

# ALM034 'Pamela's Pro Workout'

Operation Manual / Version 0.1 / Firmware 116

November 14, 2022

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# I INTRODUCTION

'Pamela's PRO Workout' is a compact programmable clocked modulation source for your Euro-rack modular system. It provides 8 highly editable outputs producing various control voltage signals correlated and synced to a BPM based master clock.

Each output can provide everything from simple clocked triggers, complex rhythmic waveforms, quantised melodic patterns to random chaos with direct and assignable CV control over numerous parameters. These features together with a quick and easy to use interface provide almost limitless synced modulation possibilities in a tiny space.

Building on the original 'Pamela's Workout' & 'Pamela's NEW Workout' the evolved 'PRO' Pam maintains the precursor's form factor and intuitive workflow but improves and adds many new features with upgraded hardware, more CV inputs, a new full colour hi res display and rewritten software adding many new enhancements like micro grid timings and cross output modulations.

Through optional expander modules more CV input and outputs can be added with support for external non euro equipment through Midi and Din Sync outputs.

Please enjoy your next generation PRO workout!



## 2 FEATURES

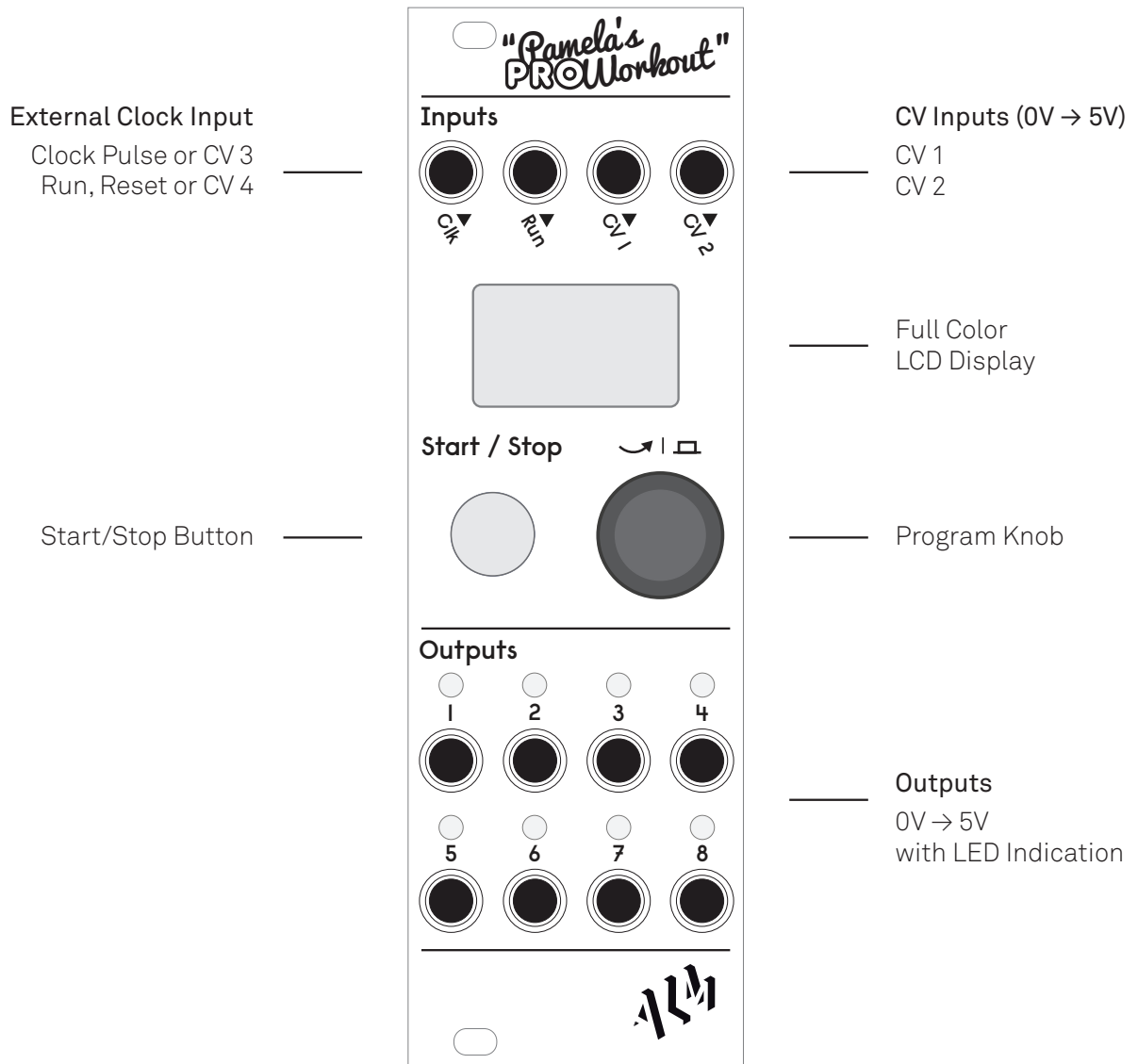
- BPM based clock with tempo rates 10-330BPM.
- Real time intuitive EASY and quick theme-able user interface with full colour high resolution display.
- 8 Clocked voltage outputs each with independent adjustable;
  - Clock divisors and multipliers from /16384 to x192 including various non-integer factors.
  - Numerous waveform types from staples to envelopes to ratchets to random.
  - waveform level, offset, phase and shaping control.
  - Extensive Euclidean, probability and beat based looping for pattern creation.
  - Cross output modulation with numerous operations.
  - Off grid 'Flex' micro timing for swing, human and bouncing ball type timing effects.
- All output parameters assignable up to x4 built in CV inputs with individual offset, attenuation and metering.
- Per output and group saving and loading to 64 banks.
- All settings remain between power cycles.
- Voltage and direct control of clock stop/start, reset and external syncing.
- Support for expander modules for additional CV in and outputs.
- USB-C for quick and easy 'drag and drop' firmware updates and memory bank backup via computer.
- Skiff friendly with reverse power protection.
- Made in England.

