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DEFINITIVE TAPE DECKS



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SEPTEMBER 1995 £2.99 US\$7.50

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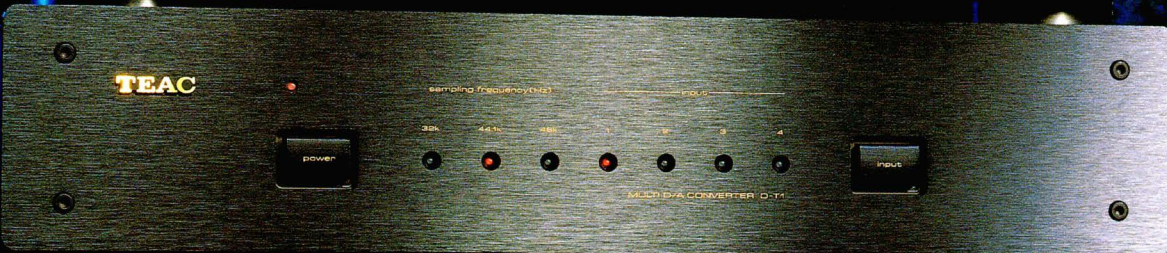
Everybody is aware of the huge success of the VRDS range of integrated CD Players and Transports. Now the VRDS players are complemented by a range of components which share the same outstanding build, engineering and sonic qualities

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* Bitstream Conversion is a trademark of the Philips Corporation.



Editor's Chair

Stan Vincent proudly presents the new-look, value-added *Hi-Fi Choice* – for a glossy coat, a long, active life and whiter whites.



This month Stan has been perching on the Funky Stacking Chair from FIT. 011 278 7227

Forget the N-reg Porsche, forget the Breitling watch, forget the Callaway golf club. All these pale into insignificance once you've seen the new, improved *Hi-Fi Choice*. We've been working night and day (well, day at least) to add even more refinement to the world's finest hi-fi magazine, and we hope you'll find it clearer, more complete and above all a supremely enjoyable read.

For starters, we've undertaken a subtle cosmetic redesign. The aim has been to achieve a more timeless, classic look that's also easy on the eye. Plus, we have revised three key sections of the magazine:

The Directory

We've gone back to the drawing board with our Directory and Buying Guide pages, with the aim being to integrate the two parts and make the whole section more usable and compact. As you'll see, there is now just a single listing of brands and products, with our review comments included where appropriate. In addition, if you're shopping with a specific sum of money in mind, we have prepared a product listing sorted by price — this is available via our FactsBack service (see page 103).

Help!

In the past few months we have been deluged by queries. (Many extra queries are coming in through our CompuServe e-mail address, especially from readers outside the UK.) To keep up with the increased flow, we have added more pages for queries, plus info on setting up systems and other practical hints. This month also sees the debut of a column by the Tweakmaster himself, Jimmy Hughes, who suggests that your speakers sound best if they face the wall!

Write On

We are also attracting record quantities of mail. Perhaps we are more loved or more hated than before, or maybe it's just that discerning hi-fi enthusiasts have decided that our letters page is the essential place to be seen letting off steam.

This Month's Big Test

This month sees our second round-up of cassette decks this year. I still maintain that for most people, cassette is the most cost-effective and versatile home recording system one can buy.

Having said that, however, the domestic user has never been better served by digital machines. As we report exclusively in our news pages this month, Pioneer is launching a 'domestically-priced' CD recorder this autumn. Pioneer also has its 96kHz-sampling DAT system in the amazingly sexy new *D-C88* portable (£2,000) — this product opens up the opportunity for home and semi-pro users to make live recordings of true audiophile quality.

Sony is continuing to revise and improve its MiniDisc technology, although the latter's greatest success has been as a high-tech jingle-player for radio broadcasts. If MD became a widely-adopted computer data storage medium, it might stand a greater chance of success with the general public.

And then there's Philips, lumbering on with Digital Compact Cassette (DCC). DCC needed to succeed as a mass-market consumer format, but on the current evidence it is withering on the vine.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF HI-FI CHOICE

- ▶ Hi-Fi Choice has been testing hi-fi since 1975.
- ▶ Collectively, our reviewers and columnists notch up over a century of listening to hi-fi.
- ▶ Our hi-fi group tests are the most thorough in the business.
- ▶ Our listening tests are conducted under strict blind conditions, using an experienced panel drawn from the hi-fi industry.
- ▶ No other hi-fi magazine in the world regularly performs blind listening tests.
- ▶ We assess every facet of a product's performance — sound, build and measurement.
- ▶ We can predict how individual components will perform in a multitude of systems.
- ▶ Best Buy products are of significantly greater value than alternatives in the same price band.
- ▶ Recommended products offer a superb performance, if not sufficiently remarkable to earn a Best Buy citation.
- ▶ We continue to look to the future of audio and the fusion of images and sound.



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SEE PAGE 51 FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

The Trichord Debate has begun

A flurry of postal opinion has resulted from last month's investigation into the Trichord *Clock 2* CD player upgrade. We're collating all the correspondence in order to stage a mass printed debate in next month's issue, so reserve your copy now.

In addition, we have heard that Trichord Research is now working on an optional power supply for the *Clock 2* mod, which addresses one of the technical points made by Paul Miller in last month's issue.

The Best Choice For Value

You might be interested to learn that *Hi-Fi Choice* has not had a significant price increase for more than ten years. Admittedly, we nudged the price from £2.95 to £2.99 with the June issue this year, to help offset the vastly-increasing cost of paper. Before that, however, the last price increase occurred with issue 40, way back in the summer of 1985, when the newsstand price increased from £2.50 to £2.95. How many other magazines can make a similar claim, I wonder? ▲

HI-FI CHOICE

The small print about the stuff we do...

● **HELP! (QUERIES) AND WRITE ON!** (letters to the Editor) items are accepted by letter only to the fax number, e-mail or postal addresses given below. We regret that we are unable to answer queries over the 'phone.

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Published by Dennis Publishing Ltd, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ ☎
Company registered in England, n° 1138891. Entire contents of this issue
© 1995 Felden Productions. ISSN 0955 111 5. ☎



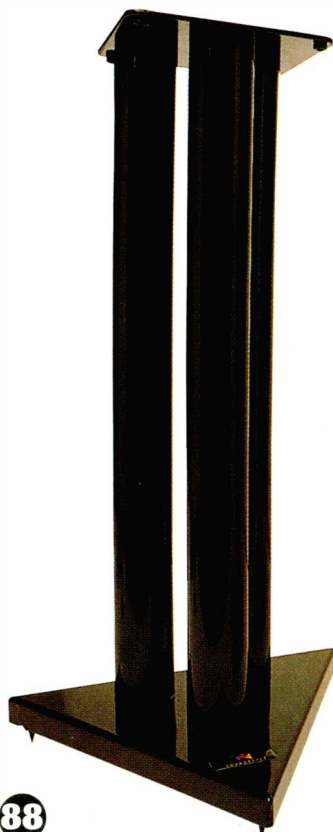
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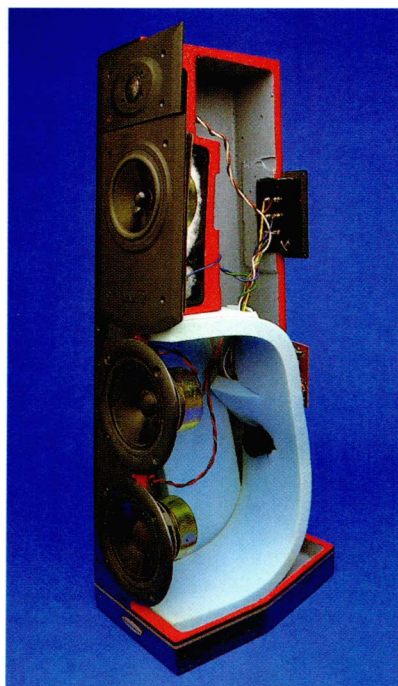
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25
years
in the
service
of
sound

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SP9/I



SP7/I



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For further information on the range of Spendor loudspeaker systems, contact our UK distributor:
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Kent BR2 9NT
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Update

BE YOUR OWN JUDGE AND JURY AND SEE IF YOU CAN FOLLOW THE CASE FOR THE DEFENCE IN OUR OJ-FREE NEWSFLASH.

CD-Recordable for all!

Recordable CD has finally arrived. Pioneer's new *PDR-05* will be capable of playing conventional audio CDs — with a sound quality very close to the new *PD-S904* (below) — but it also offers the user the option to record up to 60 minutes onto special blank CDs.

Professional CD-R hardware has been around for some time, but its ability to produce up to 74 minutes of perfect untraceable CD copy meant that a serious piracy problem could occur. To overcome this, consumer discs will be of shorter length and the hardware fitted with RID (Recording Identification). Another measure is serial copy management, which prevents 'daisy chained' multiple copies.

Pioneer's first British domestic CD-R machine is likely to be priced "under £1,500", according to John Bamford,



The piracy problem has been overcome and CD-R is here!

Pioneer's Product Information Manager. At the time of writing, only Pioneer produces blank 60-minute CD-Rs, expected to cost under £15. The *PDR-05* should reach shops in November.

Pioneer has also unleashed a plethora of ground-breaking hi-fi. This season's range will include the £399 *PD-S904* CD player with a reworked

version of Legato Link called Legato Link Conversion S. Also in the CD market are three new sub-£200 players, including the *PD-S504* with Stable Platter and Legato Link. Three new cassette decks are Dolby S-equipped, and there will be two new trios of RDS-equipped tuners and remote-controlled amps, including the audiophile-led £200 *A-300R*.

The 96kHz sampling DAT system introduced in the *D-07* and *D-05* players is continued with a 'transportable' *D-C88* DAT machine. The £2,000 *D-C88* comes complete with a battery pack and AC power supply/charger. Pioneer also introduces a £1,000 integrated amp-of-death. The *A-07* pushes out 80 Watts per channel, sports symmetrical internal design and has a gain selector to aid the S/N ratio at low frequencies.

DAC-Man forever



DAC-MAN sports the popular CD8412 input receiver.

The *DAC-MAN* is Audio Alchemy's latest and most affordable DA converter. Designed to partner low to mid priced CD players and Laserdisc machines, its input circuits automatically switch between coaxial or Toslink connections.

It uses Crystal Semiconductor chips and includes a high current class A line driver for compatibility with all preamps. Tara Labs captive analogue cables provide the connections, and the basic external power supply can be upgraded with Audio Alchemy's *Power Station One, Two or Three*.

The *DAC-MAN* sells for £149.95 but is also available with a *Kontak Link 505* digital cable at £194.90. ☎ (01494) 441736

Jubilee headphones

As part of its fiftieth anniversary celebrations, Sennheiser has introduced the *HD-414 Classic*, a limited edition, modernised version of what it claims is the world's best-selling headphone.

The *Classic* offers the same styling as the 1968 original but incorporates selected samples of the

company's latest drive units and Dr Sennheiser's signature printed on the headband. Selling for £49.95, the lightweight, open-back *Classic* features copper clad alloy wire coils, Neodymium magnets, OFC Kevlar cables and replaceable, washable ear pads.

☎ (01628) 850811



Celebrate with Sennheiser!

New and improved from Denon

Denon's new *DCD-625* comes as a direct replacement for the *DCD-615*, bringing with it circuit tweaks and revised ergonomic styling. The £199.99 player sticks with multi-bit technology, using 18-bit Burr Brown dual DACs and Denon's 20-bit, eight times oversampling Lambda filters. The new circuitry promises a 'fast, dynamic sound with a very low noise floor and excellent low-level linearity'.

The *DCD-625* also features improvements to its transport section. There's a new digital servo control for the laser assembly, which provides faster response and more accurate tracking, along with Denon's latest floating suspension to isolate the pick-up and further promote secure tracking. This remote control player also offers a variable output headphone jack, and a coaxial digital output. ☎ (01753) 888447

In brief

The Wilson Benesch demonstration at this year's Ramada show will include the world's first carbon-fibre bodied cartridge and the *Stage One* head amplifier. In keeping with the composite theme, the company will also be displaying Chris Boardman's prototype *Lotus* racing bike and an *F1* nose cone. ☎ (0114) 2852656

Local BADA dealers will be supporting customers affected by the demise of Active Audio and Eastbourne Audio. For details call the BADA hot-line. ☎ (0171) 226 4044

The £1,799 Carver *AV806x* claims to be one of the largest THX amplifiers available. It contains six discrete mono amplifiers each capable of 133Watts into eight Ohms. ☎ (01865) 516800



Owners of *DPA Little Bit 2* or *Bigger Bit* DACs can have them factory upgraded to *Enlightenment* DAC status for £400. Contact your dealer for details and a demo. ☎ (01222) 795621

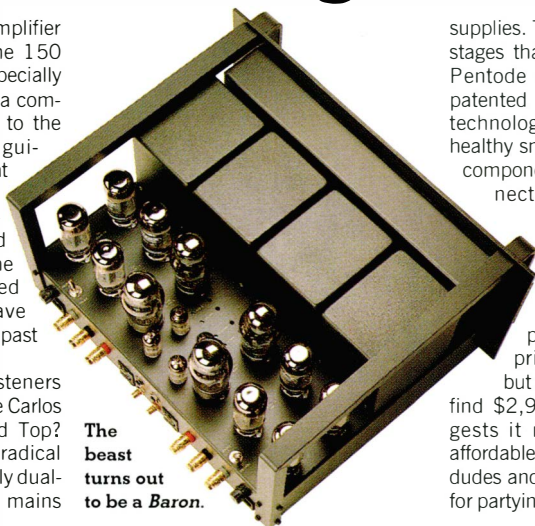
KEF Audio has gone on-line with CompuServe's Consumer Electronics forum. New KEF buyers get a free month's subscription to sample the service. ☎ (01622) 672261 or e-mail 76702.2600@compuserve.com

Glasgow's specialist hi-fi dealer, James Kerr & Co has moved to larger premises at 145 Bath Street, Glasgow. ☎ (0141) 226 5711

Integrated boogie monster

A valve powered integrated amplifier that delivers a totally awesome 150 Watts? Sounds bogus, dude. Especially when it's a hi-fi amplifier from a company best known for catering to the needs of grunt-hungry rock guitarists. However, that's just what the *Baron Reference* from Mesa Engineering is — a one-box, high powered, bottle-fed audiophile integrated from the company whose hot-rodded *Boogie* guitar amplifiers have turned it into a legend over the past quarter-century.

Can Mesa do for home listeners what it did for guitar players like Carlos Santana and Messrs Z, Z and Top? Well, it's gonna try with this radical dual-mono beast, which is totally dual-mono right down to separate mains



The beast turns out to be a *Baron*.

supplies. The *Baron* comes with power stages that can be switched between Pentode and Triode operation, and patented Simul-Class™ power supply technology. It's also stocked with a healthy smattering of audiophile grade components, including Tiffany connectors and silver plated tube sockets, as well as a valve line-up featuring four 12AX7s, four 6550s and eight 5881s.

At the time of going to press, we didn't have a UK price for this way-cool monster, but US citizens will only have to find \$2,995 to buy one, which suggests it might even be reasonably affordable over here. Most excellent for dudes and dudettes with a predilection for partying on. ☎ 001 707 778 6565



Angelic sounds ahoy with Heybrook's *Heylo*.

No missing links



Darwin would be proud — *Figaro* evolves!

Keswick Audio Research's *Figaro* loudspeaker has done the Darwinian thing and now emerges as the *Figaro Evolution*. The revised model is slightly more sensitive than its predecessor at 87dB, and is said to enjoy greater bass extension and improved imaging. Its cabinet is now made from a 25mm thick HDF material lined with a bitumen and lead damping compound. Externally it sports superior polyester piano lacquer finishes over cherry, American black walnut and Purpleheart veneers. The price in the UK is set at £899.

Other new KAR products include the £1,199 *Alto Evolution*, a two-box woofer system containing two ten-inch drivers. This is designed to complement the compact *Figaro*, taking its response down to 25Hz, while acting as a stand for it. There's also a conventional stand available for the *Figaro*, the £249 *Colonna*: a 24-inch tall, dual column support with matching piano finished trim. ☎ (01977) 671823

Cop a load of this

Swedish high-end manufacturer Copland has added to its range of valve and hybrid amplifiers. The new products reflect improvements in valve and transformer manufacture in recent years. The new £1,150 *CSA 303* preamp uses solid-state devices for a more up-beat sound, but it retains valve-like characteristics as it uses Sovtek 6922 valves in both the RIAA and line stages.

The redesigned £1,349 *CTA 301 MkII* preamplifier is an all-valve design and a radical departure from the original Copland preamp, although it shares the same slimline design. It features Sovtek 6922 double triodes in place of the lower-spec E82 CCs used in the *Mk I* preamp, and Sovtek 12 AX7s in place of the E 83 CCs. This all conspires to produce a preamp with lower noise levels, lower microphony and a lower output impedance. Owners of *Mk I* preamps can get them upgraded to *MkII* status.

Finally, the all-new £2,099 *CTA 505*

power amplifier delivers 67 Watts per channel in pentode mode and 35 Watts per channel in triode mode. Inside, higher spec components and valves abound. It also uses seven power supplies, all regulated and decoupled to increase the life expectancy of the 12 AX7 valves in the input and differential stages and the four 6550 tetrodes in the output stage. ☎ (0181) 947 5047



Angel hear

Punning its way into the in-tray comes the *Heylo* from Heybrook. Described as looking and sounding angelic, this is a mini floor-stander whose 710mm height leaves it some way short of reaching heaven.

Finished in a rosewood coloured veneer with rounded baffle edges echoing the shape of the grilles, the reflex-ported *Heylo* uses a 165mm, polymer chassis bass driver and a 25mm fabric dome tweeter. The crossover is bi-wireable and hard-wired with audiophile grade components.

An 89dB sensitivity rating and an eight Ohm nominal impedance makes it easy to drive — amplifiers between 25 and 75 Watts are recommended — while boundary placement and an integral stand make it easy to accommodate. A price of £389 also makes it quite easy to afford.

☎ (01752) 731313

Ojan! It's upgradable!

Two of the *Hi-Fi Choice* team's favourite words, after 'beer' and 'pay-rise', are 'upgradable' and 'retro-fittable', simply because it's a rare delight to be able to upgrade a hi-fi component rather than having to replace it to achieve a performance lift. These terms, however, rarely apply to loudspeakers.

Roksan's £795, floor-standing *Ojan 3* is an exception, because it offers owners a selection of after-market improvements. As it shares the same cabinet as its higher specification stable-mate,

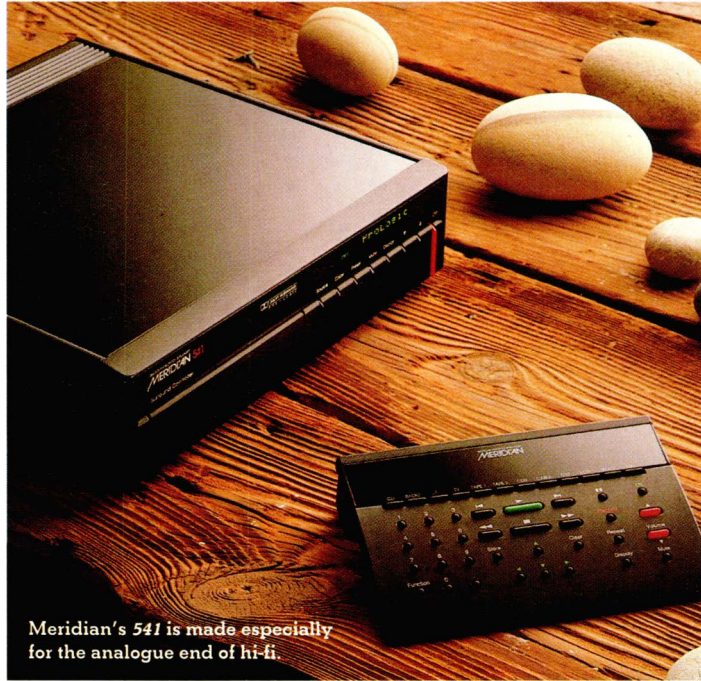
the £1,195 *Ojan 3X*, it's a simple job to convert one to the other. Roksan now supplies the retrofittable 3X driver kit for around £500. The upgrade promises greater bass extension and a purer mid-range. There's also a £99 stand for this squat floor-stander, which raises the soundstage and tightens the bass usefully when the speaker is used in a small room or on a suspended floor.

However, if you're after greatly enhanced bass you can add the £795 *Ojan 3S* subwoofer. This additional pair of enclosures, which fit beneath the *Ojan* cabinets, convert the two-way design into a true three-way system. ☎ (01895) 436384

Go *Ojan* for after-market improvements.



Look mum, no hands!



Meridian's 541 is made especially for the analogue end of hi-fi.

Meridian's multi-speaker systems policy gets a further boost from the new 541 surround controller. Unlike the company's other processor, the fully digital 565, reviewed in *Hi-Fi Choice* issue 140, the 541 is an analogue device intended for regular analogue systems. Along with its surround sound processing it also acts as a full-system remote control pre-amplifier with a wealth of audio and video inputs, including an optional MM or MC phono module.

Said to be particularly suited to upgrading existing analogue systems from two to three or five-loudspeaker stereo and film sound, the 541 also has full Meridian two and three-room distributed sound capability. Signal processing modes include Stereo, Music, Trifield, Mono, Dolby Pro Logic and Cinema.

The £950 unit — whose price includes a Meridian System Remote, but not a phono module — offers on-screen displays of user control settings and help to guide buyers through the set-up and calibration procedures. ☎ (01480) 52144

In brief

If some dodgy character offers you an Audio Research LS5 pre-amplifier with the serial number 43266001, or a PH2 with the number SM42458002, the rightful owner would like to hear about it. Both units were stolen from ProAc. ☎ (0181) 207 1150

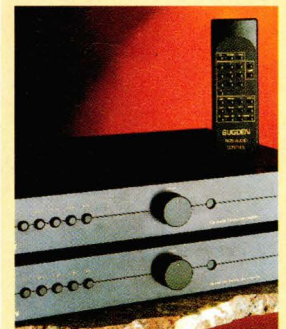
Cost-cutting cinematic combinations from Celestion include the *Little 1* and *CSC* for £199, *MP1* and *Centre 2* for £229, *MP1*, *Little 1* and *Centre 2* for £399, and the *MP1* and *CSW* for £399. ☎ (01473) 322222

Aanvil audio has become the world-wide distributor for the Tripos range of audio support furniture. ☎ (01359) 240687

If you've already started filling in your 1996 diary, here's another date: The Great British Hi-Fi Show will take place at the Palace Hotel, Buxton on 13 and 14 April. Admission will be free. ☎ (01246) 200211

The NHT *Model 2.5* is a new metre-tall 'tower' loudspeaker incorporating a side-loaded woofer that extends the three-way's response down to 33Hz. Available only in high gloss black laminate finish, it costs £929. ☎ (01865) 516800

Aiwa has an entry-level Dolby Pro Logic mini system in the £499.99 *NSX-V90*, that offers 60Watts up front with 18Watts for the centre and rear channel speakers. The package includes the system, five speakers and cables. ☎ (0181) 897 7000



J.E. Sugden has two new five-input, line-level amplifiers to partner its *Optima* CD player. The £325 *Optima 80* and £475 *Optima 140* deliver 40W and 70W per channel respectively. The £399 *Optima 80R* and £549 *Optima 140R* offer the same specification plus remote volume control. ☎ (01924) 404088

NAD's widget-free zone

The £269.95 NAD 614 may be the only cassette deck in its price range to reproduce a recording of a wide-range CD faithfully without dulling its impact, say its makers. Rather than adorn the player with convenience features such as auto-reverse and search, NAD has concentrated on areas that provide aural benefits.

Styled in NAD's traditional no-frills fashion, the 614 is a two-motor, two-head machine equipped with Dolby B and C noise reduction and HX-Pro to improve high frequency response. NAD's proprietary Play

Trim circuitry provides high frequency tailoring before the noise reduction goes to work, ensuring compatibility with tapes not recorded on the 614. The deck also offers NAD's CAR (Compensated Automotive Reproduction) circuitry to optimise tapes made for use in car or portable players.

In order to optimise recordings, the 614 has a fine bias control, situated on the rear panel. High resolution record level meters, an electronic tape counter, and remote control facilities complete the feature count. ☎ (0181) 343 3240

With its non-trendy facia, the NAD 614 is committed to serious cassette recording.



The secret's in the funnel-shaped flow guides...

Polk music

Polk has deployed Powerport™ technology to give its new Reference Theatre floor-standers deeper bass. This system uses a new type of compact port that can handle large volumes of air flow without generating undue turbulence and noise. The secret, apparently, is in the funnel shaped flow guides that control the air's passage through the venting orifice.

The four models in the range are: the £379 *RT8*, £479 *RT10*, £579 *RT12* and £679 *RT16*. All are magnetically shielded, high efficiency designs with sensitivity ratings between 89 and 90dB. They're equipped with Polk's Dynamic Balance™ drive units, and they come clad in black or walnut vinyl finishes. ☎ (01727) 827311

Fine Artemis and design

Hailed as a totally new concept in pre-amplifier design, Sumo's £1,574 *Artemis* is a non-feedback amplifier using microprocessor-controlled attenuators built onto military specification circuit boards. A proprietary RISC computer program allows relay stepped attenuators to control volume level with, it's claimed, no degradation of the signal to noise ratio, regardless of playback level. This remote controlled American

pre-amplifier comes as a two-box system in which the control circuits and power supplies occupy separate cases. Available upgrades include a fully discrete MM/MC phono module for £209, the Sumo Hybrid DAC module for £524, and the Ultra High Energy power supply at £419. Sumo's UK distributor, Audusa, also handles Electrostatic Research loudspeakers and LAT cables. ☎ (0181) 942 6241



INTRODUCING THE **IMPACT** SERIES OF LOUDSPEAKERS

Celestion's latest loudspeakers are definitely worth a closer look. Built around Celestion's new bass driver, they give you traditional Celestion fidelity with truly awesome bass power. For everyone who wants to unleash the power of Wagner, or make the most of high-volume rock & roll, these performers score an effortless 101%. It's the same story on the promotional front. Advertisements for the Impact series will soon be making their presence felt in the Hi-Fi and music press. Add a high-decibel PR launch to the mix, and the omens are unmistakable. Sales targets are about to be shattered.



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Leave all your power management to the *TX-SV525R* from Onkyo.

Attack, attack, attack!

The Onkyo Club, in its guise as both manufacturer and distributor, launches a dual pronged attack on home cinema this month. First, it has released the Onkyo *TX-SV525R* Dolby Pro-Logic AV receiver. This £549.95 unit provides 80Watts per channel into the front three channels and 20Watts into the rears. It incorporates Dolby Pro-Logic and four other surround modes, Motorola DSP circuitry, heavy-duty power sup-

plies and an intelligent power management feature that turns on the whole system with your television. The *TX-SV525R* also offers multi-room capability and RDS facilities within its tuner section.

The second introduction is a dedicated surround speaker package from Dali. The £799.95 *SL7* is a stainless steel over MDF tower for use in front left and right positions. Its compact cab-

inet includes three bass/mid-range drivers and a 25mm tweeter all integrated through a hard-wired crossover. The £219.95 *SC5* also uses three small bass/mid-range units and a tweeter, and has been specifically tuned to account for its proximity to the television screen. At the rear are the £219.95 *SS5* surround speakers, whose asymmetric cabinets come with dedicated wall brackets. ☎ (0181) 343 2082

Yours eternally



The *Series 7* may outlive both its maker and its owner.

Doomily stating that he can't guarantee he'll be alive in thirty years' time to provide service facilities, Simon Yorke says his reliable, foolproof and user-friendly *Series 7* professional transcription turntable has been designed to last forever and easily outlive its owner.

A descendant of the *Series 4* and *5* models, the £3,500 *Series 7* comes with a choice of motor drive options, including a standard three-speed supply (33, 45 and 78 rpm) and a professional DC motor system offering 15 to 130 rpm, controllable manually or through an RS232 computer interface.

The turntable chassis is a 185mm stainless steel disc. The deck's 11kg stainless steel platter rotates on hardened silver tool steel shaft in an aerospace specified thrust bearing. A range of composite arm-boards accommodates a variety of tone-arms — individually or simultaneously — including the dedicated *S7* uni-pivot (£1,250), which is also available as a twelve-incher for professional applications at £1,500. ☎ (01388) 730960

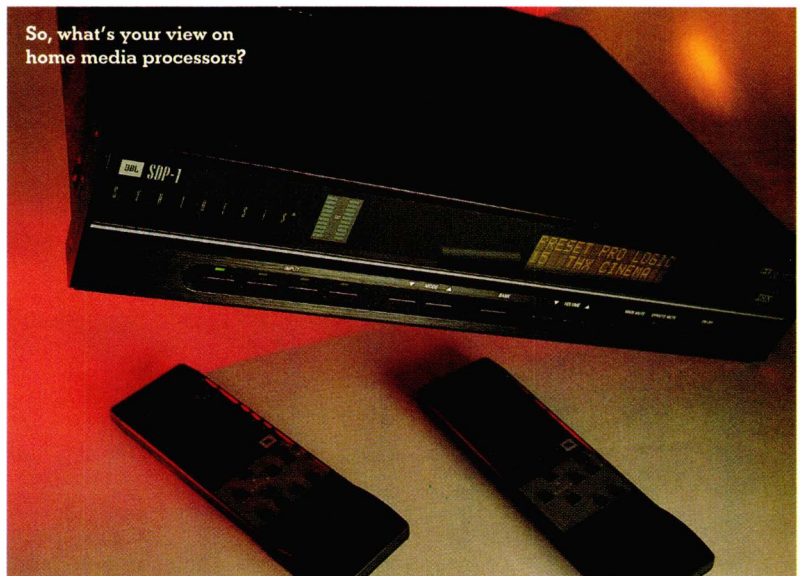
Marnoy? Tanrantz?

Marantz and Tannoy have announced a pan-European alliance. From September, the marketing and distribution of Tannoy speakers in Europe, including the UK, will be taken care of by Marantz BV.

Alex Munro, Managing Director of Tannoy Ltd, denies that the two companies are heading for a merger: "We are simply avoiding a duplication of our resources."

A similar alliance has previously been set up by NAD and Onkyo, and these moves may indicate that separates manufacturers are 'preparing' for a more systems-orientated hi-fi market. ☎ (01753) 680868

So, what's your view on home media processors?



David Owen will love it

JBL's *Synthesis SDP-1* introduces a new term to hi-fi argot: the 'home media processor'. Essentially it's a line-level preamplifier with one audio input and three AV inputs plus a raft of sound processing technology.

The *SDP-1* comes with two remote control units — a Standard handset and an Expanded version. The Standard device is for everyday use and controls basic surround functions, while the Expanded remote's main function is configuring the unit. It gives access to the set-up controls and parameter menus for all the processor's 45 operational modes.

The Pro-Logic and THX equipped *SDP-1*, whose design was influenced by the

Harman-owned Lexicon *CP3* processor, retails for £3,000. Two new power amplifiers are also available to complete a *Synthesis* home media system. The £2,400 *S650* is a five-channel amplifier intended to push 130Watts into each of your front, centre and surround speakers. The £1,600 *S400* delivers 200Watts into two channels and is intended for driving a pair of subwoofers. If you only have one sub you can bridge the *S400* and whack 400Watts of bass into your room. Both amplifiers draw lots of current when they're powered up so they incorporate a sequencing circuit that fires up one channel at a time. ☎ (0181) 207 5050

Choice sessions

JIMMY HUGHES TAKES US ON A JOURNEY TO THE OUTER LIMITS OF SOUND.



