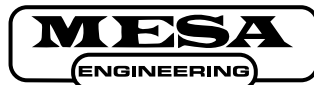


MESA/BOOGIE

SUBWAY ROCKET™

Owner's Manual

The Spirit of Art in Technology

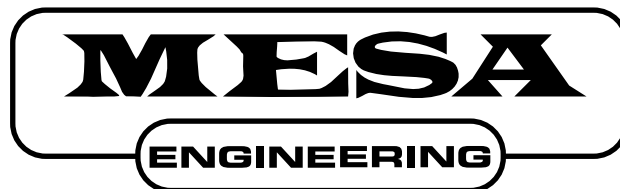


***1317 Ross Street Petaluma, CA 94954
USA***

MESA/BOOGIE

The Spirit of Art in Technology

Thank you for trusting MESA/Boogie to be your amplifier company. We wish you many years of toneful enjoyment from this handbuilt all tube instrument.



Hello from the Tone Farm...

..You, smart player and all around intuitive human, have put your trust in us to be your amplifier company. This is something we do not take lightly. Our reward is that we've designed and built another fine guitar amplifier that is destined to become a classic. By purchasing and choosing this unit to be a part of your musical voice, you have become part of the Mesa family...WELCOME! Our goal is to never let you down. Your reward is that you are now the owner of a great amp, bred of fine all tube amp heritage...benefiting from the many pioneering and patented Mesa circuits that led to the refinement of your new instrument. Feel confident, as we do, this amp will inspire many hours of musical satisfaction and lasting enjoyment. It was built with you in mind, by players who know the value of a fine musical instrument and the commitment it takes to make great music. The same commitment to quality, value and support we make to you...our new friend.

Your MESA/Boogie Amplifier is a professional instrument. Please treat it with respect and operate it properly.

USE COMMON SENSE AND ALWAYS OBSERVE THESE PRECAUTIONS:

- Do not expose amplifier to moisture, rain or water, direct sunlight or extremely high temperatures.
- Always insure that amplifier is properly grounded.
- Always unplug AC power cord before changing fuse or any tubes.
- When replacing fuse, use only same type and rating.
- Avoid direct contact with heated tubes.
- Insure adequate air circulation behind amplifier.
- Keep amplifier away from children.
- Be sure to connect to an AC power supply that meets the power supply specifications listed on the rear of the unit.
- If there is any danger of lightning occurring nearby, remove the power plug from the wall socket in advance.
- To avoid damaging your speakers and other playback equipment, turn off the power of all related equipment before making the connections.
- Do not use excessive force in handling control buttons, switches and controls.
- Remove the power plug from the AC mains socket if the unit is to be stored for an extended period of time.
- Do not use solvents such as benzene or paint thinner to clean the unit. Wipe off the exterior with soft cloth.

YOUR AMPLIFIER IS LOUD! EXPOSURE TO HIGH SOUND VOLUMES MAY CAUSE PERMANENT HEARING DAMAGE!

No user serviceable parts inside. Refer service to qualified personnel. Always unplug AC power before removing chassis.

EXPORT MODELS: Always insure that unit is wired for proper voltage. Make certain grounding conforms with local standards.

READ AND FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS OF PROPER USAGE.

SUBWAY ROCKET™

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SUBWAY ROCKET™

Operating Instructions

Overview:

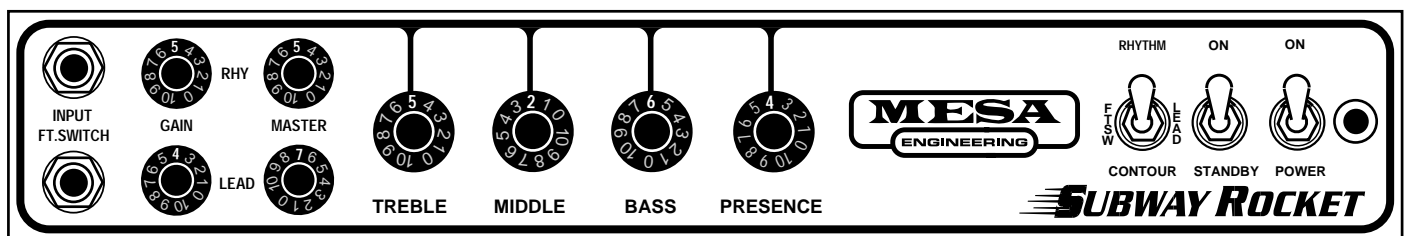
The **SUBWAY ROCKET** ushers in a new era of compact, portable and affordable combo amplification that boasts no compromise, quality construction throughout. Don't let small size and the sparse layout fool you...the **ROCKET** is an extremely versatile single channel, Tri-Modal amplifier that provides a gorgeous clean sound, a soaring high gain lead and a giant, grinding crunch - way too big for its humble size.