### 2.1 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

- **Size:** 8HP
- **Power:** +12v 60ma / -12v 10ma
- **Depth:** 32mm (approx with power header)
- **Outputs:** 0-5v buffered low impedance. 12 bit res. 3.8khz max update freq.
- **Inputs:** CV 0v-5v / Clock, Run - rising edge 700mV min.

### 3 CORE OPERATION

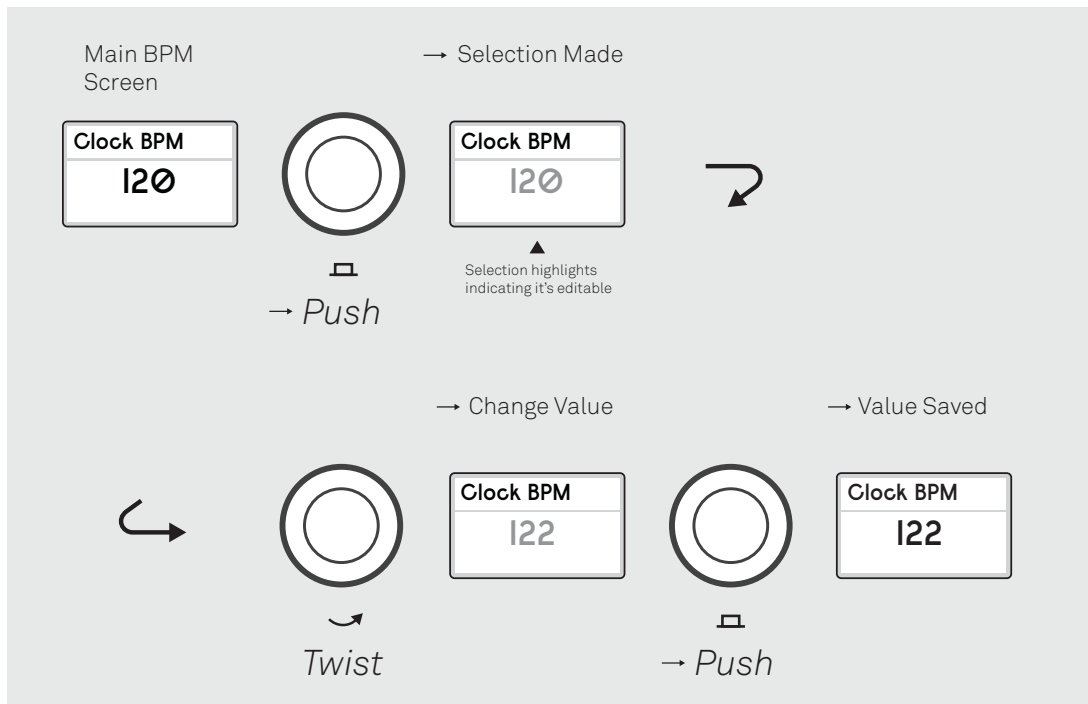
#### 3.1 Panel Layout



## 3.2 Getting Started

If you are already acquainted with the original Pamela then usage of the PRO workout will be very familiar but hopefully clearer and much more feature rich.

When initially powered on, Pamela's PRO Workout's display shows the current clock tempo setting in beats per minute (BPM). Clicking and then twisting the main blue program knob highlights and then adjusts this BPM value between its maximum and minimum values when turned. Clicking again deselects.



Clicking the 'Start / Stop' button starts the clock with this selected BPM tempo shown on the display. With the clock now running, synced voltage are sent through each of the output jacks, the level indicated by their relevant green LED's.

