Pub Genius...

Probably the best column in the world... Transcribed by Gary Cooper.

Performing Musician: You're a fan of re-speakering old cabs, aren't you?

Pub Genius: I've been accused of worse. Why do you ask?

PM: It's just that I've been looking for some speakers, and someone said I should try Fane.

Pub Genius: Ah! Fane... now there's a story!

PM: That's 'story' as in, 'This will cost me a pint,' isn't it?

Pub Genius. So cynical, yet so young. Yes. And a good Yorkshire pint, at that!

PM: 'Trouble at Mill', then, eh? Ha ha ha!

Pub Genius: That's Lancashire, dolt! This is Yorkshire, Batley, across the other side of the Pennines — where the Fane story began in 1952.

PM: Why do I hear the theme song from *Heartbeat*?

Pub Genius: Because some idiot has switched the jukebox on. But let us ignore that dirge in favour of remembering two gentlemen by the name of Arthur Faulcus and Dennis Newbold, who came up with the name for their new loudspeaker business, by taking the first two letters of...

PM: I get it, I get it! But why? Why did they start making loudspeakers?

Pub Genius: Beyond, 'Because they thought they could sell them,' the answer is lost in the mists of time, Grasshopper. But it's said that Faulcus had already been in the early hi-fi business with another great name from loudspeakers — Richard Allen. We also know that, back then, British radio and TV manufacturing were going great guns. People could increasingly afford TVs and radios and there were no cheap imports, so millions were being made in the UK, all demanding speakers. Faulcus and Newbold, though, actually started with specialist high-quality speakers for the still-new hi-fi industry, which had sprung up during the late 1950s. In fact they made some pretty esoteric gear — including, in 1965, a copy of the Ionovac system, called the IonoFane: a massless speaker that produced soundwaves by manipulating plasma. That excited a lot of interest among hi-fi geeks.

PM: Be fair, the Teletubbies can excite geeks!

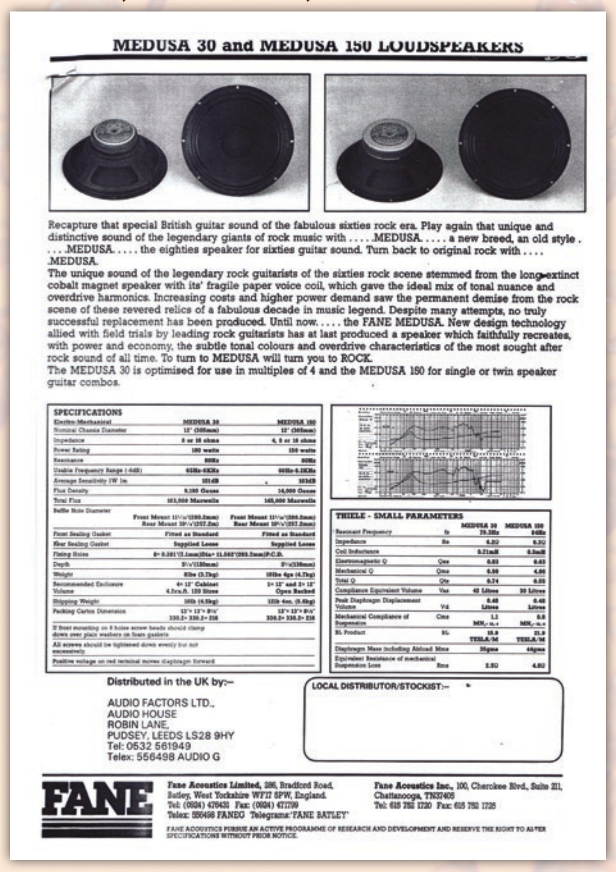
Pub Genius: And when did you last watch the football on your girlfriend's onboard LCD panel?

PM: Um... you'd better get on with the story. I think you might be experiencing a beer crisis. So what about Fane's guitar amp and PA speakers?

Pub Genius: You have to remember that guitar amps were few and far between until the early 1960s, when Selmer (who went back to the pre-War era) were joined by the likes of Vox and Watkins, all of them capitalising on the boom in skiffle and rock & roll. Fane weren't the first to get into that market — Goodmans and Celestion were the big two — but by the mid 1960s they had started supplying Selmer, Watkins/WEM and, most importantly, a young man who was to prove crucial to the brand's success: Dave Reeves, who went on to found Hiwatt. Though he first used Fane speakers in a big way in the Sound City amps, his Hylight company was making for Arbiter. But it was Hiwatt that really got the ball rolling.

PM: Why were Hiwatt so important?

Pub Genius: Reeves was notoriously fussy about components — nothing but the best would do, and his early amps were famously bomb-proof. There were no flight cases in the 1960s and amps were, quite literally, hurled into and out of vans, in which they were rattled up and down motorways and then hammered to death on stage by players trying to squeeze every last decibel out them. Hiwatt quickly developed a reputation for being loud and strong, and Fane were a key element of that reputation. Before Hiwatt started using them, Fane were regarded as slightly poor relations — a cheaper alternative to Celestion — but once the likes of The Who, Jethro Tull, the Moody Blues and Pink Floyd took to Hiwatt, they established Fane, too.



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Recapture that special British guitar sound of the fabulous sixties rock era. Play again that unique and distinctive sound of the legendary giants of rock music with . . . . .MEDUSA. . . . . a new breed, an old style . . . . .MEDUSA. . . . . the eighties speaker for sixties guitar sound. Turn back to original rock with . . . . .MEDUSA.

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The MEDUSA 30 is optimised for use in multiples of 4 and the MEDUSA 150 for single or twin speaker guitar combos.

