



April/May 2009

the absolute sound®



THE BIGGEST NEWS

IN AFFORDABLE ELECTRONICS AT CES WAS UNDOUBTEDLY THE INTRODUCTION OF NAD'S NEW CLASSIC SERIES, COMPRISING TWO INTEGRATED AMPLIFIERS, A STEREO RECEIVER, A PREAMPLIFIER AND POWER AMPLIFIER, AND TWO CD PLAYERS. THESE NEW MODELS APPEAR TO BE TECHNICALLY SUPERIOR TO THEIR PREDECESSORS, WHICH VIRTUALLY DEFINED THE CONCEPT OF HIGH VALUE IN BUDGET GEAR.

No new line of NAD electronics would be complete without an entry level integrated that sets the bar in price/performance ratio (the 3020 is the classic example). NAD's latest offering in this category is the C 326BEE at \$499.



As with previous NAD amplifiers, the C 326BEE has generous dynamic headroom, delivering up to 200W of IHF dynamic power into 2 ohms on musical transients. This replacement for the C 325BEE is upgraded in several respects, including the addition of NAD's patented "Distortion Canceling Circuit" in the output stage and the "BEE Clamp" in the power supply-features found in NAD's top models. A fully discrete circuit topology and toroidal transformer round out the C 326BEE.

The C 375BEE (\$1295) integrated shares circuitry from NAD's upscale Masters Series, as well as the "building block" concept recently introduced by NAD in its home-theater products. The C 375 can accept the PP phono module (\$200) as well as other boards for "future upgrades."

The C 375BEE delivers 150Wpc, and features NAD's PowerDrive circuit that optimizes the output

stage's performance for the particular loudspeaker. Other features include tone controls with a defeat switch, two preamp outputs with independent trim controls on each for bi-amping, and NAD's SR 8 remote control.

In separates, NAD showed the C 165BEE preamp (\$899) and C 275BEE power amplifier (\$1199).

The preamp uses NAD's Class A gain modules, tiny discrete circuits with short signal paths. The integral phonostage offers variable gain and loading (impedance and capacitance). The matching C 275BEE delivers 150Wpc, and can be bridged to deliver 400W as a monoblock.

The C 275BEE also incorporates most of NAD's best technologies found in the Masters Series of amplifiers.

Two new CD players round out the line. The C 565BEE (\$799) claims to offer nearly the same level of performance as NAD's Masters Series M5 CD player at half the price. The unit upsamples CD data to 192kHz for conversion by Wolfson DACs used in dual-differential mode. The player offers

USB and optical inputs for decoding other digital sources, and supports WMA and MP3 formats. CD text and metadata from MP3 files are displayed on the front panel along with time and track information. A rotary knob allows users to quickly scroll through large collections of music files. The entry-level C 545BEE (\$499) sports a new layout and upgraded components compared with its predecessor, the C 542. The unit will also play CD-R and CD-RW discs containing MP3 or WMA files. Despite the entry level price, the C 545BEE uses metal-film resistors and polypropylene capacitors in the analog output stage.

Finally, the C 725BEE stereo receiver (\$799) incorporates many of the parts and circuits of the C 375BEE integrated, and adds an AM/FM tuner that supports RDS. The 50Wpc unit offers seven line inputs as well as a mini-jack for connecting portable music players.

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