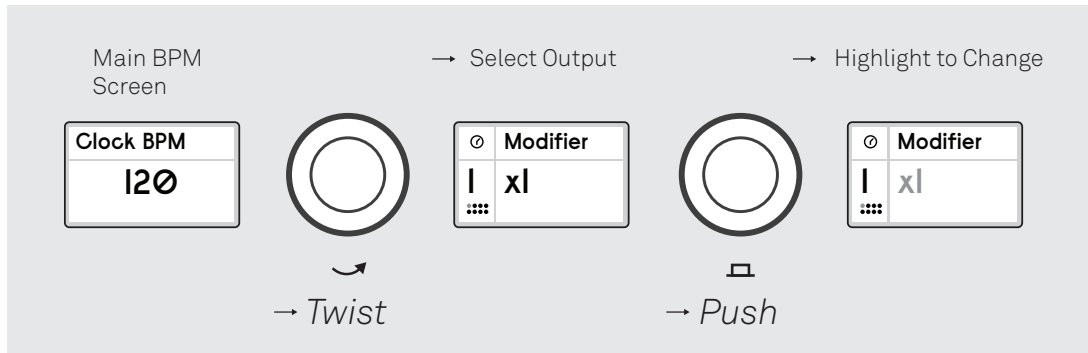
Clicking the 'Start / Stop' button again stops and resets the clock.

## 3.3 Basic Per Output Modifier Adjustment

The timing of each output can be modified to either divisors or multiples of the main clock tempo. For example, a modifier of 'x2' means there will be two steps or output pulses per beat. A modifier of '/2' means a pulse every other beat and a step size of two beats.

Outputs can also be set to stay permanently on or off, to just trigger once at clock start or stop, or be assigned to external control via a CV input – more on these 'utility' outputs later...

To adjust an output modifier from the BPM display (unselected) twisting the program knob will now cycle through each of the eight numbered output 'screens' before returning back to the main BPM screen.



Each output is represented by the output number (on left) together with the current set modifier value for that output. The modifier value is either a multiplier, a divider or a 'utility' value correlated to the set BPM clock speed.

Not all modifier values are integers - some are decimal values for triplet and dotted type timings.

As previously mentioned, there are also 4 special 'utility' types of modifier mainly for working with external devices; GATE - a held high voltage when playing useful for syncing 'run' signals, OFF - no output, START - a single initial start pulse and STOP - a single final pulse fired when the clock stops. The START and STOP pulses are useful for resetting any synced sequencers.

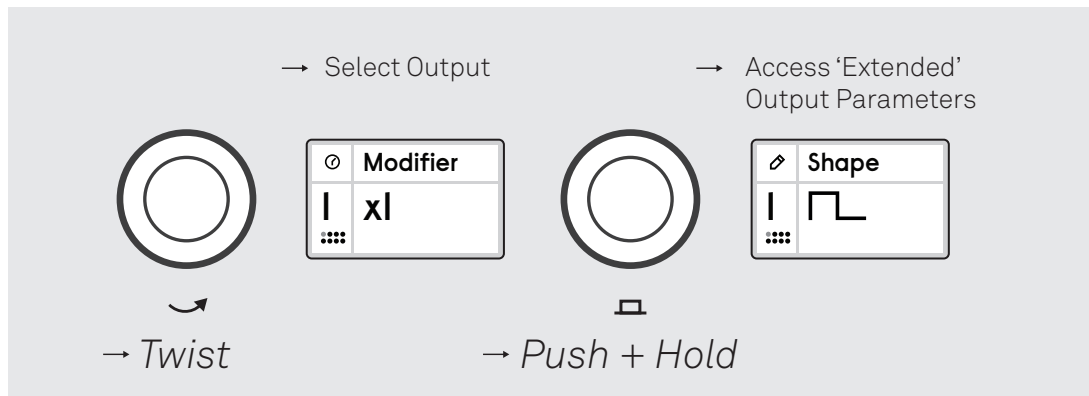
Clicking the program knob will highlight the selected modifier and turning will cycle through the available values. Clicking again will exit.

### 3.4 Extended Per Trigger Adjustment

Each output can be further adjusted through 'extended parameter settings' allowing for very complex clock synced modulations and rhythmic sequences. These extended parameters can be split into 3 categories; those which alter the output wave shape with respect to the modifier timing, those which algorithmically skip or adjust timing steps (allowing rhythmic patterns to be built) and then saving, loading and reset of an output parameter setup.

Note the extended parameters are not available for the special utility modifier types.

With an output screen selected, pushing and holding the program knob for just over 1 second will access the extended output parameter selection.



The various parameters can be cycled through and edited using the program knob just as when editing output modifiers. To exit back up to the main output modifier screen, click and hold the program knob again for just over 1 second.

Many output parameter values are in percentages of total 'step time'. The step time is derived from the selected trigger modifier. For example a divisor of /2 would have a step time of 2 beats, \*4 would be a quarter of a beat.

Any output parameter value can also be assigned to be CV controlled via any of the available CV inputs. See the Voltage control section for more info on this.

Certain parameters will only appear if a 'parent' is enabled. Please see the Output Parameter reference chapter below for info on each of the output parameters.

