUITAR CAB with 2 15s... Have you ever heard of such a thing? Well, when we tried it out yesterday with a couple of bass heads, it had pretty strong bass response, so we'll try it out with this new head and see what we get. Otherwise, we'll probably just head back to that first store and pick up that cherry Peavey 4x10 cab.

What I sort of dislike about this era equipment is that the AMP'S wattage is always displayed, but never the CABINET'S wattage. The Acoustic stuff ranged from 175W to 375W Program... but it was the same speaker model... only the amps packaged with the cab changed. Ah, well. I'll take my non-Kustom talk elsewhere Thanks for all your help!

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [QModer](#) on Sat, 30 Jul 2005 03:46:05 GMT

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Yeah a few had guitar speakers. Your welcome on the help visit us again.

Subject: Re: K200 PA head as a bass amp?

Posted by [rockbob](#) on Wed, 21 Dec 2005 14:04:57 GMT

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Do you still have that acoustic cab with 2 15in and thae horn I am looking for one for guitar

amp.THANKS BOB