Set to follow in the footsteps of a legend? The Sony 761E.

Sony CDP-761E

There's bad news and there's good news. Sony's *CDP-715E* — rated a 'gold-plated Best Buy' in a *Choice* CD player test just nine months ago — has been withdrawn. Fret not. Sony has replaced it with the *CDP-761E*, which seems to perform even better than its illustrious predecessor. I wasn't able to purloin a *715E* for comparison (apparently Paul Miller loves his so much that he locks it away in the safe every night), but I was able to try the new Sony against some classy competition.

The UK-tweaked *761E*, which has a display-off facility, is different both internally and externally to the *761* sold elsewhere. The UK version, for example, has only fixed analogue outputs and doesn't include a headphone socket. The Sony's crisp, lucid presentation is rhythmically fast, giving music plenty of energy

and attack. Those who are looking for a warm, beguiling player may find the *761E* too forward and sharp, but although its tonal balance is certainly on the bright side, it is exceptionally clean at the top end. I tried it against my usual Marantz *CD-12/DA-12* transport/DAC combo. Admittedly this is a few years old now, but it was a landmark player in its day and the *CD-12* has had Trichord's *Clock 2* added. I even added a Theta *TLC* betwixt DAC and transport to add extra fairy dust.

The Sony easily matched it, sounding, if anything, slightly cleaner and better-focused, with greater detail and dynamics. I then took it to a friend who uses an Arcam *Delta 170.3/Black Box 5*; the Sony beat it, sounding cleaner with a firmer, more solid middle and low register. Hearing it in his set-up (Naim amps driving Naim *IBL* speakers) confirmed the *CDP-761E*'s remarkable cleanness; although sharply detailed and lucid, it is very well balanced tonally. Excellent treble clarity and purity make it revealing yet, paradoxically,

quite forgiving too. Sony UK puts much of the *761E*'s success down to its special DAC, but careful choice of internal components and materials have also helped. Some may be sorry that there's no coaxial digital output, only an optical one. But a coaxial digital output would have raised the selling price for no real benefit — the internal DAC is actually so good that there's hardly any point in adding an external one.

In my view, the *CDP-761E* is another winner for Sony UK.

Cambridge CD-4

This must be the bargain of the decade. I hate to descend to hyperbole, but how else do you describe a CD player of this quality selling for just £150? The sound is rich, warm and sweet without the brightness of so many budget players. The finish is superb too, and Cambridge has gone to the trouble of equipping the *CD-4* with a BNC socket for its coaxial digital output — unheard of at this price, and rare at even two or three times the price. The *CD-4* doesn't sound quite as special as the Sony *CDP-761E*, but its sweeter, more mellifluous presentation will suit many budget systems better. Treble harshness is so often a problem at this price point, and the Sony is much less beguiling.



Theta TLC

Back in the July issue of *Choice*, Alvin Gold wrote enthusiastically about this lovely little black box that goes between CD transport and DAC to reduce jitter and thereby improve sound quality. But did you know that you can 'stack' them to increase the effect? A friend brought his over one night and we tried it using the Marantz *CD-12* transport and an NVA DAC. It definitely worked, and made the sound noticeably cleaner and firmer, with better definition and firmer middle and low registers. It's said that three stacked Theta *TLCs* are the recommended maximum before the improvements become too subtle to be worthwhile.

Pros Audio DAC-1000 Mk II

For the past few months I've been living with an interesting new DAC from a company called Pros Audio (UK) Ltd. Priced at £750, it offers a very high specification and uses quality components including no less than two custom designed toroidal mains transformers, special German electrolytic

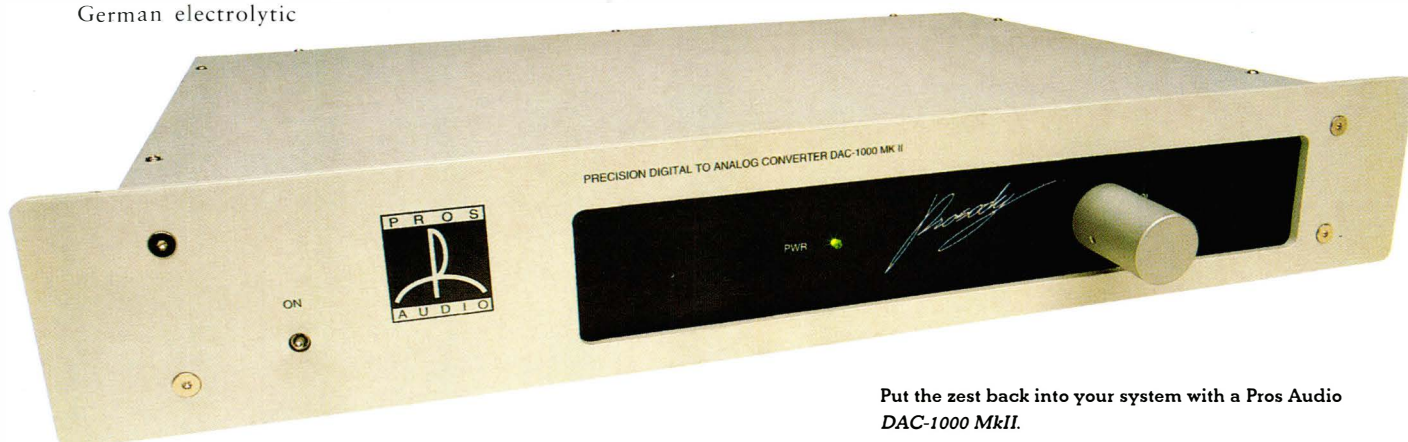
capacitors (over 50,000µF in five separate power supply circuits!), Holco resistors, and a double-sided epoxy circuit board with short signal paths and star earth layouts. The instruction booklet is remarkably detailed, giving a very technical description of circuit design plus lists of all components used. The *DA-1000/II* has a low-bit D/A converter, but it's employed in a way that makes it much less sensitive to clock jitter. Perhaps the most remarkable thing about this DAC is its extremely high audio output; 3.88V — nearly double the 2V output of most CD players and DACs. The instruction booklet describes the sound of the *DA-1000/II* as 'warm and sweet', but I suspect most listeners will agree with me in finding it extremely powerful and forward. The *DA-1000/II* has an exceptionally big sound; full, dynamic and commanding. It offers exceptional drive and control and produces a sound that has great body and presence.

Musically it's very exciting to listen to, but one little criticism is that the *DA-1000/II* can sometimes be a little relentless in its drive; it could be a bit subtler and more finely shaded at times. However, if you like your music to have real impact and guts, this is for you! Both electrical and optical input options are offered (phono and Toslink) incidentally.

DART Link digital cable.

While SD designer Steen Doessing was introducing me to the delights of *SD-3Rs*, he also gave me a digital cable to try — *DART*, which stands for Digital Analogue Real Time. He said it bettered virtually everything he'd tried it against, and wondered what it would do in my system. I'm a bit of a Chord *Flatline* freak; I not only use it as a speaker cable and have my Impulse *H-1s* wired with it internally, I also use it as a stereo interconnect (cut down to four strands) as well

The Cambridge *CD-4* and *DAC Magic I* is a budget combo with high end pretensions.



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Ehbs and *Flows* quite naturally.

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*It's quite natural on the eye too, a narrow
profile of elegant proportions clothed in a
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part is deciding which one.*



S E V E R N

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as between CD player and DAC. Steen doesn't like the sound of screened cable for digital and neither do I; *DART* is a thin stranded, lightly-twisted, sheathed figure 8 construction. Anyway, in a straight A/B comparison, SD's *DART Link* sounded better than my *Flatline*. It was crisper and cleaner, improving definition and transient attack, as well as giving improved detail. SD's new cable costs £49.95 terminated with phono or BNC plugs in 50cm lengths. Apparently it's necessary to keep lengths short. Otherwise, sound quality suffers.

REL Stadium 2 subwoofer

A few weeks before writing this, the REL *Studio* subwoofer I'd been using went back to the manufacturer. I was sad to see it go, but the thought that an improved version of the *Stadium* would soon be available made the parting easier to bear. REL now makes five models, and by taking the price of *Stadium 2* up to about £1,000 while bringing in the cheaper *Storm*, the company now offers a more even spread of products, from *Strata* at £495 to *Studio* at £3,000.

Strata and *Storm* are essentially for the AV market, while *Stadium 2* is aimed at the serious audiophile who wants to add an extra octave or two of good, clean bass to an existing set of speakers. REL's designer Richard Lord has made some radical changes to the original *Stadium*, including important internal mods to the cabinet, which improve rigidity and increase the air load on the driver. The result is tighter, cleaner and firmer bass — to the extent where Richard quietly claims that the *Stadium 2* now outperforms the £1,500 *Stentor*! The new *Stadium 2* is certainly very good, and in terms of bass tightness and 'kick' it does better than the *Stentor*. But the latter goes a shade deeper, and gives a warmer, richer balance despite its slight lack of speed. *Stadium 2* is fitted with a standard Volt drive unit. For £240 extra you can order it with the heavy duty Volt driver fitted to the *Stentor* or *Studio* models. This unit is unique to REL and can be fitted at a later stage by returning the complete unit to the factory. I tried both options and started with the prejudice that the heavy-duty unit would, of course, be much better. However, the difference was less obvious than I expected. The standard driver isn't quite as tight and controlled as the special one, but I rather liked its slightly warmer, richer sound. Since I used my

Stadium 2 with large Impulse *H-1* horn speakers, which have a very respectable bass already, I set the REL's frequency knobs at minimum and the level control around nine o'clock. As a result I'm not asking the sub to do much, so it's possible the heavy-duty driver is magnetically over-damped for such circumspect use. The heavier drive unit has much greater power handling and will take more punishment. Adding a subwoofer of *Stadium 2* quality to your system isn't just about getting extended bass response of the trouser-flapping variety. *Stadium 2* also seems to add detail and spatial depth, improving stereo imagery and dynamics. Indeed, its effect is often as impressive on music which you'd think has no deep bass (solo violin for example), as on the obvious blockbusters — even if it's superb at rattling windows! Incidentally, I preferred to use mine minus its floor spikes; the bass loses a little tightness but gains warmth and fullness. So do try both options before deciding.

SD Acoustics SD-3R

Anyone in the market for a speaker costing around £400 should give *SD-3Rs* an audition. They're lively, articulate, very clean, and tonally sharp without being overbright. The use of a special SD-designed ribbon tweeter ensures that the gritty/spitty characteristic we all know (and hate) with conventional soft dome tweeters is nowhere to be heard. The qualities of this tweeter are especially noticeable on percussion transients, which have plenty of attack and bite; the sound is fast, yet tonally the balance is smoother than usually found with dome tweeters. The bass is quite respectable, if inevitably lacking in real depth, while the mid-band is smooth and natural. Interestingly, designer Steen Doessing has done away with any sort of crossover for the mid/bass driver, preferring instead to feed it with a full-range signal. Others have done this before, yet to my ears the result has invariably been a loss of clarity and some tonal peculiarities. Not so here; the results are excellent.

The cabinets are cast from special PBM (Polybymin) — a low-Q Polyester-based resin that is compounded with a unique blend of minerals. SD claims PBM's self-damping is some 30 per cent better than 22mm thick MDF, resulting in a very rigid well-damped enclosure. Tall matching PBM stands are available at a cost of £299. The *SD-3R* is finished in high-gloss piano black and can be bi-wired. It's certainly a



very fine speaker, giving a sound of great openness and transparency.

A new *Stadium* rocker from REL.

Solid HCM-2 satellite speakers/Active Power Bass sub-woofer

I tried to wear a different hat when seeking to come to terms with these beautifully styled speakers and optional matching sub-woofer. The *HCM-2* sells for a very reasonable £129.95, the sub for £299, which makes this a most attractive package for the AV enthusiast who also has an eye for style.

I began with the HCM-2s on their own, using them to replace a

Three of a perfect pair from SD Acoustics.



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Distributors of Audiovector speakers for F3/LYD, Meinungsgade 8, D2, DK-2200 Copenhagen N, Denmark. Tel: 01 39 60 60

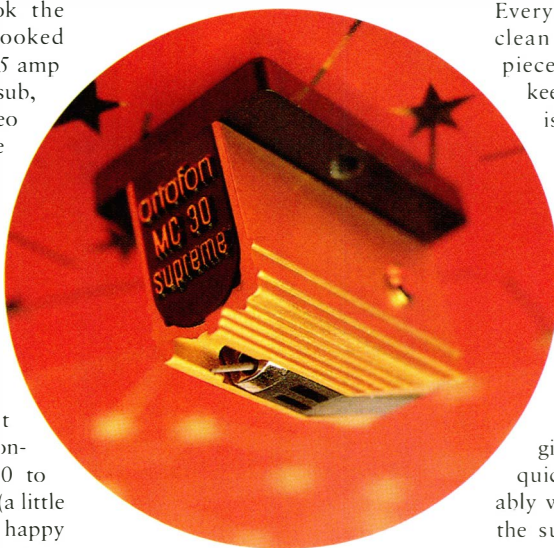
set of small Sony speakers hooked up to an amp and CD player in my workplace. First impressions were mixed; on the credit side the HCM-2 was smooth and well-balanced tonally, with a clear, open treble and a reasonably full bass. Dynamically, however, the sound seemed constrained and there was a definite lack of richness and depth. This made the music seem somehow compressed.

Some weeks later I took the HCM-2s back home and hooked them up to an Arcam *Alpha 5* amp with the Active Power Bass sub, using a Panasonic Nicam video as my source. Results were okay, if still a shade circumspect, although I did feel the sub-woofer fleshed out the bottom-end nicely. The sub made a brave stab at reproducing the dull floor-shaking thuds as the T-Rex ambles towards the broken-down cars in Jurassic Park, but we're not talking about REL levels of bass depth or control. If I'd just spent £430 to improve the sound of my TV (a little Sony 14inch), I would've felt happy with the result. However, by activating the TV's own internal speaker and setting its volume level carefully to blend with the sound of the HCM-2s, the sound was transformed into something much greater than the sum of the parts. On its own the Sony TV's internal speaker is okay, but nothing more. Adding its output to the HCM-2s produced very impressive results that quite literally brought a new dimension to the experience of watching movies and music videos. For serious hi-fi use I feel the HCM-2s (even with the sub) are rather limited, but used as an AV product in conjunction with a suitable TV set, the results can be extremely impressive.

Ortofon MC-30 Supreme

Top model in a range of three, the MC-30 Supreme costs £450, and like its cheaper brothers offers excellent sound quality and clean, fuss-free performance. Output is quite high for a 'low output' MC cartridge, producing a healthy 500µV for the usual parameters. This is twice as much as many MC cartridges (which typically offer 200µV to 300µV), and ensures that amplifier noise is minimised as well as giving a strong and clear sound. Excellent tracking ability is another feature common to all three, with the MC-30 Supreme being able to clear a cut of 80µM at 315Hz — a very good figure. On paper, specifi-

cations look quite close between the MC-30 Supreme and the cheaper MC-20 Supreme; the main difference seems to be a different cantilever and the use of a super fine-line nude stylus which extends the upper frequency response from 30,000Hz to 40,000Hz. Separation figures are slightly better too, but only by a couple of dB.



Ortofon MC-30 Supreme — the secret's in the fine-line nude stylus.

Sonically, the 30 sounds slightly cleaner than than the 20, dealing more confidently with difficult end-of-side material. The 30 has superior clarity, with more analysis in complex passages, although the 20's 'busier' presentation makes it seem as if more voices and instruments are playing. The 30 sorts everything out tidily so that you hear more clearly what's on the record. In my view, the 30's high frequency tracking is also better than the 20's, even if Ortofon gives the same spec for both. The 30 is a deep cartridge, and its fixing base is quite large. So it may

prove a tight fit when used in some arms, such as Linn. I tried my review sample in a Wilson Benesch *ACT One* arm with excellent results. A great cartridge then: clear, open, detailed, and very articulate while retaining low surface noise and stable, secure tracking ability. Just the job for clean fuss-free record reproduction.

DNM RESON Licon

Everyone knows how vital good, clean contacts are between each piece of equipment, but beyond keeping plugs and sockets clean is there anything more you can do? Well, you could use a contact enhancer like DNM's £20 *Licon*. This is a clear liquid applied to connectors and it works by filling in all the craters and crevices that exist between the surfaces at a microscopic level, thereby enlarging the contact area.

It seems to work best if you give your plugs and sockets a quick clean beforehand, preferably with something that degreases the surface. This helps *Licon* to spread more efficiently and improves results. After treatment, the treble sounds sharper, more lucid and more detailed. The whole sound seems tighter and more crisply focused. You can treat any plug or socket contact point with *Licon*, but do take care to disconnect equipment from the mains before poking around.

I have two complaints. One is that the tall thin bottle is oh-so-easy to tip over. The other is the applicator — a hard nylon shaft — which makes the liquid tricky to apply.





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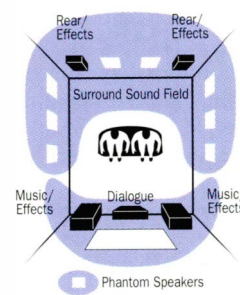
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Jimmy's CD choice

George Duke: Illusions
Warner Bros 9362 45755-2

I happened to come across this CD while listening to some of the products covered in this month's Sessions, and it served to highlight many important differences. It's an absolutely superb DDD recording with some of the deepest, most impressive bass I've ever heard — it just rolls out. Certainly, the REL Stadium 2 was really put through its paces, and a more convincing disc to demonstrate the benefits of a sub would be hard to find — try track 8, *Look What We Started Now*. But it also showed how outstanding the Sony CDP-761E was in terms of rhythm and timing, not to mention ambient depth and attack. The music consists of vocal numbers and instrumentals, and is often quite laid-back jazz-funk; sometimes mellow, sometimes fast and driving, but always tuneful and beautifully played.



Surely a tiny brush would've been better? A good product even so, and at £20 well worth trying.

DNM Solid Core mains cables

Do you have equipment that has a detachable mains cable terminated by an IEC plug? If so, you might like to try a DNM *Solid Core* mains leads in place of the stranded cable supplied by most manufacturers. I've used solid core mains cables for over ten years now, and I swear by them. Compared to stranded mains cables, they seem to make the equipment sound cleaner, with less treble glare and harshness. However, until recently, you had to make these cables up yourself using 'twin and earth' — a bit dodgy given its uninsulated earth wire. Now that DNM offers ready-made leads from proper double insulated cable it couldn't be easier.

DNM also offers a special four-way mains distribution board, complete with solid core lead, neon light removed, and all contact points soldered. It costs about £56 — not cheap, but audibly better than a standard distribution board. IEC terminated DNM solid core mains cables cost £20 each and come with MK mains plugs.

Versalabs RFI filter system; Wood Block, Ground Blocks and Red Rollers

Those who find it hard to accept that changing to a different kind of mains cable can affect sound quality may find a product like

Versalabs' *Wood Block* very difficult to come to terms with. It consists of a wooden box with a three pin IEC socket at one end and a short cable with an IEC plug at the other. The *Wood Block* simply fits in-line with the mains lead and filters any Radio Frequency Interference (RFI) that may be corrupting the mains supply. *Red Rollers* perform the same function but fit around audio cables, while the *Ground Block* does the same for earth wires such as those from tone arms. I began with the *Wood Block*, using it with an Orelle SA-100 amp. It certainly worked, and seemed to clean up the sound, making it less bright.



Versalabs actually warns that you may need to raise volume levels slightly, as the removal of RFI makes things sound smoother and less aggressive. As you add more Versalab products, you seem to get closer to the true sound of your equipment. The music becomes subtler and more mellifluous, less like 'hi-fi' and closer to the sound of real voices and instruments.

However, some may prefer things without Versalab treatment because the cleanness of the sound can take out some of the bite and aggression that makes the music seem more exciting. You have to experience the product yourself to reach a conclusion. Yet in my opinion, there's no doubt that Versalab treatment will make your system sound more natural and accurate. Whether you like it or not is another matter!

This is the cure for a disease most of us don't know we've got, but that's no reason not to investigate. Listen in ignorance by all means, but try to experience at least one of these items in your system. Only then will you appreciate the sort of difference

For a cleaner sound, try swapping your standard mains cables for a DNM *Solid Core*.

Woodn't your system sound nicer with a Versalabs widget?

THE TRUTH. THE WHOLE TRUTH. AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH.

For more than three centuries, experts have been trying to discover the secret behind some rather good sounding small wooden boxes from Cremona, Italy. (For the members of the Butt-Head-generation amongst our readers: these are called 'violins' made by a dude named Stradivari.) For the last two decades, some small wooden boxes from Skanderborg, Denmark have turned out to be just as puzzling.

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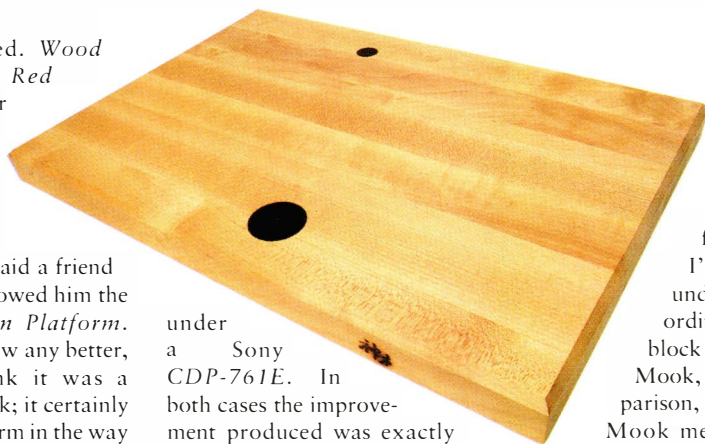
DANES DON'T LIE.[™]

THE FRONT END

that can be produced. *Wood Blocks* cost £150, *Red Rollers* are £100 per pair, and the *Ground Block* costs £60.

Shun Mook Isolation Platform

"That's good value!" said a friend sarcastically when I showed him the Shun Mook *Isolation Platform*. Now, if you didn't know any better, you'd probably think it was a wooden chopping block; it certainly isn't an isolating platform in the way a Seismic Sink or Audiophile Base is. There are no spikes or decoupling rubbers — you just sit the piece of equipment on the platform and that's it. I can't explain how it works, but the effect produced is quite remarkable. I've tried it in my own system (under an Orelle SA100 amp) and in a totally different set-up



under a Sony CDP-761E. In both cases the improvement produced was exactly the same; the sound grew richer and sweeter, with greater depth and an increase in overall spaciousness. The music seemed to flow more evenly, sounding warmer and more refined yet retaining all its bite and attack. I prefer to use the Orelle amp sat on the carpet rather than an isolating platform, because it seems to sound

better that way. It's worth adding that other amps have responded similarly, not just the Orelle. The Shun Mook platform is the first thing I've actually liked under my amp. I tried an ordinary wood chopping block in place of the Shun Mook, but there's no comparison, alas! In Chinese Shun Mook means Divine Wood, and the secret seems to be in the two round Mpingo wood inserts, that are strategically placed in the board, though quite how or why I couldn't say. £150 is a lot to pay for a block of wood, even one as nicely finished as this. But hearing is believing. Even my cynical friend changed his mind once he heard the improvement, muttering that he'd have to get one because it was just what his system needed. Shun Mook makes a whole range of unusual and fascinating products which I hope to report on in due course.

A lot of bread for a board!

System time!

I started with the Sony CDP-761E, an Orelle SA100 integrated amp, and the SD-3Rs; total cost around £1,350 plus cables but including speaker stands. This combination produced a racy, detailed and often very exciting sound that had lots of brilliance and attack. The treble was clean but very sharp and lucid, as though you were close to the players. Yet, ambience portrayal was excellent — testimony to the Sony's superb ability to let you hear the decay of each note, and listen right through the whole soundstage even during difficult complex pieces. With the Cambridge CD-4 in place of the Sony, the sound grew smoother and less assertive. It was definitely more comfortable to listen to, but also less informative and detailed. The music sounded nice but much more generalised, lacking the pace and attack of the Sony. Adding Cambridge's DAC-Magic 1 D/A converter (another incredible bargain at just £149.50) seemed to expand the soundstage, giving more separation between instruments and voices. It sounded quite noticeably louder too, although the tonal balance remained fairly smooth and less sharp than the Sony.

Fitting SD's DART Link between player and DAC made the sound noticeably better than with the screened cable supplied with the DAC-Magic 1, but at just under £50 it's one third the cost of the DAC... Although slightly outside the terms of reference for this review, I briefly tried the DAC-Magic 1 with the Marantz CD-12, and was rewarded with a far more articulate and assertive sound; clearly the CD-4, although very good, limits the DAC-Magic. I next put an Audio Innovations Alto amplifier in place of the Orelle. The Alto has a very smooth, civilised sound, and it makes a very sweet beguiling noise. Comparing the Sony and Cambridge CD players via the Alto, I found the sonic differences between them grew smaller, while individual player characteristics remained intact. Using the Alto, I initially felt the sound wasn't quite as impressive as it had been with the Orelle. But as I listened for longer this impression began to recede; the Alto invariably charms you into accepting it on its own terms! The Orelle gives the music its head and takes more chances by producing wider extremes of tonal colour and dynamics. But it's not always a particularly easy and comfortable listen.

Bringing the REL Stadium 2 into the frame proved interesting. It actually made the little SD-3Rs sound much bigger and more dynamic.

If you subscribe to the Linn/Naim hierarchy idea of spending most of your budget on the source, then it clearly makes no sense to spend £1,000 on a subwoofer when it's to be used in a system costing under £1,500. But with outstanding source components like the Sony CDP-761E available at absurdly low prices, it's clear that the old rules no longer apply — if they ever did! Times are changing...

Contacts

Sony UK Ltd., The Heights, Brooklands, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 0XW. ☎ (01932) 816000

Cambridge: Hi-Fi Club, Richer House, Hankey Place, London SE1 4LL. ☎ (0171) 827 9827

Theta: Absolute Sounds, 58 Durham Road, London SW20 0DE. ☎ (0181) 947 5047

Pros Audio, ☎ (01883) 341935

DART Link: SD-AV, The Factory, Alpha Road, Surbiton, Surrey KT5 8RP. ☎ (0181) 399 6308

REL: Harman Audio UK Ltd., Unit 2, Borehamwood Ind. Est., Rowley Lane, Borehamwood, Herts WD6 5PZ. ☎ (0181) 207 5050

SD Acoustics, The Factory, Alpha Road, Surbiton, Surrey KT5 8RP. ☎ (0181) 399 6308

Solid Team: B&W Loudspeakers UK Ltd., Marlborough Road, Churchill Ind. Est., Lancing, W. Sussex BN15 8TR. ☎ (01903) 750750

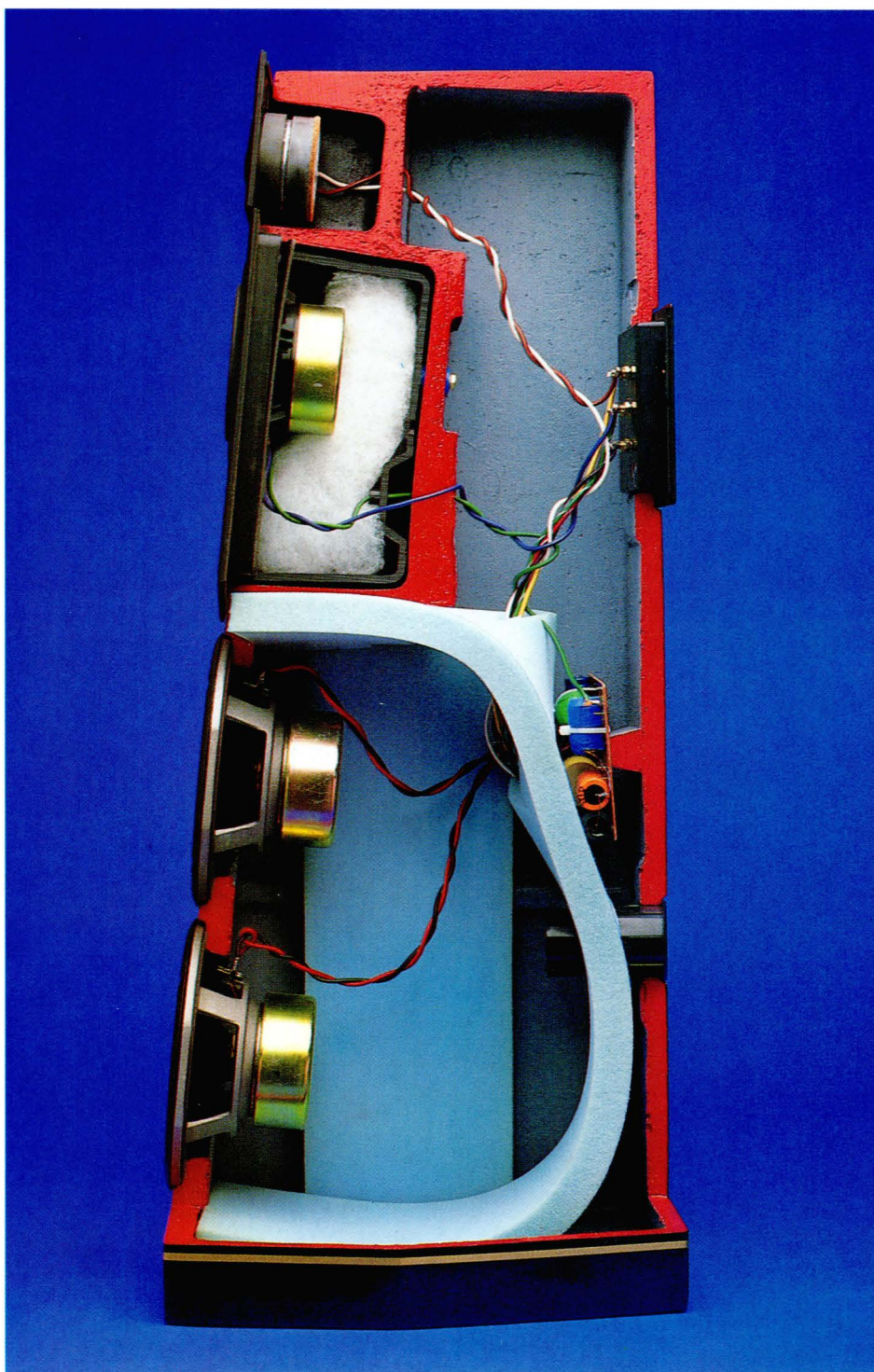
Ortofon UK Ltd., Chiltern Hill, Chalfont St. Peter, Bucks SL9 9UG. ☎ (01753) 889949

DNM: Virtual Reality Audio Systems, PO Box 383, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4GB. ☎ (01277) 227355

Versalabs: K.J. West One, 26 New Cavendish Street, London W1M 7LH. ☎ (0171) 486 8262/63

Back in Black

Jason Kennedy puts on school shorts and plays air Gibson to honour Mordaunt-Short's latest foray into serious enclosures.



The £1,450 *Performance 860* loudspeaker represents a dramatic move for Mordaunt-Short. Budget models have been the company's bread and butter for a long time, but this new enclosure takes Havant's finest into the giddy realms of what one could fairly call 'serious audio'. It's not their first venture into the territory, however: in recent memory at least there was the *442*, another floorstanding model, and one that I had the privilege to hump around on my first blind loudspeaker test back in 1988 (alas, its novel decoupled drivers did not lead to a distinguished performance in those trials).