**TIP:** *The program knob hold time can be adjusted - see the SETTINGS chapter*



## 4 OUTPUT PARAMETER REFERENCE

### 4.1 Shape

Select between various output waveforms. Shaping of the waveforms can be made by altering the width and slew parameters (if available).

waveforms include;

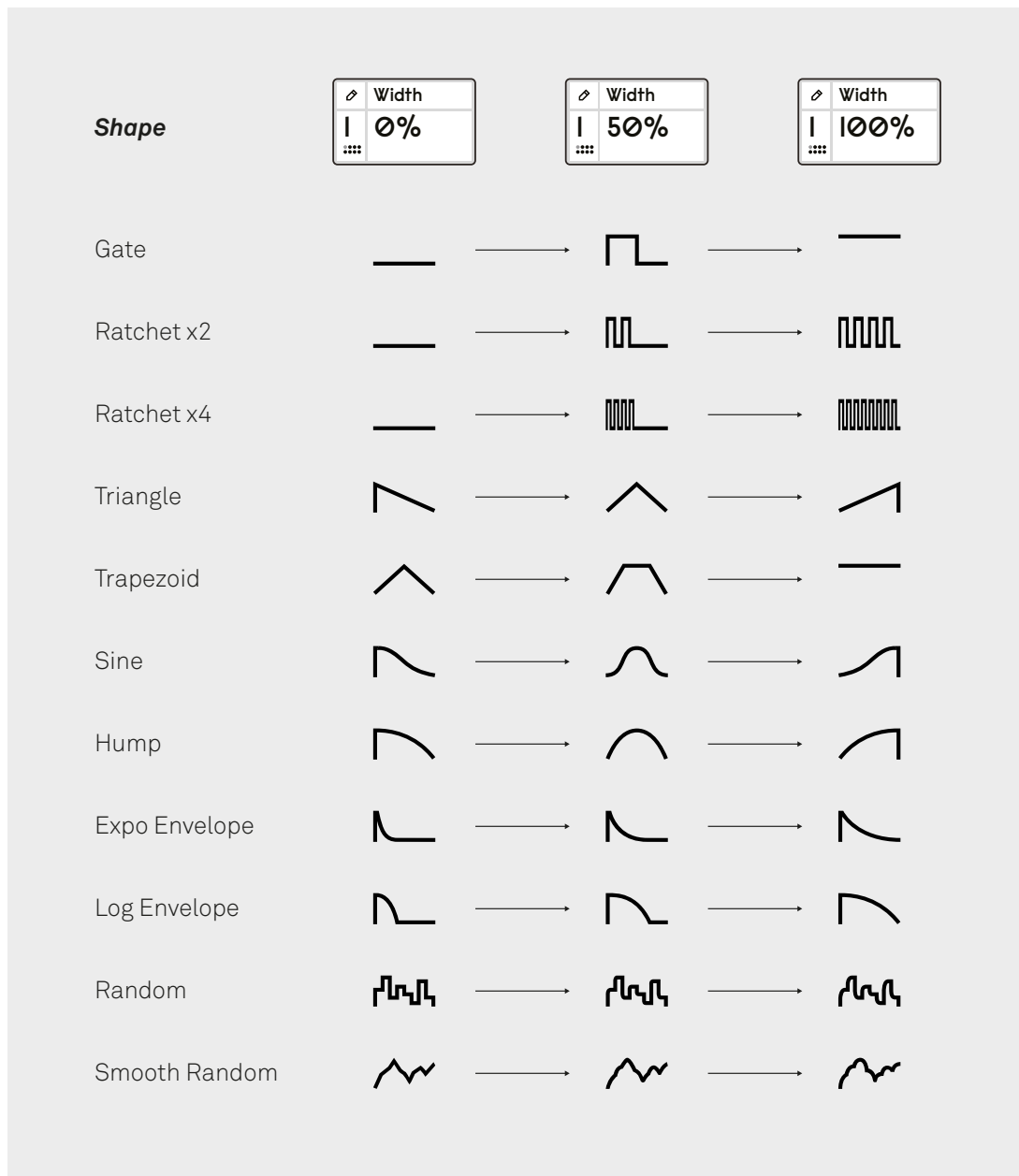
- **Gate/Pulse** - A Pulse/Square wave. Width controls pulse width.
- **Ratchet x2** - A Pulse wave split into quarters. Width makes more pulses available.
- **Ratchet x4** - A Pulse wave split into eighths. Width makes more pulses available.
- **Triangle** - A Triangle wave. Width controls slew (i.e making it more Saw/Envelope like).
- **Trapezoid** - A Triangle wave with a flat top. Width will effectively morph between a pulse to triangle.
- **Sine** - A Sine Wave. Width will 'lean' to either side.
- **Hump** - Half a sine wave / Parabola. Width will 'lean' waveform to either side.
- **Exp Envelope** - A exponential like envelope. Width controls time.
- **Log Envelope** - A logarithmic like envelope. Width controls time.
- **Classic Random** - A Sample & Hold style random wave. Slew smooths the edges of the wave.
- **Smooth Random** - A bouncy 'mario hills' musical kind of random.. Width controls roundness.

A full cycle of a waveform covers a single step. If a step is skipped no voltage will be output (excluding any set offset voltage) or held if the case of a random waveform.

Random waveforms can be looped across a number of beats using the *Loop* parameter. The actual loop (its random 'seed') can also be saved for later recall.

## 4.2 Width / Slew

The affect of width / slew differs depending on the selected shape. As shown below.



For random waveforms an additional slew parameter is made available. This smooths the edges of the random wave.

## 4.3 Level

This sets the overall maximum voltage level of the output as a percentage of 0-5V.