SPECIFICATIONS

Electro-Mechanical	MEDUSA 30	MEDUSA 150
Nominal Chassis Diameter	12" (305mm)	12" (305mm)
Impedance	8 or 16 ohms	4, 8 or 16 ohms
Power Rating	100 watts	150 watts
Resonance	80Hz	80Hz
Usable Frequency Range (-6dB)	65Hz-6KHz	60Hz-6.2KHz
Average Sensitivity 1W 1m	101dB	103dB
Flux Density	9,100 Gauss	14,000 Gauss
Total Flux	103,000 Maxwells	145,000 Maxwells
Baffle Hole Diameter	Front Mount 11⅛"(280.2mm) Rear Mount 10⅛"(257.2mm)	Front Mount 11⅛"(280.2mm) Rear Mount 10⅛"(257.2mm)
Front Sealing Gasket	Fitted as Standard	Fitted as Standard
Rear Sealing Gasket	Supplied Loose	Supplied Loose
Fixing Holes	8× 0.281"(7.1mm)Dia× 11.562"(293.7mm)P.C.D.	
Depth	5⅛"(130mm)	5⅛"(130mm)
Weight	8lbs (3.7kg)	10lbs 4ozs (4.7kg)
Recommended Enclosure Volume	4× 12" Cabinet 4.2cu.ft. 120 litres	1× 12" and 2× 12" Open Backed
Shipping Weight	10lb (4.5kg)	12lb 4oz. (5.6kg)
Packing Carton Dimension	13"× 13"× 8½" 330.2× 330.2× 216	13"× 13"× 8½" 330.2× 330.2× 216

If front mounting on 8 holes screw heads should clamp down over plain washers on foam gaskets

All screws should be tightened down evenly but not excessively

Positive voltage on red terminal moves diaphragm forward

THIELE - SMALL PARAMETERS

		MEDUSA 30	MEDUSA 150
Resonant Frequency	fs	79.3Hz	84Hz
Impedance	Re	6.2Ω	6.3Ω
Coil Inductance		0.71mH	0.5mH
Electromagnetic Q	Qes	0.83	0.63
Mechanical Q	Qms	4.99	4.86
Total Q	Qts	0.74	0.55
Compliance Equivalent Volume	Vas	42 Litres	30 Litres
Peak Diaphragm Displacement Volume	Vd	0.48 Litres	0.48 Litres
Mechanical Compliance of Suspension	Cms	1.1 MN,-m,+	0.8 MN,-m,+
BL Product	BL	15.9 TESLA/M	21.9 TESLA/M
Diaphragm Mass including Airload	Mms	35gms	44gms
Equivalent Resistance of mechanical Suspension Loss	Rms	2.5Ω	4.8Ω

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PM: A big setup was it?

Pub Genius: Hardly! In fact, the famous Batley address was at one stage a former Wesleyan chapel on several floors — not ideal for an engineering company.

PM: What was so special about Fane?

Pub Genius: Not a lot when they first started dipping a toe in the water, with their Pop 10- and 12-inch speakers in the 1960s. They became a big name in the replacement speaker market, and this market was big because no manufacturer's speakers were really up to the demands being placed on them. Some of them sounded great, but the primitive glues (glues are surprisingly important in speaker manufacture), the voice coils, the cones... none of them could take a lot of power and rough treatment.

PM: So?

Pub Genius: So everyone's speakers burned out. Then Faulcus made his big breakthrough. He developed the fibreglass voice coil. Suddenly, here was a speaker that could stand the distortion and consequent heat produced by hugely overdriven valve amps.

PM: When was this?

Pub Genius: It couldn't have been better timed — it was in 1967, just as music started to demand really serious SPLs.

PM: So Fane stole the show?

Pub Genius: Well, not entirely. But Goodmans increasingly dropped out of the instrument speaker market, which really left Fane and Celestion to rule the roost. The US brands like JBL were too expensive, so they more or less had a clear run. Celestion were very strongly allied with Marshall — to the extent that Marshall actually had an exclusive agreement for some of their models, right up until the mid 1970s. But Fane weren't being used by other makers simply because they couldn't get Celestions. People like Dave Reeves and Charlie Watkins were choosing them for their own qualities. Orange, Laney and Carlsbro were also major Fane users and, a decade later, when Trace Elliot started, they used Fane speakers too. In fact, in the US today there is a serious collectors' market for vintage Fane speakers.

PM: Did Fane ever use Alnico magnets, like the famous Vox Celestions?

Pub Genius: Until the mid-1960s, yes, but Alnico (it stands for ALuminium, NIckel and CObalt, in case you've ever wondered) got incredibly expensive and most speaker makers phased it out. Of course, the use of ceramic magnets, coupled with Fane's already impressive ability to handle high power, gave them an even bigger advantage and they soon became one of the pioneering makers as far as high power handling was concerned. They maintained this lead and developed it even further in the 1980s.

PM: So, this collectors' market — are old Fane speakers worth money then?

Pub Genius: They can be, but you need to know your models and also to realise that quite often what's branded as, say, a 'Sound City Power Speaker' is actually a Fane. Likewise with Carlsbro — they also used a lot of Fane speakers, but you wouldn't necessarily know it from the label.

PM: So it's no easy way to make a fortune.

Pub Genius: Not like producing... shall we say, beer!?

PM: OK, I get the hint! And anyway, we're getting the evil eye from Stalin behind the bar, as it is. But I want the rest of this story you know. So...

Pub Genius: Thank you. I fancy an Old Peculiar.

PM: Yes, but what do you want to drink? ■ PM

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