We should not forget the Epos brand, produced at Mordaunt-Short's factory on the South Coast, which has just been augmented by the £1,500 Epos *ES25* (*HFC 143*). However, by unveiling the *Performance 850*, budget-brand-champ Mordaunt-Short is turning on its heel to face a whole load of expensive speaker designs snarling, Biffa Bacon style: "Who you lookin' at?" And the fact is, that volte face is done with significant style.

What we have here is not just another medite box with a lot of drive units in it. No sir, this particular box is made out of one of your genuine high tech materials, specifically what Mordaunt-Short calls ResinRock. Unfortunately, it is actually made of resin, and it has got rocks in it (well, small ones), so that gag from Leslie Nielsen's cider advert must wait for another day. ResinRock is a polyester-based resin loaded with minerals and rubber to create a stiff, self-damping enclosure material that can be moulded into fancy shapes like the one chosen for the *Performance 860*.

It's an eight-sided cabinet we have here, with nary a parallel surface in sight except for the top and bottom surfaces, though these are internally separated. There is also a variety of panel shapes — always a good start if you want to keep standing waves at bay and stop the box joining in with the music.

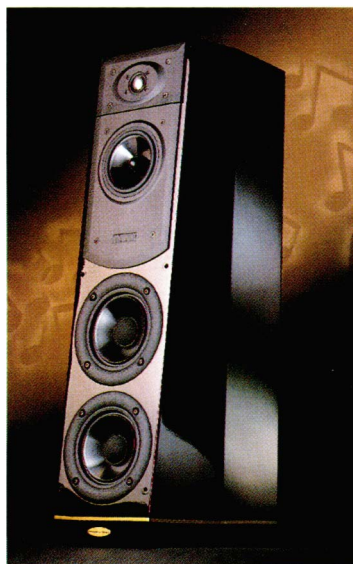
Innovation doesn't stop here,

however. The mid-range driver sits in its own sealed, mineral-loaded polypropylene enclosure, decoupled from the main cabinet with urethane elastomer, which has the effect of limiting energy travel between the two spaces. All four drive-units sit on a front baffle, which is sloped to time-align the drivers' output mechanically. In theory this should help ensure the phase linearity required to reproduce genuine stereo imagery, an area addressed in the asymmetric first order (mid and treble) and third order (bass) Butterworth crossover.

The driver complement comprises: a pair of driven 165mm bass units (sited low down to reduce phase cancellation caused by late reflections from the floor); the aforementioned 90mm mid-range unit, fitted with a phase plug; and a 25mm aluminium dome tweeter mounted on a standing-wave-disturbing elliptical plate. These units can even be addressed individually with tri-wire binding posts.

M-S has obviously been doing its homework on this design. In my eyes, its closest rival would be a product like the £3,250 Electrofluidics 2.2xi I enthused about in issue 139, which uses a very similar if larger and heavier cabinet, and is more than twice the price. Mordaunt-Short has sought to achieve similar goals of phase linearity and low coloration, and the *Performance* is certainly no lightweight itself, weighing in at 26kg a side. I'm not looking forward to lugging them down my stairs! In fact, I don't want to let go of them at all, because they're among the finest sub-£1,500 speakers I've had the pleasure of listening to. The *Performance* approaches the Electrofluidics in neutrality as well as imaging, which is no mean feat, as on those criteria the latter speaker is the best I've lived with.

In my lounge the M-S boxes were conjoined with a pair of muscular Michell *Alecto* power amplifiers — a mutually beneficial relationship, to my ears. The *Performances* are reasonably efficient at 90dB, and their nominal six Ohm load is not outra-



geous, but somehow I don't think that lesser amps would quite do them justice. For example, even the simple matter of controlling cones at 35Hz is not the job for a jejune Watt-dispenser. Did I mention that they not only claim to go down that far, but also do so without setting off the room or losing their cool? They also got on famously with the full-on Trichord Pioneer *PD-S503* transport, Pulsar DAC and PSU, the whole combination making some astounding sounds courtesy of Mana support and cookin' CDs.

A speaker that's low on character doesn't make for easy reviewing. When a hi-fi component doesn't sound like much in itself (which of course it shouldn't) then you can only discuss the peripheral raggedy areas where it goes wrong, or the music you've been listening to. The *Performance* is a subtractive rather than an additive loudspeaker; its few sins are those of omission, which makes for much less distraction. Paul Messenger might say that this box doesn't have the timing of a Naim *SBL*, and I'd say that it doesn't have the dynamics of a high-efficiency design like a horn, but it made such a good job of my music that neither of these charges really stand up in court.

When judged on the basis of Leonard Norwitz's system evaluation theory (see last month's issue), which suggests you should assess a product by its ability to show differences between diverse pieces of music, the *860s* made a fine showing. They exposed variations in the sound of different string-quartet recordings from the same period, and even picked up on the subtle variations in three different pressings of Zappa's *Joe's Garage* epic; although in the case of the digitally

remastered version, the differences weren't that subtle.

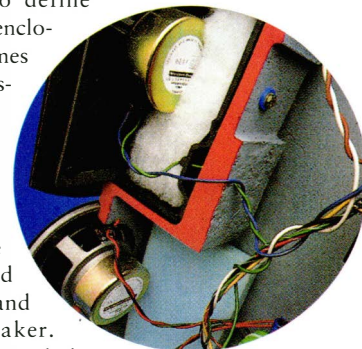
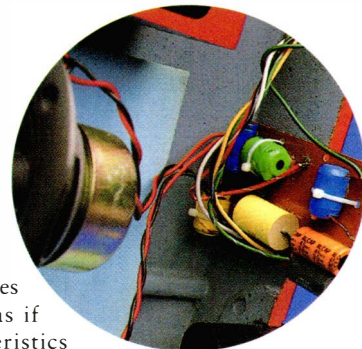
There were times when it seemed as if certain characteristics were emerging to define these obeliskular enclosures. Bass sometimes appeared a little disconnected, or treble came out a tad too tizzy, but further analysis would always show that these elements emanated from the software and not the speaker.

However, I couldn't shake the feeling that there was a slight thickness in the upper bass: nothing too blatant, mind, but from time to time I just became aware of it. Yet the majority of the time I was too busy thinking, 'Wow, what an astounding record!' The *860s* have an uncanny ability to extract detail from a performance without sacrificing cohesion or losing sight of the music as a whole.

The *Performance* is a modern loudspeaker, and it makes the most of modern recordings. A good horn will make your 'Golden Age of Analogue Stuff' sound outrageous, but it'll be inclined to tell you that digital ain't where it's at. As for the *860s*, on the other hand, they share with the likes of an ATC the ability to revel in great digital recordings played on a superb CD player, reproducing imagery that expands the room and bass that shakes it. This is one of the few speakers I've ever used that caused genuine Neighbour Assault while I indulged in a little Massive Attack.

Although this is a very neutral loudspeaker, it can — with the right ancillaries — pack a serious punch. If you prefer to hear your music as the producer heard it, the Mordaunt-Short *Performance 860* is a bargain buy. ▲

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It's SHO Time

Sumiko is a last bastion of turntabledom. In the States, it's the importer of decks and arms from Projekt and SME. In the UK, Sumiko's *Blue Point Special* cartridge has already made lots of friends in the sub-£500 needle market. Now Sumiko's going after the big names with the new £1,249.95 Sumiko *SHO*.

This isn't another me-too, Ortofon/Koetsu-inspired expensive moving-coil cartridge. First, it's a high-output moving-coil, because Sumiko believes that although the best sound comes from a coil, low-output MCs can never achieve an optimum match with the majority of amplifier phono stages — especially valve types. Second, the *SHO* embodies Sumiko's proprietary progressive damping suspension system, and its elliptical stylus allows it to track like a moving magnet.

Face facts, turntable lovers. In the high-end platter-spinning market, there are more Linn *LP12*s out there than any other make, especially in this country. Many of these, bought during the '80s and early '90s, will sport Linn or Naim pickup arms; all of which possess a unique three-point cartridge mount designed especially for the Linn *Troika* moving-coil.

Times change. The *Troika* is no more, replaced by the *Arkiv*. Now, while many '90s Linn types feel that the new needle is crisper, cleaner, more detailed and better attuned to the current Linn sound, those with a more Naim outlook feel slightly short-changed. Instead, they've looked forward to the arrival of cartridges like the excellent Lyra *Clavis DC* (Sessions, HFC 143), which will fit in a Naim *Aro* arm.

The *SHO* has taken up that *Troika*-esque three-point mount, and will enter happily into marriage with a Linn or Naim arm. This third hole is designed purely for fine alignment and is not essential to structural integrity, so don't fret if orifice number three is not present on your own particular brand of tonearm.

The bulbous appearance of this Sumiko needle has been compared in American magazines to a Klingon Warbird starship from Star Trek movies, particularly when mounted in a SME V. Perhaps I've read too

Alan Sircom treats his vinyl to a spot of sensual massage with the new Sumiko needle.

much Thomas de Quincey, but I feel it looks like an opium pipe when sitting on the end of a Naim *Aro* in my *Armageddon*-fuelled, race-tuned, low-rider *LP12*, placed on a Mana *Phase IV* table. It is a good analogy, because the sound produced by the *SHO* is heavily addictive.

The *SHO* excels at sound so free of artifice as to repeat the now familiar 'better than the best digital' trick. However, it is not some warm, romantic and veiled performer. Neither is it an anodyne, neutral-sounding, soul-less cartridge. It is just so 'right' that it makes you forget there's a hi-fi system between you and the music — if the rest of the system is up to it.

There's a sense of musical flow, a trademark of great analogue. To achieve this kind of naturalness with digits would require huge capital investment: far more than a decent *SHO*-equipped turntable.

This cartridge has all the treble bite of a high-frequency Rottweiler, if that's what's on the record. However, its top end isn't aggressive, just simply faithful to the vinyl. Such well-defined treble is usually like the Sword of Damocles on LPs that aren't audiophile pressings. Drag out the old Bob Marley albums and that top-flight sound runs for cover. However, the *SHO* will just hunker down and play sweet reggae. Of course, if you've got an 'audiophile-approved' recording that just happens to be excellent (for example Mobile Fidelity's outstanding Muddy Waters' *Folk Singer*), you get the type of sound that makes CD hide in the corner.

I'd say the mid-band is the *SHO*'s most attractive feature, although the rest of the spectrum is reproduced more than ably. Middle frequencies combine the openness you'd get from a top-class moving-magnet cartridge, with the musicality and

more attractive overall sound of a good moving-coil. To my ears, the lasting impression of the *SHO* is of a hard-wired connection between musicians and the listening room.

When I auditioned the Sumiko *SHO*, it was often impossible to pick holes in the performance. This stylus makes you find time to play records, even at three in the morning. It makes you raid car-boot fairs in search of old vinyl, and propels you inexorably into record shops to seek out the new stuff.

Hard-bitten cynicism goes to the wall: in the evening, out comes one LP, to be closely followed by all the artists that influenced it. Before long, it's morning. Respect due to the inventor of the weekend.

If the *SHO* lacks anywhere, it's in the last octave. There is precise information about the slowest-modulating groove, but there's none of the bone-crunching intensity to be had from way-out super-sharps like the Lyra *Parnassus*.

The rumour mill has suggested that the *SHO* displays a slightly ringy nature in Linn *Ittok* and *Ekos* arms. However, if you use any high-end arm, it's worth investigating the *SHO*; if you use an *Aro* and overlook the *SHO* when shopping for a *Troika* replacement, please arrange these words into a well-known phrase or saying: Mug. You. Stupid.

The *SHO* is a real honey. With enough output to run almost any MM preamp, and the sort of sound that explains the vinyl renaissance, this Sumiko is probably the most musical product I've assessed all year. Buy it, play it loads and laugh at all those who only use CD — that's what I did. *SHO* 'nuff sounds right to me. ▲

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Query of the month

More is more

My recently upgraded system is a Pioneer PDM-701 CD player, Rotel RB/RC 970BX amplifier, TDL RTL2 loudspeakers connected with Cable Talk Advanced interconnect and Cable Talk Talk 3 Bi-wire speaker cable. Would it make a considerable difference to add a second power amplifier to bi-amp the speakers? If so, should I buy another RB970 or do I need a more powerful amp to drive the bass section? I would be grateful if you could also recommend some good interconnects.

M.J.Chung-Su-Yuen@economics.hull.ac.uk

Changing from a bi-wired system to one that's bi-amped will definitely be worthwhile. I'd strongly recommend using a pair of identical power amplifiers and wiring them so that one feeds the left channel and the other the right. (Simply connect the pre-amplifier's left output to both inputs on one power amplifier, and the pre-amplifier's right output to both inputs on the other power amplifier. Use a Y-splitter lead if your pre-amplifier doesn't have two sets of outputs.) It's fashionable in some circles to mix and match bass and treble power amplifiers, but this approach leaves the system open to intrusive imbalances: if, for example, the treble amp is faster than the bass, the system's timing goes out of the window. For similar reasons I'd also recommend sticking to the same interconnect and speaker cables throughout. Cable Talk's improved Advanced 2 interconnects would be suitable and you could easily reconfigure your Talk 3 Bi-wire cables to bi-amp the speakers by fitting four plugs instead of two at the amplifier end of each cable.



Query of the month



Each month we're giving away a one metre pair of Precious Metals interconnect cables to the writer of the most interesting letter. If you've any system queries send them to: *Hi-Fi Choice* (Help!) Dennis Publishing Ltd, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

Drowning in Enya

I have a Pioneer PDM603 multi-play CD changer, a Technics SUA900 MkII amplifier and a pair of Tannoy Profile 632 loudspeakers connected with Cable Talk Talk 3 cables. Most music sounds okay through this system but Enya's *Watermark* sounds absolutely horrible. It's sluggish and heavy and the sound is boomy and unclear.

I thought it might be the CD player's fault but plugging a pair of Beyer DT331s straight into it shows that it's not. I've tried other interconnects and sticking Blu-Tack on the base of the speakers but regardless the problem persists. What do your experts suggest?
Steven Chan, ckchan@ic.ac.uk

Epos ES11 — only the finest watts should massage their cones.

This is a classic case of drowning in bass — the powerful low frequencies on Enya's Watermark are adept at unearthing this sort of problem. To get the situation under control you need to experiment with the positioning of your speakers. The 632s have abundant bass and so don't respond well to being improperly positioned. You must use them on stands in free space: placing them too close to the floor or walls will reinforce their already generous bass to the point where it becomes excessive and starts interfering with the midrange. If you don't have the space to get them clear of the walls, think about changing

to a speaker that's better suited to your room.

Bi-400s

My hi-fi consists of an Arcam Black Box DAC, a Marantz CD-52 CD player, a Pioneer A-400 amplifier and B&W DM4 loudspeakers on Target R2 stands. Loudspeaker cable is Furukawa FS-2T14.

I plan to replace the B&Ws with Epos ES11s (retaining the Target stands) and purchase another A-400 (second-hand, as it has recently been discontinued) to bi-amp the ES11s. My problem is how to wire the DAC to the amplifiers in such an arrangement.
Matthew J Willard, Cheshire



Will
Arcam's Alpha 5 CD
outperform a Clocked Rotel?

I wouldn't recommend using a Pioneer A-400 — or a pair of them — to drive the ES11s. It goes against the opinions expressed by some reviewers but I reckon that the ES11 needs a quality pre/power amplifier to exploit it. If you're keeping the A-400, look for another speaker.

However, you should really be thinking about improving your front end before making other changes. The CD-52 is a wonderful little budget machine but you need a more capable transport now that you're expanding your system's capabilities. The Teac VRDS T-1 or Micromega Drive 1 both make suitable high performance low, cost options.

Lovable relics

My system comprises a Linn Sondek LP12 turntable with Ittok LVII tone-arm and Asak cartridge, a Micromega Stage 3 CD player, Naim 02 tuner, Quad 22/11s, and Epos ES14 speakers. The 22 pre-amplifier doesn't have enough inputs and so I need to change it. With a budget of between £1,500 and £2,000 what would you suggest — new or second-hand? My musical tastes are jazz fusion, soul and blues.

H S Brown, London SE

I'd be inclined to replace your complete amplifier system. The Quad 11s are better suited to more efficient speakers and the ES14s would be better served by a heftier, solid-state power amplifier. The prime choices are Naim's NAP250 or an Exposure. Look around for second-hand examples with a pre-amplifier from the same company. Your old Quads — assuming they're in good nick — are desirable items and sell-

ing them might put more than you'd expect into your kitty.

Finally, have your dealer inspect your Asak. I'm surprised there are any of those lovable relics still alive!

Grille rot

I have a pair of Acoustic Research AR18 loudspeakers whose foam grilles are deteriorating rapidly. I'd like to find out if I can get replacements for them. Is Teledyne Acoustic Research still in business?

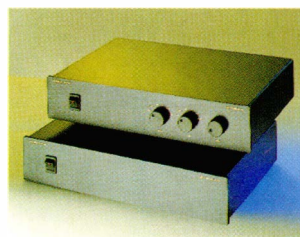
Jim Halliday, Warwickshire

It's your lucky day. I expected to find that you'd have no chance of genuine replacement parts for such an old — though prized — speaker as the AR18. However, Wembley Loudspeakers (0181 743 4567) tells me that it can supply any replacement parts you need for these or other AR models. AR is now part of the International Jensen group.

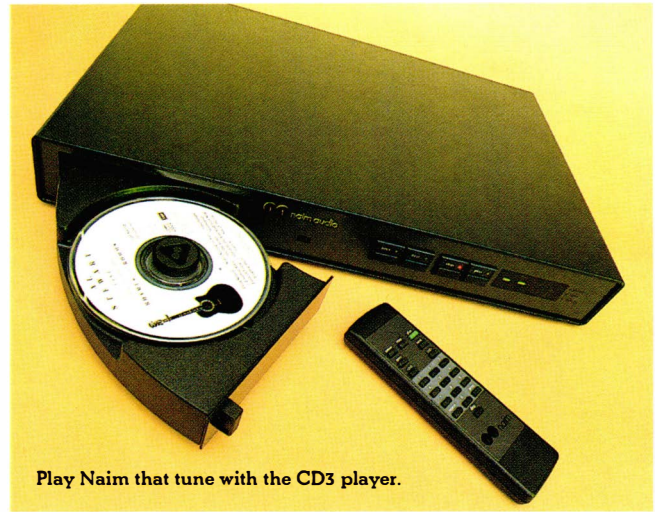
No catherine wheels

My system consists of a Rotel RCD-965BX CD player, Aura VA100 amplifier and Neat Critique loudspeakers with Mission stranded cable and Linn interconnects. My dealer advises me that the system is ubalanced and that the CD player is the weak link. What do you recommend as an upgrade — an Arcam Alpha 5, or a would a Trichord Clock 2 modification be more cost effective? I listen to both classical and rock music and prefer a well-integrated musical sound to hi-fi fireworks.

Peter Pienkowski, Exeter



Exposure and Epos — a marriage made in heaven?



Play Naim that tune with the CD3 player.

Things have naturally changed since the RCD-965BX won Best Buy status back in issue 100 — nearly four years ago. The machine, now discontinued, was subsequently upgraded and then emerged in two modified forms. Needless to say an original RCD-965BX would be somewhat off the pace of today's best players.

For that reason I'd recommend that you didn't modify it. A newer machine such as the Arcam Alpha 5, Micromega Stage 1, or Teac VRDS-7 would be a more sound investment. You'll find that these machines offer a crisper, more rhythmically animated performance than the old Rotel, which your ears will doubtless appreciate.

Get in the ring

I'd like to add a CD player to my system, which comprises an Arcam Delta 90 amplifier, Akai GX75 tape deck, Akai GT93 tuner, modified Dynaudio Xenon speakers and an Ariston RD40 turntable with SAEC arm and Linn K5 cartridge. The CD player must sound punchy and detailed. I can spend up to £1,200.

I'd also like to improve my amplifier, which sounds rather restrained at times. Could I add an extra, bigger power supply? Finally, I bought the turntable second-hand from a dissatisfied first owner. Is it a good combination and what would you suggest to improve it?

Hermann Tesmer, Austria

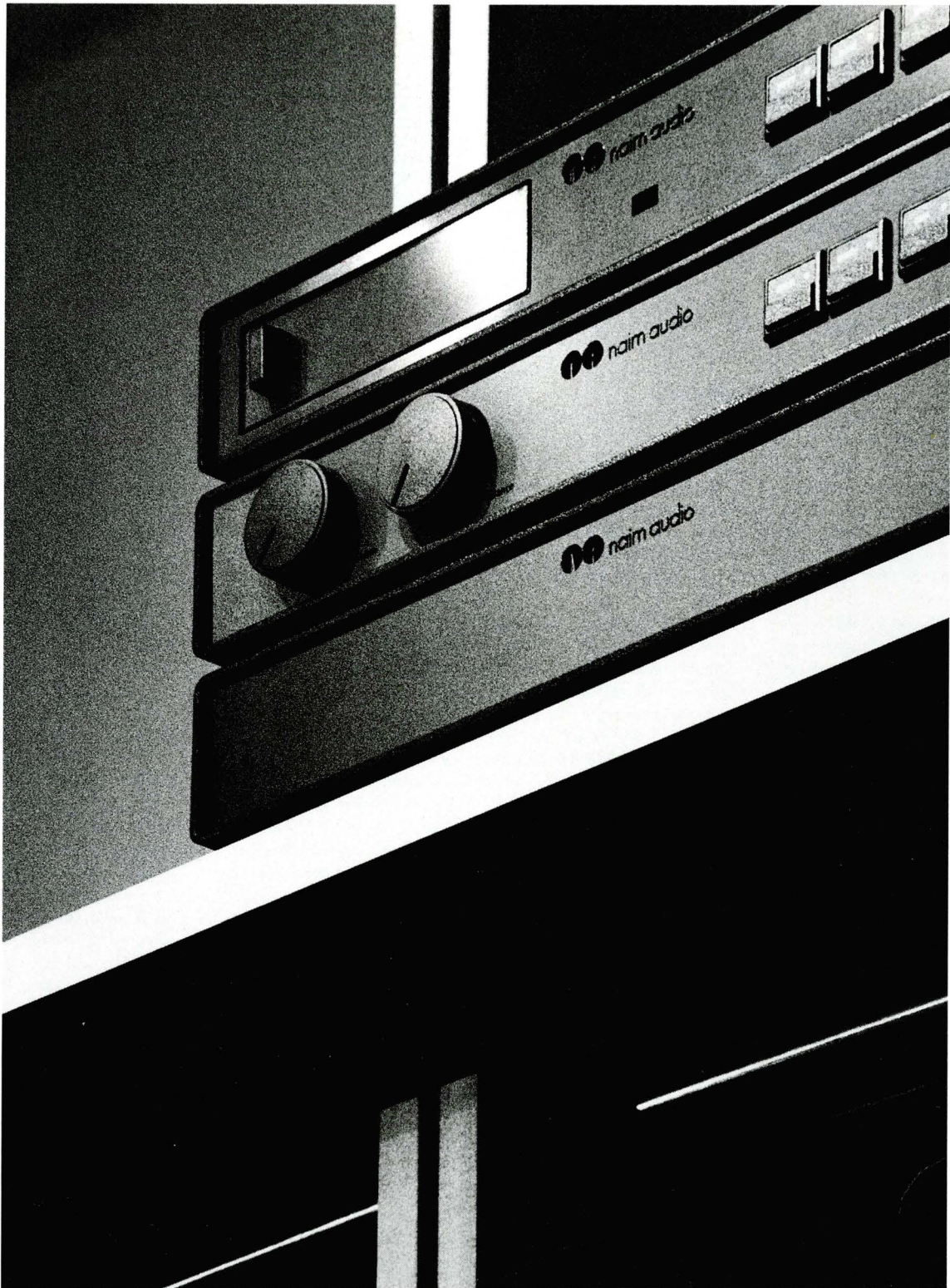
The Naim CD3 fits comfortably within your budget and makes a fine choice for someone chasing a detailed, dynamic

performance. So does the Micromega Stage 3, which can later be converted to a transport and supplemented with an outboard DAC. You could, of course, go straight for a two-box player, like the Teac VRDS-T1 transport and D-T1 DAC combination.

Making your Arcam amplifier sound less restrained is a little more difficult. I certainly wouldn't recommend attacking it with a soldering iron, which is the only way to upgrade its power supply. I'd suggest either buying a hefty pre/power amplifier to drive your speakers — Sumo's Athena IIB/Polaris III combo, for example — or opt for slightly less power-hungry speakers (Heybrook Quartets springs to mind) with your existing amplifier. Likewise, I'd replace the turntable outright. Fitting another arm and cartridge will certainly alter its presentation but won't necessarily improve it. A base-level Linn Sondek LP12 would complement any of the CD players mentioned.

Goldfinger

I consider myself a cross between a vinyl junkie and a gadget freak. I have a treasured record collection and a remote controlled all-Kenwood system. I know I could have got a better-sounding system for the same money but I want to exploit the potential of this set-up without changing any of the components. My plan is to replace the Kenwood speakers (with the Mission 780SE?) then experiment with different interconnects. I'm also considering buying a Linn Klyde moving



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In the right deck, is a Goldring MM better than a Linn MC?

coil cartridge for my Linn Axis/Akito/K9, as I've seen an ex-dem one for £295.

D Wallis, Basildon

You should audition the Mission 780SEs although I reckon they're one of those speakers that doesn't really come on song with budget amplifiers. The same is true of the Mordaunt-Short MS10 but it's nonetheless more accommodating. Check out the MS20 as well, along with the Celestion 5 Mk2.

I wouldn't go overboard experimenting with expensive interconnects. Try the entry-level offerings from Cable Talk and the Chord Company. Both outfits offer well made, hype-free cables at reasonable prices.

Don't buy the Klyde, even though it looks like a bargain. Your turntable and phono stage simply won't do it justice. Stick with a good moving coil: if you don't like the K9 try a Goldring 1012GX or an Ortofon 540.

Symphonic rock!

My system consists of a Sansui AUX-417R amplifier, Sony CDP-770 CD player, Aiwa AD-F880 cassette deck and Jamo D-88TR speakers. I like to listen to progressive and symphonic rock. I'm not sure if I should upgrade my speakers: will that improve the sound much? If so, which floor-standers would you advise up to £500.

Andre Leurink,
a.leurink@technet.iaf.nl

With due respect to the Sansui, I'd encourage you to think about a more sophisticated amplifier before considering new loudspeakers. More revealing speakers might start to show up its limitations. Bearing that in mind you



Will the NAD 804 cope with the complete works of a band like Yes? What about Blodwyn Pig? Aphrodite's Child? Lieutenant Pigeon?

should look at speakers that will initially be well behaved with the AUX-417R yet sufficiently open to respond appropriately in the fullness of time to an upgraded amplifier.

Monitor Audio's MA9 Gold 2 is probably one of the most easy-going designs around and would be my first recommendation. Conveniently, its close-to-neutral character suits both rock and orchestral music. The efficient Mission 752, NAD 804 and Rega EL8 are also worth auditioning. However, do try to hear them with your own amplifier to make sure their balance suits you.

On her majesty's secret service

I want to update my system, which consists of an Onkyo A-803 amplifier, Mission 751 speakers, Technics SL-BD20

turntable, Aiwa AD-F450 and AD-S950 cassette decks and a Philips CD115 CD player. I have a particular hatred for the CD and would welcome your recommendations for a replacement. I'd also like you to suggest a suitable tuner. Juan Francisco Rodriguez Baez, jfrb@cic.teleco.ulpgc.es

If you want a significant upgrade without spending too much money it would be sensible to look at CD players around the £400 mark. The Aura CD50, Arcam Alpha 5 Plus, and Micromega Stage 1 would be the first I'd suggest you audition.

The next move should be to upgrade your amplifier. Again, look at spending the same sort of money, although any of the CD players mentioned will serve more costly amplifiers if you're feeling flush.

Tuners don't get tastier than Audiolab's 8000T — it's dolphin-friendly!



What else for a Rega speaker, but Rega's own Elex amp?

How much you spend on a tuner depends on how you intend to use it — as an important source or as a filler on your equipment rack. The Denon TU260L remains the king of the budget models while equipment like the Audiolab 8000T will satisfy the most picky broadcast fiend.

Natural contenders

I have a NAD 5425 CD player with Trichord Clock 2, Rega Kyte speakers and a Quantum 102/207DA pre/power amplifier that I bought second-hand about ten years ago. The pre-amplifier has DIN inputs and I have problems setting the volume level. The amp is simply too loud in this system and the volume control is poor so I have to use mildly attenuated interconnects, which aren't widely available at reasonable prices. I'd like to buy a replacement amplifier that is British, costs less than £500, and sounds substantially better. Any suggestions?

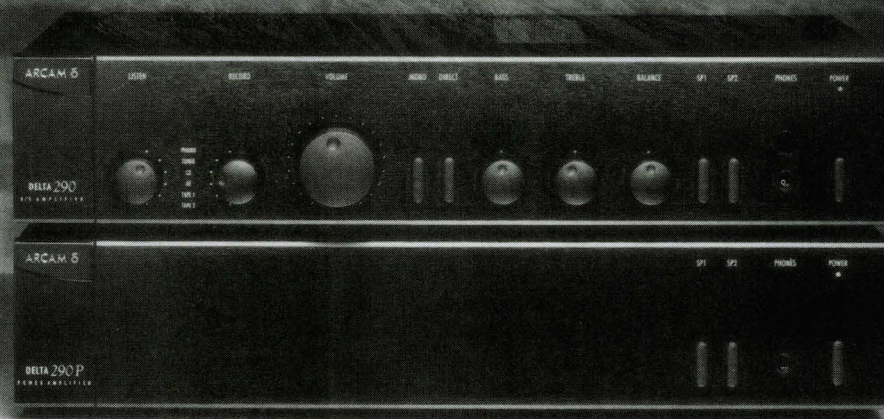
Keith McCulloch,
Worcestershire

You have two choices here: to buy a new preamplifier or to replace your existing pre/power with a modern integrated. Given the age of your power amplifier I'd incline towards the latter option. Today's better integrations should give you the performance lift you're after. Arcam's trusty Delta 290 amplifier fits the bill nicely, and is a good match for the Kytes. I can't say quite how it would perform with your tweaked NAD but it would make a good reference point from which to judge other amplifiers you audition. The slightly less expensive Rega Elex is also a natural contender, with a pair of Rega speakers.

Moonraker

I have a NAD 501 CD player, Rotel RA-930BX amplifier and Celestion 3MkII speakers in a room that's four by four

close your eyes and see



the Arcam Delta 290 amplifier and the new Delta 290P power amplifier

Close your eyes and see how a 75 watts per channel amplifier with "real clout" can, at the same time, be "subtle and intriguing." For this is how Audiophile magazine regards Arcam's Delta 290 amplifier. Discover why the 290 is one of "Britain's Top Ten Best selling amplifiers" with a "weighty, well-judged, detailed sound," (in What Hi-Fi's? view). Prove to yourself that "amplifiers of this calibre are certainly uncommon," as Hi-Fi Choice sees it. Finally, realise why Corey Greenberg of Stereophile magazine gushes "In the truest testimony to its easy superiority, the Arcam was the one I chose to listen to when I just wanted to listen to my fave recordings at night before I laid me down to sleep. To me, that sez it all." (Now that's *really* closing your eyes and seeing...)-Stereophile, July, 1994, Vol.17, No.7.