**TIP:** Each 20% is essentially 1 volt.

## 4.4 Offset

This sets the initial bias or offset from zero volts as a percentage of 0-5V.

**TIP:** *By setting an output's Level to 0, Offset can then be used as programmable constant voltage output useful for internal and external modulation and even preset storage.*

## 4.5 Phase

This allows for the phase shift on a waveform.

**TIP:** *Keep in mind phase wraps. Shifting a trigger pulse with a greater than 50% width by more than 50% can cause unexpected double triggering.*

## 4.6 Probability

This is the percentage likelihood a 'step' will occur or be skipped with no effective output.

Random patterns created using this function can be looped across beats (using the *Loop* parameter) and saved.

## 4.7 Euclidean Patterns

Euclidean rhythms are made from a simple algorithm which takes a numbers of steps and triggers (active steps) and produces a pattern based the on hits being as equidistant from each other as possible. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euclidean\\_rhythm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euclidean_rhythm) for more info.

Pamela is able to map Euclidean patterns to an output and to then skip steps when they are not triggered. This can used to build up rhythmic patterns. The *Loop* parameter can also be used to 'reset' non 4/4 patterns.

Four parameters are available for setting up a pattern.

The parameters are:

### 4.7.1 Steps

Sets the number of steps used for a full Euclidean pattern. Steps must be greater than zero for other parameters to appear.

### 4.7.2 Triggers

Sets the number of 'triggers' or 'hits' for Euclidean pattern generation. Must be more than zero and less than the number of steps to produce a pattern.

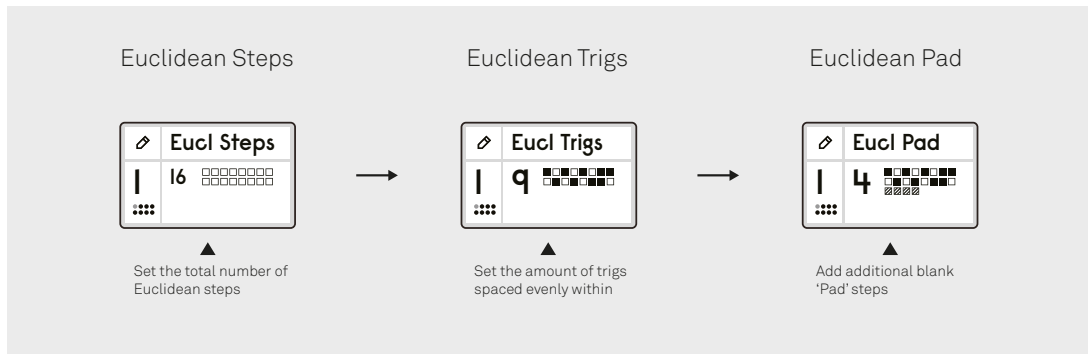
### 4.7.3 Rotate

Rotates the defined Euclidean pattern by the specified number of steps effectively changing the patterns start position.

#### 4.7.4 Pad

Adds empty padding steps to the end of the generated pattern. This can be useful to break up the regularity of an Euclidean pattern and group triggers to the begin, middle or end of a looped pattern.

Across all Euclidean parameters a visual grid shows the created pattern.



## 4.8 Loops

Specifies the number of actual beats (*not steps*) at which the output is effectively reset. Loops can be thought of as an inbuilt reset/rewind mechanism for random, flex ops and Euclidean as to build repeating patterns that are more musically structured.

When a Loop is active a couple of other parameters are made available;

### 4.8.1 Loop Nap

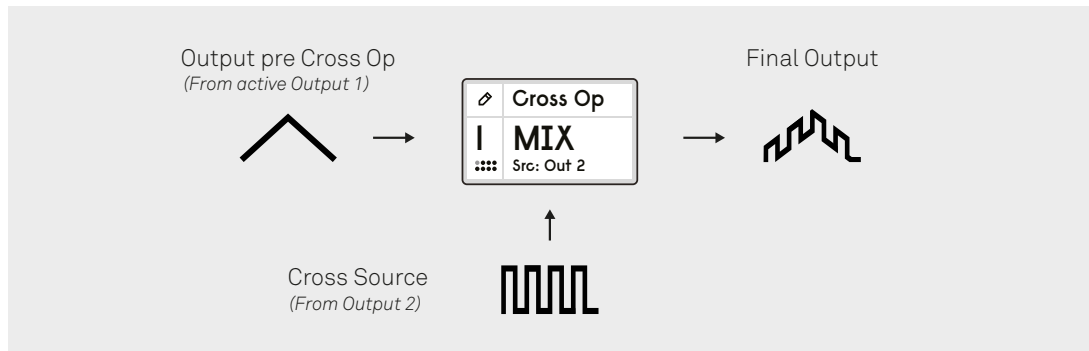
The number of complete loops to 'sleep' the output for - i.e shut off the output.

### 4.8.2 Loop Wake

The number of complete loops to run before napping (if any set).

## 4.9 Cross Operations

Cross operations allow for the value of the current selected active output to be influenced by the value of another output or CV input (source) dependant on a selected operation. This could be as simple as mixing two outputs together, a logic operation or something more complex like sample and hold or a parameter reset.



