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XTA GETS CLOSE AS YOU CAN GET TO THE BLUES

Despite many years as a hard rock icon, both in bands (including the seminal Thin Lizzy) and under his own name, it was in 1990, when Gary Moore released 'Still Got The Blues', that his career really hit a rich vein. June saw the Irish guitarist / vocalist and his band touring the UK to promote their latest album 'Close As You Can Get', with the blue of XTA front panels perfectly complementing the blues music!

Taking in 1200-3000 capacity venues, the tour's audio company Capital Sound provided a Martin Audio W8LC PA, driven by four XTA DP226s and a DP448 run digitally from the Yamaha PM5D FOH console. Front of House engineer Dave Wooster's own DP324 SiDD completed the system's complement of 'blues'.

"What has been working really well for me, as always, is the combination of the Martin speakers and the XTA processors," says Dave. "This is traditional rock'n'roll-style blues, which needs depth but with clarity and drive. I set the EQ settings through crossovers with the XTAs and it's driving the LCs really, really well. The bass has so much punch and depth to it."

Wooster specifically requested the DP448, because it gave the system so much flexibility, very important where you are touring in venues where the largest is more than twice the size of the smallest.

"The 448 gives me the option of sending two feeds to it - one for the flown system and one for the ground-stacked boxes. However, I can also group it down to a stereo feed and then matrix it from within the 448. This is a really powerful feature because it means some days I have got the option of running two separate EQ systems or, on others, one across the entire system. It makes it really flexible without having to re-patch cables every time we play a different theatre," Dave continues.

"With the 448, everything I need is 'in the box'. It gives me graphic and parametric EQs over everything, which makes changes very quick. On top of that, I have my own SiDD providing EQ across the whole stereo left and right system. So I have another level of show EQ there as well. If I can't fix any issues, like late temperature or room changes, with the five bands of parametrics on the SiDD, then I have obviously got my main set up wrong!" he adds, laughing.

Dave is using AudioCore and a WISER wireless network to control the XTA units, so the system is very quick and intuitive to tune.

"The integration of the wireless system with the 448 and the 226s means within 30 minutes the whole room can be sorted out," he says. "Then it's done for the day and I'm not spending hours running up and down!"

Further XTA DP224s are on the monitor system operated by Gareth Williams, controlling the Martin Audio LE700 wedges. "It's a very stripped down system," says Dave. "There's just the four guys in the band and they all use wedges."

He continues: "Overall it's a really good system which, through all the years I have been using it, has worked well every time. The compression and EQ are very useable and if you get a problem area - for example, sometimes when Gary's soloing the sound is inclined to overpower the rhythm section - the EQ just gently controls the sound without really tearing into it.

"It also shows off how good a guitar player Gary is. It's very important that he has a very defined guitar sound and this system really delivers that."