Next, witness the latest addition to the Arcam family, the Delta 290 power amplifier. Capable of operating in both stereo and dual-mono

modes (for bi-amping), the 290P gives any hi-fi or audio video system a whole new outlook, outperforming other power amplifiers costing twice as much.

Finally, put the 290 and 290P together, along with a pair of bi-wireable loudspeakers. Leave the 290 connected to the speakers' treble drivers and connect the 290P to the bass units. Now, play your favourite music; though you might have heard the epithet "working in perfect harmony" before...now you'll understand it.

Just listen. Simply sample the experience that is the Delta 290 and 290P amplifiers.

Just close your eyes, open your mind, and see the light.

ARCAM

For more information on the Delta 290 and 290P or other Arcam products, complete the coupon and post it to:
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The Handi-Remote shown is now supplied as standard with the Delta 290.

metres. Either the speakers or the system seem to run out of bass playing both rock and classical music. I wonder if my amplifier can handle bigger, better speakers. If so, which model would you recommend? C Skiopoulos, Greece

At the moment your system is well-balanced, if a little under-powered for your room. Bigger speakers — which would give you significantly more bass extension — would require a bigger amplifier. Those upgrades would then unbalance the system, shining a spotlight on your CD player, which might also need improving.

The easy and least expensive solution would be to swap your Celestion 3s for Celestion 5s. These won't give you trouser flapping bass but they will add some weight to your system's presentation. This will give you time to investigate CD players and amplifiers that will properly feed and control speakers with truly extended bass.

You only live twice

I have a Rotel RCD-965BX CD player and I want to add a DAC. Do you think buying an external DAC like Pink Triangle's Ordinal or Arcam's Black Box 50 will give me a significant improvement in sound? Or should I buy a more expensive CD player? George Stavrakis, Greece

The RCD-965BX responds quite keenly to DA improvements and either of the DACs you suggest would certainly improve its performance. However, for a truly significant improvement you'd be better off using the DAC with a dedicated transport. You could perhaps begin by using the DAC with the RCD-965BX then upgrade the transport later. The BB50 naturally works well with Arcam's Delta 250 with which you can exploit the combination's proprietary digital signal synchronising circuitry. There's also a 'matching' transport for the Ordinal in Pink Triangle's Cardinal transport. Another option worth considering, given the warm sound of the Rotel player, would be the Micromega T-DAC, to which you could later add the complementary T-Drive 2.



The A1000 amplifier is a big MF... Does it need a good stand, too?

Diamonds are forever

I am reasonably happy with the sound of my system, but would like to hear less sibilance in vocals and some more warmth overall. The system consists of a Pioneer PD-S703 CD player, Pioneer A-400 amplifier, Mission 752 speakers, Ixos 102 interconnect and Kelvin bi-wire speaker cable. I'd like to try a better speaker cable and I would also like a recommendation for a semi-auto turntable up to £200. Tony Wright, Lancashire

Rather than change your speaker cables I'd suggest you check out alternative interconnects. I've found Ixos 102 to be a little too exuberant in already lively-sounding systems. Try replacing it with Cable Talk's Advanced or The Chord Company's Cobra, both of which are evenly balanced with less effusive treble.

Before recommending a semi-auto turntable I have to say that I think it's hard enough to get a no-frills manual turntable that sounds decent for under £200. The Rega Planar 2 is my favourite at this price but if you must have semi-automation the choice falls between the Dual CS-505-4, the Project 1(E), and the Thorens TD-280IV UK. However, if you can live with-

out automatic arm-lifting and motor-starting you'll achieve worthwhile performance gains.

Feel the width

I'm extremely happy with my system: a Teac VRDS20, van den Hul carbon interconnect, Musical Fidelity A1000 amplifier and Heybrook Sextet loudspeakers. The only problem is that the A1000 is extremely microphonic.

I can't place it on a glass shelf or I get a screeching top end. The prohibitive width of the amplifier and CD player negate every stand on the market. Do you have details on the shelf sizes of the wooden stand holding the Dynavector amplifiers in the Shahinian/Dynavector system featured in issue 144?

My system is currently on a Habitat coffee table: nice sound but no room for expansion. Secondly, I need a turntable to replace my now outclassed Rega 3. Budget is £1,300. Or would an expensive cartridge get me close?

Harvie Rawlins, Reading

Firstly, if your A1000 is genuinely microphonic talk to your dealer about getting it fixed. I've used this amplifier on a glass-topped Mana stand and it didn't exhibit any such tendencies. Nor should it!

Micromega's T-series is the perfect two-stage upgrade for a Rotel.



There were two stands pictured in the Pear Audio system in issue 144. The largest of the two is The Monster, supplies of which, Pear tells me, are currently being disrupted by the troubles in Eastern Europe.

The smaller table holding just the amplifiers was made by London dealer, Auditorium, whom you might like to contact for details (0171-247 5000). Alternatively track down an Alphason New Concept, as an A1000 fits a treat in this wider than average table design.

Regarding your turntable: an expensive cartridge in a budget deck isn't the way forward. I'd suggest you investigate the Linn Sondek, Rega's recently released high-end model, and the Michell Gyrodec.

Shaken not stirred

I currently have a Nakamichi DR3, a Marantz PM-44SE amplifier, Mission 760i loudspeakers, Ixos 103 interconnect and Cable Talk Talk 3 speaker cables. I wanted to change the 760is for either 780SEs or 751s but a dealer told me to change the amplifier for a Cyrus III. What should I do?

Also, should I change the Ixos 103 for a Chord Cobra or van den Hul The Source? And finally, what stands are best for the Mission 760is? J Bedford, West Yorkshire

You'll certainly find that improving your amplifier will provide greater musical rewards than changing your speakers. The humble 760i can deliver a surprisingly sophisticated performance on the end of a high quality amplifier.

The Cyrus III would be a good choice but it's not the only suitable contender. The 760is will work well with a variety of models, including the Naim NAIT3, Audiolab 8000A, and the less costly Pioneer A-400X.

If you change your amplifier to one that's a little drier sounding — such as the Cyrus or Naim — you'll benefit from changing your Ixos 103 to a cable with a more even balance. I'd recommend trying Cable Talk's Studio 2 or Monitor 2.

About the best match I've found with the Mission 760i loudspeaker is the Atacama SC24, especially when filled with silver sand.

The Jimmy Hughes

Experience

In the summer of '92, I made a simple but radical improvement to my hi-fi system. I reversed my loudspeakers so they pointed towards the rear wall. Results at first were mixed, but I persevered and now, some three years on, I could not go back to conventional placement.

Reversing your speakers won't make a terrible system sound great, but it will improve homogeneity. If you've longed for sound that has colour, vibrancy, dynamics, excitement, detail, attack, yet at the same time is sweet and musical so that flaws and imperfections in recordings fail to interfere with your enjoyment of the music, this could be a vital step towards what must seem like an impossible ideal.

Most people mistakenly believe good sound depends on having outstanding equipment. Yet we've all heard expensive quality systems sounding poor, and mediocre combinations sounding good. Often what wins the day is not absolute quality but presentation. For example, putting speakers up high creates a delightfully natural effect that effortlessly fills the room with music. Hi-fi often sounds cruelly revealing and fussy because we sit close up to highly directional speakers.

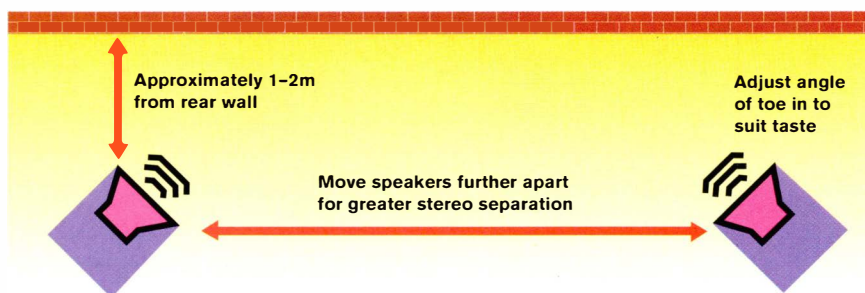
If you wanted to light a room evenly and comfortably, you'd never set up two powerful searchlights, placed ten feet apart, pointing straight at your eyes. The result would be impossibly bright and harsh. Yet isn't that what we do with speakers?

Unfortunately, simply reducing the treble on a bright system doesn't work either. Harshness is reduced, but with it goes brilliance and vibrancy; you end up with dull, muddy sound. What's needed is more evenly distributed treble, not just less of it.

Photographers employ reflected or diffused light to avoid harsh contrasts and create smooth illumination that looks bright, even, and natural. If you've ever driven a car facing bright low sunlight, you'll know how even a 'clean' windscreen can suddenly look dirty when lit from the wrong angle. It's the same with sound; unless they're tonally very smooth and/or fed with refined source material, speakers that fire straight at you can easily create harsh contrasts. Distributing sound evenly creates a more natural effect, and ironically allows for a more vivid tonal balance without things becoming brash and disjointed.

In the days of mono it was necessary for the loudspeaker to create a soundstage all

Jimmy Hughes is the Voodoo King of hi-fi – there's not a bottle of snake oil or pointy widget that he hasn't tried. This month he takes the concept of speaker placement to a new extreme.



by itself because a dimension was missing from the recording. Stereo changed all that; suddenly it was desirable to have directional speakers to highlight channel separation. But try this simple test; listen to your system in mono on one speaker and see how it sounds. Most systems rely on the spatial qualities of two speaker stereo to hide their limitations.

On such systems, if the stereo effect of a recording isn't especially vivid, or you play a mono recording, the sound becomes confined and constrained. Of course you blame the recording, but it's arguably a system problem. If everyone still listened to single speaker mono the great majority of modern hi-fi systems simply wouldn't be good enough to be tolerated! Stereo makes it possible to get away with sound of poorer absolute quality without it being painfully obvious, except when the recording itself lacks spread. Single speaker mono is ruthlessly revealing. Only a really capable system does a decent job under its scrutiny.

Reversing speakers helps create a soundstage acoustically in the room, and minimises the phase and amplitude irregularities of multi unit speakers, giving more realistic sound. Reversed speakers expand the sound of two-channel, twin-speaker stereo by using the rear wall as a kind of acoustic mirror, creating reflected sonic images. The result should be a smoother, more homogenous sound. Ambience and depth are more fully revealed, recreating the acoustic of the recording venue with increased fidelity. Recordings with close balances and microphone spotlighting

retain their up front qualities, but lose that 'dogs dinner' effect where everything crowds up and instruments or voices protrude unnaturally. Bass depth seems to increase too, perhaps because the treble is smoother and better integrated. LP surface noise and tape hiss are much less irksome for being less sharply projected, yet treble detail/brilliance isn't necessarily sacrificed.

This increased coherence means you don't hear individual speaker drive units, just a clean, seamless sound. Given reasonably bright sounding speakers and a reflective rear wall, there should be no loss of treble bite. If anything there's more detail; as the presentation is smoother and better integrated, the ear assimilates the complete sonic picture more easily. The added space and depth produced depends on how close you place the speaker to its reflective rear wall. A metre gap seems about right in my view. Surprisingly, stereo imagery is hardly sacrificed. You may lose a little precision, but front to back depth images are greatly enhanced. It should be easier to 'place' instruments and voices in a precise acoustic space because the whole presentation is more coherent. Moving the speakers wider apart helps maintain left/right separation if this seems diluted.

With speakers reversed, the music is recreated between, behind, and in front of the enclosures, as if the space itself were being energised and the music projected on to a screen. This increased width and depth can cause the speakers to disappear as sources of sound, leaving you with seamless, holographic music.

Seismic

I have a pair of Audiostatic ES-100 Electrostatic speakers which are similar in standard to the famous Quad ESL-63 and very popular in Germany, Holland, and Belgium. I've got them partnered with an Orelle CD-160 CD player and Orelle SC-101 preamp/SP-101 power amp, and like many owners of electrostatics could never do without the uncolored transparent open sound produced by dipole speakers.

Yet there is a lack of deep bass a problem with most speakers of this type. I have tried to remedy this by buying Chord *Blue Heaven* analogue interconnect cable and adding Audiolab's 8000DAC digital to analogue converter. The bass was improved by the cable, but not by the DAC. Of course, adding a subwoofer would be one answer, but it's an expensive course to take and I haven't got room. Do you think a better DAC or interconnect could do the trick?

B Nissen, Mortsel, Belgium

Although on the surface the Audiostatic and Quad share similar properties, the Audiostatic needs healthy amounts of amp grunt to extend the bottom end properly. Audiostatic have addressed this somewhat by producing a matching bass panel for the ES-100, but there is no substitute for the sort of heft that a behemoth amp can bring. Begin by checking out the Sumo Athena IIB/Polaris III combo and keep going through the usual line-up of big muscle amps until you find something that works with the ES-100. Although a big amp may lose some of the speed and grace an amp like the Orelle can bring, the vice-like grip it has over the speakers will prevail.

Speakers with strong articulate treble can often seem to lack bass depth, even when the low frequency extension is more than respectable. Anyone who's ever experimented with speaker crossover design will know how bass tightness and control, plus subjective depth, can be profoundly influenced by changes to the tweeter circuit. If you really do want to be sure of getting a much fuller

deeper bass, then only by adding a good sub are you certain to get a result. Other changes like a different DAC or interconnects may help up to a point, but it's unrealistic to hope that significant changes in bass depth will result. If Audiostatics own bass panels don't suit, try and hear REL's new Stadium II or the MK V125 subwoofers; if either of these do what I think they could for your system, you'll soon make room!

Tube lust

I currently have an Audiolab 8000A amplifier, Marantz CD-63 CD player with Audio Alchemy *Dac-in-the-Box*, and Triangle *Titus* speakers on sand filled stands bi-wired with Cable Talk 3. With the valve revival at an all time high I'm thinking of a tube amp for my next upgrade. What should I consider and what are the pitfalls to avoid?

David Chin, Singapore



The classic stereotypes are of valve amps sounding rich and warm, with transistor designs sounding bright and forward. Yet, as if to try and produce the opposite of what many enthusiasts expect, often tube amps sound really sharp and lively while many solid state models try to sound silky smooth and refined! A nice British compromise is the Minstrel from Quantum Audio, a valvetransistor hybrid that sounds rich yet very articulate and alive.

The line stages are solid state, but the output uses tubes, and the sound is assertive and detailed with no loss of refinement. At the other end of the scale, something like Audio Innovations' Series 700 (above) sounds very sweet and dynamic with no lack of grip: a classic valve amp that's beguiling to listen to. Luckily your Triangle speakers are pretty efficient and don't need too much driving, so you should get good results with even a low powered valve amp. They also are an exquisite match with the Series 700.

HINTS & TIPS

In the first of a new series, Jimmy Hughes tells you how to make the most of your system. This month — the basics of setting up a system.

1 Half the battle is buying the right components; if you've chosen wisely, you're more than halfway there. But even the best system will stand or fall by the level of care taken over installation, and getting these important details right.

2 With turntables it's vital to get the cartridge and arm correctly aligned. Small differences in arm height will affect the cartridge's VTA (vertical tracking angle), producing shifts of tonal balance. Most cartridges sound best when the arm is parallel to the surface of an LP when viewed from the side, but if it sounds harsh, try lowering the arm base a few millimetres. Raising the arm so that the tube slopes down to the cartridge will usually result in a sharper sound. Likewise, setting the cartridge at or near its manufacturer's maximum playing force will usually improve tracking, but may result in dull treble and heavy bass. With the playing force set too light the treble will be bright and open, but perhaps a shade rough with audible break-up in heavily modulated passages. Getting the cartridge headshell fixing bolts tight helps improve clarity and fine detail.

3 There's much less to tweak with CD players, but like turntables they're sensitive to the surface they stand on. A light support is best although there is a school of thought that advocates high mass supports, on the basis that these act as a sink for vibration — however, they're only suitable for solid floors. Obviously, purpose designed audio stands are best suited to the task. It's also a good idea not to put CD players too close to items like amplifiers or tuners; many CD players put out a fair bit of RF hash that can adversely affect the sound of sensitive amplifiers, as well as ruining radio reception. Much of this noise can only be eliminated if the amplifier has a mains earth.

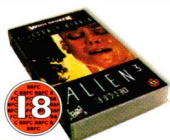
4 If your amplifier has a tape-monitor input, try your CD player through it because it almost always sounds best. This is because you're bypassing the amp's main selector switch, thereby avoiding an extra set of contacts and shortening the signal path. The exception to this rule is where the amp has a special CD Direct input. Many integrated amplifiers have two sets of speaker binding posts, often marked A and B. In many cases set B sound audibly better, because they're closer to the main circuit board. Try it!

5 It's always worth making sure the screws that secure the speaker drive units to front baffle are nice and tight; if they're slightly loose the sound will lose much of its tightness and control. Tweeters that have three or four bolts around the dome should be checked for tightness too. If they're loose, the result can be a rougher treble quality. These bolts usually hold the magnet in place, so never ever undo all of them at once! If your speakers make provision for bi wiring, but you're using just a single set of cables, experiment with connecting to the tweeter and woofer terminals, you'll find there's a difference. Make sure the links connecting both sets of terminals are making a clean and tight connection. Some speakers use special wide flat metal plates to connect the two sets of terminals together for single wiring; these should provide a good link, but try replacing them with ordinary thick solid core wire; the result should be improved sound. Many enthusiasts think speakers always sound better with grilles off, but often they help the drive units to integrate better and take some of the sting and brightness out of the treble. It's so easy in hi-fi to win the battle and lose the war! Most speakers (or their stands) are fitted with floor spikes, to improve rigidity so the enclosure is very solidly fixed. This improves tightness and control, but sometimes the overall sound is uncomfortable, especially during heavy climaxes. Try listening to the speakers minus spikes, especially if you've got a concrete floor. I'll have more to say about this in a future issue.

6 Cables are directional; if you're listening one night and things sound a bit off, try reversing your CD to amp interconnect or your speaker cables, and see what happens.

7 One final tip; only make one change at a time, and always keep volume levels absolutely identical. Don't make further changes or tweaks until you're certain the difference is an improvement!

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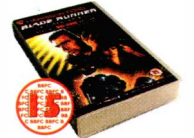
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Your sound in

You don't have to read many issues of *Hi-Fi Choice* to notice that lots of audio people seem to delight in slagging off the sound quality of most modern recordings, and the way that things are done in commercial studios. Sadly, many of the comments seem to me to be distinctly less than well-informed, and often display an almost total lack of understanding regarding the realities of why and how studios work. What I want to do in this article is to explain some fundamental points about the recording business, starting with a few general principles...

What Goes On In A Studio?

I hope it's fairly obvious that most professional recording studios are, first and foremost, business ventures — they exist to make a profit, and it's a competitive industry. Also, quite a few musos have long-since suffered permanent hearing damage, therefore don't fully appreciate decent sound quality, and/or don't give a toss as long as they shift product. Plus there's the fact that at least 95 percent of music is ultimately played on sub-£300 micro/mini/midi systems, bog-basic car stereos, and walkies. Given all of this, the desires of the audiophile listener are, hopefully understandably, not exactly a top priority.

Ah, you may say, but there's no reason why studios couldn't do things with more respect for sound quality, and if some of the studios I've been in are anything to judge by, it's a hard concept to argue with. But when people start moaning about the hardware and practices that even the best studios use, I tend to think that they're often talking through a small and depressingly ignorant posterial orifice. Let's take a look at what goes on...

Mike Me Up, Scotty

Most studios use microphones that are well on the way to being the best that money can buy — with a few specialist exceptions, the most-commonly used type is what's called a large-diaphragm condenser, and these generally cost £1,000-£2,000 apiece. Their quality can be pretty brill, but the signal that arrives at the mixing desk may not fully reflect this: for a start, the mikes are generally run on phantom power (the 48

Music would sound better if recording studios didn't mess it up... or would it?
John Peel explodes some popular pro-sound misconceptions.

Volt supply shares the audio cable), and it's well-known that this has a slightly adverse effect on the signal.

More importantly, the cable itself may be anything from fifteen to fifty metres long, which isn't exactly the best recipe for preserving signal integrity; worse still, the type of cable most-often used is what's called 'star-quad' layout (excellent for rejecting hum and other interference), with cheapo PVC insulation — neither count as many people's idea of maximising sound quality.

Interference rejection is obviously a basic requirement, especially when you consider the vast array of interference-producing kit in a modern studio, but there's also the commercial point that a typical studio may easily have a total of something like a thousand metres of signal cables — and using, say, Teflon-insulated linear-crystal oxygen-free silver wiring would cost £50,000 or more.

Mixing It

Once the signals reach the mixing desk, things get worse. Most folk agree that the simpler the signal path, the better the sound, so it's possibly not the best of news that a large studio desk will have more than

five thousand pots and switches — items which are not noted for their beneficial effect on sound quality. Also, any particular signal passing through the desk may go through fifty-plus integrated circuits, and the ones used are often somewhat less than state-of-the-art.

Then there are the effects units (reverb/echo, compressors/limiters, enhancers, graphic/parametric EQ, etcetera), so not only are there more components in the signal chain, but also, as some of these units are digital, there are piles of ADCs and DACs. Worse still, these effects need to be applied to different channels or tracks in different orders, so time-pressure practicalities dictate the use of patchbays for flexible hookups. Though the jack plugs and sockets generally used might have been fine for 1920s' telephone switchboards, they don't really qualify as the ideal way to connect high-quality equipment.

Speak Of The Devil

The monitoring systems used by most studios don't generally come in for much audiophile praise either. It's true that the first requirement of pro-studio main monitor speakers is that they be able to play at appallingly loud levels (mostly because everybody in the studio may well be half-deaf, not-surprisingly caused by years of listening at appallingly loud levels). And it's also true that when pro monitors are occasionally assessed in the hi-fi press, they don't usually score too highly, typically being criticised for a lack of transparency.

There are several points here — on the one hand, you can argue that if you can't hear it, you can't fix it or mix it, but anybody who's actually done pro work will confirm that, within reason, the out-and-out quality of the monitors doesn't really matter too much. What counts is that the engineer and producer know the system's little oddities inside-out, so they can allow for them.

Over the years, I've heard quite a few hi-fi people argue that there are plenty of very high-quality speakers that would be better for the job; but, by and large, I don't agree. The majority of high-end speakers have oddities that could hardly be described as little, and, most particularly, they tend to fail on one count that is especially impor-

their hands

JOVAN DJORDJEVIC



tant in studio work: they only really deliver at just one 'hot-spot' listening position. Given that the engineer may be moving around a six-foot wide desk, and shifting over to effects racks — also that the producer and musos must be able to hear what's happening — wide dispersion is utterly vital. A further point: almost all studios use several sets of monitors, to check that the final mix balance will work effectively on the kind of kit that punters are likely to be listening on.

Interestingly, there seems to be a current trend away from using the really heavy-weight monitors at the mixdown stage, instead listening on the pro equivalent of mid-to-upmarket hi-fi speakers; and, even if studios do use their biggies, they're probably run at more like the levels punters will use (maybe peaking around 100 dBA, C-weighted, fast response, measured at three metres). I agree entirely with the thinking behind this (unless you're producing solely

for, say, the dance/club market), which is why I use slightly-modified Epos *ES14s* as my primary mix monitors.

Getting It Down On Tape

For multitrack recording, there are four main pro systems: wide-gauge analogue, usually with noise reduction (Dolby A, Dolby SR, or maybe dbx), open-reel digital such as DASH (Digital Audio Stationary Head), and the cassette-based digitals (ADAT and Hi-8). More than just a few musos and producers prefer the 'analogue sound': some cite a certain 'sweetness' or 'warmth'; others (seemingly contradictorily), cite a certain 'roughness'; while many like the inevitable dynamic tape squash produced by pushing the levels (though God alone knows why they don't realise that the same effect can be achieved with a suitably-set level- and frequency-keyed compressor). Still, digital is indubitably dish of the day, and most of us have no

problem with its supposed limitations; also, at a practical level, we appreciate its much faster access times. Even if the multitrack is analogue, the final stereo mix is usually recorded on DAT, and though DAT is often rubbished in hi-fi circles, I for one find it totally adequate.

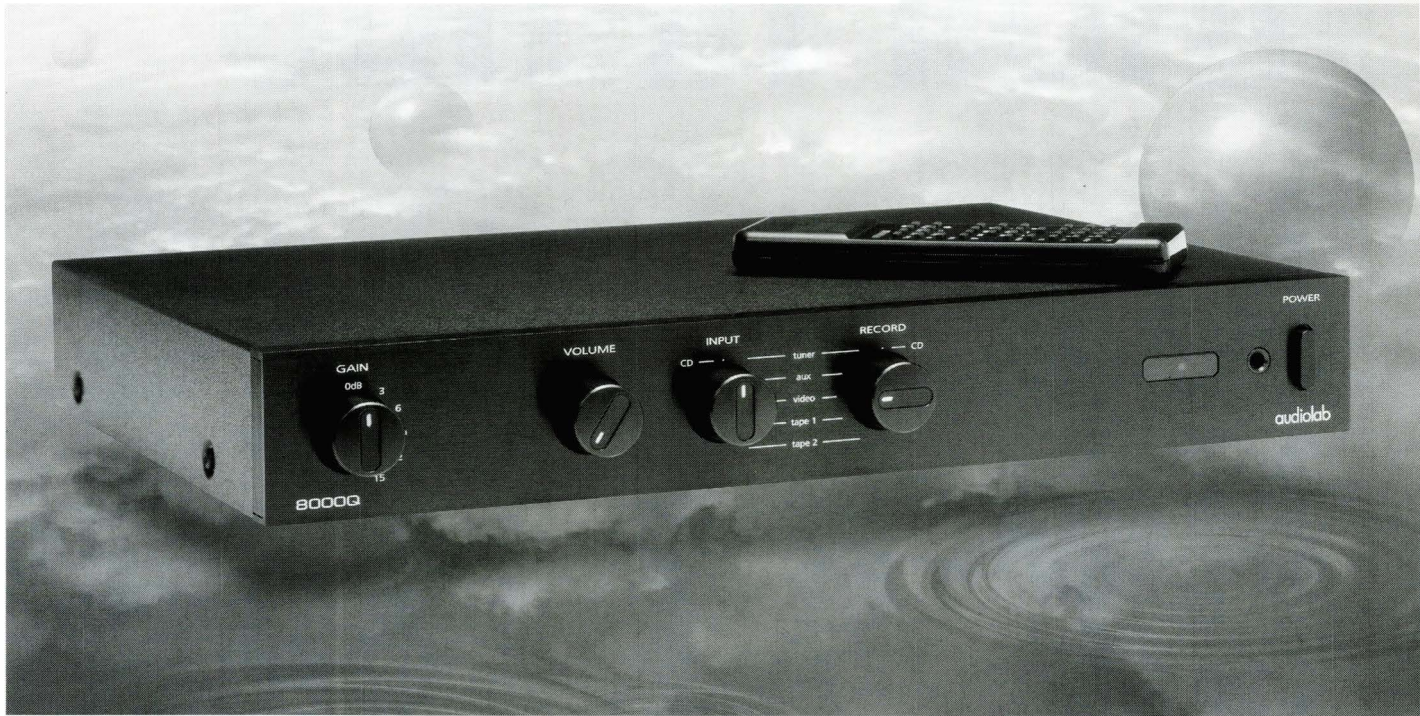
Why It's Done This Way

Let's suppose that you set up a 'purist' studio (presumably without multitrack, EQ or other effects) — what's going to happen? Many musos are not exactly the most consistent of performers, so the chances of you getting a whole band to give a first-rate performance in a single take aren't much higher than meeting Elvis in Tesco's. And quite frankly, given that the musos themselves know their limitations, their reply to your invitation to use a non-multitrack studio is likely to comprise just two words, the second of which is 'off'.

On the effects front, certain types have



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long been accepted as pretty much essential — EQ is jolly useful, because having spent two days getting a decent take out of the vocalist, he or she isn't likely to love you deeply if you then say, 'Hang on, this sounds too warm; would you mind doing it all again?' And unless you're going to record everything in a cavern, you need reverb, simply because music sounds 'dead' without it. Likewise, a certain amount of compression is almost obligatory, partly because most punters do a good deal of their listening in less than ideally-quiet environments, but also because, if you play them uncompressed and judiciously compressed versions, they mostly vote for the compressed version. And the same story applies to enhancers.

Of course, no effects unit is likely to improve signal integrity, but that ain't the point: given that we're talking about the music biz (emphasis on word 'biz'), anything that on balance makes the music more effective (sorry), fully justifies the loss in other departments.

The Mazumah Matter

Something that crops up in almost every discussion about studios is that boring (huh) old subject of money. A big pro studio can easily cost a couple of million to set up (if you're interested, quite apart from the land and building costs, the desk alone may come in at half a million, while, perhaps surprisingly, the air-conditioning systems can account for 25 percent of the damage). Even if, as often happens, some of the finance comes from a muso who wants tax deductibles, this kind of studio simply *has* to charge a minimum of £100 an hour to cover basic costs.

When you allow for the fact that it seldom takes less than three months to produce an album (that's typically a track a week), you're looking at costs of seventy-plus grand, and that's before engaging the services of a decent and credible producer. Okay, you may argue that such a figure is peanuts compared with the potential profits, but that's not the point — until the profit's actually in the bank, the upfront money is totally at risk.

As it happens, there's a major change going on in the way that quite a lot of music is recorded. With the arrival of cheap(ish) digital recording, and the improved quality of midprice (mostly digital) effects, it's now practical to put together, say, a sixteen-track home studio for not much more than fifteen grand all-in. Given that a lot of modern music doesn't need the facilities that large studios offer, and that many musos prefer working at home, so-called 'project' studios are sourcing an ever-growing proportion of commercial work.

The quality of project-studio efforts may not always be totally top-notch, partly because there might just be a slight difference between a £200 reverb and a £10,000 Lexicon, but also because the muso who's

doing his or her own engineering may not know quite as much about the game as the people at Abbey Road. Looking on the bright side though, it does mean that musos who can't afford to finance a regular studio production, or who can't persuade a record company to bankroll them, are now more able to get their work recorded, and, with the parallel growth in self-publishing and 'independent' distributors, released.

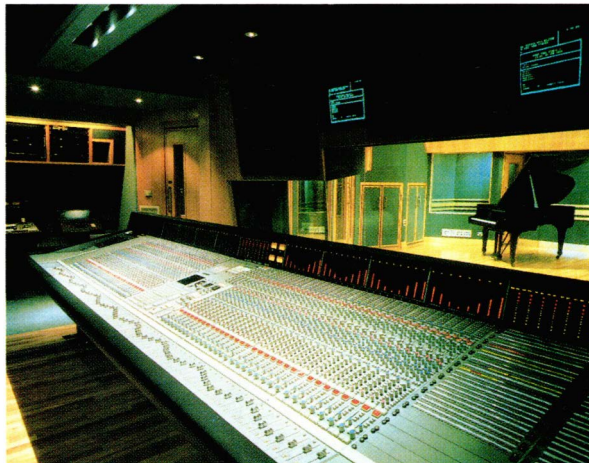
The End Product

Given the vastly long and complicated signal chain in most studios, I must admit that I'm amazed by just how good the best of

Where many releases do fall down, whether they be new productions or transfers of old material, is after they've been through what's called post-production. The stereo master may be fine, but before it gets to manufacturing, the post-prod people get their hands on it. I'm certainly not criticising all the people working in this area, but more than a little of their output might reasonably be described as being somewhere between sloppy and disgraceful.

