

Dear Troels,

Just wanted to say THANK YOU for your work, passion and what you have brought (and keep bringing) to the DIY/Music lover's community. Your web-page with all that information, knowledge and impressions is simply priceless! Thank you so much for sharing it with us.

I've been studying your web-page for several years, as well as DIY-Audio's forum with all that Nelson Pass' and other's DIY projects. It was very interesting and I've learned A LOT. Your detailed and professional articles convinced me try some of them. My initial thought was to built SBA-861 PFCR Level 1 due to it's affordable price. But later I discovered that Discovery-861 Level 2 is noticeably cheaper than Level 1 and still has Superior Z caps for tweeter. So, some extra budget was earned and Discovery-861 was chosen.

This was my first loudspeaker of my first audio system, first DIY experience in speaker-building. Together with this project I was also building First Watt F6 power-amp clone. Hopefully, F6 was built successfully (it was also my first DIY power-amp built) and after that Discovery-861 was finished in several days. Not the smartest decision to do it so quick/intense, but I've been dreaming to built speakers for YEARS. So, once I got everything in place, I was completely into the built with almost no sleep =)

For the cabinet I ordered a CNC cut from 19mm MDF, as I am living in an apartment with no access to the table saw or router. Veneering with American oak (wood glue + iron method), linen oil and black matt paint on the front panel (to match matt finishing of the drivers). Everything was done for the first time. Veneering was a bit more difficult than I thought, but the final result worth it. Instructions on the article are so good that even 100% newbie like me didn't make any major mistake. Patience and double checking is the key to success.

I've been listening these speakers for a year and it is hard to describe how happy I am with Discovery-861. They sound AMAZING with my system.

Here are some impressions about the sound if somebody would be interested. Obviously, everybody would have different experience with different system and room. I got mine with Hana SL cartridge, Pioneer PL 30L II (upgraded internal wiring from Cardas), Lehmann Audio Black Cube SE 2 phono; DIY Wayne Colburne's WHAMMY Headphone amp/Preamp (diyaudiostore.com), First Watt F6 clone (diyaudiostore.com), DIY acoustic panels on the first reflection point. These speakers work really well with 25 Watts class A amp. No lack of power whatsoever.

Highs and mids are incredible. Precise, smooth, endless decay and clarity. Incredible accuracy and separation on vocals. Soundstage is HUGE if recording is so (in my case, it requires wider placing in the room). As you wrote in the article – it does everything from classical music to rock – I would add that even harder genres sound incredible due to the low distortion and as a result - great separation. What previously was a mess of sound, becomes clear reproduction of lots of instruments.

With the bass I was a bit confused at the beginning – I felt that there was not enough of deep bass. Placing speakers closer to the corners helped a bit. But later I discovered, that it depends on record itself. It seems to be, that my previous experience was with “too much bass” closed headphones and friend's systems, where every record had noticeably deep (but with no details) bass. It appeared that not every record is mixed (and cut) so. E.g. Dire Strait's Brother In Arms (UK OG LP) has plenty of deep bass and you can't say, that Discovery-861 doesn't have enough. On all my Pink Floyd's early or OG UK records, Nick Mason's drums and kick-drum are also deep and room-shaking where it has to sound so. But CCR's Cosmo's Factory (recent reissue) seems to have less deep bass, but I believe it was the choice during the production... Discovery-861 just show you what is in the mix, without making everything more “pleasant” to average speaker buyer by adding MORE bass. And we are so spoiled with that boomy speakers... Hopefully, I finally understand what “balanced bass” is, but it took some time.

Considering the sound quality, price of the kit and simple construction – it is a no-brainer if you are looking for DIY speaker design.

Once again, I am extremely happy with the result and the fact that I didn't screw up, doing it for the first time. Thanks for making this happiness possible. MagLev TT is next on the list, and hopefully TL III.

Wish you all the best,

Mykola, from Ukraine/Poland