



FRONT
OF
HOUSE **Online**

16 **midas**
DESIGNED FOR A PURE PERFORMANCE
Launch 01.20.2005



THE NEWS MAGAZINE FOR LIVE SOUND

[Home](#)

[Subscribe](#)

[Newsroom](#)

[Forums](#)

[Current Issue](#)

[Contact Us](#)

TAPCO Juice Power Amps

In the past few years, the once staid world of power amps has crossed the line into the realm of rocket science as features like DSP processing and networked diagnostics and control become more common. With the introduction of new models like Crown's iTech, this trend will only accelerate. And as the Product Gallery on page 14 attests, amps are getting smaller and lighter all the time.

But sometimes you just need good solid power without the bells and whistles, and times like that call for an amp like those in the new Juice series from TAPCO. Yes, I said TAPCO. Hang with me here. In case you hadn't heard, TAPCO (officially TAPCO by Mackie) was reintroduced last year as Mackie's entry-level retail brand.

We received a pair of Juice amps: the 450-watt J•1400 and the 750-watt J•2500 (both amps power per channel at four ohms). The first thing we noticed on removing them from the box was the lack of MI grade I/O common on other "entry level" amps. Inputs are a choice of Balanced TRS or XLR and all outputs are Neutrik Speakon—no combi-jacks, 1/4-inch speaker outs or binding posts. In fact, there are three Speakons—one each for the A and B channels and a third for either bridged mono, or it will carry both the A and B outputs on a single Neutrik NL4 connector, which is a nice little touch.

Rear panel controls include the expected mono/stereo/bridge switch, but also a less expected in this price range defeatable limiter and a 9dB at 30 Hz low end filter. The front panel is the model of simplicity with an on/off rocker switch and a pair of output pots with signal present and overload LEDs. Though they are part of the same series, there is more of a difference between the two models than total output power, with both the J•1400 and its smaller sibling the J•800 being of the AB variety and the J•2500 being a class H amp.

We put both amps through the wringer for the better part of three months without any glitches or problems. In applications ranging from driving a couple of wedge mixes to powering subs for a mid-sized corporate one-off, they did exactly what they were supposed to—provide power without problems. Yes, they are made in China and they are not exactly lightweight. No, you are not going to replace your touring-grade workhorses with a rack of Juice amps. But as a backup or a way to extend your power inventory without spending a mint, the Juice line is worth a look.

What it is: Solid power amps with mid-line performance at an entry-level price.

Who it's for: Bands and smaller venues and soundcos.

Pros: Solid performance, pro I/O, great value

Cons: Weight to power ratio

How much: J•1400 MSRP \$549, J•2500 MSRP \$699