
Subject: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet)

Posted by [Skip](#) on Sat, 21 Jan 2006 17:37:33 GMT

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In the group build thread below, Manualblock mentions the JFET article by Nelson Pass in Audio Express. This article is also available on the passdiy.com site. I have an order in on the group buy for the Lowvoltec JFETs. Look at diyAudio Forums > Top >Market Place >Group Buys for this. Evidently the minimum quantity on these is huge, hence the group buy. I've ordered more than I need, I will have a few extra, should you need them. I hope to build several variants on this and would be happy to work with anyone here who is doing likewise. We can each make half the mistakes that way. Skip Pack

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet)

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sat, 21 Jan 2006 21:39:57 GMT

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Say Skip Pack; is that amp the J3 that is listed on Nelson's site?

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet)

Posted by [Skip](#) on Sat, 21 Jan 2006 23:00:55 GMT

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Hello, The amp I'm talking about is at the following URL.

http://www.passdiy.com/pdf/ZV8_power_jfet.pdf He is also selling the Firstwatt F3, which I understand is a much fancier implementation. This ZV8 (the one in the Audioexpress article) is so much like a tube amp that it would be easy to explore lots of configurations that I can understand because I have been paying more attention to tube basics. Skip

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet)

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sat, 21 Jan 2006 23:39:08 GMT

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Yes I understand the particular piece you mean; I thought maybe he was marketing one of his own. As a tube guy what do you think of the chip amps?

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet)
Posted by [Skip](#) on Sun, 22 Jan 2006 02:56:54 GMT
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I don't have a tube power amp, though I do have a Foreplay II which I have enjoyed for a good while. I was going to start putting together tube amps when the gainclone thing started. I heard the 47 Labs Gaincard(s) at Yoshi Segoshi's home around 2002 and was impressed. Once I became aware of the gainclone emergence, I built some, and have been consistently impressed. At the Lonestar Bottlehead's meeting a week ago, I listened to my gainclone followed by Wardsweb's Sexamp. I thought the sex amp was the better amp up to volumes louder than I ever listen at. It wasn't radically better, but clearly better. I tend to think that well done tube amps are usually better than SS, but that SS is catching up. As you know, you could easily put together a good gainclone for \$150, including an attractive chassis/box. Mine is a standard version 1.0, single transformer from Brian Bell. I think I can put together a much better gainclone with Carlos Felipe's snubberized supply and separate power supplies. I suspect that the Jfet amps could be very good. Hopeto see/hear if that's true. Skip

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet)
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sun, 22 Jan 2006 13:39:35 GMT
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Yes; I heard the 47 labs at a meeting of the audio society here and they used a pair of Audio Physics loudspeakers that ran about 6K\$. It sounded good. Your point about the price is well taken not to mention the hassle of tubes. I have always wanted equipment with the ease of use of SS but there has never been the quality and musicality you get with tubes. Even Nelson will admit that. That being said; the GC is definitely listenable and this new concept, (actually New/old concept), sounds really good. Can you say a little more about the group build you mentioned? It looks so simple it is hard to believe it can work.

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet)
Posted by [Skip](#) on Sun, 22 Jan 2006 15:32:40 GMT
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I assume that you are referring to the ZV8 as far as building. I wasn't aiming at a formal group build, but more toward communicating while building with others doing the same thing. I'm not anywhere knowledgeable enough to do anything more than put together the design as shown, and then, maybe, embroider around the edges. The group buy is underway with plenty of the JFETs available: <http://www.diyaudio.com/forums/showthread.php?s=&threadid=71633&perpage=10&pagenumber=1> The rest of the items are very much off the shelf, junkbox to boutique. The only difficult thing would appear to be heating the less common package of the JFET. Discussion of the JFET amp <http://www.diyaudio.com/forums/showthread.php?s=&threadid=64292> This thing

intrigues me because it looks like you could easily choke load it (if you could find the high-current choke), or use two modules in push-pull. Maybe even feed two modules with a center-tap-primary transformer just like a PP tube amp. It all seems approachable if you're willing to stand way back when you power it up in the middle of your back yard. Skip

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet)
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Tue, 24 Jan 2006 01:09:43 GMT
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BTW just read your post on recording recommendations in the other forum and thanks; we don't get much in the way of music recommendations here so when someone offers something new it's greatly appreciated. On the DIY forum I find the thread discussing the JFET amp but no offering of a joint buy for parts. I know I am missing something in your earlier post regarding that. Just follow that link exactly as written and there should be info there is that right? The JFET is a nice idea because I like the Class A amps almost as much as tubes and they are a lot less high maintenance; are you going ahead with the project if I may ask?