The Three Footswitchable Sounds (Modes) of world class personality housed in a Baltic Birch cab, along with our custom-designed magic ten inch **SUBWAY** speaker, make the **ROCKET** a mighty ally in the studio, rehearsal hall or anywhere else that you might be in need of Heavyweight Tone in a Bantam-watt arena. Its powerful footswitching capabilities and all the Gain a player could need, make the **ROCKET** well suited for Rock, Pop, Country, Top 40 or any other style where versatility is the name of the game. Players who lean heavier in the Roots or Blues direction may want to take a look at the **ROCKETS'** older brother, the **SUBWAY BLUES**. This simplified **SUBWAY** focuses on power section clipibility with a Tone-packed, stripped pre-amp perfectly matched to the same twenty-watt burner.

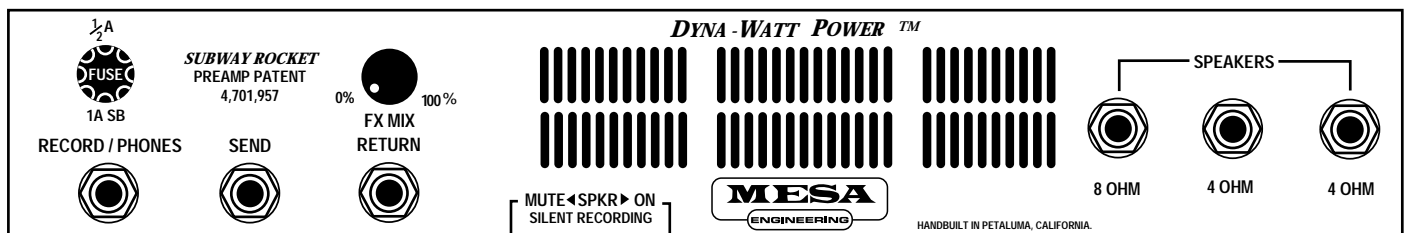
Looking to the **ROCKETS'** Rear Panel assures that your interfacing needs are covered. A parallel **Effects Loop** with a MIX Control provides tone insurance for even those questionable effects. Three speaker jacks (one 8 Ohm and two 4 Ohm) are provided to ensure the proper impedance match to the many types of speaker enclosures. A **RECORD / PHONE OUTPUT JACK** is provided to capture the **ROCKETS'** soulful character direct to tape or into your own personal headset. The **SILENT RECORDING MUTE SWITCH LOCATED TO THE LEFT OF CENTER ON THE CHASSIS' UNDER SIDE** and just beneath the Rear Panel, is a handy feature for those late night sessions when live speaker volumes are just too loud or not needed.

As you can see, the **ROCKET** provides all the features any demanding pro could need and at the same time remains simple to operate.

FRONT VIEW **SUBWAY ROCKET**



REAR VIEW **SUBWAY ROCKET**



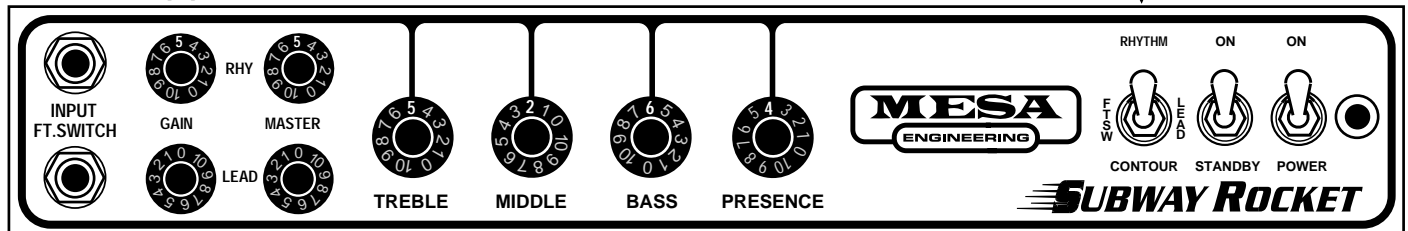
FRONT PANEL

POWER-UP:

