



ROOM

SOUND



Genzler Amplification Magellan 350 Combo

BY ED FRIEDLAND

FOLLOWING UP ON THE SUCCESS OF THE MAGELLAN 800 amp and Bass Array 12-3 cabs, Jeff Genzler decided it was time to think small. As the man behind some of the most successful mini-combos of the past ten years, it's no surprise he struck gold with his newest effort, the Magellan 350 combo.

TWO-PACK FOR SURE

While most combo amps are one-piece units, the MG-350-CRADLE (included) allows you to detach the head for use with larger cabs, making it easy to tote the six-pound powerhouse wherever you go. Essentially a stripped-down version of the Magellan 800, the 350 sports the same preamp design and features, minus the Drive channel. Genzler chose a 350-watt rating to set it apart from its larger sibling while still providing gig-worthy output from the ICEpower 300ASC module. It also drops the

unit to a lower price point: The 350 head by itself has a street price of \$440. The Magellan 350 head is outfitted with an XLR DI with ground lift, pre/post EQ, and line/mic level options. The ¼" stereo line-level aux input lets you plug in other sound sources, and the headphone jack gives you a silent-practice option. With Class D designs, cooling is a critical factor, and the Magellan's whisper-quiet thermal-sensing fan increases speed as the amp works harder. The SMPS automatically senses and corrects to the line voltage, making the Magellan a handy world traveler, and the impedance selector switch lets you optimize the output for 8-, 4-, or 2.67-ohm loads. The front panel gives you a piezo-friendly 1 megohm input jack, MUTE switch, GAIN, A/B CONTOUR, BASS, sweepable MID, TREBLE, and MASTER VOLUME. The EQ section is flexible and powerful, but for major personality shift, the Contour options point the Magellan in two distinct but useful directions.

Contour A's "Classic to Modern" response gives you a mid scoop via boosting the lows and highs, useful for slapping (upright or electric), or getting a fat, studio fingerstyle tone. Contour B's "Thicker to Vintage" curve bumps the low mids and tapers the highs—great for conjuring up the limited frequency response of old-school rigs.

ARRAY OF SUNSHINE

The Magellan 350 head is mounted to Genzler's new BA10-2 cabinet, a smaller version of the groundbreaking BA12-3. The vertical array of four custom neodymium 2.5" drivers handles the upper mids and highs, with a crossover point of 1.6kHz, while the woofer does the heavy lifting. The array configuration provides wider dispersion across the horizontal plane, and the 2.5" speakers give the critical upper mids greater clarity without getting pointy. The high-frequency response is strong, but because it's produced by small paper cones instead of a piezo tweeter or compression driver, the BA10-2's top end has a natural sweetness that tames the savage bass. The premium Eminence neodymium 10" cast-frame woofer is well housed in a small, vented bass-reflex cabinet built with a slight upward tilt toward the ear. Stacking the combo on top of another BA10-2 creates an arc that magnifies the design's dispersive nature. Because the head accepts a 2.67-ohm load, it is possible to stack three BA10-2 cabs—though it is recommended to do so on a solid, preferably uncarpeted stage for better stability. The black textured vinyl covering seems tough, and the metal corners should prove durable. The well-placed heavy-duty edge lift handle gives the already-lightweight amp an easy balance point for schlepping.

BRAVE COMBO

I've been touring extensively for the past year with the Magellan 800, and I have nothing but high praise for its beefy response, flexible control, and reliable performance, so I was curious to see how Mini-Me would stack up. I have no need for the Drive channel, so it wasn't missed on the 350, but the overall tone, response, and effectiveness—relative-to-task is just as good as the higher-powered model. I auditioned the combo on several upright bass gigs and found it had more than enough power, and its excellent dispersion meant I heard



myself better. The velvety highs of the BA10-2 made the often-strident transients of slapping the doghouse much more listener-friendly, while the stout low end supported the tone with authority. The amount of bottom is surprising for such a small enclosure—I found myself rolling back the BASS control to 11:00 on one gig. But of course, there's more to life than getting a great upright bass tone, so I dragged out a few choice "slabs" to see if the little guy could rock. The 350 Combo did not back down when confronted with aggressive slap from my G&L L-2000: It threw it back at me with a smooth, musical finish. With a passive Fender Precision, it gave an even, full-range representation of whatever I put into it—right-hand dynamics, subtle shifts of hand placement, even the slightest roll of the tone pot were clearly audible. The 350's uniform response was a boon when I plugged in my Muckelroy HMC 6-string. While the bass itself is tonally well-balanced, the rig reproduced the instrument's full range without over-accentuating the lows or wimping out on the highs. In testing, I naturally try to push the amp into the red, and while the Magellan did acquiesce, it was not until I hit a volume level that would be inappropriate for a rig of this size. Let's not kid ourselves, this is not an 8x10.

The game changed considerably when I stacked the Magellan 350 combo on top of a second BA10-2 cab. Taking advantage of the head's full power and the combined *oomph* of the two woofers, I now had a lot more destruction at my fingertips. Compared to your typical 2x10 scenario, this rig has more depth and punch than most, and it

produces intelligible upper mids and clear highs. I didn't have a third cab at my disposal to hear the amp at max output, but it seemed unnecessary.

Having spent many years gigging with Mr. Genzler's previous small combo design, it is apparent from the improved performance and practicality of the Magellan 350 combo that lessons were learned. The 350—with or without the BA10-2 extension cab—can handle surprisingly volume-demanding circumstances while delivering great tone, but upright players in search of the "perfect" small combo for gigging need to give this little dynamo a serious look. **BP**

S SPECIFICATIONS

GENZLER AMPLIFICATION

Magellan 350 Combo
Street \$960
Pros Small, light, loud, lovely
Cons None
Bottom Line Heavyweight performance in a lightweight package.

S P E C S

Power Rating 175 watts @ 8Ω; 350 watts @ 4Ω, or 2.67Ω (with 2 extension cabs)
Input Impedance 1MΩ
Tone controls bass: ±15dB @ 75Hz; mid: ±15dB @ 150Hz–3kHz; treble: ±15dB @ 6kHz
XLR DI output Pre/post switch and ground lift
Power amp Class D
Power supply Switchmode
Output jacks Two Neutrik Speakon NL-4
Configuration 1x10" woofer + 4x2.5" line array mid/high drivers
Speaker impedance 8Ω
Power handling 250 watts
Frequency response 55Hz–20kHz
Sensitivity 96dB @ 1W/1M

Made in Taiwan (head), USA-assembled (cabinet)
Contact genzleramplification.com