When re-mastering oldies, they often work from copy-copy-copy-masters, using tape decks that aren't remotely lined-up to get the best from the tapes, and they don't have the time/facilities/inclination/brains to carry out some intelligent sweetening. With modern digital systems, it shouldn't matter too much that they're using copies, but their kit may be less than top-notch, and they often use monitors that are too poor to reveal the problems, or that lead them into applying effects like EQ little short of stupidly.

Yes, you may think that I'm exaggerating, but there's an easy way to prove my point: with ever-more compilations of back- and current-catalogue being released, just compare versions of the same track on different discs. Some are excellent, others awful. Hmm...



Look at the knobs on that! £500k's worth of knobs, to be precise...



Pro monitors are designed for wide dispersion, not subtlety.

modern commercial recordings can sound. Hi-fi people often criticise them, but in many cases, it's because they simply have no idea how good the signals on their CDs or vinyl really are, many of the seeming problems lying in their own systems.

Taken overall, it's true that the very best of old all-analogue recordings can be truly excellent, and that some modern work is ludicrously and inappropriately over-produced — but, as I find it, much of what we're doing today is, in terms of realising and communicating the essence of music, pretty damn good.

The Bottom Line

This is pretty straightforward: like it or loathe it, moan and groan if you wish, but the music biz simply isn't going to change its ways to suit the minority demands of hi-fi users. Of course, some product will always be better than others, but though it's true (if not exactly original), to say that 'the wider you open the window, the more the muck blows in', most systems don't remotely do justice to *any* of the signals they're fed with, and since that's something you can (bank imbalance permitting), do something about, that's where I'd be inclined to start.

Think of it, if you will, like this: a decent grand piano can cost thirty grand — does anyone really and seriously suppose that a pair of £200 or even £2,000 speakers can do full justice to the reasons why people buy such instruments? Yes, it would be nice to imagine that they can, but perhaps not entirely realistic...

Not the DJ, but a rare (though not yet collectable) combination of ex-consumer, ex-retailer and ex-reviewer, John is one of the few professional writers covering the entire audio chain, all the way from music gigs to hi-fi rigs. ▲

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21st Century

MPT 1336 is hardly visible from planet Earth, but it was recently spotted through Barry Fox's telescope, and guess what...

Fox

In the July issue of *Hi Fi Choice*, I recommended that the British Radiocommunications Agency (RA) should allocate radio frequencies that can be used for wireless loudspeakers. A few days before the magazine was published, I went for a meeting with the RA. They had a present for me. It is called MPT 1336.

Published in November 1986, MPT 1336 has a pretty dull title: *Low Power Devices, Transmitters and Receivers for use in the VHF Band 49.82 - 49.98MHz*. Read the dull text and you'll find it also covers two other radio bands, 36.61 - 36.79MHz and 37.01 - 37.19MHz. All three bands can be used for 'cordless audio devices for use with domestic audio equipment'.

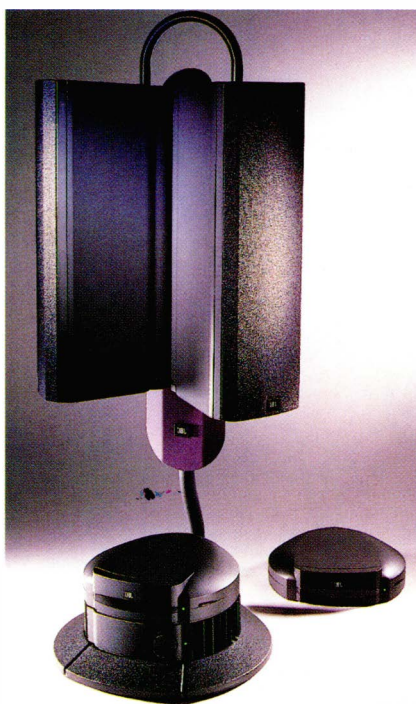
As long as the equipment is designed to conform with basic technical requirements, it can get 'Type Approval'. This means that it can be sold for use without any operating licence. The main requirement is that transmission power is below 10µW for the lower two bands, and 10mW for the higher band. The equipment can be used only with a small integrated aerial, which limits transmission range to within one house or flat.

Read deeper and you will find that Section 1, Sub Section 12 specifies that 'cordless audio devices are headphones or loudspeakers in which the wired connection to the domestic audio equipment has been replaced by a short-range radio frequency link'.

So why are people illegally importing American wireless speakers that work at around the 900MHz band, which is smack in the middle of the cellphone band and thus likely to suffer serious interference?

I'll bet that nobody has spotted that, since 1986, MPT 1336 has made it legal to sell cordless loudspeakers as long as they operate as above. There are so many frequency allocations and so many dull documents that it is only when someone goes digging that the gold pops out. The new management at the Radiocommunications Agency went digging. The civil servants who had previously run the show could not be bothered to check their own records, even after I had specifically raised the question of wireless speakers.

The two lower bands are 180 kilohertz



Cable-free speakers are a reality, after all...

and the higher band is 160 kHz wide. The nominal bandwidth for VHF/FM radio broadcasts is 250kHz. This carries an FM stereo signal with 15kHz audio bandwidth. So taken together, the three bands provided by MPT 1336 should be able to provide high quality left, right, centre and rear channels for surround. And there is a wide margin to stop the signal spilling over into adjacent bands.

Modern digital techniques, of the type developed for digital audio broadcasting, should make it easy for the same bands to carry a high quality digital signal. Because the MPT does not specify any particular coding technique, the manufacturers must set their own transmission standard.

Because the allocation is in the low VHF band, the circuitry will be simple and cheap to build. Manufacturers do not even have to pay for a copy of the specification — it is available free of charge from the Radiocommunications Agency, at Waterloo Bridge House, Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UA. Just quote the MPT 1336 number.

So the next time you are trying to lay extension speaker wires around the house, just remember that your work is completely unnecessary. All it needs is for the audio industry to agree a coding and transmission standard and start selling wireless speakers.

Disc combat goes on

The debate over high density CD continues, with Philips and Sony battling against Toshiba's system. Philips' boss Jan Timmer had a rare meeting with the press recently and I asked him whether he is willing to fight a standards battle on high density CD.

"I have never been one who was willing to die for a standard or for a principle", said Timmer. "I believe there is more to this new standards issue than a simple A/B comparison of two disc systems. Marketing power is a key factor in making something a success. With CD the marketing was good. There was only one company with a rival system (JVC) but that was eliminated, like the eight-track cartridge.

"This year there will be 1.75 billion CDs sold around the world. So I think we can call CD a success. But the skill in putting the system into the marketplace was as important as the invention of the disc.

"It is also important to maintain the integrity of the CD system. New discs must be backwards compatible. I have jealously guarded the integrity of CD. CD-ROM, CD-i and the new recordable and erasable CDs will all be compatible. We must talk about the family of CD, in the interests of the consumer and the computer industries.

"We always had a dream of creating the CD family and we have almost succeeded. This has nothing to do with corporate pride. It's about transparency and integrity of the CD system. I will defend the Philips system because I think it fits best in the family. I will continue to defend it for as long as I can and for as long as I must. It's 14 years since CD was launched, and it has been a long road. I want to complete the job."

Timmer's reference to erasable CD confirms that Philips plans to launch recordable and erasable (Phase Change) versions of standard CD, later this year or in 1996. Erasable high density disc will follow in 1997, with a dual-layer, double-density version arriving in 1999. ▲



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Morten Warren has designed two new speakers for the Solid range. At £249.90 for a pair, the *HCM1* offers superb value for money, can handle up to 150 Watts, and its toughened copolymer cabinet and curvaceous front baffle all act to reduce coloration. This speaker is also available singly, as a £124.95 centre channel unit.

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Does home taping really kill music?

I would like to ask a question about copyright law. On the radio they sometimes say things to the effect that it is illegal to record music off the radio, but no-one ever says this about video. On the rare occasions of a simulcast, is it illegal to record both the video and the radio signal? If so, this seems absurd and can't be right. In practice, surely no-one gets prosecuted for recording things for their own use? It's only when you sell copies for profit that they do anything.

I'm a total radiohead and I follow all the news of Digital Audio Broadcasting with great interest. Will some DAB receivers have a Toslink output for a MD machine, as the tuner currently is the weak link of my system? I would upgrade if it wasn't for the promise of DAB in the near future.

Andy Benton
Edinburgh

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Videos and audio recordings which are copied from broadcast material and made purely for your own use, or shown for educational purposes, are 'technically' legal. This allows the individual to 'time-shift' material for viewing/listening at a later date. However, this loophole in the law does not allow for 'archives' of broadcast material, which are kept as a library or collection.

If any such recording is subsequently loaned, hired, sold, or even shown in public, it contravenes the Copyright Designs and Patents Act, 1988. The same act applies to any form of copying of prerecorded material, whether it be for dubbing, remastering or remixing, or producing compilations.

In reality, if you build a collection of — otherwise unavailable — recordings made from broadcasts for your own use, you are unlikely to get prosecuted, even though you are technically breaking the law. If you start to loan these recordings out, be prepared for prosecution. If you make a profit from these recordings, be prepared to receive the full weight of the law. If you start to produce low-quality 'bootleg' copies of generally available material, with fake covers, then you deserve to spend the rest of your life in an iron coffin, with spikes on the inside.

Digital Audio Broadcast is still some way from full introduction. It's currently in the testing stage: the standards have yet to be set, and we have no idea if a DAB machine will have a Toslink output as yet, and a fully-functional DAB service is unlikely to appear before the first years of the 21st century. Why not treat yourself to a decent aerial and good tuner in the interim period?
Alan Sircom, Letters Editor

Boom-bang-a-bang!

I read Malcolm Steward's article *A Nice Pear* (issue 144), with particular reference to the Shahinians, with the usual interest, yet one quizzical eyebrow kept getting higher and higher. It seemed he had only listened to rock and pop (or similar), where the boom-a-bang bass element is not only all-important but is already built-in. His only foray into anything approaching 'classical' music was Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man* which hardly has classical nuances; it is what it says — a fanfare and a



very stirring piece, at that. But what is all this about 'bass extension'? He only seems to have this one thing in mind.

The most sensible remark that I have heard about bass came from my friendly 'local' dealer when he rigged up my Cabasse *Skiffs* for me. He had come all the way from Surrey (i.e. over 130 miles) to do this, and while we were listening to our first track I remarked that they had a good bass. He immediately replied "Yes, but only when required". I have listened to them with that wisdom in mind ever since. If the composer does not write a strong bass line for a piece then don't try and find one.

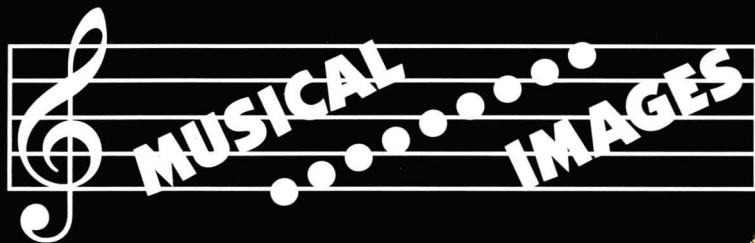
Incidentally, could you be more careful with your front cover? I found myself surreptitiously hiding the July issue cover and hoping that guests didn't think I belonged to some association that dabbled in 'sex machines', with the implication of attendant black leather, wrist thongs, chains and whips et al!

L G Neville
Tewkesbury, Glos

Although his collection tends toward rock, Malcolm Steward has been known to spin the odd classical, jazz or even operatic number on his system. The recordings mentioned in his review are a précis of the test itself, citing tracks that highlight a particular aspect of the system's performance, including classical passages from Copland, Varèse and Jean Fery Rebel.

As someone who has had experience of both the Cabasse Skiff and the Shahinian Diapason loudspeaker, I'd argue that neither overstate the bass line. What the Shahinian does is add the sort of depth and weight to really low organ pedal notes and timpani that only vast amounts of cash can bring. This extended bass has little place in compressed pop music, as it is more noticeable with large orchestral pieces and reflects the extensive classical collection of the designer, Dick Shahinian.

The Sex Machines cover was a reference to a ditty popularised by a well-known American male vocalist, James Brown. Referred to as 'The Godfather Of Soul', Mr Brown has had many hits since the 1960s. I apologise for any confusion.
Alan Sircom, Letters Editor



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MORE

The Royal Scam?

Oh dear, here we go again, another review that stands a previous one on its head. Your panellists (drawn from the trade, I see) think the Kenwood 7050R amp timid, lacking in oomph, bass weight, clout etc, while the Audiolab 8000A gets Recommended (issue 140).

So let's go back to June '94 and an *On the Couch* review in *What Hi-Fi*. This panel were volunteers from the general public. So presumably with no axes to grind. What did they think of the tracks discussed?

The 7050R took first place, with the panel all enthusing about the bass weight, clarity, atmosphere — in short, just about everything that your panel didn't like.

Is it any wonder that most of us out here think that reviews are just one big scam? Why don't you abandon them altogether, or at least only conduct them with a panel of people who buy the stuff, rather than the people who sell it?

A Caffrey
Preston, Lancs

Let's set the record straight. First, our team of industry types have been chosen for their listening skills and impartiality — they need to be impartial, as they cannot see what products they are listening to.

A brief look at the track record of any company's product submitted for test will show that our team has no axe to grind. A good amplifier in a test will not sway the blind panel in future tests. It's almost impossible to remove such bias in sighted tests.

Secondly, our blind tests are precisely level matched. Almost imperceptible changes in volume level can have dramatic effects on the performance of a machine. Accurate level settings at least place everything on an even keel.

There will always be differences in taste, especially when different systems are used. This is why we use the same test systems, year in, year out. We do not assume our tests are perfect, but we do strive to be consistent and impartial. Hi-fi buyers should be careful when they decide which reviews are the most trustworthy...

Alan Sircom, Letters Editor

Synergisation

Blind group listening tests of hi-fi may have their place, (July 1995 editorial), but their results are virtually meaningless to your readers as indicators of performance. In fact, Paul Messenger gives one example in the same issue!

Equipment compatibility is largely an unknown quantity. It therefore follows that tests carried out on one system can only give an indication of performance in the context of that system. Note that the 'system' extends beyond the little black boxes tested to include cables, stands, room interface — even the type of music being played.

I accept that it is impractical to test every possible permutation, but I do miss the increasingly rare reviewers who use their experience (and other gear which they may have to hand) in order to wring the maximum performance from the equipment under test. After all, we read reviews to decide what to audition — not what to avoid!

Fortunately, there are good dealers available who do just that, although they are restricted by their franchises.

So please, when your reviewers come across a symbiotic matching of equipment, whose performance far outperforms the sum of its parts, let us readers know. It would be extremely useful.

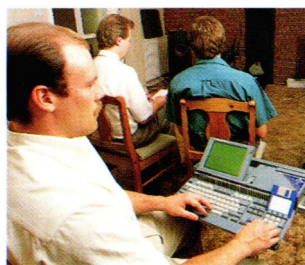
David Carter
Trowbridge, Wilts

Rehd fever is spreading

After reading your enthusiastic report on the Rehdeko speakers, I would like to share some of my experiences. My record player is a Micro solid 5 with DNM *aciore* cartridge, Meridian 200/263 CD player and DAC, plus 204 tuner. These all run into a DNM *primus* preamp and DNM PA1 power amplifier driving Rehdeko 145 speakers. All the cables are DNM.

It took me years to afford such a purchase and at the moment, I'm awaiting to upgrade the record player to a DNM *rota*, upgrade my small DNM to a *six*/PA2 version and, of course, the Rehdeko 175s.

Like Paul Messenger, I feel very split in my opinion. There are moments when my system sounds terrifically convincing,



Blind test or blind alley? We think they're worth the effort — do you?

yet sometimes I feel my system is far too hard and unnerving. Almost all of my guests complain about this harshness.

This makes me less secure and I am worrying if I am on the right path. There are moments when I feel I should investigate other power amps, staying with the same preamp and speakers, or exchange the Rehdekos for some warmer and more relaxing designs.

I don't know how Paul Messenger's Rehdekos are driven, or if you have heard either the system I am using, or the fully upgraded DNM system.

Jean Michael Crettaz
Zürich, Switzerland

For your information, Paul uses his Rehdeko 175s with a Linn LP12/Armageddon/Aro/Archiv turntable, Naim CDS CD player, NAT 01 tuner, NAC 52 preamp, 2x NAP 135 monoblock power amps and Naim NAC A5 loudspeaker cable. All the electronics sit on Mana Acoustics supports.

This may not be the ultimate Rehdeko driving system, but we have yet to hear that ultimate system. If you are a Rehdeko owner and you believe that you know the secret of the big Rehdbox — or you simply hate the French folly — then let us know.

Alan Sircom, Letters Editor

Mugger off

Perhaps you will find some comfort in the loss of yet another reader. Surely it's part of the equation to lose some, but mug the rest for lots of dosh. It's always a comfort to lie upon a bed of bank notes!

Though a good read, I admit that the prospect of winning decent gear did tip the balance when buying *Hi-Fi Choice*. I could do with some good hi-fi.

However, the new policy of

mugging your readers over the phone, doubtless stringing on the call for as long as possible disgusts me. So you will lose my custom — such is life.

G Hanley
SW London

Ever since the great 0898 telephone-sex-lines fiasco, people have been wary of entering telephone competitions. However, the facts belie the truth. The combination of postcard and stamp is only slightly less expensive than a cheap-rate, premium-call entry.

We do not sting our callers with overtly long calls — the maximum length of call is around two minutes. If you feel that Hi-Fi Choice is a good read, surely this is spoiling the ship for a ha'porth (39p in new money) of tar.

Alan Sircom, Letters Editor

Spin, spin, spin the wheel of justice

With reference to your article 'The New Deal' in issue 143, let me transport you back to 1972, when one Ivor Tiefenbrun walked into my shop — Hi-Fi Corner in Edinburgh. He explained that it was his company that had just produced the Linn LP12. I was impressed by his turntable, and he in turn was amazed by my unique demonstration and the quality of my after-sales service.

This consisted of the usual switch-box demonstration to narrow the field down for the customer, then withdrawing to the living-room-style setting of our uncluttered demonstration room for the final choices. I had found that a system sounded better without other equipment in the room. We also provided free coffee, installations, cable and two years' free service.

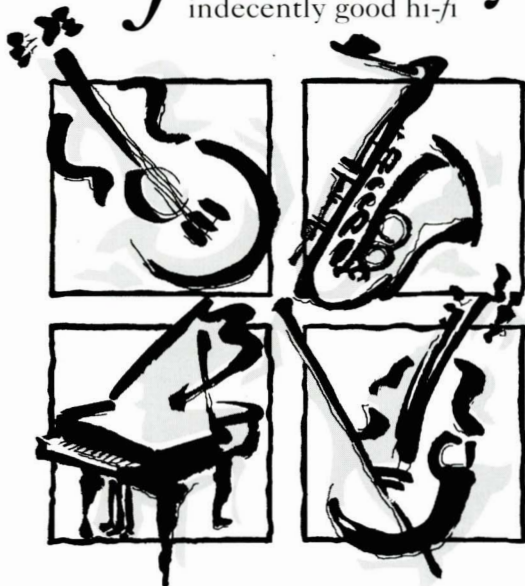
Ivor came over sometimes to help on Saturdays, discovered how effective my methods were, and the Single Speaker Dem Room was born. His dealers adopted similar demonstration methods, and principles of good service and after care.

I suppose it's understandable that he rather than the originator should get the credit for a concept which, and I quote, "revolutionised the way in which hi-fi was sold".

Russ Andreus
Kendal, Westmorland ▲

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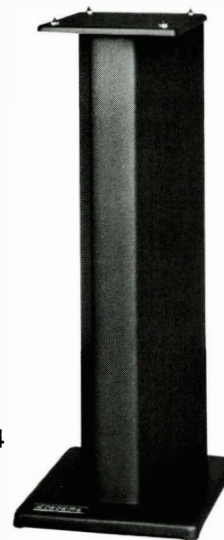
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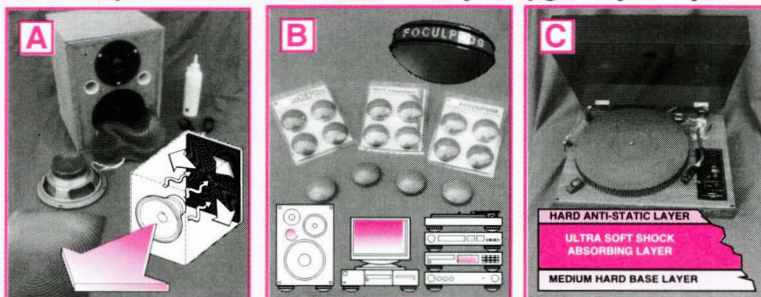
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MODERN



Alan Sircom selects another brace of time-honoured hi-fi components.

Sony WM-D6C Professional Walkman

The late '70s were exciting times for youth culture. I remember hearing the late, great Kenny Everett being so impressed by the original Sony *Stowaway* that he pushed the headphones up to his mic during a live broadcast on Capital Radio. I'm getting old — that was fifteen years ago...

Even a year can be a lifetime in the heady world of the personal cassette player. No one would expect a decade-old Sony *Walkman* to be a going concern, however good its performance. Yet the *WM-D6C Professional Walkman*, currently the oldest product in the entire Sony catalogue, still hangs in there, unchanged.

In fact, it still hangs in there as one of the best tape machines you can buy. By today's ultra-miniature standards, it's a dinosaur — no flash bass-boosts, DSP, exotic casework or pretty LED displays. It's big, it's heavy and it looks dated, yet it makes recordings that put most full-sized machines to shame.

Open up the *Pro Walkman* and it's easy to see why. Rather than a simple-to-make chipped circuit,

the *Pro* is packed with discrete components and hefty motors. There is nothing that's in the least bit superfluous; it sports manual tape selection, but no bias adjustment, so keep to good-quality TDK tapes that stick to the IEC standards like glue. There is a level indicator, but it is a simple five-LED affair. It even lacks some cassette basics, like an end-of-tape stop. If you are likely to forget to switch the tape off at the end of a side, you can quickly kiss goodbye to the tape — do it too often and say sayonara to the *WM-D6C* as well.

Over the years, the reliability of the *Pro Walkman* has caused some concern, but in reality there were rumoured to be two good justifications in Sony's favour. First, many of the dodgy *Pro Walkmans* out there in the early days were cheap 'grey imports', smuggled into this country from the near and far east. These often came supplied without English instructions and had been shipped under less than perfect conditions.

The other big underminer of the *Pro Walkman* was its users. Some treated it like a conventional tape deck, or — worse still — a piece of rugged studio gear, and then wondered why their *WM-D6C* fell to bits or only recorded in one channel. However, if you give a *WM-D6C* the kid gloves treatment, caring for it as you would a high-end record player, you'll get good long-term results.

The *Pro Walkman* isn't really cut-out for the active life of a personal stereo. There are more rugged, more convenient, more economical and more lightweight players at a fraction of the price. They may not have the purity of sound quality that the *Pro* can give, but they're better suited to life in a back pocket.

Instead, use the *Pro* for what it was originally intended — an excellent recording device. With the addition of a decent set of stereo mics, you will be able to make superb recordings (Michelle Shocked's

CLASSICS

The Texas Campfire Tapes was made with one). Used in the home, only the best full-size machines such as Nakamichis and Pioneers can produce better sound quality.

For many years, its agricultural, minimalist, anti-hero chic made the *Pro* the tape deck for anyone with 'flat earth' inclinations (Naim users). It gives one the look of someone who takes their recording seriously, yet without the bank breaking that comes with massive Nakamichi *Dragons* and *CR-7s*. It's still very popular; popular enough for Chord to manufacture a DIN-to-minijack cable in its Naim-friendly *Cobra* interconnect range.

If you use the *Pro Walkman* in the home, the optional six-volt power supply is not an option, it's a necessity — unless you want to open an account with Duracell. It eats four AA batteries at a stretch and once they begin to go off, so does the speed stability. There are after-market power supplies for the *Pro*, giving a cleaner set of volts than can be delivered by the Sony plug-top. One fashionable variation in the '80s was a modified Naim Snaps or Exposure power supply. Others have used rack-mounted computer-grade power supplies. Today, RATA still produces a huge £400 supply specifically for the *Pro*.

So, with all that audiophile backing, it's clear that this is no ordinary *Walkman*. Ten years on, the *Pro Walkman* is still the serious player for us hi-fi types. It's not the easiest machine to live with, but it is certainly one of the most rewarding to use.

Whatever you do, don't use it on the bus, simply to listen to the East 17 concept album. Treat it with care and use it as if that tape for the car is an unreleased Beatles master tape, and you will get astonishing performance from a very cute machine.



BBC LS3/5A

No round-up of classic products would be complete without the BBC *LS3/5A* speaker. Designed to be a compact monitor for classical and speech programme in the BBC's OB (outside broadcast) units, the *LS3/5A* was originally developed in 1975, to replace the *LS3/5* produced a year earlier. It is known as a Grade II monitor to the BBC — meaning that it is suitable for checking the quality of broadcast, but lack the fine resolution of Grade I monitors (like the *LS5/9*) used for determining microphone placement and tonal balancing. However, the *LS3/5A* found favour with hi-fi buffs around the world, probably due to its clarity and diminutive cabinet volume.

Wherever the BBC appeared in vans or buses, so did the *LS3/5A*. Often, the speakers were connected to quite prosaic music centres on road-show buses, and the sound quality garnered from these systems usually surprised the unsuspecting public. Many people who owned similar systems were stunned by the high-quality sound in these buses, and soon the reputation of the *LS3/5A* spread outside of hi-fi circles.

Being a BBC design, the consistency of its components and construction should make it possible to use



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SOUND ORGANISATION

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a 1995 left-hand channel match with a right-hand channel speaker made in 1975. Such precise tonal matching has effectively frozen the design. There have been several changes over the years, including improvements to the B110 driver and crossover in 1987 and — more recently — the addition of bi-wire terminals. However, these changes brought the production back on course and are not supposed to affect the sound. Obviously, making such a tightly specified product places considerable demands on the company licensed to manufacture the speaker.

Today, four companies produce the *LS3/5A*: Spondor, Harbeth, Rogers and KEF, all having historic connections with the speaker. Both Spencer Hughes, founder of Spondor, and Dudley Harwood, founder of Harbeth, worked on the original *LS3/5* project in the BBC's Design Department before forming their own companies. Rogers produced *LS3/5As* almost from the outset and — save for a brief period in the early '90s — has made them ever since, turning out almost 50,000 pairs in that time. Rogers recently introduced the *AB1* subwoofer for the *LS3/5A*, which adds extra bass and dynamic range to the speaker and provides a matching stand. KEF has traditionally produced the T27 tweeter and B110 bass driver for the speaker, and last year the company introduced the Raymond Cooke series, which includes a pair finished with silver-grey grilles. Likewise Harbeth, who only recently entered the *LS3/5A* fray.

Several companies have also taken up the *LS3/5A* licence over the years, only to fall by the wayside. Companies like Chartwell (acquired by Rogers parent company, Swisstone, in 1978), Audiomaster, Goodmans, RAM and JPW all attempted the BBC design with varying degrees of success.

With 20 years of hi-fi development and tweaking between the launch of the *LS3/5A* and the present day, it's interesting to see how far (if at all) we have come. Five years or more ago, it was still the finest classical monitor around. While keeping up with the competition, the *LS3/5A* is today a classic design whose time is slowly running out. Its strengths are superb clarity and a slightly warm-sounding honesty of tone. Its BBC heritage is evident, providing it with a sound very reminiscent of Radio Three and Radio Four broadcasts.

The phrase 'dynamic' is not one that springs to mind when listening to the *LS3/5A*. Partner it with some outrageous amps and sources and the sound begins to come alive. On the other hand, placing the *LS3/5A* with components of a similar ilk and the speaker can sound a little uninspiring.

The prime example of this is in the bass. Use a lo-fi system, cheap leads and a pair of lightweight stands and there will be little true deep bass to speak of. Swapping the electronics for more high-end samples, using good cables and moving over to a pair of heavy Slate or Target *R1* stands can transform the sound of the *LS3/5A* dramatically, adding about half an octave of weight and grip to the bass. As can the Rogers *AB1* subwoofer.

Gratuitous tweaking does pay dividends with the *LS3/5A*. Although the basic properties of the speaker remain unchanged, extremely careful attention to speaker placement will open out the soundstage and transform the low-level detail and overcome any mid-range bloom. Try to place the speakers at two corners of an equilateral triangle, with your listening position at the third corner. Then aim to give both yourself and the speakers at least a metre from any

adjacent wall, experiment with different speaker-stand interfaces and toe-in a handful of degrees at a time until you find the optimum position. Obviously, this is best performed with a friend's help. A couple of hours spent positioning the speakers should provide you with several years of pleasure.

No matter how far you push the ancillaries, however, there are shortcomings of the speaker which you can't get around. The obvious lack of deep bass and dynamic limitations aside, there is a minor anomaly that becomes more and more noticeable as familiarity increases: a mild yet peculiar zing in the upper mid-range and lower treble. This comes in the guise of a larger-than-life quality to the upper registers of pianos and guitars. It's a very beguiling sound, but not quite as accurate as it could be. Then, there's the time-smear, which will never excite the rock and roll listener. Many of these problems have been addressed by speakers that improve upon the basic *LS3/5A* design, like the Harbeth *HL/P3*. It is worth remembering, however, that without the BBC *LS3/5A*, speakers of that ilk would simply not exist.

Despite its shortcomings, the *LS3/5A* design still keeps up with the alternatives in the field — just. I could name more than one reviewer who feels that the *LS3/5A* is the ultimate small box speaker. So, the BBC *LS3/5A* remains a fine yardstick by which all small loudspeakers can be judged. For classical listeners in a small room, this is still one of the best speakers around. **AS** ▲

☒ Harbeth Acoustics Ltd, Unit 1, Bridge Road, Haywards Heath, W Sussex RH16 1UA. ☎ (01444) 440955

☒ KEF Audio Ltd, Tovil, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6QP. ☎ (01622) 672261

☒ Rogers International UK Ltd., 310 Commonsides East, Mitcham Surrey CR4 1HX. ☎ 0181-640 2172

☒ Spondor Audio Systems, Station Road Industrial Estate, Hailsham, E. Sussex BN27 2ER. ☎ (01323) 843474

Charity Auction

As a final note, in memory of a dear industry colleague, Spondor has offered a gorgeous pair of Rosewood *LS3/5A* loudspeakers for postal auction, the proceeds of which will be donated to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. This is no normal pair of *LS3/5As*, as they use specially selected drivers, and their construction was overseen by Spondor MD Derek Hughes. These speakers are bi-wired, use oxygen-free cable, and will feature a special replica of the original oval Spondor logo.

We are inviting bids for this unique loudspeaker. The highest bidder will be contacted by us and, in exchange for a cheque made payable to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund for the specified amount, a superb pair of Rosewood Spondor *LS3/5As* will be despatched. Please write to *Hi-Fi Choice, ICRF/Spondor auction, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ* by Friday 15th September 1995, enclosing your bid, your name, address and daytime telephone number. The bidding starts at £400, but please send no money now.

Rules

The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. The highest bidder will be notified by telephone. We regret that the auction is open to UK residents only. We regret that we cannot accept any cheques with the original bid — any moneys sent with the original bid will be considered to be independent donations to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund and will be forwarded along with the winning cheque. Bids submitted for the auction of the *LS3/5A* loudspeakers will not be used for marketing purposes. The act of entering the auction will be taken as acceptance of the rules.