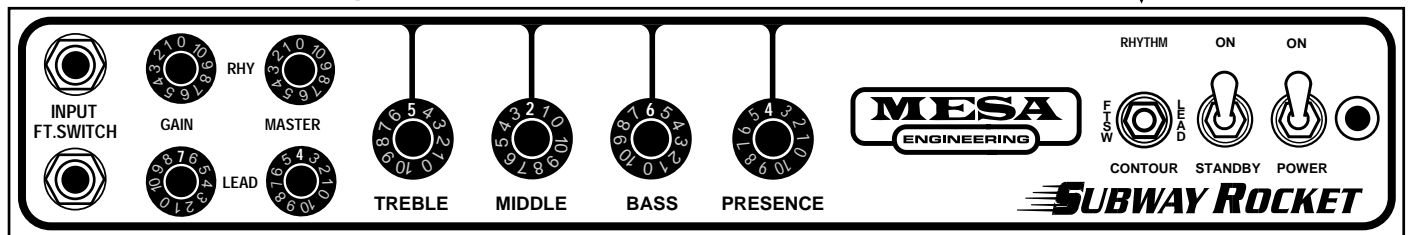
First familiarize yourself with the Front and Rear Panels of your new **ROCKET**. 1.) Connect your favorite guitar to the instrument INPUT jack. Now turn the power switch "ON" while leaving the standby switch set to "STANDBY." It is always a good idea to practice this *start up* procedure as at least 30 seconds of warm-up time lessens the shock on cold power tubes, thus prolonging their toneful life substantially. 2.) Connect the **ROCKETS'** Mode Select Footswitch (which is included) to the FOOTSWITCH jack that is located just below the instrument INPUT jack on the far left of the Front Panel. If the footswitch is not available, you may use the Mode Select toggle located to the left of the STANDBY switch to audition the **ROCKETS'** three distinctly different sounds (SEE NOTE.) 3.) Using the example below as a guide, set the controls as illustrated and turn the STANDBY switch to the ON position to fire up your new **ROCKET**. Now its time to play ! Run through the three Modes and feel free to experiment with the controls.

NOTE The *Mode Selector (RHYTHM - LEAD - CONTOUR)* switch must be in the center (MIDDLE) position for the Mode Select Footswitch to work. This will select the Lead Mode until you choose another Mode with the Footswitch.

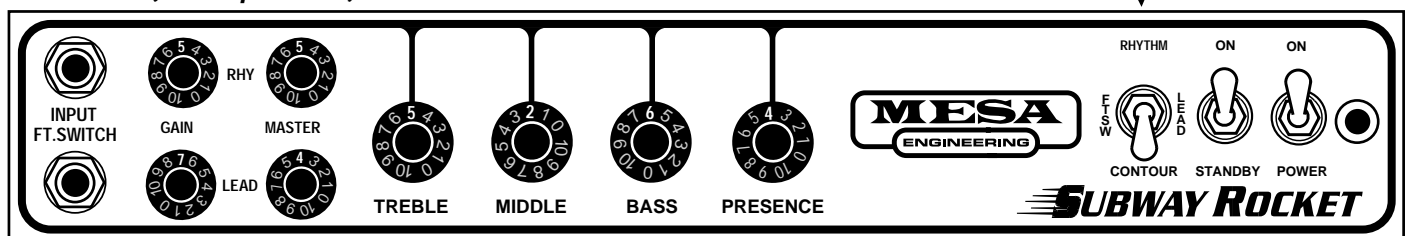
RHYTHM (up position)



LEAD (switch in the center position)



CONTOUR (down position)



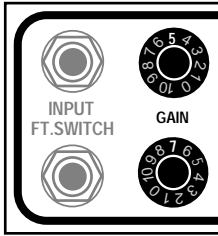
NOTE It is normal for the volume of the CONTOUR Mode to be a little louder than that of the LEAD Mode, as the voicing of the LEAD Mode is being drastically re-shaped and some frequencies are being boosted quite dramatically to achieve this sonically powerful sound.

