



Techniques for using the MC275 in mono and how to passive bi-amp speakers

- by Ron Cornelius

We are seeing more and more dealers and consumers using the new MC275 as a mono amp. In stereo mode the MC275 is set to deliver rated power into loads of 4, 8 or 16 ohms. This covers the majority of speakers including classic designs from the 1950s and 60s that are 16 ohms. If a low impedance speaker such as an electrostatic panel is used where the impedance drops to 2 ohms, field reports have shown the MC275 to work well on the 4 ohm tap. Where more power or dynamic range is required the MC275s can be used as mono amps, one per channel.



When the MC275 is wired for mono the output taps are 2, 4, or 8 ohms. The typical power of the MC275 is in excess of 85 watts per channel stereo so in mono it will be at least 170 watts which is a lot of power. The proper connection of a mono MC275 is one amp full range per speaker.

Passive 'Bi-amp' of loudspeakers is becoming more popular as a way to utilize two amplifiers to run one speaker. This is accomplished by disconnecting the speakers' rear jumper straps on the terminals so the Mid-High and Bass sections are isolated from each other. This will only work on speakers that are set up this way like most McIntosh, B&W N series and other speakers. One amp is connected to the bass section and another two the mid high. Since the speaker's built in passive crossover is still in line the amp will see high impedance outside of the crossover pass band which will result in the amp's power to taper off. CAUTION- this will only work when the two sections of the speaker are truly separated when the jumper straps are removed. Check with an ohm meter that the grounds are not shared for best results.

Many have used the two B-zone amps in the MHT200 to Bi-Amp the main front speakers and this can also done with channel 6 and 7 of the MC207. If a customer is running a 5.1 system this is one way to use the idle channels when the B-zone is not employed or big power is needed on the front L+R mains.

Tube amps have high output impedance on the tubes and will not work in a passive Bi-Amp set up. Yes they will function but will not be happy in that they will run hot and have an increase in distortion. If multiple tube amps are to be used for bi-amp they should have an electronic crossover on the input side to limit their response. Pro sound type crossovers can be used with the balanced in and out of McIntosh preamps and amps.

If you have any additional questions please contact me at Ron-C-McIntosh@msn.com.

Thanks again,
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