This greatly extends the original Pamela's NEW Workout logic operations (and also includes these).

To activate, the *CROSS OP* parameter is set to a selected operation other than 'None'. A *CROSS SRC* parameter then becomes available to select the cross modulation source.

It should be noted that when combining with a CV input, the sampled CV is of lower resolution than when combining with an actual output.

Cross operations happen prior to any quantisation.

The operations are described as follows;

### 4.9.1 MIX

Adds both source and active output value and halves total.

### 4.9.2 MASK

If the source output value is zero then the active output value is too. See 'NOT' for the inverse of this.

### 4.9.3 MULT

Multiplies the two output values and scales (i.e essentially a ring mod).

### 4.9.4 HOLD

If source output value is greater than zero the active output value is frozen with its last value.

#### **4.9.5 S&H**

A rising trigger on source will cause the current destination output value to be 'sampled' and held at that value until next trigger.

#### **4.9.6 ADD**

Adds both output values together, clips any overflows.

#### **4.9.7 SUB**

Subtracts both output values from one another, clip any overflows.

#### **4.9.8 OR**

Bit wise logic OR operation of both output values.

#### **4.9.9 XOR**

Bit wise logic XOR operation of both output values.

#### **4.9.10 AND**

Bit wise logic AND operation of both output values.

#### **4.9.11 NOT**

If source output value is greater than zero then active output value is zero.

#### **4.9.12 SEED**

A rising trigger will reset any random seeds on the active output.

### **4.10 FLEX Operations**

Flex operation can be thought of 'micro timings' or off grid blips which can lead to chaos at extremes.

As well as selecting the Flex operation, you can also select an amount percentage value which increases the intensity of the timing effect to extremes.

The RAMP & HUMP operations exponentially change timings for 'bouncing ball' type effects. A desired effect is likely also dependant on the initial output modifier setting and may well take some experimentation.

#### **4.10.1 HUMAN**

Introduces human like random timing errors.

(Previously known as 'Slop' on PNW.)

#### **4.10.2 SWING**

Delays each alternate step by the set amount for a swing or shuffle like timing effect.

#### **4.10.3 RAMP UP**

Gradually increases the step time causing any modulations to accelerate depending on the set amount.

You can use the *Loop* parameter to reset the timing factor back to its original timing.

#### **4.10.4 RAMP DOWN**

Gradually decreases the step time causing any modulations to de-accelerate depending on the set amount.

You can use the *Loop* parameter to reset the timing factor back to its original timing.

#### **4.10.5 HUMP**

Repeatedly increases and then decreases the step time based on the set Flex Amount. You can use *Loop* to reset the timing factor back to its original timing.

**TIP:** *Modulated flex operations on random waveforms and patterns can produce some very unique results*

### **4.11 Invert**

Inverts the final output value.

### **4.12 Quantiser**

Quantises the final output value as to fit in a selected musical scale or mode with the 1V/octave standard.

#### **4.12.1 Saving custom scales**

Its possible to save up to 3 different user scales which are saved across power cycles.

To do so; With selection mode active and a User scale selected, a long hold on the program knob will enter edit mode where a custom mode can be edited. Rotating and clicking the program knob will toggle notes used in the scale. Long holding the program knob again will exit.

### **4.13 Scope**

Displays a visual representation of the output waveform updated in real-time.

Selecting (i.e clicking the program knob) toggle a full screen view of the scope.

Turning the program knob zooms in and out.

## 4.14 Load, Save and Reset

Allows the loading and saving of an output and its parameters for later recall.

Reset allows you to reset all output parameters to their default simple 50% pulse like state or Reset the random 'seed'. Resetting the Seed will cause any loop Random parameters (i.e probably , waveform) to have new random values.

**TIP:** *Load/Save can also be used to 'copy/paste' an output to another.*

## 4.15 Key Shortcuts

There are a couple of key 'shortcuts' or combos which can be useful when editing parameters. They are:

- With an output parameter screen active, holding start/stop button down and turning the program knob will quickly move between the same parameter for different outputs.
- Holding start/stop and clicking the program knob will toggle mute the current active output.



## 5 EXTERNAL CV MODULATION

As well as direct user control, Pamela's clock and outputs can be assigned to external voltage control via 4 upper external signal inputs - 'Clk', 'Run', 'CV 1' & 'CV 2'. To use 'Clk' & 'Run' as CV inputs you must set them to expect CV (see Setting section below) otherwise they will appear as greyed out options.