Again, these are merely examples of how to set up your new **ROCKET** for its maiden voyage. Experimentation will lead you to many different sounds in each mode. Now that you have heard the three distinctly different Modes, let's move on to understanding the controls and their interactive roles in achieving the sounds that *you* want to hear.

CONTROLS:

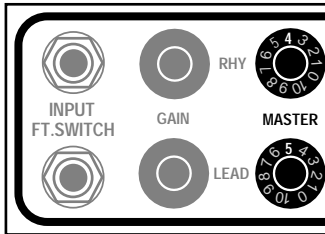
GAIN:

This is by far the most powerful control in each of the three different Modes that are activated by the Mode switch. It not only determines the overall gain amount, shape and sensitivity of the Mode selected...but it is also a **powerful Tone control**. Generally speaking, whatever is dialed up here ultimately determines the Modes' personality. **Set low, it allows cleaner and brighter sounds with enhanced dynamic response**, especially in the higher frequencies. **Set high, the whole personality of the Mode becomes darker, fatter and more overdriven**. We worked hard to make sure that the entire range of Gain available is usable in the **ROCKET** and more importantly, *musical*. Don't think for a moment that this simple layout limits you in any way in regards to the amount and texture of Gain that is available. Long neurotic hours were spent to ensure that the ranges of Gain were stylistically accurate. It's probably a good time to mention that most of the *great sounds* can be found in the **ROCKET** by setting the GAIN Control moderately, especially in the LEAD MODE. For example, somewhere between **2** through **6**. In the RHYTHM position, try setting this control somewhere between **3** through **8**. Use of moderation here will reduce the likelihood of pesky tube microphonic problems ever occurring, while at the same time making all three Modes easier to balance in volume and FX send strength.



MASTER:

The individual MASTER Controls serve three purposes in the layout of the **ROCKET**. **FIRST:** They serve as level balancing controls for each of the two channels. This enables a wide range of front end Gain settings to be matched to a given listening level and the level of the other Modes.

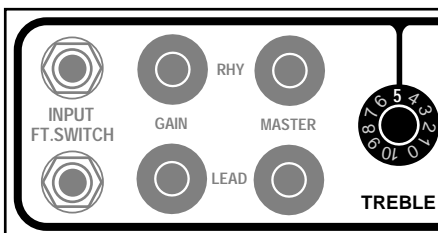


SECOND: They act as Effect Send controls for each Mode in the Effects Loop. As with many of the controls on the **ROCKET**, the best results for balance and tone are usually found in the medium range of this control.

THIRD: The MASTER Control is the Record / Phones Send Level control. When using the direct RECORD / PHONES jack found on the Rear Panel to interface directly to a mixing board or recorder, this control will determine the amount of signal you will be sending via this jack. In this application it is usually best to start with the MASTER Controls set to **3** and gradually increase them to the proper level. This minimizes the possibility of blowing speakers or eardrums in the event the engineer has an extremely sensitive input headroom setting in place at the console.

TREBLE:

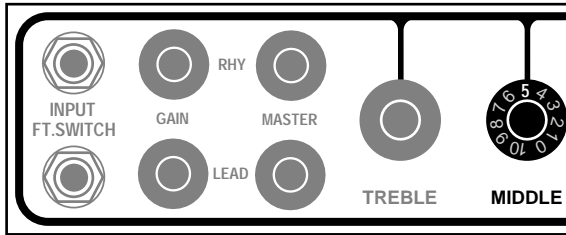
As with most guitar amplifiers, the TREBLE Control is the strongest of the three rotary controls. Its setting on the **ROCKET** determines the blend and strength of the MIDDLE and BASS Control. **Set high, it is the dominant control, minimizing the amount of MID and BASS that would otherwise be possible in the mix. Set low, the TREBLE becomes the recessive control and a warmer, darker blend is produced.**



Dial with care! Subtle tweaking of this control tends to produce the best results.

MIDDLE:

Through endless daily tone dreaming, the "if-only" design dictum led to the MID Control that doubles as a *dial-in* gain boost. From **0** to about **3** the taper is adjusted to act as a very effective MID Control. As you increase the MID to **4** and above, you will hear the lower Mids getting more pronounced and fatter. When the MID Control is set above **6** the MID leaves behind the old notion of being a tone control and becomes a truly usable Gain control.