SEVENOAKS HI FI



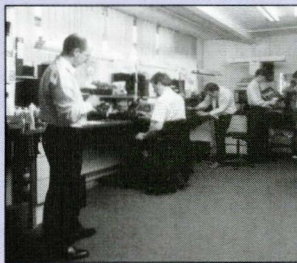
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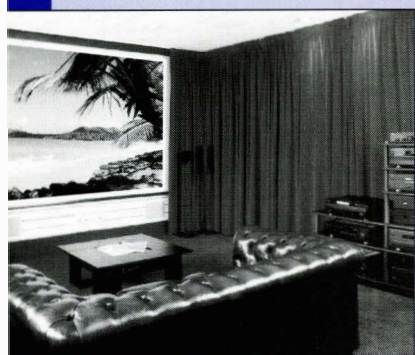
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meridian



551

All Meridian components, from the simplest to the most complex, are designed to be operated by the touch of a single button on the MSR remote control.

The 551 integrated amplifier is no exception. It will provide the same, very high, standards of music reproduction as every other model within the superb Meridian range. Utilising a dual-mono configuration similar to that used in the 555 power amplifier, the 551 can deliver enough current to drive most loudspeakers with control. Combine this with a high quality pre-amplifier section that includes many of the technical features of the 501 pre-amplifier, and you have a superb performer, suitable for all applications.

However, the real benefits of the 551 only materialise when it is used with other Meridian products like the 506 or 508 CD players and the 504 digital tuner. Thus, creating an advanced, and flexible digital remote control system.

audiolab



8000Q

With the introduction of the new 8000Q pre-amplifier, Audiolab are able to offer a true 'audiophile' product, capable of working within any ancillary combination.

New 'Zq' technology ensures ultra low noise and distortion, while a printed circuit layout realizes the optimum (shortest) signal path.

The 8000Q is best described as a purist design, yet it certainly is not minimalist. Six line, and three tape inputs mean it is an ideal partner for Audiolab's own 8000P or 8000M power amplifiers.

For more details on the complete Audiolab range, including the 8000A, 8000C, 8000CDM, 8000DAC, 8000T and 8000PPA, contact your local Sevenoaks Hi Fi branch.

monitor audio



STUDIO 12

The breathtaking, new STUDIO 12 loudspeakers from Monitor Audio, clearly show the no compromise approach they have to design and construction. This is obvious the moment you see them. Whether they are finished in a standard satin veneer or a luscious grand piano lacquer, the STUDIO

12's are stunning.

All of the models within the new STUDIO series offer a combination of a gold anodized tweeter and an aluminium alloy bass/mid range driver. If partnered with suitable amplification, the STUDIO 12's offer remarkable transparency and the necessary focus to reproduce very complex passages of music with glorious accuracy. To experience the Monitor Audio STUDIO series of loudspeakers, including the STUDIO 20SE, just visit our branches in Sevenoaks, Chelsea, Croydon, Guildford, Watford and Witham (Essex).

arcam



ALPHA 5+CD

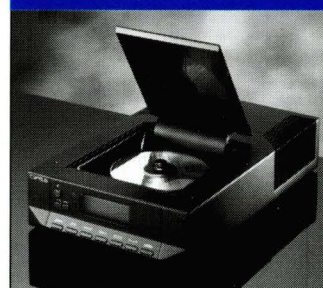
When the original ALPHA CD was launched, few could have thought that it was destined to become such a success.

Over the years the Alpha outsold every other model (from Britain and Japan) in its price category, and although other manufacturers made wholesale changes as new technology was developed, Arcam kept to their original philosophy.

Today the new ALPHA 5+CD still uses multibit conversion. Arcam, firmly believe that this reproduces instruments and vocals naturally. With an improved master-clocking device on its DAC board, the ALPHA 5+CD player can provide technical accuracy and musical enjoyment.

You will discover the Arcam Alpha and Delta series at all Sevenoaks Hi Fi branches.

cyrus



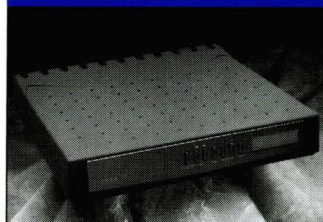
DAD 7

The DAD 7 CD player is the one box derivative of the acclaimed DISCMASTER and DACMASTER. Like these, the DAD 7 utilizes a multibit conversion stage, which ensures that all music, from rock to classical, is delivered with a close attention to detail.

All Cyrus products are designed with the same innovative styling, and each reproduces music with natural sophistication. To improve performance further, simply add the PSX-R power supply, which isolates the unit from the mains, therefore reducing the chances of extraneous noise and glitches.

For more details on the Cyrus DAD 7, DISCMASTER, DACMASTER, PSX-R, FM 7 digital tuner, award winning CYRUS III amplifier and the new PRE-POWER amplifiers, contact your local Sevenoaks Hi Fi-Cyrus stockist.

quad



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hi fi connoisseurs and music lovers

The new **77** integrated amplifier embodies all of the hallmarks of quality you associate with Quad, which have made them such a well respected and successful manufacturer over the last fifty years.

Compared with many other integrated amplifiers, the **77** is revolutionary. The new **77** has almost limitless expansion capabilities, thanks to a new 'intelligent' remote control.

With a **77** CD player, and tuner soon to be released, this family of exciting products represent that rare breed of innovation and tradition, that is only available with Quad.

rotel



RA970BX

Designed and developed in the UK the new **RA970BX** is instantly recognizable as a Rotel product. With the same slimline styling and characteristically solid build quality as every other Rotel amplifier, it delivers the performance you would expect from models at twice the price. Four line inputs, a tone defeat switch, and a split volume knob provides finite adjustment.

When partnered with a suitable pair of loudspeakers, the new **RA970BX** is capable of getting feet tapping. 60 Watts RMS per channel means that bass lines are punchy, and treble is crisp.

For further details of the Rotel range, including the new **RCD970BX** CD player, and **RC/RB970BXII** pre/power amplifier combination, visit your local Sevenoaks Hi Fi.

castle



HOWARD II

There are no obvious revisions on the exterior of the new **HOWARD II**. Yet beneath the handcrafted, real wood veneer cabinet, are more closely specified components.

Castle's mastery of quarter-wave bass technology was evident in the original **HOWARD**. However, combine the new crossover with the off-set metal dome tweeter and fibre polymer bass/mid range driver configuration, and you have a loudspeaker that is adept at handling all types of music well.

The **HOWARD II** encapsulate all of Castle's style, offering nine real wood finishes on all of the models in their range, like the compact **TRENT II**, **DURHAM 900**, **SEVERN** and **CHESTER II**.

marantz



CD63SE

Marantz are one of the dedicated manufacturers that enjoys making recorded sound

as realistic as is possible. This development of pure fidelity has led the Hi Fi Press to bestow numerous Best Buys and Recommendations upon models within their range.

The **CD63SE** offers the kind of sparkling performance you associate with more expensive CD players. With a high mass drawer mechanism, and copper screening, ensuring unrestricted CD transportation and air flow, music is always reproduced faithfully.

The **CD63SE** also offers an easy upgrade path, via coaxial and optical digital outputs. With this pedigree, the **CD63SE** represents exceptional value for money.

nad



514

Nad's no compromise approach to the development of the new **514** CD player, has meant that many unique features and specifications have been demanded.

At the heart of this unit is a one bit dual digital to analogue (DAC) MASH converter. This maintains the purity of the all important audio path by eliminating the need for any capacitors. Thus, yielding real benefits in terms of musical detail and nuance.

The **514** also offers a new CDR audio compression circuit, enabling the **514** to make top quality recordings onto tape for a wide variety of listening environments, such as car audio.

To hear the new **514** contact a Sevenoaks Hi Fi near you.



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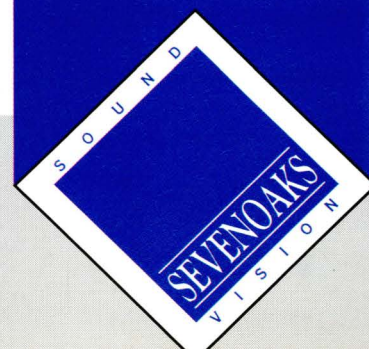
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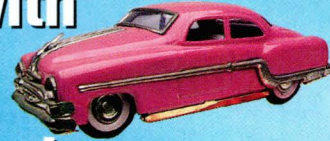
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In 1994, Alpine launched its Ai-Net system. It's a system which uses seriously advanced technology, but is simplicity itself to use. Ai-Net stands for Alpine Intelligent Network. It is like an audio system with a network of nerves, as it allows huge amounts of information to be transferred from one part of the system to another. All this information is in the digital domain, to prevent interference from the car's electrical system.

Ai-Net also makes system building a cinch. In short, it conspires to make the system sound better, simpler to use, with more sound control and easy system expansion. You can start with a simple head unit and a pair of speakers, and then follow with one of the many units can that be slotted into the system. The 'intelligent' part of the system is often be hidden away. Heard but not seen.

Ai-Net is also future-proofed, allowing for forthcoming innovations such as in-car navigation, so you don't have to throw away your in-car system when all those *Tomorrow's World* predictions become reality.

The Questions

1 When was Ai-Net launched?

- a) 1974
- b) 1984
- c) 1994
- d) 2004

2 What does Ai-Net stand for?

- a) *Alpine Intelligent Network*
- b) *Artificial Intelligence Network*
- c) *Air-Net*
- d) *Advanced Interactive Non-Executive Terminology*

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You will be asked to state the answers to the two questions above. Please speak clearly, and don't forget to leave your name, address and daytime phone number. Winners will be picked at random from all correct entries. You will be asked to inform us if you do not wish to receive details of further offers or promotions.

Calls cost 39p per minute cheap rate, 49p per minute at all other times. Calls should take no longer than two minutes.

Lines open at midnight on Friday August 11, and remain open until midnight on Friday September 15th, 1995.

Competition Rules

The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. All winners will be notified by post. The competition is not open to employees of Dennis Publishing Ltd, Alpine (UK) Ltd, their suppliers, agents or associates. We regret that the competition is open to UK residents only. No cash alternative will be offered. The act of entering the competition will be taken as acceptance of the rules. You must notify us if you do not wish to be informed of any special offers or promotions. For a list of winners, write enclosing a stamped address envelope to *Hi-Fi Choice*, Dennis Publishing Ltd, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

Billy Vee

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EISA AWARDS

A dozen heavy hi-fi products walked into the room. They were big, although each one was not not much larger than a small truck. They introduced themselves as the 12 EISA Award Winners and I felt inclined to believe them. So they let go of me. I winced. My shoulder ached.



CD PLAYERS

Then the blond gave me a look you could pour on a waffle. "You interest me. Rather vaguely. Now, could you find out which is the best CD player between £150 and £250? What are your charges?" she breathed in the sort of voice you could feel in your hip pocket. I knew where I could put my hands on a dozen machines. "I get twenty-five bucks a day and expenses — when I'm lucky."

BUDDY, CAN YOU SPARE A KLYNE?

I sat down on the edge of a deep soft chair and looked at her. She was worth a stare. She was trouble. She was stretched out by the new two-box Klyne preamp in next month's Statements, so I stared at its fascia. "There's more where that came from," she whispered seriously. She tried to keep a cute smile on her face, but it kept going blank on her...



DIGITAL JITTERS

She had the jitters. I looked down and saw I still had my Gat in my hand. It was still smoking. Now I had the jitters, too. Did my digits really empty six slugs into her old man? I was still pondering on this when her sidekick sapped me. It turned dark. Everyone's got a blackjack these days.

ALSO

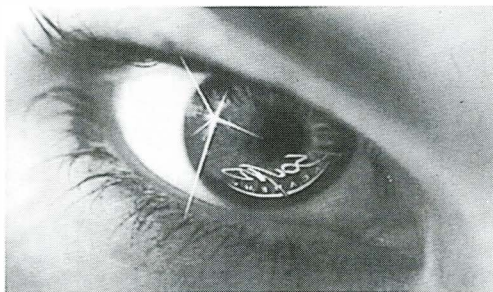
"The DA smells a lot of headlines on this one," she sneered. "There's a valve amp, flashy cans and even mains plugs in Sessions" • Say "Farewell, My Lovely" to your old amp, if you win a couple o' hits from Alchemist • Listen in on some EAR waxings from Jason K • Go and speak to a tough hombre with a jaw like the front of a Cadillac called 'The Moose' — he'll give you the low down on the rest of the issue for a quart of Scotch.

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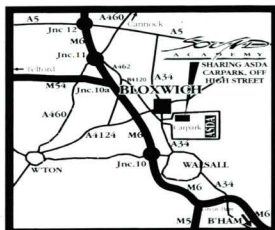
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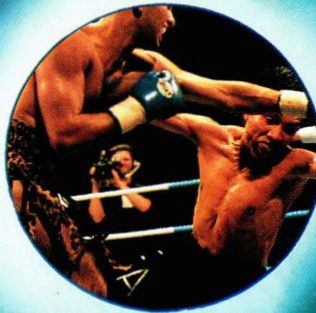
Is your TV so knackered it's heading for the Mablethorpe and district boy scouts league? If so, restore your home cinema system's Premiership status by replacing it with a new big screen telly. We've got a squad of new TVs on test all waiting for that big match debut.

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Super satellite supplement



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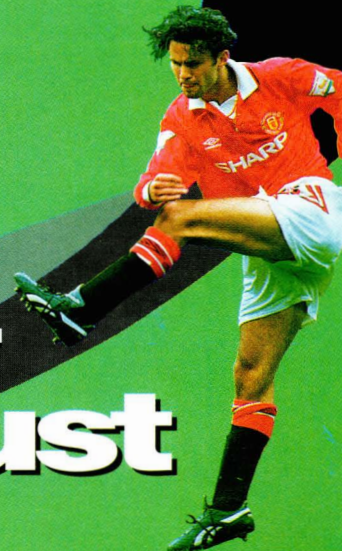
There are times when terrestrial TV is as interesting as a footballer's post-match clichés. If you want the cutting edge of TV (and we don't mean Jimmy Hill's chin), you've got to think satellite. Next month we bring you the definitive guide to TV from space: the programmes to watch, the equipment to buy, and most important of all, how Sky can transform your surround sound viewing. It's all in our action-packed satellite supplement.

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ON TEST

Cassette decks



Noted tape aficionado Alvin Gold gets to grips with 12 of the best-value decks you can buy today.

THE CAST LIST	
Aiwa AD-WX727	£170
Denon DRM-540	£160
Grundig CCF3	£200
JVC TD-V662	£270
Kenwood KX-7060S	£330
Luxman K-322	£200
Marantz SD-53	£200
Onkyo K-611	£430
Pioneer CT-S830S	£500
Sony TC-K461S	£190
Technics RS-BX601	£230
Yamaha KX-580	£250

This round-up of cassette decks features 12 new models, making it the largest group we have assembled for some time. Much development effort over the last few years has been diverted away from compact cassette to the new digital media, mainly DCC and MiniDisc, but as you might be aware, these new technologies have yet to take root, and the spotlight has now turned back to good old compact cassette.

Quite a few of the new machines include Dolby S in addition to Dolby B and C. One useful property of this system is that the noise reduction curve follows Dolby B fairly closely, and even though the amount of noise reduction is much greater at each frequency, Dolby S

recordings replay quite satisfactorily in Dolby B players. The most obvious change is a degree of mild compression that restrains the loud passages, or, to look at it another way, raises the quiet ones. These qualities are of particular use in high-noise applications such as in-car systems and when using headphones — where large and sudden changes in volume are potentially dangerous.

There has also been an increase in the proportion of decks that boast an automatic tape alignment system to set record bias, sensitivity and equalisation. In the absence of a separate fine bias control to manually tweak the upper frequency response following calibration, there is a danger with some decks that the calibration circuit will produce an error that cannot be

avoided. In practice, the problem seems to be limited to a minority of relatively inexpensive decks, usually because the adjustment is performed in few, coarsely spaced steps.

The tests that follow cover a representative cross-section of single and twin tape cassette decks at all but the very highest price levels. Where appropriate, some guidance about the suitability of particular decks for particular applications is given in the reviews.

How the tests were done

The cassette deck tests on the following pages are in two sets: measurement tests and listening tests. Of the two, the listening tests are the more significant, but it's important to keep in mind that cassette decks are peculiarly dependent on setting up. The qualities of a good deck are wasted unless it has been set up properly for the tapes it is to be used with. Similarly, comparatively minor technical shortcomings can make a deck near-useless for high quality recordings. In this instance, the numbers really do mean something.

The measurements were conducted in two parts. A Hewlett-Packard spectrum analyser was used to produce the wow and flutter plots, using a 3150Hz tone recorded to OVU (signal intensity reference), with Dolby B engaged. A perfect plot would look like a narrow, pointed cone; the amount by which they diverge from this ideal is the measure of their departure from perfection. Look especially for sharp, discrete sidebands which are likely to be audible. Well-distributed artefacts (like random noise in an amplifier) are less likely to be audible than clustered ones.

The remaining measurements were performed using a Lindos computerised generator and analyser. The tests included frequency responses using all tape types — some with Dolby, some without — and were measured at -10dB, which is a more critical test than the conventional -20dB. A pre-recorded test tape was also used to check compatibility with pre-recorded material, and many other tests were run (eleven plots of various kinds were made for each deck). Due to limited space, only a proportion of these are printed in this review.

Signal-bearing test tapes are from Abex, and blanks for the three tape groups are the TDK formulations closest to the relevant IEC standards, namely TDK AR (Type I/ferric), SA (Type II/super-ferric, or chrome bias) and MA (Type IV/metal). Any points arising are discussed in the appropriate places in the tests.

The bulk of the listening tests used CD as the original source and concentrated on the same Type II and IV tapes on the grounds that Type Is are too limited for high quality critical work, although they are perfectly suitable for general use. Headphones and loudspeakers were used for analysing each tape. All models were run in thoroughly and their heads cleaned and demagnetised before testing began. Equipment used came from Wadia and Marantz (CD players), Musical Fidelity and Denon (amplifiers), Tannoy and SD Acoustics (speakers), as well as Beyer (headphones).

Making great recordings

The nature of home recording has changed over the years. Once upon a time, cassette decks were bought for recording baby's first words, and quite a few were used for live recording of one kind or another. Almost all cassette decks had microphone sockets, and most hi-fi shops could offer at least a rudimentary choice of dynamic and electret microphones; sometimes even a basic mixing desk or two.

Not so now. There are almost no cassette decks with microphone inputs left in 1995, and home mixing desks don't really exist as a product category anymore. It seems that cassette decks are used to make recordings of only two main types these days. Most often they're used to make copies of recordings already in the owner's possession, and typically this means CDs or records. These recordings are then used in cars, personal stereos, and sometimes even through the same host hi-fi system to save wear and tear on records, or as a relatively fuss-free alternative to other sources for parties or background use. The other main use is recording radio programmes.

Bearing these facts in mind, the following checklist explains what you need to know to make great recordings.

- 1 Assuming your deck is used a few hours per week, the deck should be demagnetised every few months, and before every important recording session. Demagnetisers are not expensive, but they need to be used with care. Make sure to choose a mains-driven demagnetiser; not a cleaning tape with an integral demagnetising function. In my experience these are ineffective.
- 2 Heads, guides and rollers should be cleaned every week, and before every important recording. Use head cleaning fluid and Q-tips for the purpose if you want to do the job effectively. Again, avoid head cleaning cassettes.
- 3 Choosing the tape is an important part of successful recording. Never use anonymous cassettes from car boot sales, and stick to the better-known brand names. Type II/chrome bias tapes make recordings with less background noise than ferrics, and metal tape recordings are more consistent and dynamic, especially at high frequencies. The question, of course, is whether your cassette deck is good enough to make the most of metal tapes. Many are not, even where metal compatibility is claimed. This subject is addressed explicitly in the reviews. Metal tapes also cost more, and they may not be cost effective in anything other than the most quality-critical cases. Avoid C120s (they're not usually available in



the best tape grades anyway).

- 4 Choosing the noise reduction system is also important. Making recordings without noise reduction at all is the purist way, and it usually sounds more transparent and less processed. The problem is that tape hiss will intrude during quieter moments. So this technique works when the music is uniformly loud (hello Lawnmower Deth fans), and even then only when the tape is unusually quiet and the tapes are driven as hard as possible. Type II/chrome bias tapes are generally the quietest of all, but metals can be driven harder, and in practice these will often make the 'quietest' recordings.
- 5 Dolby B offers the least noise reduction of any of the Dolby processes, but because it involves less signal processing than more powerful systems like Dolby C, it tends to sound fairly transparent. More often than not, Dolby B represents the best compromise, and also the widest compatibility, since any replay hardware worth its salt will be equipped for Dolby B replay. Dolby C is more dependent on the way the tape and the recorder are set up, and can sound disappointing.
- 6 Dolby S often delivers the best of all worlds: the greatest noise reduction and the least modulation noise. It is also relatively robust — tolerant of minor set-up errors. Early Dolby S decks often sound opaque and uneven, but standards have improved out of recognition in the last couple of years.
- 7 Setting recording levels is one of the black arts, and not much guidance can be given because the way that record level meters are set up tends to vary between makes. Read the instructions, experiment, and remember that music with a strong high frequency content (close-miked rock, solo piano etc) should be set at a slightly lower level than music which better fits the tape saturation curve — orchestral for example.
- 8 Look after the tape. Remove the record protect lug on the back of the cassette housing for each side that you want to keep (if you're looking at the open part of the housing, the hole on the left hand side on the other side of the case is for the uppermost side of the tape — the hole can be covered with Sellotape at a later date), and store the cassettes in a cool place, away from stray magnetic fields, like those from loudspeaker magnets.

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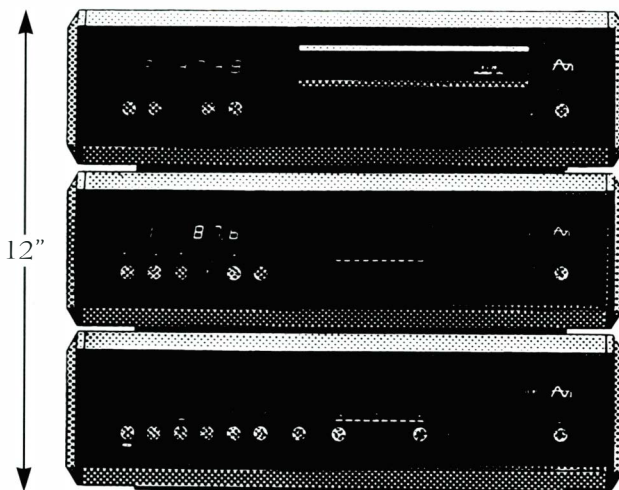
Electronics genius Martin Grindrod has now inched the AVI total hi-fi system still closer to his ultimate dream:

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Aiwa AD-WD727

Although Aiwa has been slowly running down its component hi-fi range to concentrate on cassette personals, packaged systems and home cinema gear, the company continues to produce a market-leading range of budget and mid-price cassette machines.

The moderately-priced unit under scrutiny here is a twin-bay auto-reverse deck, with one mechanism that records and one for replay and dubbing purposes only. Dolby B and C noise reduction are fitted, while Dolby HX-Pro bolsters record headroom with low bias tapes.

Operating features include slick solenoid-operated logic controls for the two transports, track search (it can hunt for something up to nine tracks away in either direction) and intro search. This intro search facility plays the first four seconds from each track, which is just long enough to confuse you about which track is being played. Tapes can be dubbed at normal or double speed with the press of a button.

As usual with Aiwa, the controls and displays are comprehensive and well-thought-through. Two completely independent sets of large transport controls stretch out across much of the fascia width. Normal and high-speed dubbing are both one-touch operations, and each transport has its own electronic tape counter — in fact, all that's lacking is a memory stop feature.

A pair of headphones can be accommodated (though there is no facility to adjust their volume level) and the bright, busy-looking display panel can be turned off when not needed. That counts as a minor blessing.

Sound Quality

It is no accident that both twin decks in the group suf-

fer from below-average wow and flutter. Cost constraints, and shared components (motors, belts etc) virtually guarantee that this will be the case. The good news, however, is that although the Aiwa is no paragon in this respect, it sounds a great deal more stable than the Grundig. In fact, it is more stable than the numbers might suggest.

With that potential handicap out of the way, the Aiwa turns out to be a thoroughly likeable and competent all-rounder. True, it doesn't have quite the gravitas of a good single transport deck at the same price level. The bass lacks real power and authority, and sound quality never quite makes it from 'serviceable' to 'excellent'. But I made clean, essentially accurate recordings on Type II/chrome bias and Type IV/metal tapes from widely varied source material.

The Aiwa is also capable of excellent-sounding dubs when the recording is made at normal speed, but there is some compounding of wow-and-flutter levels, and recordings sounded a little less stable spatially. High-speed dubs were thicker in texture, with an edgy mid-treble, and the stereo perspectives of individual instruments tended to vary as the music changed — for example with the pounding of the drum track, in one particularly awful dance album from one Sony Joe Bloggs (who he/she?) that I picked up by mistake.

VERDICT

SOUND ★★★★★
VALUE ★★★★★
PRICE £170

▲ Relaxed and natural sounding. A coherent performer.

▼ Could sound better organised, especially at higher levels. Needs sensitive speakers.

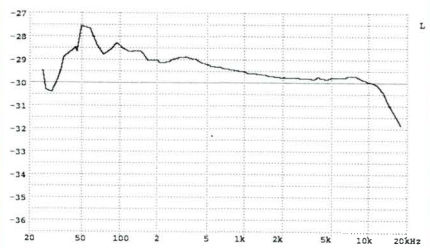
✉ Aiwa (UK) Ltd, Unit 5, Heathrow Summit Centre, Skypoint Drive, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 0LY
☎ 0181-897 7000

Conclusions

This Aiwa offers first rate value for money. Although there are objective failings, including a potentially serious wow and flutter problem, the AD-WD727 actually sounded extremely well-sorted, both when recording (Type II tape offers the best price to performance bet for most purposes), and with pre-recorded cassettes.

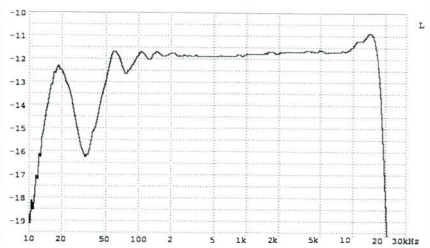
LAB REPORT

TYPE I RESPONSE



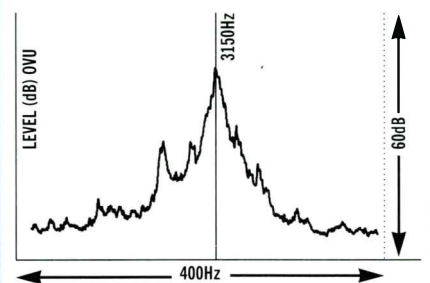
This excellent playback-only response shape indicates that there should be good compatibility with pre-recorded cassettes.

TYPE IV RESPONSE



Typically well-engineered frequency response — the HF response peak adds a touch of brilliance to the sound.

WOW AND FLUTTER SPECTRUM



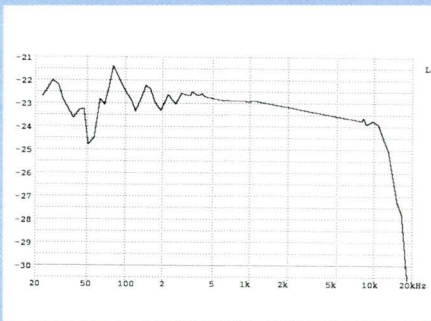
Not one of the best results: the shallow slopes of the central peak are a measure of wow and flutter. The left hand peak may indicate a loose component or slack bearing.

For the most part, this is business as usual. The Type II and IV (chrome bias and metal) frequency responses are spot on; the measured 1dB peak around 10-15kHz is almost certainly designed in, as many people prefer a slightly over-incisive sound. Type I tapes roll off above 2kHz, and are 1dB down at 10kHz, which results in a just perceptible loss of clarity and 'air' with most material. For once, the record level meters should be taken seriously: the OVV level should not be exceeded.

This deck's one weakness is its transport, which suffers more wow-and-flutter than expected. The asymmetric spectrum analysis plot is unusual, and may indicate a loose component or bearing in the drive chain.

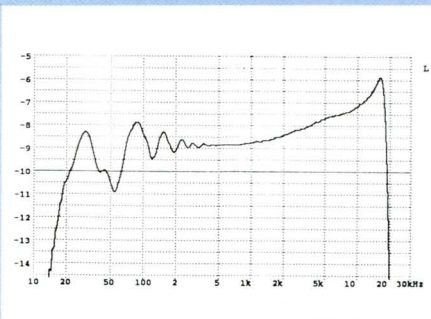
LAB REPORT

TYPE I RESPONSE



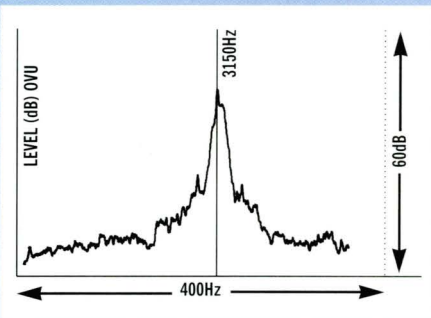
Playback compatibility is good, the gentle output loss with increasing frequency being responsible for a degree of added warmth.

TYPE IV RESPONSE



The Type I and II responses are accurate at normal bias settings, but this one is under-biased, giving a bright, thin sound if left uncorrected.

WOW AND FLUTTER SPECTRUM



One of the best transports yet encountered below £200, though the kink in the plot near the central peak points to a low-rate wow artefact.

It is typical of a low-cost cassette deck that head contour effects are noticeable in the plots — these can be expected to affect the bass. The upper frequency responses, using IEC compliant tapes at the standard bias setting, are fairly accurate with Type I and II ferric and chrome bias tapes, but Type IV metals show a sharply rising high-frequency trend which suggests under-biasing. Increasing bias helps, but does not solve the problem. As usual, metal tapes need more correcting than other tape groups, leading to bright, uneven results. With all tape types, record levels need to be peaked well above OVV to avoid excessive noise.

Absolute levels of wow and flutter are way below average for a deck in this price band.



Denon

DRM-540

This unit looks curiously old-fashioned, thanks in part to the fact that the transport is in the traditional side position; many competing brands have adopted the more fashionable approach of mounting the transport slap bang in the middle. In addition, some of the panel graphics have been clumsily handled, and this increases the impression of a slightly dated look. However, an ergonomic advantage results from the fact that there's no transport loading door to break up the transport controls — everything falls naturally to hand. In contrast with the more expensive models in the Denon range, the *DRM-540*'s transport is not cam operated, which means that transport modes kick in and out noisily.

Operating features are scarce, but those present are well chosen. The electronic tape counter has a memory-stop feature, and a 'record return' key which will reset the tape so that it is ready to make another recording if the first pass has to be abandoned.

The record-level meter has a wide 50dB operating range, and headphones can be connected, although their output cannot be adjusted. Last but not least, a fine bias-adjust control is available to help extract the most from a wide range of tapes. However, as this is not a three-head deck, determining optimum settings can be a chore.

Sound Quality

Stereo soundstaging is exceptionally stable and well-focused, and high-frequency behaviour is clean and precisely articulated, even if it is difficult to achieve a completely accu-

rate balance with Type IV/metal tapes. The quality of sound is such that the problem is purely technical.

