

## THE TSA BAYIRA 8200 KIT - MIKE'S STORY

### The Build

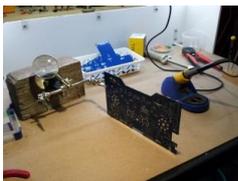
The Bayira 8200 Single Ended Tube Kit arrived safely and I started on the build about an hour after it turned up. (This was much to the wife's disgust as we are due to go on holidays in a couple of days and apparently I should be excited about going away for the first time in a couple of years).



First thing was the instructions and a through read and inventory; all present. Next was separating the PCB into its component pieces and a careful deburring of the joint

points. Using the supplied Kester 63/37 low residue solder (a nice touch from Tube Sound Audio as I know a full roll of this high quality solder would cost around \$200), assembly commenced.

After three or four components were soldered to the PCB I made it my practice to do a very careful inspection of the joints with a good magnifier. A good inspection was also performed at the end of completion to make sure there were no missing parts, that nothing was misaligned and a final double check on the polarity of installed capacitors.



One step extra I made was to ensure all resistors were placed with their gold bands in the same direction, a sort of polarity thing, even though resistors are non-polarised. I thought it a nice touch should ever a replacement become necessary.

Eventually, the four main PCB component pieces came together and were installed in the amp's neat chassis and the final connections made. The build proceeded logically and surprisingly quickly and all



the components fitted together perfectly. This kit is certainly very impressively engineered.

Next, came the exciting bit: connection of speakers, a source (I used an Ipod Nano) and powering up. I switched on and waited anxiously for any crackles or pops or dreaded smoke ... nothing. Testing then commenced per the instructions: select Line 2, turn the volume up just enough to determine sound and balanced output. Then do the same for Line 1, the 3.5mm input and headphones (which cuts off the speakers). It all worked perfectly first up! So now, the amp is sitting on top of my NAD 356BEEG with a warm and gentle glow coming from its tubes.

Time spent from opening Hours. I know the kit but I wanted to take my correct. The soldering bit of practice before temperature controlled



the box to power up was about 14 could be built in a shorter period time and ensure everything was requires a degree of precision so a starting would not go astray. A iron with a small tip would also be

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a good idea. Everything else though is easy, provided you follow the instructions, which are very clear and straightforward.

### Assessment

I left the amp to "burn in" for around 6 hours (no playback) before I started to listen in earnest.

Over the next 10 or so hours, and listening to a variety of music (pop, soft rock, classical, instrumental etc.) I discovered the amp was extremely easy to listen to. From around the 10 hour mark there was an obvious 'opening up' in the amp's performance, a sort of a 'clearing of its throat', so to speak. It wasn't as if the amp was initially wanting, it just seemed to have a bit more all-round presence after a period of settling down, which I now understand is a tube thing. Lows and highs have made themselves a little bit more known, without sacrificing a nice, warm midrange.

Classical soundstages (I think that's what they're known as) when you sit and listen very closely, are great. You can hear where everything is coming from and with ease. The amp is very clear in its reproduction and it certainly does have that distinctive "tube warmth" that I was keen to experience. I have heard that tube amps are supposed to be a bit 'middle of the road' when it comes to reproducing their source; I don't know about that but to my old ears this Bayira 8200 is absolutely not middle of the road. It's a ripper!

All listening has been with the amp in 'Ultra Linear' mode, the amp also offering Triode and Pentode modes. Eventually, I'll try a bit of tube rolling with some 6550C and EL34 power tubes, but for the time being, the EH6L6GC's are just fine.

You can listen to this amp for literally hours without feeling fatigued by it. My solid state 80w + 80w rms amp is nowhere near as good in that regard.

One thing that I regard as a bit of a bonus with my amp is the faint blue plasma glow around the top mica plates in each 6L6GC tube. Both show this perfectly normal phenomena (electrons hitting and bouncing off outer glass envelope) almost evenly. It certainly looks great when listening in a darkened room.



If you think 8w + 8w is a bit tame (as I sort of did when I decided to buy), then you will be truly enlightened by this amp. It's not going to fill a town hall with noise, but for an average listening area, and average listening levels, it's absolutely fine. It just won't make your eardrums meet in the middle, like some cheap 250w + 250w Ebay amps can, but then I left that scene behind years ago. Importantly, there was no difficulty driving my low sensitivity loudspeakers.

With regards to the build, one word says it all.....FUN! I found it very enjoyable and relaxing. You do need to be able to solder well and to follow instructions to the letter. The best aspect was seeing ALL THESE BITS gradually make 1 BIG BIT that works.

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My gear:

Amp: 8200 Bayira Single Ended Tube

Source: Yamaha CDX560 CD, Ipod Nano

Speakers: Visaton Classic 200, (8"Al cone woofer, 4"Ti cone mid, 1"Ceramic dome tweeter) crossed at 400Hz/2500Hz

Sensitivity: 88dB (1W @ 1M), front ported and grounded to timber floor.

Cables: Speaker 273 strands of .012 copper x 2, OFC and low temp silver soldered ends.  
Interconnects: good quality with gold plated RCA ends.

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*The Bayira 8200 Single Ended Tube Amp kit is supplied by Tube Sound Audio  
see <http://www.tubesoundaudio.com.au/tube-amplifier-kits.asp> for more details*