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet)
Posted by [Skip](#) on Tue, 24 Jan 2006 02:22:36 GMT
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Maybe my last post contained a confused reference. You can get to the group buy by going to www.diyaudio.com, then to 'Market Place' then to 'Group Buys'. Finally, look at the thread titled 'Lovoltech LU1014D power JFET'. That has all the information. The fellow doing the work, Grey Rollins, has a huge number of JFETS on hand and is welcoming more orders. I think I will do the project, how fast, I don't know. My first step are experiments on a power supply with some surplus finds (I don't know if they are actually finds yet). I think I will breadboard the whole thing first. I've never done that before, and it sure offers some advantages.

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet)
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Tue, 24 Jan 2006 12:00:17 GMT
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Excellent; thanks. Did you build the GC; I think you mentioned that?

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet)
Posted by [Skip](#) on Tue, 24 Jan 2006 13:35:33 GMT
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Yep, 1 inverted 1875 using Scott Nixon's boards, and two, more or less identical non-inverting 3875's using BrianGT v.1 boards. One of the 3875's is shown in FredT's post in Wayne's GC group build thread below. I never did get a good comparison of the two types. Both sounded good. I was using the 1875 to independently drive the two drivers on a single Tower 2 Pi with bi-wiring jacks. It worked like crazy in a situation where good stereo was out of the question. I believe you have done a 3875 if I remember correctly.

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet)
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Tue, 24 Jan 2006 19:14:21 GMT
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That's right; actually I built the standard model Brian GT and when that sounded pretty good I ordered the "Boutique", version. The Black gate caps and Riken and I forget the other brand of resistor but they do make the amp sound better. I used a Hammond toroidal looks like the same one you have in the picture. I just followed Brian's instructions and the schematic and it worked right out of the box. I would like to try the JFET; I think I will order some of the JFET's from the DIY site. Maybe some of the guys here will want to do this also. Any ideas for a PS on your end?

Subject: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet) PS Thoughts
Posted by [Skip](#) on Tue, 24 Jan 2006 20:46:05 GMT
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I found some very cheap 48V CT (2A) transformers, and will play with them. I would think that PS ripple will be poisonous to this circuit, so I have hatched a hare-brained scheme. I wonder what would happen if, after the diode bridge and, at least, a very small cap, you ran each leg through the secondary of a transformer like (in this case the same) as the main transformer. If you then connect the nominal primaries of these two transformers so they oppose one another, would this act like a conventional PS choke in a tube amp? My goal is something similar to a choke input supply without having to find and pay for a monster, high current choke with enough inductance. This seems too simple to me, so I'm expecting to learn why it's not a good idea. The transformer in the picture is an EI 40V CT that was on closeout at Parts Express.

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet) PS Thoughts
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Tue, 24 Jan 2006 22:15:28 GMT

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Can you run this in PSUD?

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet) PS Thoughts
Posted by [Skip](#) on Wed, 25 Jan 2006 01:15:59 GMT
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Don't know if it could be put into PSUD. I haven't tried it on anything. I wonder if you need to know more than the nominal ratios of the transformers to get a good result. I have no means of getting inductance or much anything more than the ratios and the DCR.

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet) PS Thoughts
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Thu, 26 Jan 2006 21:10:28 GMT
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I noticed a good PS regulating scheme for the Zen amps in an older copy of AE written by Nelson. Maybe it is on his site but it looks useful in this context.

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet) PS Thoughts
Posted by [Skip](#) on Thu, 26 Jan 2006 23:25:38 GMT
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I think you mean this article on his website: <http://www.passdiy.com/projects/zenv3-1.html> think you are probably right, this is probably easier, and I may end up there anyway, but I expect to fool around with unregulated supplies first.

Subject: Re: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet) PS Thoughts
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Fri, 27 Jan 2006 01:11:46 GMT
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Yep; you're probably better off. Say, that transformer you mentioned is on sale in the Parts Express flyer that came today. It's 4\$ or so, is that the one?

Subject: Pass Zen V8 (Jfet) PS Thoughts
Posted by [Skip](#) on Fri, 27 Jan 2006 14:13:55 GMT
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No, this was from Cascade Electronic Surplus (or Cascade something) in Portland. About that price. I haven't seen that flyer or missed the trafo.