In fact, using metals probably isn't a cost effective option, and a high-grade Type II like TDK SA sounds slightly more limited than metals. Both noise reduction systems were tried, but as usual the less powerful Dolby B system sounded a less contrived than Dolby C, whose very high frequency performance is often suspect (Dolby Labs has addressed this problem in the Dolby S process). The Denon has a characteristic quickness: transient attack and release happens with a quicksilver quality that is musically telling, and stereo perspectives are well handled in the depth plane as well as from left to right. This was one of the comparatively few decks that made musical sense of finely-recorded source material — the sparsely orchestrated voice of Jennifer Warnes in the title song from *Famous Blue Raincoat* being an excellent example.

Pre-recorded cassettes performed much as suggested in the Lab Report opposite. There was some added warmth, some loss of articulation and subtlety, but these things are par for the course with all but the most exactly designed decks.

VERDICT

SOUND ★★★★★☆
VALUE ★★★★★★
PRICE £159

- ▲ Absolute top-class budget deck, and an example of what can be done by focusing on the essentials
- ▼ Some loss of accuracy with pre-recorded cassettes and Type IV/metals

Hayden Laboratories Ltd,
 Chiltern Hill, Chalfont St Peter,
 Gerrards Cross, Bucks SL9 9UG.
 (01753) 888447.

Conclusions

No ifs or buts: for a cassette deck that costs just £159, Denon has pulled out all the stops, and performance is remarkably fine. It is less in the envelope-pushing areas that it excels, however, than in its basic musical attributes with well-recorded material. An area where inexpensive cassette decks frequently sound uncomfortable or opaque. A hearty Best Buy.



Grundig Fine Arts CCF3

Some dual cassette decks seem to know their place in the natural order: they even look frivolous. Not so the Grundig CCF3, whose front panel can only be described as an imposing edifice. The fascia is dominated by an enormous input level control, mounted centrally, that would be quite grand enough to control the flame jets in Hades. This is flanked by vertically disposed controls for the two logic-operated transports. Most of the minor controls take the form of Japanese-style miniature fingernail splitters, and these are hidden behind a full-width flap.

The CCF3 is a twin auto-reverse deck, configured in the now-traditional fashion, with one transport of the two capable of recording. Two tapes can be played sequentially, and tapes can also be dubbed, at normal or double speed. But as usual, saving time this way means throwing much of the sound quality potential of the deck to the four winds. The auto-reverse side change is triggered by the end of the tape, which means that the deck will attempt to record over the leader, giving ten seconds downtime. Noise reduction is by Dolby B and C, with HX-Pro headroom extension circuitry, and a single electronic tape counter can be assigned to either transport.

Concessions to luxury are few and far between, but those that have been provided are almost entirely related to the timer, which has a memory stop facility and can be switched to read in real time mode: it works out the elapsed time after being left in play mode for a few seconds. Finally, the display (counter and record level meter) can be muted from the front panel, a fea-

ture more often associated with rather more exalted designs.

Sound Quality

The measurement programme revealed that there was not a lot to be gained by using Type II/chrome bias tapes over Type I/ferrics, and in practice it was difficult to distinguish between them — not because they sounded identical, but because there were other things going on that drew the attention elsewhere. In fact, both tape groups were capable of making clear, detailed and open recordings, but in both cases the bass was thin and shallow, and the sound was always somewhat coloured.

Dominating the sound of this deck, however, was a lack of audible stability. Low-rate wow artefacts could be heard clearly with sustained tones from many instruments (and from test equipment!). With rapidly changing music, pitch variations could not always be identified directly, yet the whole sound picture seemed poorly anchored and unstable. The play only mechanism was even more strongly influenced.

As expected, pre-recorded tapes were less badly affected, because there is no compounding of the problem when the signal is passed only once through the deck. Still, the sound remained rather dull and closed in.

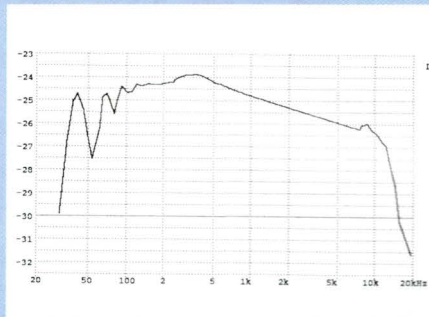
Conclusions

Twin decks inevitably involve compromise, but the lack of pitch integrity is not easy to live with, especially as there are decks around that do much the same job at a similar price, but do it better. Build quality and the straightforward control system are plus points, but alone they're not enough.

VERDICT	
SOUND	★☆☆☆☆
VALUE	★☆☆☆☆
PRICE	£200
▲	Simple, sensible and well-built twin deck. Dubbing performance (single and double speed) is good.
▼	Lack of pitch stability seriously detracts from sound quality.
✉	Grundig International Ltd, Mill Road, Rugby CV21 1PR.
☎	01788 577155

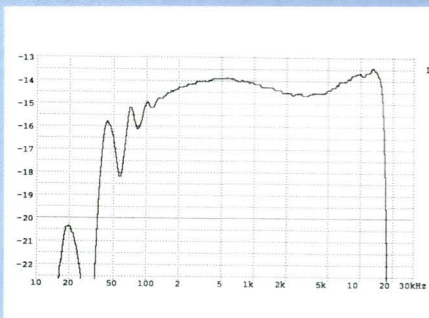
LAB REPORT

TYPE I RESPONSE



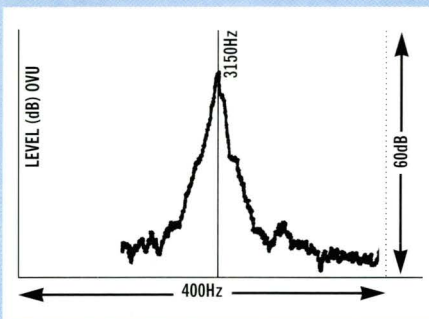
2dB loss of output at 10kHz (output barely registers at higher frequencies) is clearly audible.

TYPE II RESPONSE



This Type II plot replaces the usual Type IV one, as the CCF3 cannot accommodate metals. Note somewhat uneven response and limited bass.

WOW AND FLUTTER SPECTRUM



Broad base to 3150Hz measurement peak confirms high wow and flutter figures (p.86).

Technical performance is modest. Wow and flutter is around twice the level normally regarded as satisfactory for a design that's intended to qualify as high fidelity, and as the listening notes clearly attest, there are audible consequences of this that cannot be ignored.

The frequency response situation is more promising. Type I/ferrics are handled well, with an accurate, extended treble, but Type IIs are handled with less neutrality, and with scarce frequency response advantages. The clincher in the ferric versus chrome equation is that although chromes are good for a couple of decibels extra signal/noise, there is more headroom in hand for ferrics, and mid-level distortion levels are significantly lower. Note; this deck is not designed for Type IV/metal tapes

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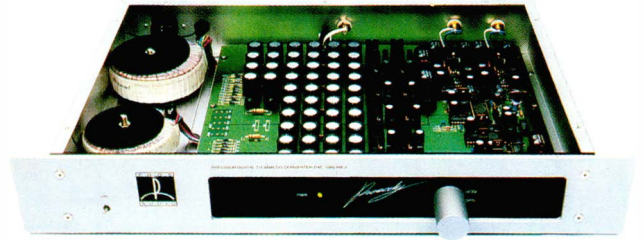
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JVC TD-V662

As one of the top models in the wide JVC range, the TD-V662BK is not intended to appeal to the casual user. This is an enthusiast's tool, which will typically be used to record from records, CDs and off-air.

This JVC is built around a dual capstan transport, which isolates the length of tape between the lead and trailing capstans to improve the stability of tape to head contact and reduce modulation noise. Indeed, the reduction of modulation and related noise sources — death by cotton wool — is a theme of this deck. This is supported by the design of the motorised loading mechanism, and indirectly by the selection of a high bias frequency (210kHz) to reduce downband (ie sub 20kHz) modulation with high frequency musical harmonics. An alternative short path 'CD direct' input is also provided in addition to the standard line input. There are three heads, which facilitates real-time monitoring when recording.

The TD-V662 is a slick deck, with a quiet, refined cam-operated transport, good quality meters with dynamic markers to show the maximum record levels for the three tape groups, and manually adjustable record bias and sensitivity which uses a special mode of the record level meters. Although more long winded than an automatic calibration system, the practised user will be able to tweak the settings to taste, or to suit particular types of music. For example, slight over-biasing could reduce perceived distortion with choral music, at the expense of a dB or so at the high frequency end of the spectrum.

Sound Quality

Cassette tape has certain properties that tend to give it away on audition. An obvious one is background hiss (bias noise), but those practised with cassette will have learned to recognise others, including a wavering pitch (wow and flutter), flatulent-sounding bass, inarticulate, strangled vocals, and a top-end roughness.

Nothing, however, is more characteristic (or frequently ignored in the published literature) than the slight but fatal blurring around the edges that almost always seems to be part of the tape process — the equivalent of looking through greas-smearred glass. Everything tends to sound just slightly defocused.

It is precisely in this area that the JVC scores highest. It's not quite the most transparent piece of cassette hardware to have come my way, it has a perceptibly coloured 'electronic' flavour which may (and did) pass unnoticed with Bon Jovi, but which is obvious enough with Jennifer Warnes' voice and Nojima's piano. In spite of this, the deck has a grippy quality, and projects music into the space around the speakers with a positiveness and rock steady quality that at times belies the fact that the music is being produced by a humble cassette deck. That almost subliminal fuzziness seems to have been banished, especially when recording with metal tapes.

Conclusions

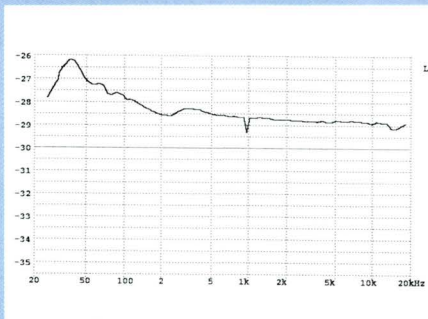
If it is not the most refined deck in its class, the TD-V662 is one of the most self-assured and focused, and it is easily the best JVC I have encountered for some years. Excellent value as an all-round musical tool at a reasonable price.

VERDICT	
SOUND	★★★★☆
VALUE	★★★★☆
PRICE	£270
▲	Fine, middle price deck which has been engineered for — and delivers — low modulation noise and sharply articulated music.
▼	Slightly coloured and 'electronic' in flavour; control system messy.
✉	JVC UK Ltd, JVC Business Park, Priestley Way, London NW2 7BA. (0181) 450 3282

LAB REPORT

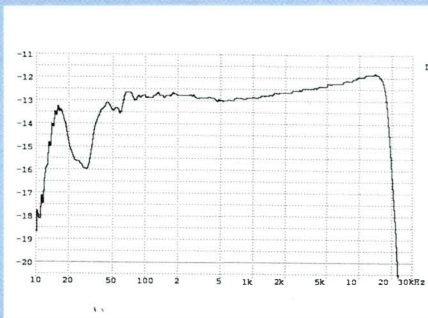
CASSETTE DECKS

TYPE I RESPONSE



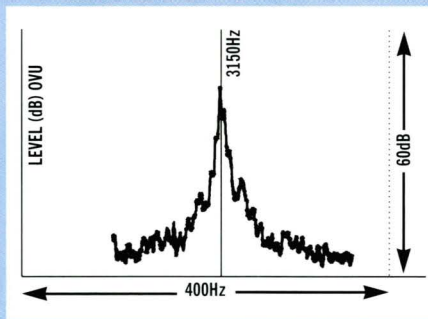
Flat, extended midband and treble, but notice the rising low frequency trend.

TYPE IV RESPONSE



Apart from characteristic deep suckout in bass plot, this is a good response shape, with a suggestion of increased treble output.

WOW AND FLUTTER SPECTRUM



An excellent result for a deck at this price level. There are few discrete wow or flutter effects.

Wow and flutter is extremely well suppressed. The analysis shows that the existing artefacts have a spectrum which approximates to random noise, with few discrete sidebands. In practice this means great sound.

The signal-to-noise figures are more than satisfactory (p. 86), especially when viewed in the context of lower than average distortion figures. Keeping record levels fairly high and using Dolby B is a recipe for success with this JVC.

Despite the tape calibration circuits, the various responses were on the erratic side. Type I (ferric) tapes reproduced with a significant (2dB) treble loss, but the other two tapes were much closer to the line, with a 1dB rise at the top end of the band (ref 1kHz in each case).

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Kenwood KX-7060S

Second down in an impressively high-tech range of cassette decks from Kenwood, the **KX-7060S** has a conventional if busy fascia that conceals a three motor dual-capstan tape transport. In this mechanism, the short length of tape between the lead and trailing capstans is all but completely isolated from the hubs, reels and housings of the cassette itself, not forgetting the hub drive and reel braking system of the cassette deck. This is also a three-head deck, which means that listening off-tape while making a recording is possible, but arguably the most prominent feature of all is the Dolby S noise reduction. The deck also includes Dolby HX-Pro, which improves high frequency linearity of low bias (mainly Type I/ferric) tapes.

In common with other Kenwood decks, this one is fitted with a wide range of minor features, not all of which are as accessible as they might be, thanks to an artless (if cosmetically attractive) control layout. They include track and intro search, phrase repeat and support for simplified dubbing operations using compatible Kenwood CD players. Auto tape calibration (ATCS) adjusts the various record parameters to ensure a consistent match between tape and machine. Last but not least, a remote control handset is available as an extra-cost option. And why not?

Sound Quality

Source/tape switching using the tape monitor key indicated that there were no gross problems. The deck was capable of accurate, stable recordings, although there are limitations to this kind of

before/after monitoring while recording is taking place. And it's unwise to draw conclusions from this evidence alone. In fact, the Kenwood sounded rather better when playing back in parallel with the (previously recorded) source, but the slightly hyped-up treble when using metal tapes meant that recordings had a character slightly at odds with the original.

The Kenwood's top end is unusually well defined and open, and the ability to resolve fine detail is of a high order. Quiet background instruments can be followed with ease, and the Kenwood has an organic quality and subtlety that lifts it clear of the mainstream. However, using metal tapes with this deck sometimes seems to give music a mechanical edge and a graininess that places it at a disadvantage when compared to, say, the Yamaha **KX-580** (which could almost be the Kenwood's alter ego, albeit with two heads rather than three). The Kenwood was simply less transparent to subtleties of phrasing and articulation. Switching to Type II or even Type I tapes helps, but also saps too much vitality and clarity from the sound. Pre-recorded tape follows in a similar pattern, and sounded lacklustre — more lacklustre than is normally the case, that is.

VERDICT

SOUND ★★☆☆☆
VALUE ★★☆☆☆
PRICE £329

▲ Strong on fixtures and fittings, sound quality with Type IV especially is exquisitely sharp and detailed

▼ Some treble edginess with metals, dull playback of pre-recorded tapes

✉ Trio-Kenwood UK Ltd, Kenwood House, Dwight Road, Watford, Herts WD1 8EB
(01923) 816444.

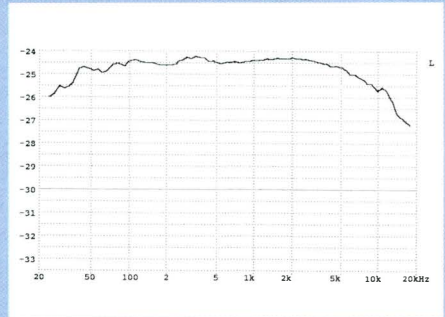
Conclusion

A well-equipped and fine sounding mid-price deck, it was perhaps unfortunate for Kenwood that it happened to fall into a group where it was compared directly to a cheaper if less well-equipped alternative that offered some significant performance advantages. This is an excellent cassette deck, though, which amply justifies Recommendation.

LAB REPORT

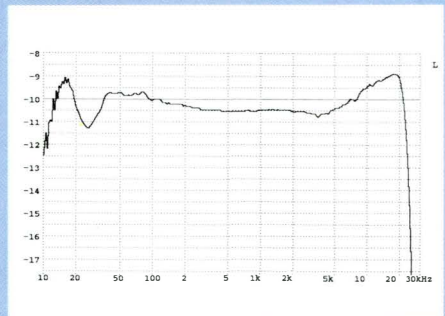
CASSETTE DECKS

TYPE I RESPONSE



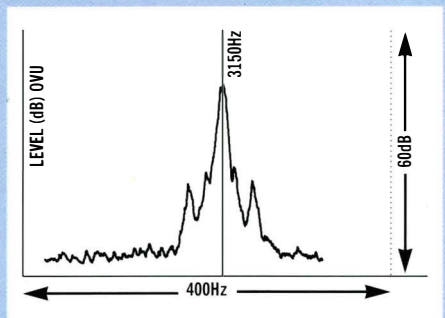
Output remains flat and uniform out to 5kHz, and declines slowly thereafter, which is responsible for a subtle softening of the sound.

TYPE IV RESPONSE



Well-extended frequency response, but kicked up extreme treble gives the sound bite.

WOW AND FLUTTER SPECTRUM



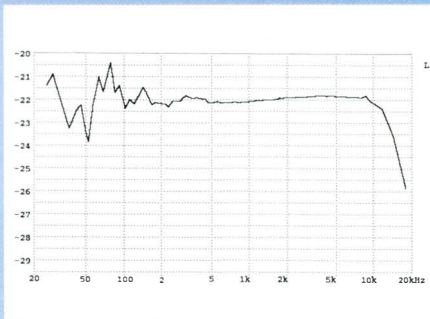
The reason for the good but not exceptional wow and flutter figures can be seen in the wow sidebands.

Highlighting one of the benefits of using dedicated record and playback heads, the Kenwood is capable of a wider bandwidth than most. Even ferrics operate cleanly up to 19kHz, and metals sail right up to 22kHz (-3dB ref 1kHz). Equally impressive is the combination of good signal/noise and low distortion at high levels in the case of Type IV metal tapes especially, whose MOL of +6.1dB is very impressive. Here is one design whose record amplifiers and head have no problems driving high energy tapes towards the limits of their capabilities.

Wow and flutter was good rather than outstanding, good inherent pitch integrity being slightly compromised by what appears to be capstan wow or transport resonance. Nevertheless, these effects remained inaudible.

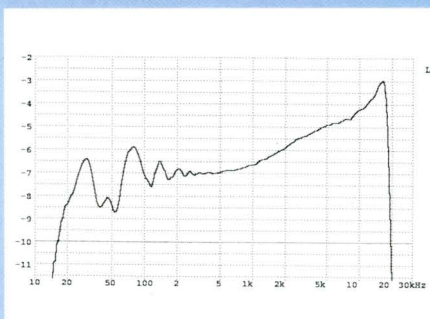
LAB REPORT

TYPE I RESPONSE



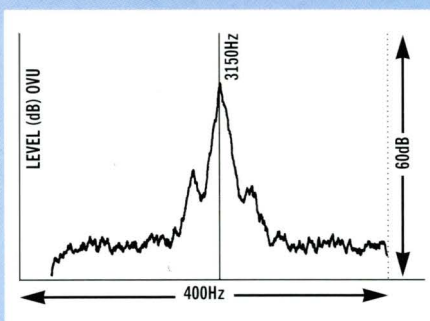
Accurate replay-only result bodes well for compatibility with pre-recorded cassettes.

TYPE IV RESPONSE



Strong rise at high frequencies mirrors behaviour with Type II/chrome bias tapes, but is outside the scope of adjustment using bias control.

WOW AND FLUTTER SPECTRUM



Wow and flutter behaviour is typical at the price, and the analysis shows good central pitch resolution.

Type I/ferric was the only tape group that delivered a flat — well, flat-ish — record/replay frequency response at the standard setting of the fine bias control. The Type II/chrome and the Type IV/metal responses rise by around 4dB between 500Hz and 15kHz, and although the Type II response can be more or less flattened by increasing the bias setting, there is not enough adjustment in hand to 'cure' metal tapes. Pre-recorded tapes, however, are handled extremely well.

Noise and distortion levels for Type I and II tapes were fair, but Type IV showed none of the expected headroom advantages. This tends to confirm an early listening result, namely that metal tapes are not the Luxman's best friend.

Luxman
K-322

Luxman has only recently been reintroduced into this country and distribution is now handled by The Audio Partnership, the manufacturing arm of the Richer Sounds retail chain. It is, therefore, in their shops that you are most likely to encounter this deck.

The K-322 is a budget design, with a straightforward set of features. There are no gimmicks, and no significant omissions. Dolby B and C are supplemented by Dolby HX-Pro headroom extension circuitry, with a switch to defeat the MPX filter. The transport controls (which include track search) are large, clear and well-shaped. The display, which includes a 50dB record level meter, is equally well designed, if brightly lit for subdued surroundings. Headphones can be connected, albeit at fixed level, and the electronic tape counter is supplemented by a memory stop feature.

Record return, which resets the tape to record/pause mode where the current recording started, is a small refinement that many will appreciate. Last but not least, the Luxman includes a fine bias adjust control which, as the lab tests show, is much-needed.

Sound Quality

Metal tapes didn't really suit the Luxman's character. They tended to sound cold, a little strident and, well, metallic; although to an extent Dolby C noise reduction acted as an effective emollient. The deck sounded more at home with Type I and II tapes after suitable adjustment of the fine bias control (to about four o'clock with TDK SA, which approximates to the relevant IEC standards

for this tape group). In the final analysis, Type IIs were capable of slightly cleaner and more dynamic sound quality than Type Is, but the difference was smaller than with many decks. For general purposes, such as recording off-air, a premium ferric tape goes a long way to making the most of the Luxman's capabilities.

In these cases, the Luxman worked well. When correctly set so that tonal colours are closely matched to the source, the Luxman sounds slightly distant. There's a perceptible loss of focus on the bottom octave, but string tone is clear and bright, and it lacks aggressiveness or severe loss of detail. Its gentle refinement tended to make better sense with a wide swathe of classical music than the more exotic extremes of rock, where it sometimes sounded overwhelmed. Pitch problems were never made explicit, even with the most critical material, though from experience lower flutter would have yielded other advantages, such as greater focus and definition in the treble.

Conclusion

This attractive and well turned-out Luxman design didn't pass the lab tests with flying colours, but with enough in its favour to promise reasonable value for money. In the event, it lived up to its

promises without surpassing them. This is not a deck that pretends to break any moulds: it is what it appears to be, namely a thoroughly likeable tape recorder, capable of better than acceptable results with low to medium grade tapes, especially with Dolby C, all in an easy to use package. The K-322 lacks the star quality to assure an explicit Recommendation but is definitely worth shortlisting.

VERDICT

SOUND ★★★★★
VALUE ★★★★★
PRICE £140

▲ Likeable, well-engineered budget deck that makes attractive recordings with low and medium bias tapes.

▼ Loss of focus in bass prejudices results with high energy, close-miked rock.

✉ The Audio Partnership, Gallery Court, Hankey Lane, London SE1 4BB.

☎ 0171 357 9090.



Marantz SD-53

The Marantz SD-53 costs £200 and is equipped with two heads, a single capstan transport, and the usual Dolby trim-virate: B, C and HX-Pro. MPX filtering is switchable.

Other mod cons include a headphone socket (but no associated volume control), a fine bias adjust control and an electronic tape counter with memory stop.

Negatives are few, but the record level meter is both electrically and physically short (the operating range is 28dB) and has limited resolution. It can be supplemented by a little something called D-Mode, which is a button that switches the tape counter into an alternative mode in which it displays a peak level readout scaled in dB. The D-Mode display retains its reading only momentarily.

Though simply endowed, the Marantz is not without charms. The attractively curved fascia is metal rather than plastic, and with some well-designed controls the whole effect is more solid and stable than the majority of alternatives at this price level. The transport is smooth, and most modes are engaged with quiet decorum. So if you want toys you should look elsewhere: the Marantz is designed to appeal to those on the lookout for quality first, and gadgets last.

Sound Quality

Pre-recorded tapes sounded slightly dulled and lacking in vitality. Rock percussion sounded damped, but voices and other instruments were accurate and well-formed, confirming that the auditioning results were dominated by the measured loss of output above 5kHz.

I have reservations

about this machine's recording capabilities. Even with material like Ry Cooder's 634-5789 (from *Borderline*), which has limited bandwidth and tonality and is therefore relatively undemanding — it was primarily used as a warm-up piece with each of the decks — the bass sounded tubby and shallow. The midband was punchy and well-controlled, but there was a roughness to the sound which became all too obvious as a sandpaper quality. However, the string sound in a recording of Mozart's *Clarinet Quintet* was surprisingly well preserved. From past experience, the perceived roughness is also certainly attributable to shortcomings in the transport which are catalogued in the Lab Report.

Dolby C is one of those systems that generally promises more than it delivers, but I heard no problems with the performance of the circuit here. However, this was probably only because the deck lacked the inherent transparency that would have made obvious any degradation caused by noise reduction processing.

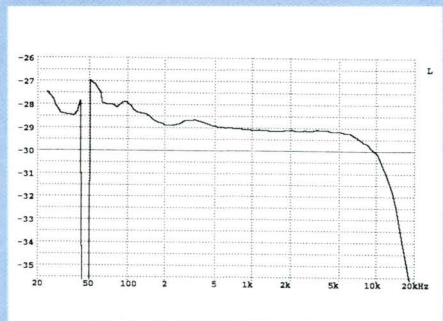
Conclusions

The Marantz SD-53 is a pleasant deck to use, thanks to a well-designed set of controls, and despite the rather crude record level metering. It had some good points on test, not least the fact that it behaved consistently with each of the three tape groups, though metal tapes gave the cleanest, most open sound. It was let down on audition, however, by roughness in the transport, and it also suffered from a significant loss of treble when playing pre-recorded material. Not quite recommendable material.

VERDICT	
SOUND	★★★★☆
VALUE	★★★★☆
PRICE	£200
▲	Easy to use, and of good external build quality, the Marantz works consistently with all tape groups.
▼	Roughness in upper midband and treble is probably attributable to transport flutter, and some loss of HF output with pre-recorded material.
✉	Marantz Hi-Fi UK Ltd, Kingsbridge House, Padbury Oaks, 575-583 Bath Rd, Longford, Middlesex UB7 0HE. (01753) 680868

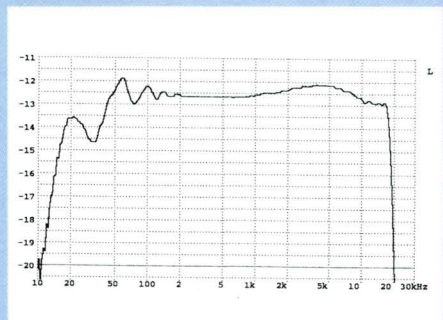
LAB REPORT

TYPE I RESPONSE



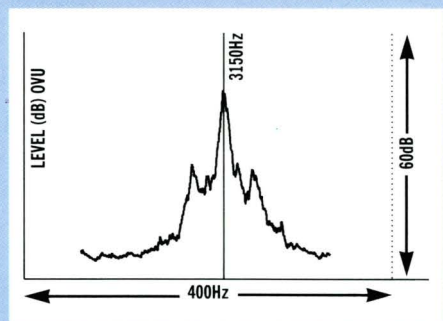
Although not as extended as most, the midband output, and thus tonal balance, is accurate. The sharp 50Hz suck-out is a measurement artefact.

TYPE IV RESPONSE



This plot bears a striking resemblance to the Type I/ferric and Type II/chrome bias plots.

WOW AND FLUTTER SPECTRUM



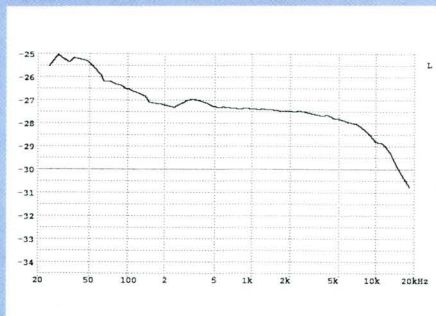
Moderate wow and flutter figures and a rather messy spectrum analysis reveal a few problems.

The various frequency responses are sound; the only difference between the three tape groups on paper being in the earlier response roll-off with the lower bias tapes. Type IV/metal bandwidth extends out to nearly 20kHz, where Type II/chrome bias extends to 17kHz, and Type I/ferric to about 15kHz (-3dB ref 1kHz). The bass response is also slightly curtailed, but less uneven than many, a factor that can normally be correlated with sound quality. Available dynamic range is adequate with Type I and IV tapes, but disappointing with Type IIs.

Wow and flutter levels are also a tad disappointing. They weren't disastrously high, but they certainly weren't negligible either. The analysis indicates prominent sidebands extending over a substantial bandwidth.

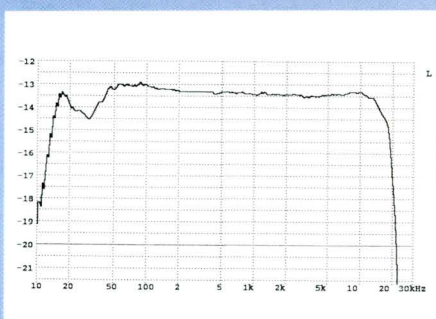
LAB REPORT

TYPE I RESPONSE



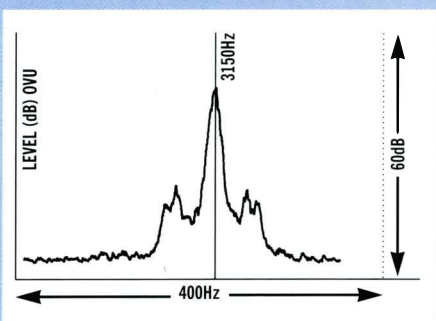
Smooth midband, but a tilted overall response, gives a rich sound balance.

TYPE IV RESPONSE



Textbook response shape. Mid/top response is as straight as a die, and bass is well extended. The smoothness of curve also underlines stable head to tape contact.

WOW AND FLUTTER SPECTRUM



Slightly disappointing wow and flutter figures are reflected here in substantial wow artefacts.

The Type II and IV response shapes are extremely good, and the same applies to the signal/noise and distortion figures (p.86). Taken together these indicate a wide dynamic range, especially with metal tapes. The Type I response has a gently declining output with frequency, which gives a smooth but dull sound with TDK AR.

I was slightly disappointed with the sophisticated transport mechanism, which ought to be the Onkyo's prime asset. It yielded what, at best, can be described as an indifferent set of wow and flutter numbers. There is every indication that the mechanism provides a stable relationship between the tape and head, which is the most important function of any dual capstan mechanism, but absolute pitch integrity is also important.

Onkyo
K-611

According to Onkyo, this model is pitched directly at the specialist hi-fi market dominated by such luminaries as Quad, Meridian and Linn. The qualities that make it especially suitable include the compact outer dimensions, the uncommon simplicity of the user interface and the lack of superfluous gadgetry in favour of solid engineering and features focused on the central task of making the most of cassette tapes.

As promised, the *K-611* is stripped bare of almost all non-essentials. Normally accessible controls are limited to basic transport, monitor and record level controls, and the few luxuries are concealed (guiltily?) behind a panel width flap — and we're only talking about Dolby B/C/MPX filter switching, an auto-space function (useful when recording for a car or personal player with track search features) and tape counter controls which don't include memory stop. There's nothing here that could be described as sonically corrupting. There is no headphone socket for example, no Dolby S, no bias adjust and no auto tape calibration. No sir! Not here.

Under the casing, however, reside a sophisticated dual capstan transport and separate, dedicated record and play heads. The mechanism has a power load feature which can be conveniently triggered by tapping the top of the tape shell once it's inserted.

