

# BASS MUSICIAN MAGAZINE

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## Bass Musician Magazine: Bass Gear Reviews

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### Markbass Traveler 102p, 5/29/2008



Review by Jake Wolf

Markbass sent me their Traveler 102p cab to review along with the F1 amp. Its compact size makes it a great companion to the tiny F1, and together the petite rig weighs in at less than 40 pounds. As a reference, sitting on the

floor next to my EA NL210 and Accugroove tri112, it looks extremely small. Its footprint is a full 17 inches, but its front dimensions are little more than enough to house the dual 10" speakers and custom 1" piezo tweeter. The three traveler series cabs, which include this 2x10, along with a 1x12 and a 1x15, are designed to deliver top notch tone in an easy to tote, featherweight package, and the 102p certainly delivers.

The 102p is built solidly. Its two custom designed neodymium B&C drivers and lightweight plywood construction drop the weight down to an easy 33 lbs. It has a single high quality side mounted handle, and the attenuator control for the tweeter is conveniently located on the top of the cab in the front right-hand corner for easily making adjustments on the fly.

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The cab felt very well built in my hands; the grille was free of rattles and fastened securely. The large badge and bright yellow drivers definitely command some attention.

This is a rear vented cab. I call it rear "vented" instead of rear "ported" because most rear ported cabs I've encountered have one or more round holes directly behind the center of the driver(s), whereas the 102p has a rectangular vent running along the long edge of the cab, similar to an Eden XLT, but with the vent on the back instead of the front. While this is an unconventional approach (to me anyways) to rear porting, I like it because it sounds so different on its side versus straight up. More tonal options and variation equal more versatility in my book. Too boomy in that corner? Stand it up vertical. Drummer drowning you out with that 24" bass drum? Horizontal! The rear panel offers dual function speakon and 1/4" inputs, which allows for either type of cable.

The 102p has a very nice full range texture, with a slight tendency to favor the midrange frequencies. At low volumes, it produces beautiful buttery sub-bass warmth that fills the room without overpowering. It isn't the loudest 210 I've heard, but it seems to cut very well, and the tweeter offers plenty of spank for slap playing, or edgy rock tones. The rear vented design makes room placement more of a considerable issue; if its in a corner or up against a wall it may have more low frequency buildup, possibly resulting in a tendency to sound boomy or muddy. Likewise, on an outdoor stage, without a back wall to reflect off of, the low frequencies typically get lost in backstage no-mans land. I know some guys who really prefer rear porting, depending on what type of gigs and what kind of cabs they're used to. I have owned both types and at this point prefer front porting for its ability to project lows from the stage, but really it's a preference thing, and neither are categorically better or worse. I would by no means discourage players from experimenting to see which they feel more comfortable with (another upside to rear porting is that typically the drummer can hear you better on a traditional stage layout). The reality for the 102p is that it's dwarf size is only possible with a rear port. If they moved the vent to the front, it seems they would have to add a few inches to the height in order to accommodate the vent.

My only beef with this cab would be in regards to its' singular side mounted handle. As I said, it is an easy one hand carry, but a matching handle on the left side might help make it even more portable, and easier to lift. For its size, it definitely pumps out an impressive amount of volume and low frequency heft, but doesn't project or sound as authoritative as some other 210's. As a result, I might feel reluctant to use it as a standalone cab with a full band, which, to be fair, is the case with most single 210 setups for me.

All in all I think this is a very cool cab that fits some players needs perfectly. For its midget status, it has great low-end extension and adequate volume. It certainly is a departure from the standard 2x10 formula that many companies seem to use as a blueprint. If you're in the market for a compact 210 cabinet, the 102p definitely warrants a listen. It's wee size, and cool porting feature offer players a unique option, one that sets it apart from the modern day cornucopia of bass cab choices.

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