



There are those who prefer to hear the wind rushing by and those who wish to hear the pounding thunder of an aftermarket tuned exhaust. Then there are those who spend more time on the road and prefer to listen to the stereo. If you are one of the latter, then keep reading.

Hogtunes is an all-Canadian company that produces high quality audio components to enhance any 1998 and newer Harley-Davidson sound system. The company president, Mike 'Pez' Pesdirz, who has many years of design experience with home and auto audio systems, designed all Hogtunes components. "Many companies simply re-badge 'off the shelf' car stereo components for the motorcycle market but motorcycles are different than cars, therefore, they need special consideration. Motorcycles have to deal with wind noise, a speaker box (the fairing) that does not allow the bass out as a speaker box should, and usually handlebar paraphernalia like mirrors, master cylinder etc. are in the way," said Pesdirz. "Through the use of our own internal sound lab, we have developed these components specifically for the motorcycle that spends its life on the highway. Every piece of every product,

right down to the adhesives used to hold the speakers together is designed or specified by us."

I was invited to watch an install of Hogtunes components and ride the donor bike, a 2006 FLHTC Electra Glide Classic with a stock two-speaker system, at various stages of outfitting. There are a couple of different options to set your system up using Hogtunes products; both options are reviewed here.

First, I went for a ride with the original system as it comes from the factory. Not having anything to compare it to, I thought it sounded OK but, because I brought my own CD and knew the music, I found that the sound was a bit flat. Also, there was not a lot of difference between minimum and maximum levels of treble and bass. After a 20-minute ride it was back to the shop for the first stage of component installation.

Option #1

The first Hogtunes option is simply swapping the original front speakers for a pair of Hogtunes speakers. In this case, the 2 ohm front speakers for 2006 bikes were used. After removing the few screws that separate the two fairing halves, the speakers are exposed and

easily removed. The upgraded speakers are the same dimensions as the originals so they fit the original speaker holders perfectly. Mount the speakers to the inner fairing, plug in the wires and it's time to mount the front half of the fairing back on the bike. Even though the total installation was interspersed with phone calls and conversation about the product, the bike was out of the shop in 30 minutes. The installer estimated it might take 45 minutes for someone who has never had a fairing off before.

Time for a ride with the replacement Hogtunes front speakers. The result was an obvious improvement. The sound was fuller with more treble and bass and the volume didn't have to be as loud. Adjusting the treble and the bass from minimum to maximum resulted in a much more noticeable tonal range. The cost for these front Hogtunes speakers is \$120 (MSRP CDN).

Option #2

Upon my return to the shop, it was once again time to remove the fairing to install the next option in the Hogtunes line-up for 2-speaker bikes, the 'Ultrasound' system. The name 'Ultrasound' was chosen as it gives 'the sound of an Ultra' by adding the rear speakers to any 2-speaker bike with a factory radio and King Tour-Pak®. This kit includes an amplifier, two speakers, wire harness, wire ties, rear speaker pods with speaker grills, all mounting hardware and installation manual. Everything you need to do the job.

The speakers that were just installed were removed and set aside for the time being. The amplifier is mounted on top of the original stereo and plugged in. An important note here is that there

are no wires to splice; the supplied harness is 100% plug and play. Wires are of a length and plug configuration that make it impossible to plug components in wrong.

After the amplifier is installed, the speakers that come with the 'Ultrasound' kit are installed in the stock speaker holders and mounted to the inner fairing and wires connected. The supplied wiring harness is then run alongside the throttle cable under the fuel tank. The tank does not have to be removed but the seat does in order to facilitate the wire harness to run underneath and tie to the frame out of harms way. The main Hogtunes wire harness ends at the rear of the passenger seat in preparation for the rear speakers.

The next step is to mount the Hogtunes plastic injection moulded rear speaker pods. This is easy as the mounting holes are marked the size of a centre punch or 'Sharpie' marker to enable you to easily find the centre of the hole. Once the mounting holes are located, drill the holes to the proper size in the speaker pods and the Harley-Davidson Tour-Pak®, then mount the speaker pods to the Tour-Pak® with the supplied hardware. The speaker pods will accept the OEM stock front speakers or Hogtunes speakers. In this case, the previously removed Hogtunes speakers will be mounted in the rear pods. Connect the speaker wires to the newly installed wire harness and your new 4-speaker system is finished. "An important part of the Hogtunes wiring is a small plug that allows the Tour-Pak® to be removable, unlike the stock Harley wiring that is wired directly from the bike to the speakers," Pesdirz says, as he



plugs the speaker wires to the main harness. Total install time for the 4-speaker system, again with phone calls and system explanations, took about 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Once the seat was re-installed and the Tour Pak® lid was down, it was apparent that the leatherette on the rear pods perfectly matched the factory leatherette on the adjoining cushion areas. With the fairing re-mounted, it was time to ride again. This time the sound was a clear improvement from the two other rides with a crisper and fuller sounding tonal range using less volume.

“The ‘Ultrasound’ system was designed to have a wider mid-range sound and also utilizes a technology in the amplifier called ‘MaxxBass®’ which ‘tricks’ the ears to hear more bass without putting undue stress on the speakers or the amplifier”, Pesdirz told me after my return.

The Hogtunes ‘Ultrasound’ system uses less than 4.5 amps at full power, less power than it takes to operate a headlight, and delivers 24 watts (RMS) per channel. It was an important design consideration to give the most sound with the least current demand from the bike. To do this, the amplifier runs the front speakers only, and the radio’s built-in power is re-routed to the new rear speakers. Even with the Tour-Pak® off, the rider still gets the benefits of the amplifier running the front speakers.

The Hogtunes Ultrasound system costs \$599.95 (MSRP CDN) and can represent a significant savings over any other rear speaker kits on the market, especially if you do it yourself.

Sounds good to me!

Check out www.hogtunes.com or phone 705-719-6361.

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