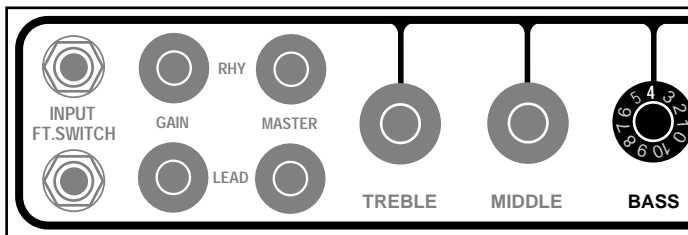
This upper range is a smokin' addition to the **ROCKETS'** RHYTHM Mode and in conjunction with the GAIN Control all kinds of higher gain rhythm sounds are possible. Try the MID Control set high and the GAIN Control at about **6** - **7** for a cool blues solo sound. For a grinding crunch rhythm sound "Dime" the MID Control and stand back ! If this still isn't crazy enough for you..."Max" the GAIN and TREBLE Controls and set the PRESENCE Control to **0** - **1**. This should be sufficient enough fuel to get you to the next planet! The versatility that this dual purpose MID Control lends to the RHYTHM Mode of the **ROCKET** greatly expands its usefulness as both a clean and overdrive Mode.

NOTE

The lower region of the MID Control **0** - **3** determines midrange punch and boldness in lower gain sounds and a smooth "vocal like" blend in high gain sounds. It can be very effective acting as a "cut through the band control" in certain situations. Dial to taste, remembering that the setting of the TREBLE Control greatly effects this control's strength.

BASS:

This control blends in the lower frequencies and its effectiveness, again, depends on the setting of the TREBLE Control.

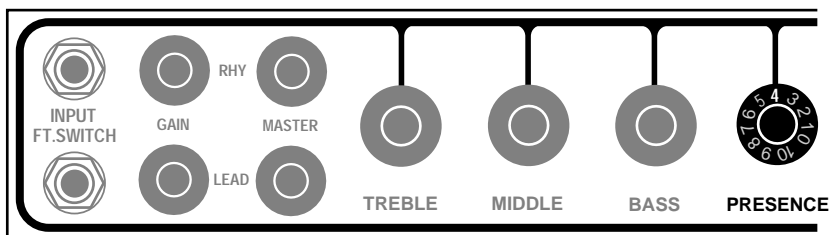


It should be set with moderation, as extreme settings in either low or high directions can produce an unbalanced tone. In any one of the three Modes, be especially careful using higher Gain settings. Too much BASS will cause a flabby unfocused sound that can't be dialed out because excessive BASS has been introduced to the pre-amp in the early stages. Try setting the BASS to **6** for clean sounds in the RHYTHM Mode and **4** or below

when dialing up High Gain overdriven sounds in this Mode. In the LEAD Mode, try setting the BASS somewhere between **0** - **3**. These settings will depend upon the amount of Gain and Treble that you have dialed up.

PRESENCE:

The PRESENCE Control attenuates the high end and controls dynamic compression in the power section.



High settings produce more sparkle, cut and lend a more "open" quality to the RHYTHM Mode. Low settings of the PRESENCE Control compress the sound and enhance the more vocal like qualities of single notes.

Treble settings, *combined* with low PRESENCE Control settings produce the richest and roundest lead sounds. For a clean sound, try setting the PRESENCE Control at around **5** or **6** for the sweet blend of sparkle and cut in the RHYTHM Mode. This range in the RHYTHM Mode also tends to give the impression of more headroom. Try a LEAD Mode PRESENCE Control setting of **3** to start with and adjust to desired taste.

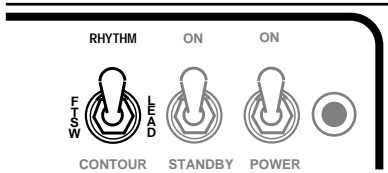
This control can also produce a fatter, warmer character, especially in the LEAD Mode. Lower

NOTE

Avoid setting the PRESENCE Control to **10** when High Gain and Treble settings are in use. This reduces the likelihood of annoying microphonic tube problems occurring.

