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Subject: Reminder to Check all your cab's speakers when micing!

Posted by [Neil](#) on Sat, 06 May 2006 16:43:29 GMT

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I'm recording a demo for this band called Lhasa Vector, and we started setting up & getting tones last night... kinda interesting the way we're doing the drums, but I'll get into that in a minute. Anyway, so we're setting up the primary guitarist's rig, and we're trying a Marshall 4x12 cabinet, and also a Mesa 4x12 cabinet... I have no idea of the speaker models in each, but he says he likes certain characteristics of both, so can we try a/b-ing them? I say sure, no prob... he has a Mesa triple rectumfryer head that has two speaker outs, so he can play through both cabs at the same time & we'll use the same kind of signal chain on each one to record a couple test files so he can hear the difference between the two cabinets.

So, we record him playing a bit, each cabinet mic'ed with an Audix i5 going through a channel on the Focusrite Red-8... the Mesa cab is definitely somewhat louder than the Marshall - not by tons, but it's apparent. It's also brighter & tighter.

So, as we're playing back each track & I'm going back & forth between them: "Here's the Mesa... here's the Marshall... here's both... 'both' sounds pretty good.", I'm noticing that the Marshall speaker sounds really "soft" or "loose" - not just compared to the Mesa cab, but in it's own right. Now, he likes the way this is sounding, and he's saying he prefers it to the Mesa... like I said, it's a little softer in tone, a little less tight, and definitely "fuzzier" (though not "ready to be re-coned kinda fuzzy").

Anyway, I say: "Let's, just for grins, try something, OK?, I want to see what another speaker in that Marshall cab sounds like... so I take the mic off the Mesa, put it on the speaker right next to the one we're micing in the Marshall cab, and have him play again... lo & behold, the other speaker sounds different... not necessarily better, but definitely somewhat different. I asked him if he'd had to replace any of the speakers, or had any of the speakers re-coned lately & he said: "no, never"... bought the cabinet new, has had it for a few years, and has never had to have it worked on.

Bottom line, the other speaker is a little bit tighter-sounding & less "fuzzy" than the first one - there is absolutely no perceivable difference in volume between them, and the waveforms are right at the same levels; and in fact, when I threw one mic out of phase for a second while he was playing, they nulled to the point where I couldn't hear it at all, but

there's definitely a difference in tone.

In any event, he likes the sound of the combination of the two speakers, so that's what we're going with, but my point is: CHECK ALL THE SPEAKERS! I know there's been times when I've done this, and also times when I've mic'ed up a cab, said: "He-EEYYY that sounds pretty good right there!" and gone with it... I wonder if I had checked all the speakers in any of those events, we might have ended up saying: "DAAAAAMN, that's even BETTER!"

My only regret at this stage is that the other guitar player really liked that i5/Mucusrite Red combination he was hearing, but unfortunately, I only have two i5's, and two channels of "red". We didn't dial in his sounds last night because at first he said he wanted to do his parts as overdubs once the first guitar was laid down, but as we were wrapping up for the evening, he changed his mind & now wants to do them at the same time. I have other mics & pres, of course, but I dunno if we're gonna get something he's happy with now that he's heard that particular combination... the saving grace might be that although he's got the same kind of amp head as the first guy, he'll be using the Mesa cab, and he says his overall tone is different from the first guy's too... he's trying to fit into the frequency range between the bass & the first guitar. Since these guys de-tune a step & a half, that's gonna be a pretty low tonal range... I'm thinking maybe I wish I had another TLM-103 at this point, too LOL if he's going that low I might need something like that for his tone, just so it's not a big, muddy, mess! I guess we'll find out today (fingers crossed).

Anyway, I said I'd mention the drum thing 'cause it's kinda different... the drummer loves his Roland E-kit, which he incorporates with some live cymbals, as well. So we're using 3 live cymbals, plus live hi-hats, 3 e-kit cymbals, and the e-kit for kick, snare, and 4 toms (one tom pad plugged into the hi-hat trigger port, with the brain reprogrammed to strike a floor tom MIDI note instead of a hi-hat MIDI note). We're micing the hat with an Earthworks TC-30 (tried a Rode NT-5 too, but the Earthworks won out by a large margin due to being less midrangey, having a ton more "air"; and also being an omni, and as a result, picking up more room ambience). OH's are TLM-103's, and no, you can't hear the "thwack" on the pads at all once you get the audio from the e-kit going. The downside to all this is that the e-kit only has stereo outs, so we're tracking the MIDI output as well so we can go back & re-trigger individual tracks for kick, snare, etc for mixing purposes. So, the stereo outs that are being recorded for the time being

could be considered "scratch" drums, I guess. lol

Just thought I'd mention the drum thing too, because I recall a few months back someone had posted a question about had anyone done something like this & how did it work out, etc.

Neil

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