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Subject: DCA 5.5M drivers initial impressions  
Posted by [akhilesh](#) on Wed, 14 Feb 2007 02:49:58 GMT  
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Hi Everyone! Well, I finally got the DCA 5.5 drivers, from Dave Merrill of D'Charles Audio. I decided to try them in the PAWA horn that earlier had the 4" DCA drivers, and that you all heard at the 2006 GPAF. Those, if you recall had to undergo serious excursion to pump out meaningful bass. Crossed at 70 Hz with a 24 db active Xover, they sounded very nice. I removed these & put the 5.5 M drivers in the PAWA horn (had to enlarge the hole to do it of course. I then fired them up with a 2a3 SET amp & a modded NOS TDA154a chip Phillips Cd player. Initial Impressions: The 5.5M drivers are a very significant improvement over the 4"ers. I think Dave has really made a lot of changes that were needed. Let's see, much less IM distortion of course, and they sound noticeably fatter than the 4"ers in the midbass. The plug seems to help the midbass, midrange & treble considerably. I am listening to them full range without a sub, and frankly, for music the bass is very adequate! I measured them with a rat schack meter, and they seem to go down to about 70 Hz, and then drop, but honestly, they sound more like 45Hz drivers to me with music. maybe because it is a horn, the bass response was not measured accurately by the rat schack meter at my listening distance of about 15 feet. The amazing thing is the 100 Hz to 5,000 Hz response...very very flat within +/- 2 db in my listening position! Very nice. The one drawback I can see is that in the 6000-10000 Hz range they seem to go up by about 10 db, which may just be that they need break in. Anyway, there is not much program material over 5,000 Hz, so the subjective effect is that of added air with a slight treble sheen to higher voices & instruments (exaggerated 2-3rd order harmonics maybe?). Very subtle, and really not too bad at all. I am listening to them with the drivers almost facing straight ahead (almost no toe in), and the imaging, etc are dead on. Very clear and nice with very good bass for music. They are about 3 feet from the side wall and about 5 feet from the back wall in a largish room. I'm going to keep these in the PAWA horns, and have ordered another pair from Dave as a spare. Will keep you all posted as I listen more!-akhilesh

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Subject: Where can I find these drivers, my man?  
Posted by [Poindexter](#) on Sat, 17 Feb 2007 23:02:58 GMT  
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Mahalo, Poinz

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Subject: Re: Where can I find these drivers, my man?  
Posted by [akhilesh](#) on Sun, 18 Feb 2007 03:07:01 GMT  
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Aloha Charlie, [amerrill@web-ster.com](mailto:amerrill@web-ster.com) Dave Merrill has them. In very limited quantity I believe.

Hang loose-akhilesh

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Subject: Re: Where can I find these drivers, my man?

Posted by [Shane](#) on Sat, 24 Feb 2007 21:38:00 GMT

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I hope you bring them to Dallas, Akhilesh. I'd like to hear the larger drivers in the PAWO.

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Subject: Follow up comments on the DCA 5.5 drivers

Posted by [akhilesh](#) on Sun, 25 Feb 2007 03:57:14 GMT

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Hi Shane, Unfortunately I won't be able to get them to Dallas. But I do have some follow up comments on these. I have now broken them in (over 40 hours music has been played on them....mostly at night when I was asleep). In many ways these drivers in the PAWO horn do things at a level I have not heard before in any system. Transparency, coherence, imaging, depth, instrument placement, focus are all amongst the best I have heard in ANY speaker system. Tone is acceptably good. Dynamic range is on the low side (compared to the usual horns I am used to listening to) so they are best in a small room, heard at about 8 feet. And for the first time the lack of frequency extension in a single driver system is not bothersome to me...while most single driver systems I have heard are suitable for acoustic & jazz, and after a while the lack of low end or high end starts bothering me, these are suitable for acoustic, jazz, as well as pop & classical....only deep rap tends to not sound great (the bottom octave is kinda low on these). Highs are great. I am listening to them about 10-15 degrees off axis. Overall, highly highly recommended, IN THE PAWO HORN of course. I can't speak for them in any other enclosure. -akhilesh

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Subject: Here is the catch (long)

Posted by [akhilesh](#) on Sun, 25 Feb 2007 14:16:05 GMT

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Of course, I don't have any commercial interest in DCA whatsoever. In fact, Dave Merrill is a friend who I respect for his single minded pursuit to bring affordable audio to beginning audiophiles. Dave belongs to that hard core band of north american single driver aficionados who know the differences between the different variants of the Rat shack/fostex 4 inchers, and who can differentiate between a zigma hornet & a PAWO horn. I myself own and have listened to a lot of these single drivers, and usually they need bass augmentation, and in some cases a supertweeter. Often, they have objectionable frequency aberrations as well. But the DCA 5.5 in a PAWO horn is the first setup I have ever heard that does NOT need ANY tweaking, no passive

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components, no notch filter, no BFC circuit; NOTHHING in the path between the amp & the driver, and STILL sounds great without serious compromise. AS mentioned before, I recommend this setup strongly. Here is the catch: Dave was selling these for \$90-\$100 a pair (a very very reasonable price if you ask me), but he had very few initial drivers. THE PAWO horn BTW is an excellent design, available on the web, and shoould not cost more than \$300 to build if you get a carpenter to build it for you. If you build it yourself, should be even less, like a \$100-\$150. NO curves in this horn! GREAT WAF! Very elegant design. I thinkd Dave's initial set of drivers is gone (fortunately I bought a spare pair!)For example, Mark M, an audiophile buddy & owner of a mega buck audio note system, decided to buy one or two pairs of these drivers on the spot after listening to them in my house. This should reassure you that I have not lost my mind, these are indeed good! In order for Dave Merrill to get another batch, i thnk he needs to order a few hundred from his source at least. So if you are interested, and for the money, frankly, you;d have to be crazy NOT to be intereted, I recommend you email Dave and tell him of your interest. If he gets enough emails of interest, he may be motivated to get another batch made. Otherwise, I fear this driver will fade into legend. And we don't want that. -akhilesh

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Subject: Correction:  
Posted by [akhilesh](#) on Sun, 25 Feb 2007 20:25:09 GMT  
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That should be BSC circuit, not BFC circuit. I'm a lousy typist.

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Subject: just got mine  
Posted by [Zeno](#) on Thu, 08 Mar 2007 11:43:49 GMT  
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hi akhilesh,i just got mine two days ago, will be trying them this weekend, i am happy to learn that the 5.5 sound better tha the dca 4" zeno

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Subject: Re: Follow up comments on the DCA 5.5 drivers  
Posted by [Wey Lee](#) on Fri, 24 Aug 2007 19:29:42 GMT  
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Where to get the plan for the PAWO horn?Thanks

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