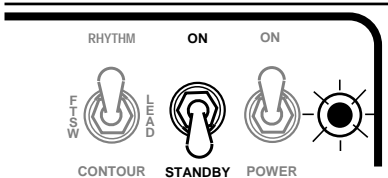
TOGGLE SWITCHES:

RHYTHM / LEAD / CONTOUR:



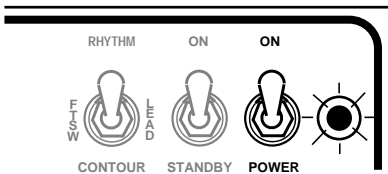
Use this toggle to select one of the three Modes - RHYTHM, LEAD or CONTOUR. This toggle can also take the place of the remote footswitch when there isn't one handy.

ON / STANDBY:



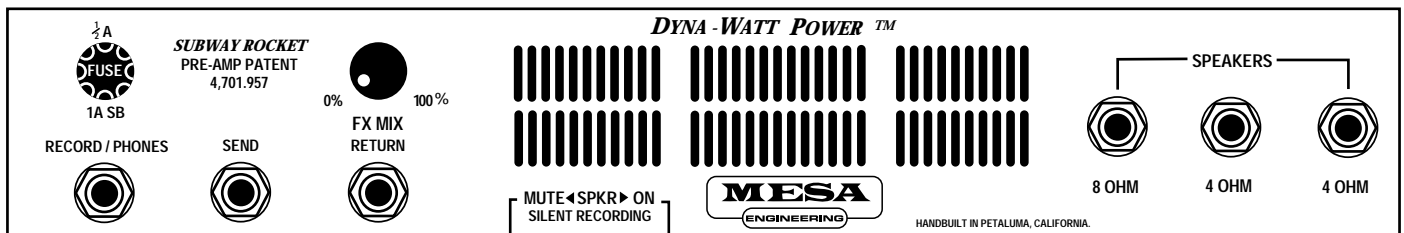
Perfect for set breaks...this toggle switch also serves an even more important purpose. In the STANDBY position the tubes are at idle so that during power up they may warm up before being put to use. **Before the Power is switched on, make sure the STANDBY switch is in the STANDBY position. Wait at least 30 seconds and then switch the STANDBY to the "ON" position.** This helps in preventing tube problems and increases their toneful life substantially.

POWER:

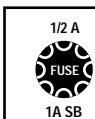


This switch delivers the A.C. power to the ***SUBWAY ROCKET***. Make sure the unit is grounded (all three terminals of the A.C. power cord must be connected whenever possible to avoid injury to the user as well as to the unit) and that the proper voltage is present. Follow the cold start procedure described in the ON / STANDBY section above when powering up your ***ROCKET***.

REAR PANEL:



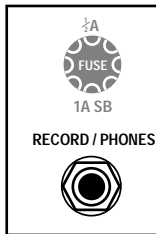
FUSE:



This is the A.C.'s (Alternating Current) main fuse and provides protection from outside A.C. fluctuations, as well as power tube failure damage. Should the fuse blow, replace it with the same rating in a slo-blo type package. The domestic U.S. version requires a 1 amp slo-blo fuse. A power tube short or failure is often the cause of a blown fuse...**Follow the cold start procedure mentioned in the ON / STANDBY switch section** and watch the power tubes as you turn the STANDBY to the ON position. If a power tube is going bad or is arcing you will see it! Turn the STANDBY Switch to STANDBY immediately and replace the faulty power tube and the fuse if necessary. If you see nothing abnormal as you lift the STANDBY, it is possible that a power tube shorted temporarily and blew the fuse. If this is the case it may work again normally. To be extra safe you may want to replace all power tubes in the "shotgun" troubleshooting tradition and save the replaced set as spares. **Don't forget to carry along a few extra fuses to your gigs, they could be worth their weight in**

RECORD / PHONES:

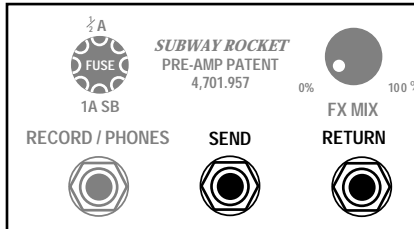
This jack provides direct-to-console interfacing for recording or sound reinforcement applications. It can also be used to power a set of personal headphones which is a convenient way to practice day or night privately. It is a circuit dedicated to reproducing the *roll off* that occurs in the output section with a speaker connected. With accuracy, it faithfully captures the ***SUBWAY ROCKET'S*** soulful character.



