Subject: Re: Give us the "pitch"...
Posted by Wayne Parham on Tue, 22 Aug 2006 03:17:29 GMT
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Thanks for the questions - I'm really excited about the tweeter and would love to go on and on about it. But I don't want to get excitement started without being able to follow up. That's why I've had my cards close to my chest.If interested, I'll tell you the story. I could just tell you the technical details, but that doesn't explain things very well. So if you have a minute, read on.Set the clock back about five years when Bill Martinelli and I met. I wanted to have a vendor in the USA that made nice wood radial horns. Yuichi Arai made beautiful radial wood horns, but he was in Japan and I'm not sure they were for sale anyway. Fostex made them and so did TAD, but the prices were high. So I was looking for someone that would make fine wood horns, and Bill Martinelli stepped up to the plate.Bill and I had many discussions over the next few months, and I did a couple dozen Hornresp models to find throats and flares that would work best, with the constraints of what could be made on a lathe. That was the biggest problem really, the fact that the lathe set limits and the throats needed to have certain dimensions. So we quickly kicked out ones that weren't suitable and settled on the best ones. That left the rest of the flare, and I wanted a radial flare with certain area expansion rates.What Bill eventually sent me was very close, but instead of having straight side walls and curved top and bottom walls, it was reversed having curved sides and a straight top and bottom. But its measurements were good and I thought it sounded nice too. So in spite of the fact that the shape was different than what I wanted, I used and recommended them.Eventually, Bill was making all of my speakers for me. Most people bought kits and did their own DIY thing, but those that wanted finished loudspeakers got boxes made by Martinelli. We did that for a few years, and I think everyone enjoyed the arrangement.Fast forward a few years. Bill got busy or whatever and decided he couldn't build cabinets for me anymore. I think he may still build loudspeaker cabinets on occasion, but they're very expensive. I can understand - It's a lot of work to make loudspeakers, especially when you are meticulous with your work.So that left me to find another cabinetmaker. I eventually settled on Brad Smith because he does excellent work. He had done a lot of custom cabinetry work in some of Tulsa's finest multi-million dollar homes, and his work was outstanding. So I knew I wanted him to do our cabinets from the first time I met him.Brad's first project for me was midhorns, and he quickly developed flat-pack kits that are cut on CNC machines and use Miller dowels for assembly. I was impressed with his resourcefulness and the quality of the flat pack kits. Assembly for DIY builders was much easier than earlier kits and the quality was better too because of the CNC cuts. Since then, he's filled plenty of orders for finished loudspeakers and each one has been a work of art.Last year, Brad and I started talking about the tweeter horns. I told him what I originally wanted and showed him the drawings. We started planning to make them on CNC, hoping to have them ready by GPAF 2006. That was my plan, to unveil them at

subwoofer. I finished the design and preliminary tests late summer / early fall and did the Prosound Shootout in October. I expected it to do well, but it really exceeded my expectations.

and he doesn't have time to do some of the other projects for me that I'd like. Paying customers have to come before new development work.So that brings us up to date. Brad and I talk about the tweeter horn every time we see each other. We make a firm committment to get back to work on them, to clear off time for him to be able to setup the CNC to make the pieces. But then we look at the orders in front of us, and put it off another month.Sometimes I think maybe it's time to

we'll do it again now.I know this, I know that I really want to get moving on the wood tweeter horn

designed and look fabulous on paper, so I'm confident the finished models will be great. I'm very eager to have them both done and ready to show. But until they're ready or at least close, I don't want to publish preliminaries and get excitement started. When I'm sure I'm only a month or two out, I'll post an announcement here.