

“Audio Trends TA-10 Amp (t-amp)”

<http://www.mail-archive.com/audiophiles@lists.slimdevices.com/msg18908.html>

jimmyfergus

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So, the wife was out and the baby asleep last night, and I got a chance to do a more extended listen. Each amp swap was a few minutes of messing around with cables, so it was less than ideal. All my impressions were long gone from my short-term memory by the time I got to listen to the other amp. I was comparing:

Creek 4330 amp vs. Trends Audio TA-10.1 Using an Arcam 7se CD player and Epos ES-12 speakers.

I don't have any lossless encodings on the Squeezebox. Perhaps I should have done that for this forum :). I mostly listened to Elliot Smith, from Either/Or. As said before, the speakers are probably a bit too much of an effort for the poor little amp. To give it a chance I was only about 6-8ft away from the speakers.

I was playing about 2 full songs with each amp before switching, because of the hassle factor, and I couldn't form a coherent conclusion. The T-amp was definitely more bright, sounded a clearer, but I alternately felt each was doing a better job than the other. A few times when I switched the Creek back on I thought it sounded relatively dull and muddy, but then I'd change my mind.



In the end, I found a short passage to focus my attention on, and really listened to some details. Then, the verdict was hands down to the T-amp. I was clearly hearing and enjoying some background

instrument details which were much less distinct and clear on the Creek. The T-amp just had better resolution of the the sound.

I don't couldn't reproduce my impression before of the bass being indistinct either. I adjusted the output bias before listening, and it was off (~5mV and 2mV - doesn't sound much?). Perhaps that had an effect? Seems unlikely.

I'd criticise the t-amp as being a bit over-bright in my setup – a little more wearing to listen to than it should be. My hearing is very sensitive to volume, particularly at the high end. Also, at times I was completely undecided, so it was quite a close thing. All the same, I think the fact that it was close, and ultimately I decided I heard more and enjoyed the music from the TA-10.1 better, is remarkable for an amp that cost 1/8 of the Creek. A miracle after all.

I didn't have the SA-T-amp on hand to try that, and anyway, I was fed up with all the switching by the end. I'd love to do a blind test. Now the poor TA-10.1 is back in the kitchen facing the indignity of pushing the really muddy Optimus speakers, until and unless I replace them.

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jimmyfergus



Contact:
ITOK Media Ltd (Trends Audio)
Unit E, 13/F, World Tech Centre,
95 How Ming Street, Kowloon, Hong
Kong.
Tel: (852) 2566 5810
Fax: (852) 2566 5740
Email: sales@TrendsAudio.com
<http://www.TrendsAudio.com>