

Not TOO Technical Reports on Some SONY Products
by Tom Garcia, Box 15186, Tucson, Ariz. 85708

First, a few further words on the Sony CRF-230 to supplement the DXF report of 9/5. I have a catalog from Sony (in seven languages what less!) which calls the "World Zone" portable a "master-piece of radio technology". It is a 23 band receiver for the man who has everything, I guess, considering the price. Grant reported its US price as being \$695. At Sony at Tokyo I was quoted ¥198,000 and was told that the item first came out in 1968. At the current rate of exchange this works out to be \$550 US. Of course, you would have to pay Customs charges upon bringing it home. However, I have purchased a number of Sony items at my favorite "hole-in-the-wall" discount shop in Tokyo at an average of 23% off list, minimum. This makes the price work out to \$425, US. There is one small problem, the CRF-230 is very scarce, even in Japan you will have a hard time finding one to buy "off the shelf". Hope that this gives some of the discount price hunters a few ideas.

I have a Sony TR-1000 4-band portable which gives excellent results. It's much easier to carry around on trips than my Zenith Trans-Oceanic (now retired) and the price was much more reasonable. On top of that, it performs better. A few issues back, I noticed the comment, "For just a few dollars more you can buy the TFM-1000, with an FM band". True, but with the TFM (a look-alike to the TR) you sacrifice some of the SW frequencies as you only have 2 SW bands instead of 3. I prefer more SW bands, as FM is useless in the boom-dock places I visit. To further confuse you: The TR has 10 transistors and 4 diodes plus 1 thermistor while the TFM model has 14 transistors and 7 diodes plus 2 thermistors. Both feature RF amplification stages for high sensitivity.

An interesting Sony BC receiver of vest pocket size is the IC-200. This comes with a recharger for its built-in NICAD battery. The use of integrated circuits allows for the small size. List price in Japan is ¥7,900 (US \$22), discount price is US \$17. I haven't seen one for sale in the US yet, but it will be interesting to see how much they want for one. By the way, avoid this receiver's predecessor, the IC-100, it was a lemon.

The Sony TC-110 "Cassette-Corder" has several features which cause me to highly recommend it for use in the radio monitoring field. First, it has a built-in condenser microphone which is located behind a tiny grill at the front left corner of the 5½x9½ inch case. Due to this (and the fact that the unit operates on self contained batteries, it sits on my monitoring desk causing a minimum of clutter. Pickup quality of the built-in microphone is so good that I have not felt it is necessary to wire it directly to my receiver. As my monitoring desk contains quite a number of various receivers, it is quite handy to have a recorder which can be placed in front of any receiver, as required, without any dangling wires. Next, the Sony has an unique end of tape alarm which sounds a gong if you are using a Sony "Auto-Sensor" cassette. This recorder has all the extras, to include: Automatic level control, remote control, AC cord, optional rechargeable battery pack, and an optional switch controlled external microphone. CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

If you missed the 9/70 issue of CONSUMER REPORTS, check one out at your public library. Tested are 17 battery operated AM/FM radios. Only one was rated excellent on AM/AM selectivity. None rated higher than very good on AM sensitivity. The text does a very good job of explaining what to look for in a portable radio.

A number of bargains are available these days in 3 inch and 5 inch tape recorders. As far as sales go, these have had it. Any store still having these in stock must unload them, at a loss if need be. The cassette recorder has taken over. Watch Clsen catalogs as this company is the best source I've found. One word of caution, stick to well-known brands. Highly recommended: Panasonic products.

THE OLD RADIO SHOP-THE "ARB" FOR BCB

There are few receivers (within reason to the typical DXer) that are designed mainly for BCB. This one is, and it's downright cheap! It is a NAVY type CHV 46151 "Aircraft radio receiver" commonly called the ARB.

It covers 190-9050 KHZ in four bands. The first two cover the BCB. It is a six tube single conversion superhet, with a 135 kHz intermediate freq, for BCB. This gives very sharp selectivity on the BCB, and makes "splits" easily audible. Tuned HF amplifier.

Tube line up: 12SF7, RF amp. 12SA7 mixer, 12SF7's for IF amps, det, and 1st audio, 12A6 audio output. It has a big beautiful four gang tuning capacitor. (They don't make 'em like that any more) The receiver weighs 26.8 LBS, and measures (approx) 7 X 8 X 15½.

There is very little info about the ARB around, however schematics are available, and conversion is quite simple. It comes with an internal dial, and although it becomes a bit hard to read on the high end, (calib every 20 KC after 800, every 10 before) once the oscillator is set, and the set is warm, drift is minimal. It would also be easy to change a SW dial to cover the BCB better for tuning ease.

The receiver is available from: G & G Surplus, 45 Warren St. New York, N.Y. 10007. (Catalog: 25¢) It comes complete with tubes, for \$39.50. A wired AC power supply is \$8.95 extra, and there are remote tuning units, etc. available if desired. This set is very well shielded throughout, and I noticed no image problems here on a LW antenna, 30' high, and 50' long EW.

As it is, all that is needed is an audio gain, and an off-on switch, and an output jack for phones. Depending on how far you want to go, you can easily add: "S" meter, RF gain, BFO, 4 ohm speaker output, (it comes with 600 ohm output transformer) there are several good books describing further conversion.

For under \$50. this set would definitely make a good main receiver for many IRCA members, easily comparing with receivers seven or eight times the price (on BCB).

I offer this information with the hopes that some of the members that are on a tight budget (as I am) won't go and blow \$100. on some of the "glitter radios" available today. Most of them are gutless on the BCB, unless you go over \$400. If you want some DX instead of a status symbol, think seriously about an ARB. It's sure worth the effort! I will be happy to answer any questions as I have one here working quite well.

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Grant Manning