The send level strength is determined by the GAIN and MASTER Controls. From this jack, adequate signal level will be available to you for most of your recording needs and live performances.

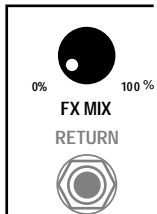
FX LOOP: SEND / RETURN:

These two 1/4" jacks are the patch point for external effects. The Effects Loop is wired in parallel with the normal signal. **Connect the SEND jack of the *ROCKET* to your Effects Input jack. Connect the RETURN jack of the *ROCKET* to the Output jack of your effect unit.** The Effects Loop is a patch point between the pre-amp and power section. Therefore, the RETURN jack can double as a "Power Amp Input" jack. When the RETURN is used as an input, the PRESENCE and MASTER Control of the active Mode are being utilized. While the RETURN is being used in this manner, all other controls are inactive.



FX MIX:

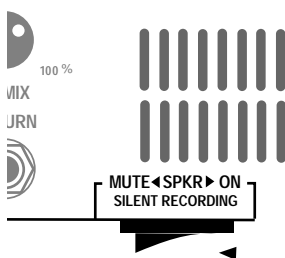
This control determines the dry/wet blend of the FX Loop signal in relation to the unaffected signal. Set to 0% you will experience only the dry signal (no effect) and at a setting of 100% the entire signal will be wet (total effect.)



For the best results...Set the mix of your effect to 100% wet. Then dial in the amount of effect that you wish to hear, starting at 0% with the FX Loop Mix Control. The *drier* (closer to 0%) signal you use, the better your tone should be. This parallel type FX Loop allows the amplifier to retain its purity with the smallest amount of degradation due to possible effect impedance mismatching.

SILENT RECORDING:

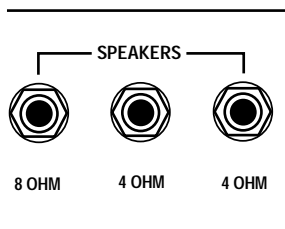
This rocker switch which is located down under the chassis and selects between the *live* "Speaker On" setting and the *silent* "Speaker Mute" setting. This is a perfect solution for *all-nighters!* This switch mutes all of the signal at the power section driver stage, removing the need for a speaker load **IN THIS POSITION ONLY!**



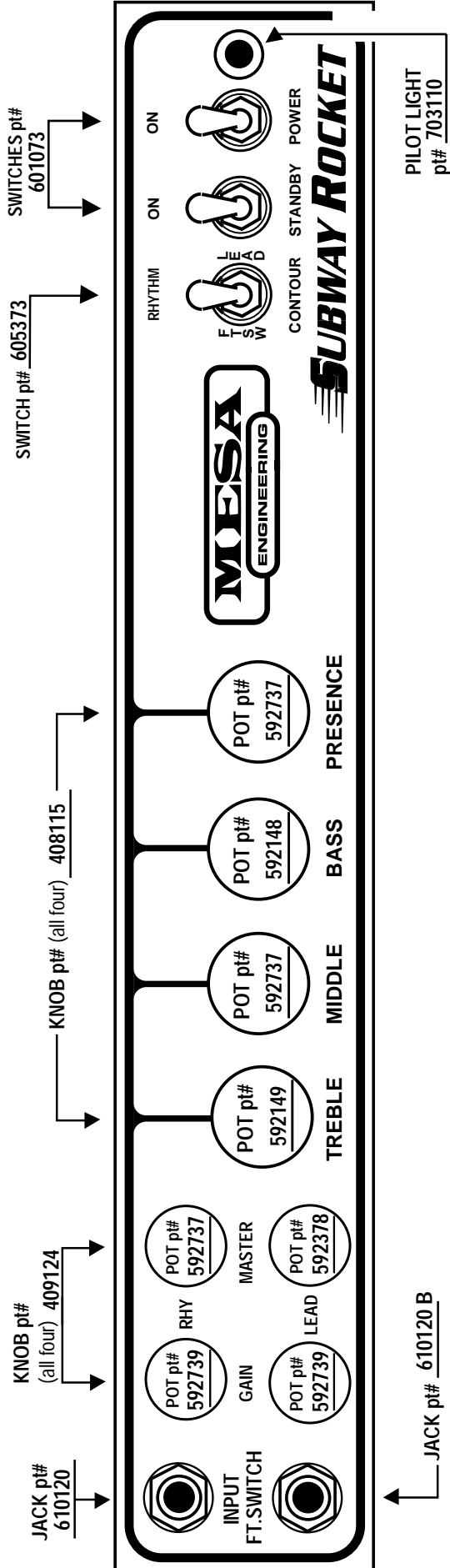
NOTE When this switch is set to the "ON" position, a speaker load must be maintained by either a load resistor of some type or a speaker itself. Failure to comply with this instruction could result in major damage to the amplifier. **Leave your speaker connected.**