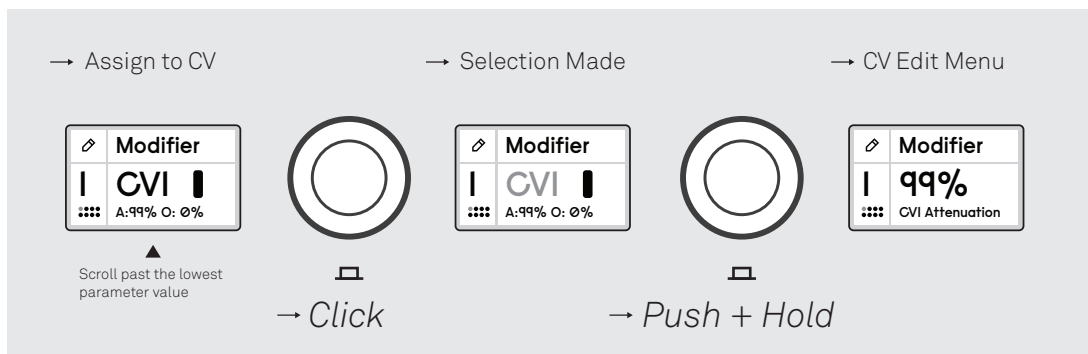
### 5.1 CV Assigning

An output modifier and many of its extended parameters can be externally voltage controlled by assigning its parameter value to any of the enabled CV inputs.

All CVs respond to voltages between 0 and 5v. Voltages input outside of this range are safe but will be ignored.

### 5.2 CV Attenuation and Offset

With a value assigned to a CV input, it can be further controlled by setting a per parameter attenuation and offset value to the incoming CV value. Pushing and holding the program knob whilst a parameter CV option is highlighted (in selection) will access sub screens to set these values as well as provide the ability to visually monitor the applied CV value.



The set attenuation value can be either positive or negative which in effect inverts the CV value (i.e just like an attenuverter)

Multiple parameters can be assigned to the same CV input and each parameter has its own attenuation and offset parameters. Multiple CVs can not be assigned to the same parameter.

### 5.3 Axon-1

The Axon-1 is an additional CV expander module available. It plugs into the rear of the module (See Appendix III) and supports 4 extra CV inputs. Only a single Axon is supported per Pam module.

## 6 SETTINGS

By long holding the program knob on the BPM screen this allow you to access various setting parameter screens. These include:

### 6.1 Input: Clk

Sets the 'Clk' input to either review a clocked pulse signal for external syncing or be an additional CV input.

#### 6.1.1 EXT Clock PPQN

Defines the expected 'Pulses Per Quarter Note' for external clocking. It is recommended you keep this value at the default 24.

### 6.2 Input: Run

Defined the action of the 'Run' Input. It can be set too;

- *RUN* expects a gate like signal which sets the clock running when high, stopped when low. Recommended you use this when syncing as gives Pam a chance to 'pre sync' - connect to the Din Sync or (converted) MIDI clock run signal.
- *RESET* Resets a running Pam to initial step when a trigger pulse is received. Will also cause Pam to automatically start and stop when an external clock is detected (at least 2 pulses before starting).
- *CV* Sets the 'Run' input as an additional CV input that can be assigned to various output parameters

### 6.3 UI Theme

Allows you to select a visual theme for the user interface.

### 6.4 Enc Hold Time

Sets the time for a 'held' program knob to be registered.

### 6.5 Load Bank

Loads an entire bank (all 8 outputs).

### 6.6 Save Bank

Saves an entire bank (all 8 outputs).

## 6.7 Reset All

Resets all outputs to their initial state.

## 7 EXTERNAL CLOCK SYNCING

Pamela can be driven by, and thus sync to, an external clock. This could be something simple like a square wave LFO or something slightly more complex like a Din Sync or convert MIDI clock signal from external hardware patched into the 'Clk' and run inputs. You can also control the tempo directly with just a voltage level.

For syncing to work, Pam needs to know the external clock's number of ticks (i.e clock pulses) to a quarter note (i.e beat) - this is known as the Pulses Per Quarter Note (PPQN) value. A mismatched PPQN value will cause Pam to report a very different BPM value to the external clock - usually much lower. 24 is the **recommended** PPQN value to sync Pam with. Lower PPQNs will not sync as accurately.

Pam also needs to know if it should start the clock automatically when an external clock signal is detected or wait for an external gate signal via the 'Run' input to indicate the clock state (high clock playing, low stopped). Its much better to use a Run signal as Pam can 'pre sync' and doesn't have to guess when a clock has stopped.

By default Pam is setup to follow a standard Din Sync like clock. A Din Sync clock is just a clock signal with a 24 PPQN and a simple gate (into Run) which is high when the clock is playing, low otherwise. It was used by various Roland drum machines and the like. Its really the only standard 'analogue' syncing protocol - thus the default for Pam and recommended way to sync.

### 7.1 Syncing tips

- **Always use a 24 PPQN clock and a Run signal** Pam does not work like a simple analogue style sequence where it simply advances a step on each incoming clock trigger, it has to further divide the clock the down so a high resolution clock is critical for this. This is what 24 PPQN provides. A 'RUN' signal allows for 'pre-syncing' and avoids need to guess when external clock has stopped.
- Modern MIDI clocking from a computer/hardware sequencer is generally fine assuming:
  - Your computer/device OS and DAW is up to date.
  - Your MIDI interface is from a reputable well supported brand.
  - You dedicate the physical MIDI line to only sending clock data. Sending note, program change and other MIDI data on the same line can soon saturate the available MIDI bandwidth and cause the clock to hiccup.
  - Your MIDI to 'analogue' clock module or utility supports outputting a Din Sync like clock. We strongly recommend our mmMidi (<https://busycircuits.com/alm023>) module for this will which will provide a Din Sync like signal out of the box with no configuration.

