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Subject: Kustom III Lead Head and 4x12 Box explanation on functions needed  
Posted by [Parsons](#) on Sun, 24 May 2009 12:22:46 GMT

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Hello,

I'm new to this forum. I'm from Germany and it is hard to find any informations on Kustom amps here, so in the end I ended here...

I own an old 70s Kustom III Lead and a Kustom Cabinet Box with 4x12" speakers.

Actually this Amp is oversized for me (and my needs), so I wouldn't need all the features, just plug and play. But I'm very interested in finding out more about it so I can use it suffiecently.

First about the head:

on the back it reads: 200-0441-00 (maybe the telephone number of the company at the time?)

under this there is a Badge/plate (right word?), wher you can read the following:

Kustom (like written letters),

Canute, Kansas

Model III-L

Serial No. 223045

Pat.No. 210.129

- it has two channels. Two Jacks for each channel (total of 4). What are the second Jacks for?
  - two potiknobs are missing, is there any way I can restore it someway? Would maybe a Fender Blackface Knob fit?
  - the red Power switch has three positions. The Power knob can be pulled up, middle and downwards. the middle position is the off-position, so far. But what are the others for?
  - on the back there is a "power socket" or something, it looks like the matching counterpart of the power supplies you use in USA. In Germany we have two pins at the end of the cable which we plug in the power socket on the wall of our rooms. On american ones there are three pins, as far as I know. But why is there a thing like where you can plug in this thing. What I called "power socket" looks has three holes, grouped like a face (Eyes and nose) Above it, it says 200 watts maximum (on the Internet I found that it has 130 watts)?.
- Beneath it there comes out a cable with a german plug at the end. So I guess someone changed the thing for German needs?
- The back has also jacks: footswitch, speaker out, line out (no question about that, just wanted to be complete).

The Box or Cabinet (english words mean the same, don't they?) is a 4x12". On the back it reads:  
K

Canute, Kansas

Model 4-12 L (weren't there IV different types?)

Serial No: S 161498

Pat.No.: 210.129 (this indicates it belongs to the head, but why than a different manufacturers

Badge "Kustom" vs "K"?)

It has the big K on it, not the written word "Kustom", so this should be a later one??? But I can use

it with it, without Problems, or would another do better?

The Amp makes a continuous noise like hissing (right word?). Is that normal for an amp in that dimensions?

I Know, a lot of questions, but I hope you can help me.

MANY THANKS!!!

Mathias.

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Subject: Re: Kustom III Lead Head and 4x12 Box explanation on functions needed  
Posted by [LesS](#) on Sun, 24 May 2009 14:43:01 GMT

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Hi - welcome to the forum.

Model III-L SN 223045 was made approx September 1979.  
Speaker cabinet model 4-12L SN S161498 was made approx October 1978.

The 4-12L cabinet should be fine to use with the III-L amp.

I have not used this model, but one input jack is normally louder than the other.  
The quiet jack is good for active instruments (example: guitar with built in preamp).  
In the earlier Kustoms, the top jack was brighter.

The 3 power switch positions are "off", plus two different polarity positions (one position might make less hum than the other).

For the American power socket - as you look at it, the left hole is Negative - (usually a white wire) and is sometimes larger than the right, the right hole is Positive + (usually a black wire), and the lower middle hole is ground. (Our voltage is 117 to 120 volts.)

The 200 watts is the maximum usage of any device that you plug into it.

The power output of the amp is a different measurement – it is unrelated to the 200 watts for the accessory socket – and is 130 watts RMS.

The hissing sound is normal as long as it is not too loud.

-Les S

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Subject: Re: Kustom III Lead Head and 4x12 Box explanation on functions needed

Posted by [Parsons](#) on Tue, 26 May 2009 16:54:25 GMT

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Hey,

thanks a lot!

Know that you told me, what one can hear using the different jacks, I really heard it myself. Definitely the lower Jack sounds warmer (less bright thenn the upper one). I didn't really hear, that one was louder than the other, but the difference in tonecolor is interesting enough. I plugged a 1998 Epiphone Les Paul Standard into it, I finally managed to get the sound of intro of "sweet home Alabama", as I would describe it.