SPEAKERS:

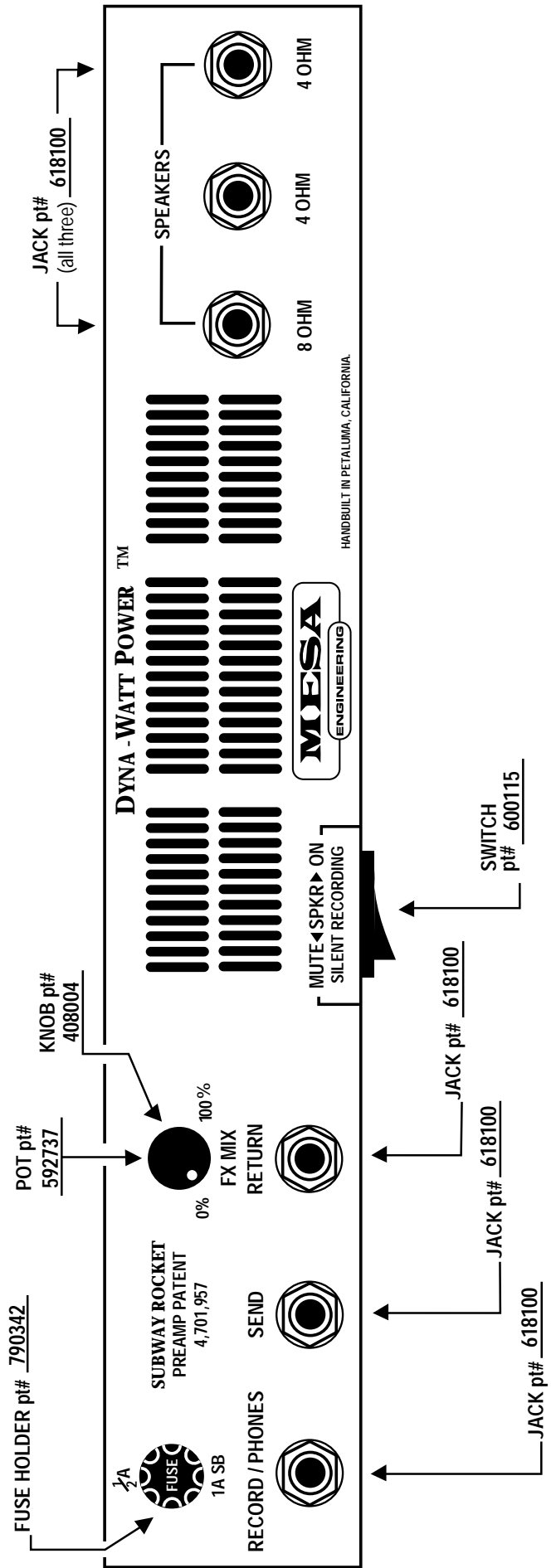
Sensitivity to speaker mismatching in regards to ohmage differences is low, hence no damage to the amplifier will occur. However, very low ohmage loads will cause the power tubes to wear faster. The ***SUBWAY ROCKET*** is equipped with a single 10 inch 8 Ohm speaker, but as you can see, other speaker configurations may be used. When using two 8 Ohm speakers, connect each of them to the 4 Ohm speaker jacks that are provided, this will equal a 4 Ohm load which is the proper impedance required when using this particular speaker configuration.



FRONT VIEW SUBWAY ROCKET



REAR VIEW SUBWAY ROCKET



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