- You can also use an audio based clock from a DAW. This can work well but usually requires a more complex setup. Its also recommended you set up for a Din Sync style clock with 24 PPQN and using a run signal.
- The ALM-UT001 (<https://busycircuits.com/alm-ut001/>) adaptor cable can be used to breakout Din Sync signals from din cables (via older XoX style hardware for example) and patch into Pam.
- Two Pams can be synced together by patching one x24 pulse output to the clock input of another, and one output set to 'GATE' (or 'On') to the Run input. An expander can also be used to save outputs.
- Displayed BPMs between Pam and a synced device may slightly differ (+/- 1). This doesn't mean the two are out of sync. If it sounds in sync it is!
- Excessive jitter of the displayed BPM value could well indicate a slightly unstable external clock. This shouldn't matter syncing-wise however.

## 8 LIMITED WARRANTY

From the date of manufacture this device is guaranteed for a period of 2 years against any manufacturing or material defects. Any such defects will be repaired or replaced at the discretion of ALM. This does not apply to;

- Physical damage arising from mistreatment (i.e. dropping, submerging etc).
- Damage caused by incorrect power connections.
- Overexposure to heat or direct sunlight.
- Damage caused by inappropriate or misuse including physical 'modding'.
- Use of incorrect or non-official firmware

No responsibility is implied or accepted for harm to person or apparatus caused through operation of this product. By using this product you agree to these terms.

## 9 SUPPORT

For the latest news, additional info, downloads and firmware updates please visit the ALM website at <http://busycircuits.com> and follow @busycircuits on twitter and instagram.

Questions? please visit <http://busycircuits.com/support>.

## 10 APPENDIX

### 10.1 I. Factory Reset

Whilst powering, hold down the program knob and wait for the bar to fill. This will clear all saved data back to factory state.

### 10.2 II. Firmware Update and Data Backup

With the unit unpowered, connect a USB cable from the port at the left side of the PCB to a computer. Pam will then appear as a standard removable storage device on your computer. Copy a valid firmware file to the root directory to update. When complete, Pam will automatically eject once the update completed and is ready to use powered normally (any 'unmount' errors from the computer can be safely ignored).

To back up all outputs, again connect Pam to a computer (the same as performing a firmware update). Copy the 'PPWDATA.BAK' file from the PAM root directory to the desired back up location on your computers drive. A previous backup may be copied back to PAM to replace the existing output patterns stored in the memory.

**NOTE:** Mac OS Ventura may have an issue copying to the Pam drive and present an error when using the finder to do so. The workaround is to use 'Terminal' program and copy the file via typing in the follow command and pressing return.

```
rsync ~/Downloads/alm034-v116.fw /Volumes/PAM/
```

You may need to replace 'alm034-v116.fw' with the name of the firmware file you downloaded.

### 10.3 III Expander Modules

#### 10.3.1 PPEXP1 & PPEXP2

Both these expanders plug into the small vertical 5 pin connector on the rear of the module. They provide both Din sync and Midi Clock outputs as well as extra fixed pulse outputs for the PPEXP1.

The ALM-UT001 (<https://busycircuits.com/alm-ut001/>) adaptor cable can be used to convert Din Sync output to a Din plug.

The ALM-UT002 (<https://busycircuits.com/alm-ut002/>) (or similar) 3.5mm Stereo mini jack to Din adaptor can be used to break out the MIDI jack connections to a Din cable. The switch on the rear of the module should match the cable type (ALM is Type B).

Only a single connected PPEXP1 or PPEXP2 is supported. The PEXP1 & PEXP2 expanders for 'Pamela's NEW Workout' are not currently supported.

*We expect the new expanders to be available Dec/Jan*



### **10.3.2 AXON-1**

The Axon-1 plugs into the small horizontal 6 pin connector at rear of module marked 'EXPAND'. This will add 4 extra CV inputs.

Only a single connected AXON-1 supported.

## 10.4 IV Improvements over PNW

The PRO workout contains the following improvements over 'Pamela's NEW Workout'

- Large, colour and higher res display with much improved clearer theme-able UI.
- Faster CPU with dual core processing.
- Outputs all now 12 bit resolution (over 10 prior Bit).
- Higher resolution internal clock.
- Run and Clock inputs can now be reassigned an 2 extra CV inputs.
- New faster multipliers / bigger divisions.
- Supports Axon-1 expander for 4 extra CV inputs.
- Instant Saving and loading of output settings and banks.
- Clock does not need to be stopped for current parameters to be saved across power cycles.
- Improved Euclidean patterns - pattern display, 'padding' option.
- Improved quantiser with definable user scales.
- New waveforms - Ratchets, Slewled random, Hump, trapezoid, Log envelope.
- Loop snooze and wake options.
- Cross output operations combine output values in various ways (extending logic ops).
- Flex micro timing mode for swing, humanise, bouncing ball type 'off grid' timings.
- Invert option.
- Scope display for monitoring signals.
- Easier firmware updates via usb-c disk.
- Stored banks backup and restore via usb-c disk.
- Adjustable program knob hold time.