What I find very interesting and like very much is the Pull-Bright Option on the Treble-knob, you can almost get a sound like the scratchy gutiar of the Intro to the TV-Series Shaft. Funny. Ok, I know sound lies in the eye of the beholder.

Thank you for the other information you have given me, too!

It might seem I am a dumbass, but now that I know what the upper and lower Jack of each channel is for, what are the two channels for? Is it just to allow quick change between two sounds that you have "preset" before? Or can I try playing with two guitars over the same amp? Sorry, I know, this might sound very dumb and I know I maybe don't deserve a good Amp like that, but I have fun with it (really don't like my old Hughes and Kettner Attax 40).

Has anyone an idea how where I can get the two missing knob-heads?

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Subject: Re: Kustom III Lead Head and 4x12 Box explanation on functions needed  
Posted by [steven](#) on Wed, 27 May 2009 10:17:04 GMT

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Hi, and welcome to the board.

The second input jack on these early amps are set to be 3DB down form the first jack, or in simple terms, half volume as it will take twice as much signal fed into that jack to match the output of the first jack, and yes the higher resistance of this second jack will produce somewhat less high end tone.

On latter amps made for bass with active pickups the second jack has much less gain than even your amp as active pickups can have far greater output.

A Fender knob that uses a set screw can be used to replace what you do not have.

The two channels can be use to run two different instrumenets thru the amp, or with a A/B type stomp box a quick tone and or volume change.

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Subject: Re: Kustom III Lead Head and 4x12 Box explanation on functions needed  
Posted by [Parsons](#) on Sun, 05 Jan 2014 15:53:52 GMT

Hello,

I come back here, because I finally had the chance to visit a musicstore and look at a Fender skirted knob, which looked the same as the missing Kustom knob, but unfortunately the diameter of the knob itself is wrong.

Did I look for the wrong fender knob?

Thanks in advance!

(If someone has knobs as a leftover I am willing to pay for it).

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Subject: Re: Kustom III Lead Head and 4x12 Box explanation on functions needed  
Posted by [Parsons](#) on Fri, 25 May 2018 12:34:41 GMT

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stevem wrote on Wed, 27 May 2009 06:17

The two channels can be use to run two different instrumenets thru the amp, or with a A/B type stomp box a quick tone and or volume change.

I have to come back after all these years and ask a follow up question...

It would be totally OK to play plug in two e-guitars at the same time and play at the same time, right?

Would it be ok to play a bass guitar through one of the channels alone or accompanied with an electric guitar without harming the amp?

Which impendance has the box, if I once want to connect another top with it?

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Subject: Re: Kustom III Lead Head and 4x12 Box explanation on functions needed  
Posted by [stevem](#) on Fri, 25 May 2018 12:58:06 GMT

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It's perfectly fine to play 2 instruments of any kind thru the amp, as in 1 instrument in each channel.

Your question about the box I assume you mean speaker cabinet?

That box / cabinet is set to a 4 ohm load, and the amp in order to output its maximum 130 watts of clean power wants that 4 ohm load,

Running that box / cabinet and any other box / cabinet at the same time could harm the amp depending on how loud you play it so your best off to say away from doing that if both boxes / cabinets are 4 ohms.

You could however run any other boxes/ cabinets at the same time if they where 8 ohms or 16 ohms .

Two 8 ohm boxes / cabinets in parallel = a 4 ohm load once again on the amp.

Two 16 ohm boxes / cabinets on the amp. = a 8 ohm load on the amp.

A 8 ohm load will cut the amps output down from 130 watts to some 75 watts watts , and a 16 ohm load on the amp will half that wattage yet again,

Rule of thumb with solid state amps is with a higher load on them then what they are rated at , it is 100% safe, but you get the side effect of less power.

A lower load on the amp like a 2 ohm load on a 4 ohm rated amp makes for more heat and a good chance of damaging the amp.

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