Sound Quality

Musically, the Onkyo is all but bullet proof. It makes an excellent stab at copying the source accurately and

with real transparency, imposing little of its own character on the music while doing so. The bass is solid and sure-footed, and vocal articulation is close to first rate. There was a suggestion of roughness with the highest notes and with some instruments — the more closely miked strings, in the case of one chamber music recording.

For critical work, it pays to stick to metal tapes, which deliver a more solid and wide-ranging sound, with negligible mid-band compression, which is sometimes noticeable with lower bias tapes.

The rich sound balance with pre-recorded tapes has been alluded to in the Lab Report section, and arises because of the way that the Onkyo has been set up at the factory. The sound is never less than attractive, and there is little audible distortion, but the Onkyo cannot be said to make the most of the good work done by the tape duplicators.

Conclusions

Usability is spoiled slightly by the fact that the tape is invisible when inserted, and the tape counter shows minutes and seconds from the last reset. It is not capable

of working out for itself how much tape remains, and this urges a disciplined approach to using the deck which may, for example, involve rewinding the tape and resetting the counter before use. Otherwise I agree that nothing important has been left out, and I appreciated the pared down simplicity of the design. The sum-up almost writes itself: good-to-excellent performance but at quite a price; Recommended.

VERDICT

SOUND ★★★★★☆
VALUE ★★☆☆☆☆
PRICE £429 in black or silver finishes

▲ Bare bones features, compact packaging and all round good sound quality.

▼ A little over-priced, and there is some loss of vitality and clarity with pre-recorded tapes.

✉ Onkyo UK, 401-405 Nether Street, London N3 1QG.
☎ 0181-343 2082



Pioneer CT-S830S

Almost three years ago, Pioneer launched a range of high-tech cassette decks with the CT-95 as the flagship. The deck has since established itself as one of the best-liked and most enduring high-end designs. Billed as a 'poor man's CT-95', the CT-830S will interest all those in the market for a serious audiophile deck who can't stretch to the £1,000 price of the CT-95.

Many of the key features are carried across intact. This is a three-head deck with Dolby S, a dual capstan transport and the same Reference Master Slant mechanism as specified for the CT-95. The idea is that the bearings become statically loaded up in both planes when slanted away from the perpendicular. There's also a fully automatic tape calibration system that can be modified with a manual bias adjust feature. (The name for this, in case you're wondering, is Super Auto BLE, which must be favoured to win the prize for the most odious moniker of the year.)

FLEX replay equalisation (see Lab Report for more details) can be used to 'correct' faded recordings or tapes recorded elsewhere with different azimuth settings. Other useful features include a real time tape counter that indicates remaining play time, multi-track search (eg fourth track thisaway), timer standby and synchronised dubbing from compatible Pioneer CD players using a dedicated rear panel link.

Sound Quality

The CT-95 is a cassette deck which could be safely

chosen to represent the state of the art in cassette sound quality whenever a reference is needed to judge DAT and DCC machines against. Usually it was the latter that were found wanting on purely musical grounds, without reference to the measures of technical excellence such as wow and flutter or signal/noise ratios.

As with the father, so with the son. The CT-830S has roughly the same status relative to other £500 decks as the CT-95 to the rest of the four figure crowd. Used with Dolby S and Type IV/metal tapes (TDK MA), it is almost frighteningly refined and transparent. In common with a number of other recent Dolby S cassette decks, the most important role of the S circuit seems to be to reduce modulation noise, which it accomplishes without the peculiar shifts of internal balance and the downright messiness of early Dolby S decks (including Pioneer's own, it should be said).

Stick to metal tapes rather than Type II/chrome bias stock, and Dolby S rather than Dolby B, which with suitably critical source material sounds perceptibly more tape-like, as though there is a layer of something lossy that can almost be felt between the music and the ears.

Perhaps because its performance as a recorder is so impressive, commercially recorded material tended to sound slightly flat and anti-climatic.

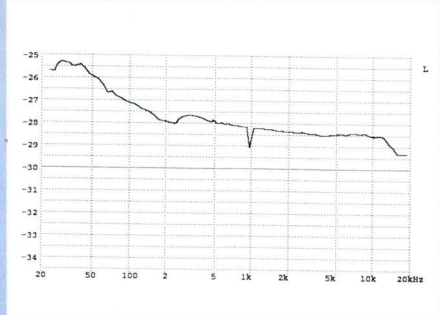
Conclusions

£500 is a lot of money, and from bitter experience expensive hi-fi doesn't always deliver. This is not the case here. The CT-830S crystallises much of what makes the CT-95 great, and at £500 it's a steal.

VERDICT	
SOUND	★★★★★
VALUE	★★★★☆
PRICE	£500
▲	Ultra-refined, dynamic and impressively detailed sound, especially with Dolby S.
▼	Pre-recorded sound quality is not as good, though blame lies more with the tape than with the machine.
✉	Pioneer High Fidelity (GB) Ltd, Pioneer House, Hollybush Hill, Stoke Poges, Slough, Berkshire SL2 4QP.
☎	(01753) 789789

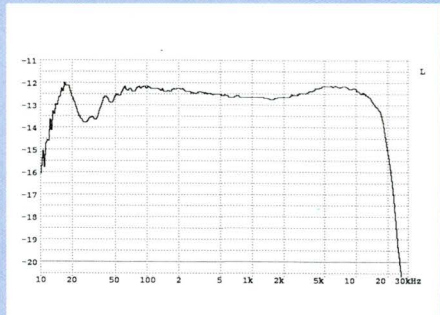
LAB REPORT

TYPE I RESPONSE



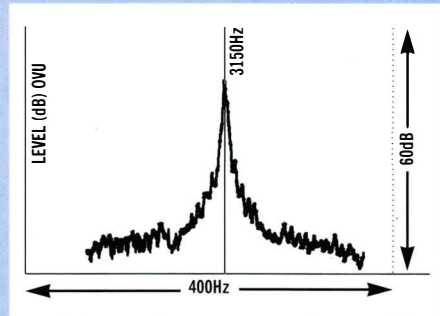
Gently declining output can give a noticeably rich, full result, but this can often be addressed by the FLEX system (see Lab Report below).

TYPE IV RESPONSE



CT-S830S lacks extraordinary HF bandwidth of CT-95, but still extends to 20kHz and beyond.

WOW AND FLUTTER SPECTRUM



Superb wow and flutter result is amply confirmed by the textbook narrow, sharp 3150Hz measurement peak.

The CT-S830S is an exceptionally well-engineered unit. The worst case record/replay frequency response errors fit within a +/-0.5dB envelope from 30Hz-15kHz, and the metal response bandwidth is a true 20kHz (-3dB).

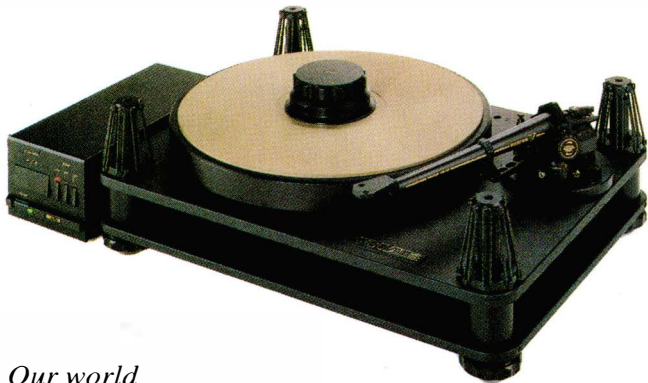
FLEX replay equalisation sets relative mid and treble levels by sampling the playback signal, and comparing it to a reference value stored in memory. This may sound arbitrary, but the much more alarming fact is how often music of all types turns out to fit this naively simplistic yardstick. The replay test, however, was run sans FLEX.

Wow and flutter levels are state of the art, and the moderate signal/noise figures should be set against good OVU distortion levels, which implies a wide working dynamic range even without noise reduction.



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Sony TC-K461S

The most remarkable feature of this attractive deck is the price. £180 for a Dolby S deck promises headline-grabbing value for money. The *TC-K461S* replaces the *TC-K415*, acquiring Dolby S, auto tape calibration and a Sorbothane tape stabiliser, while losing the third tape head to keep the price the same. On the left of the central tape door there's a bank of controls and a well designed display block, whose record level meter gives a clear indication of the maximum record levels for the three tape groups — a little extra headroom for those occasions when recordings to metal tape go above +8VU would have been useful. On the right are the remaining controls, which include a one-touch auto tape calibration feature which does its thing in about 25 seconds. The transport is both clanky and noisy except when in play/record modes.

The matter-of-fact simplicity of this deck makes it easy to live with, but Sony has still managed to include a fixed-level headphone monitoring circuit and a track search feature.

Sound Quality

One obvious question is this: how much, if anything, does Dolby S add to a relatively inexpensive deck such as this? The question has added force because early Dolby S implementations sounded uneven and sometimes opaque with Dolby S switched in. This definitely wasn't the case with the *TC-K461S*.

Even compared to Dolby C, recordings made with Dolby S sounded significantly quieter and more

refined, and less like they had been committed to cassette. Detail projected more cleanly and the whole effect had heightened contrast, with more expressive 'local' dynamics evinced by the subtleties of instrumental and vocal phrasing. Images were more stable as the music changed. (Stability is the first thing to suffer if Dolby S tapes are played using Dolby B or C, or if Dolby mis-tracking is encountered when recording and replaying on the same deck.) At the same time, Dolby S did have the effect of slightly softening the sound around the edges. Recordings lacked the pin-sharp clarity and the presence that were apparent when recording either without Dolby altogether, or with the simpler, less intrusive Dolby B circuit.

Pre-recorded tapes gave no cause for complaint. Sound quality was neutral and outgoing, in line with the measurements. But does anybody who takes audio seriously buy these things?

Conclusion

Was it worth sacrificing a head (two instead of three) to gain Dolby S? It is not possible to give a definitive answer, if only because there are points to be made on both sides of the argument. Changing to two heads will certainly have led to some loss of dynamic range, especially at high frequencies with high energy tapes, but the influence of the Dolby S circuit in expanding perceived low-level dynamics and cutting down background noise was very impressive.

Whatever faults it has, this new Dolby S deck is capable of above average results at a below average price. The ingredients that make for Recommendation.

VERDICT

SOUND ★★☆☆☆
VALUE ★★☆☆☆
PRICE £180

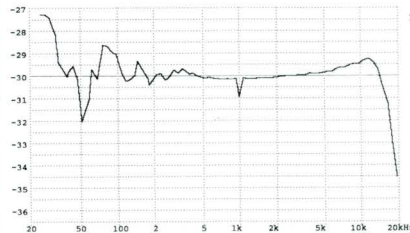
▲ Surprisingly good showcase for the benefits of Dolby S, which offers a slightly damped, but refined and articulate sound.

▼ Bass lacks authority, and deck is happier with Type II/chrome bias than Type IV/metal tapes

✉ Sony UK Ltd, The Heights,
Brooklands, Weybridge, Surrey
KT13 0XW
☎ (01932) 816000

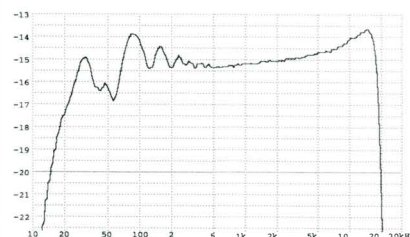
LAB REPORT

TYPE I RESPONSE



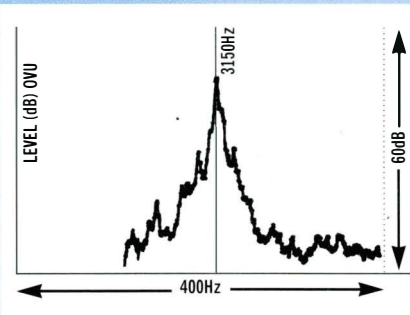
Accurate, well extended playback response promises good compatibility with pre-recorded material.

TYPE IV RESPONSE



Mild post-calibration peaking of response in treble confirms marginal suitability for this tape type.

WOW AND FLUTTER SPECTRUM



Somewhat messy spectrum analysis plot, but there are no dominating artefacts behind moderate wow and flutter figures.

Pitch integrity is respectable, but bass response is uneven. Type I and II tapes gave an almost identical record/replay response, with a 2.5dB response drop between 1-10kHz after tape calibration, which demonstrates the consistency of the calibration circuits, if not their accuracy. Type IV (metal) was set up with a rising response after calibration, indicating mild under-biasing, possibly due to inherent limitations in the record amp/head chain, coarse tape calibration steps, or perhaps to adjust for a brighter, more incisive balance.

Compared to the *TC-K415*, this two-head deck offers a reduced dynamic range, especially with metals, but the wow and flutter performance is significantly improved over its predecessor.

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Technics RS-BX601

From the middle of the extensive Technics cassette deck range, welcome the *RS-BX601*. Although many of the headline features found in its more costly siblings, the *RS-BX701* and *RS-BX747*, are included in this £230 machine, it lacks some of their proprietary refinements. Significant omissions include a low-resonance composite base and an auto tape tuning system that allows tapes to be optimised with user-specified bias levels to suit different types of music.

This is a three-head deck with a fast-acting auto tape calibration system (called ATC) which sets bias, equalisation and sensitivity, with 64 step resolution, in just under 35 seconds. Minor luxuries include power-loading, a memory counter with an elapsed time option and a headphone volume control.

The control and display system is first rate. The only mild criticisms concern the noisy transport engagement solenoids, a cramped record level meter and the fact that the deck does not default to tape monitor when recording — something that irritates reviewers, but probably won't make much difference to most users.

Sound Quality

The Technics offers a good, if not outstanding, performance off-tape. In common with the Yamaha, whose similar post-calibration brightness turns out to have been deliberately engineered, frequency balance is emphatically not a problem here. The Technics did not even sound bright, which is a sure indication that the high frequency music content is being handled well. In fact, the main

before/after differences with Type IV metal tapes were found to be much lower down the frequency band, where there is a certain thickening of textures. Here, some sounds appeared reluctant to let go when their time had passed.

In common with most of the three-head models, but arguably not to the same extent as the best of them, the Technics has good resolution of fine detail, and a strongly dynamic feel. With Type II/chrome bias stock like the test TDK SA — and especially with Type IV/metals — the Technics sounds bold and secure. It comes on like a train with BB King (*Blues Summit*) and a favourite recording of Mars from Holst's *The Planets*, but it also managed to sound disciplined yet full-blooded with Chris Rea's *Nothing's Happening By The Sea* (from *Water Sign*). It also showed secure intonation in Jennifer Warnes' *Joan of Arc* (from *Famous Blue Raincoat*), but this last track also revealed some of the Technics' limitations. In particular, voice quality was deficient when held up for comparison with the original recording, and despite strong resolution of fine detail, subtlety and grace are not always the strong suit of the Technics.

Type I and II types lacked the vitality of metals, and Dolby B sounded more transparent, if hissier than Dolby C, and on balance was preferred on musical grounds. Pre-recorded tapes were handled extremely well, and were largely free from exaggeration or loss.

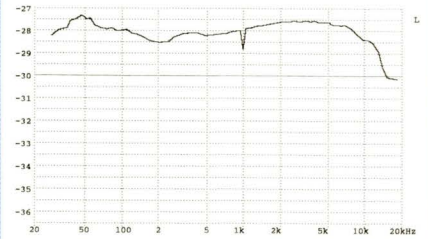
Conclusions

Although objectively open to criticism, the *RS-BX601* is far from expensive. Taking this into account, it's an excellent cassette deck and warrants Recommendation.

VERDICT	
SOUND	★★★★☆
VALUE	★★★★☆
PRICE	£230
▲	Well-equipped three-header with strong all-round abilities.
▼	Some losses of subtlety in extremis.
✉	Panasonic Consumer Electronics Ltd, Panasonic House, Willoughby Rd, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 4FP.
☎	(01344) 861656

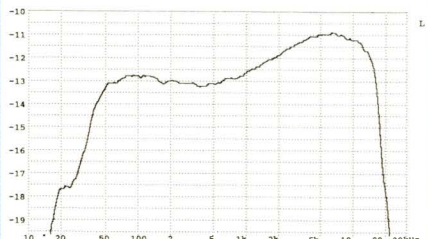
LAB REPORT

TYPE I RESPONSE



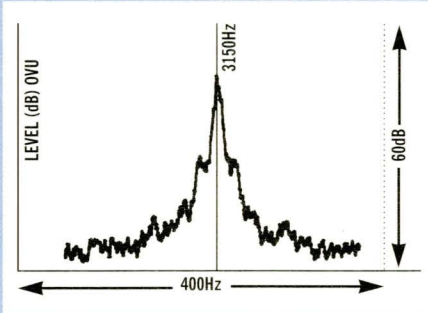
An excellent result: flat overall response with only minor local aberrations underpins good listening results with pre-recorded cassettes.

TYPE IV RESPONSE



A poor response shape, with 2dB peak between 5-10kHz, and limited extreme bass and treble output.

WOW AND FLUTTER SPECTRUM



A benign result, with some capstan wow but a sharp peak indicating good speed stability.

The two-motor transport is capable of fast winding a C90 in a remarkable 67 seconds, leaving the tape pancake smoothly packed. The transport even slows near the end of side to avoid stretching the tape substrate.

The rest of the test programme yielded less exciting results. Wow and flutter is strictly average. Even after using the tape alignment feature, the frequency responses are consistently about 2dB proud in the treble, and there is no manual adjustment to set matters right. Would you like that in bright or bright sir?

Frequency responses are not especially well extended in the bass or treble, even with metal tapes, although operating dynamic range (taking noise and distortion into account) are quite good, especially with metals.

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Yamaha KX-580

Aimed squarely at the quality-first market, the KX-580 is one of the small but steadily increasing number of Dolby S cassette decks. After a shaky start, the performance of recent Dolby S decks has improved, while the entry price has been on a fast declining trend.

The KX-580 is a two-head deck, and in addition to an exotic noise reduction system it also includes a single button auto tape tuning feature and a fine bias adjust control. This means that the user is not completely at the mercy of electronics if the deliberately bright responses delivered by the tuning circuits (see Lab Report) are not wanted. Play Trim is also available to re-equalise tapes whose treble content is suppressed due to head azimuth differences between the hardware used to make the recording and the playback deck. Variable level headphone monitoring and various repeat and memory stop modes are also available.

Many of the controls are rather inaccessibly housed in a recessed panel which is normally covered by a plain hinged panel. Despite a clanky transport, this deck has a solid, engineered feel that contrasts with many of its peers.

Sound Quality

Pre-recorded tapes were handled well. The Play Trim facility woke up some old, worn Beach Boys recordings. With the tonal balance restored, Dolby tracking was also improved, giving more stable stereo imagery and less coming and going of background instruments.

Switching from source to tape when recording, say, the *Larghetto* from Mozart's *Clarinet Quintet* using Type IV metal tape and Dolby S was instructive — and encouraging. The Yamaha is a clean and transparent instrument which imposes remarkable little of its own electronic signature on the music. Recordings are tonally and dynamically believable. Imagery stays consistent, instrumental phrasing is articulate, and positioning is stable.

There was no perception of increased background noise at all — not the case with Dolby C, which sounds somehow busier at low levels even if the hiss can't be identified directly. The only limitation noticed was a suggestion of slightly increased opacity; that lithe instrumental phrasing was slightly slower and coarser than before. Low frequency behaviour is undistinguished, but essentially uncoloured and reasonably well focused.

Along with a number of recent Dolby S decks, the Dolby S circuit here is finally outperforming Dolby C, and at least equalling Dolby B for sound quality in the areas described earlier.

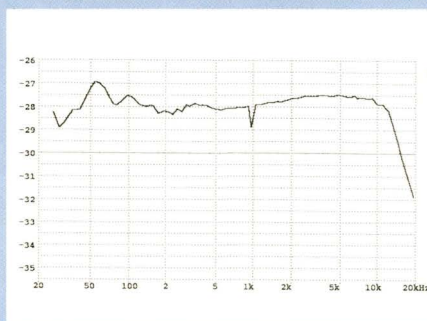
Conclusions

The KX-580 has good all-round performance, and is blessed by an excellent Dolby S circuit which has the capability to produce recordings that, in certain respects, appear to transcend the acknowledged limitations of cassette technology. The mild measured brightness turned out to be of little account even if left uncorrected. Definitely the stuff that *Hi-Fi Choice* Best Buys are made of.

VERDICT	
SOUND	★★★★☆
VALUE	★★★★★
PRICE	£250
▲	Excellent Dolby S implementation, good pitch stability, Play Trim.
▼	Undistinguished bass, auto tape calibration circuit trims for a somewhat over-bright tonal balance.
✉	Yamaha Electronics UK Ltd, 200 Rickmansworth Road, Watford, Hertfordshire WD1 7JS.
☎	(01923) 233166

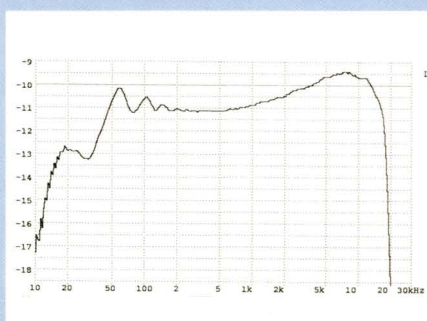
LAB REPORT

TYPE I RESPONSE



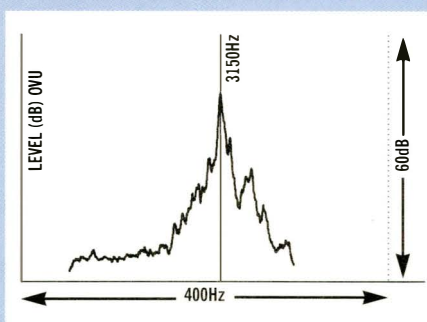
Excellent playback response can be tilted using the Play Time control to allow for azimuth variations between record and playback hardware.

TYPE IV RESPONSE



Rising high frequency response is the visible sign that the tonal balance has been tweaked — see Sound Quality.

WOW AND FLUTTER SPECTRUM



The somewhat uneven looking spectrum analysis belies a low measured wow and flutter figure.

All the record/replay frequency responses have a rise in the treble. This varies narrowly in the range 1.5-2dB above 5kHz after the deck has calibrated itself to the test tape using the auto tuning feature. However the manual bias adjust and Play Trim features mean that the responses can be brought into line.

The limited low frequency bandwidth, on the other hand, is the result of limitations in the design of the record/play heads. Care should be taken over record level settings with metal tapes, which cannot be pushed quite as hard as usual, although the good signal/noise figures are an effective compensation.

Happily, the KX-580 is blessed with an excellent transport which gives it high standards of pitch stability. ►►

Analogue vs. Digital

Various digital media have been introduced to update domestic recording technology. DAT (Digital Audio Tape) is a fully enclosed cassette about half the size of a compact cassette. It can record up to two or four hours (the latter by using a lower quality LP mode). DAT's 16-bit linear mode delivers a sound quality which is normally just below CD.

Digital Compact Cassette was conceived as a domestic recording system, with a cassette format and playing times similar to compact cassette. The PASC data reduction algorithm in DCC is barely audible, but DCC doesn't offer the bandwidth advantage of Pioneer's 96kHz DAT. Further developments are uncertain, but the latest Philips models offer good value for money.

Sony's MiniDisc has CD-length running time with data reduction, although audio processing is not as sophisticated as DCC. MD could become a commercial success, which would ensure the availability of software.

Mains powered equipment is available in all three formats, but DCC and DAT lack many car or personal players.

Play your old tapes on the Philips DCC 170.

MiniDisc enjoys major backing from Sony.

Thanks to Sony, MiniDisc is better served. A range of pre-recorded DCC and MiniDisc titles are available, but DAT has not been adopted by major record companies.



CONCLUSIONS

Best Buys and Recommendations

It was good to see that most manufacturers have resumed active development of cassette decks this year, with some interesting new models, especially between £200 and £500. Given recent currency trends, it is no surprise that prices have tended to harden since our last test, and the entry price point has crept up towards £150 for single transport models with Dolby B, C and HX-Pro. This is the extent of the bad news though, and there is some evidence that the current entry level models are at least as well specified, and often better adjusted on the production lines than their predecessors. There were no real horror stories this time around.

There is more good news in that Dolby S is being adopted by more manufacturers and at lower price points. Dolby S made a shaky start with indifferent, rather uneven sound quality from most of the early adopters, but performance standards have improved a great deal, and the best of the current crop offer a more stable, less opaque sound, with lower tape modulation noise. In general terms, Dolby S recordings offer similar mid-level resolution to Dolby B, but with improved low-level resolution as well as the other advantages already identified.

The star of the show is the £500 Pioneer

CT-S830S (Recommended). This is a cut-down version of the CT-95, which in the last few years has established Pioneer at the top of the market alongside Nakamichi. These two Pioneer models are built like tanks, are superbly equipped and distinctly high tech, but they take advantage of all new developments, from auto tape recognition (if you can call this new), to one button tape calibration, and Dolby S — none of which can be found on Nakamichi designs. Along with a handful of others, the CT-S830S is a real chip off the old block: a deck that pushes against the edge of the envelope of the cassette medium.

Also check out the £429 Onkyo K-611 (Recommended), which looks like a mini system component derivative. It is equipped in minimalist style, and is being pitched at the Linn/Naim-toting audiophile. There are better decks at this price if you look hard enough, but it works very well, and with size and simplicity taken into account, it amply deserves shortlisting.

Although the Pioneer delivers better absolute sound quality sound than any of the other decks tested — albeit at a price — there are, of course, decks that offer better value. At £270, little over half the price of the CT-S830S, JVC's TD-V662 (Best Buy)

MEASUREMENT DATA AT A GLANCE

Manufacturer Model	Aiwa AD-WD727	Denon DRM-540	Grundig Fine Arts CCF3	JVC TD-V662	Kenwood KX-7060S
Wow and flutter IEC386 Q-Pk %					
Pk Wtd	0.18%	0.087%	0.28%	0.09%	0.126%
Mean Wtd	0.16%	0.073%	0.24%	0.06%	0.104%
Crosstalk ref 0dB					
100Hz	-31.7dB	-52.0dB	-30.3dB	100Hz -47.4dB	-32.5dB
1kHz	-59.0dB	-50.5dB	-57.2dB	1kHz -64.1dB	-59.5dB
6.3kHz	-62.5dB	-56.5dB	-56.3dB	6.3kHz -60.5dB	-60.0dB
10kHz	-61.3dB	-55.5dB	-54.2dB	10kHz -57.3dB	-57.9dB
Noise CCLR 468-3 Q-Pk IEC					
IEC Type I	-45.6dB	-39.8dB	-39.2dB	IEC Type I -41.8dB	-38.6dB
IEC Type II	-47.2dB	-40.6dB	-41.3dB	IEC Type II -44.1dB	-45.5dB
IEC Type IV	-46.7dB	-39.3dB	-	IEC Type IV -42.9dB	-43.2dB
Peak Wtd	-43.2dB	-44.5dB	-39.6dB	-35.3dB	-42.1dB
Peak Unwtd	-41.6dB	-43.6dB	-39.1dB	-35.4dB	-46.3dB
Mean Wtd	-42.8dB	-53.6dB	-	-35.3dB	-45.6dB
	45.8dB	-40.0dB	-39.5dB	-41.9dB	-38.7dB
	47.5dB	-40.7dB	-41.6dB	-44.3dB	-45.7dB
	-46.9dB	-39.6dB	-	-43.3dB	-43.4dB
MOL 3% ref 0dB					
1kHz	-1.5dB	+4.9dB	+3.7dB	+1.9dB	n/a
	-3.1dB	+3.4dB	n/a	-0.7dB	n/a
	n/a	+3.9dB	-	n/a	+6.1dB
Distortion (THD+N) @ +8dB					
100Hz	19.1%	11.0%	5.53%	9.06%	2.76%
1kHz	10.5%	11.5%	17.1%	11.9%	12.7%
6.3kHz	4.09%	8.35%	-	10.0%	8.82%
	5.31%	10.2%	3.81%	5.05%	7.43%
	6.11%	5.39%	4.07%	3.88%	4.45%
Distortion (THD+N) @ -8dB					
100Hz	0.73%	0.91%	1.09%	0.73%	0.98%
1kHz	0.49%	0.69%	0.91%	0.64%	0.86%
6.3kHz	0.77%	0.86%	-	0.63%	0.62%
	1.51%	1.53%	1.54%	1.19%	1.49%
	0.84%	1.03%	0.83%	0.58%	0.90%
	0.83%	1.14%	-	0.65%	0.79%
	2.28%	2.51%	2.13%	1.65%	1.90%
	2.30%	1.71%	1.09%	1.38%	1.40%
	2.52%	1.69%	-	1.45%	1.59%
Dimensions	43x14x32.7 (WxHxD) cm	43.4x12.5x27.5 (WxHxD) cm	43.5x14x34 (WxHxD) cm	43.5x13.3x33.2 (WxHxD) cms	44x12.7x27.6 (WxHxD) cm
Average wind/rewind time (C90)	3 min 8 sec	2 min 54 sec	2 min 54 sec	2 min 27 sec	2 min 0 sec
Price	£170	£159	£200	£270	£329

is capable of making excellent recordings on metal tape using, by preference, Dolby B. This is thanks in part to a first rate three-head dual-capstan transport. For £20 less than the JVC, **Yamaha's KX-580** (Best Buy) offers a different set of compromises: it only has two heads and a single capstan transport, but Dolby S is included. The Dolby S circuit is a much better performer than most early implementations of the system, and on this evidence worth having. There are also some good support features like Play Trim.

Among the Recommended models, the **Technics RS-BX601** (a three-head deck selling for £230) comes close to the Yamaha but lacks Dolby S. At a somewhat higher price (£329), the **Kenwood KX-7060S** has it all, namely Dolby S, three heads and dual capstans. A thoroughly modern design, it can sound a little synthetic, especially with metals, but it remains a talented, well endowed and good value deck.

At the affordable end of the price band, there are two excellent decks for less than £200. One, the £180 **Sony TC-K461S** (Recommended) is the cheapest Dolby S model to date, and despite sounding slightly softer around the edges, the wonder at this price is that it can be done at all. That said, the £159 **Denon DRM-540** (Best Buy) is significantly sharper and more transparent, allowing the music to talk for itself with even greater clarity.

There were two dual decks this time around, of which the £170 **Aiwa AD-WD727** (Recommended) is cheaper, has better facilities and sounds superior into the bargain. The Aiwa is a good bet if you need the facilities of a dual transport deck, but if you can manage without, you can have significantly better sound quality for the same money. Alternatively, you could save in the region of £40 and buy a deck of similar quality. ▲

Best Of the Rest



The DR-1 from Nakamichi transcends the limitations of the medium.

If you're on the lookout for a well-equipped, well set up and respectable-sounding three-head Dolby S deck, the **Aiwa AD-S950** at £300 can hold its own alongside any of the more recent Dolby S alternatives. At £250, Kenwood has an excellent single-capstan model, still with three heads and Dolby S, called the **KX-5060S**. This is, in effect, a junior version of the **KX-7060S** (£330), and performance is only a few steps behind its senior sibling. Both achieved Best Buy status in the last group test of cassette decks in issue 136.

The Harman/Kardon **TD420** (£280) also made an impression back then. This is a much simpler two-head Dolby B/C model without fancy gadgets, but it has been designed using audiophile criteria. The test sample was not especially well set up, but this is likely to have been a teething problem that will now have been resolved.

If you're strapped for cash, the **Aiwa AD-F450** (£120, Best Buy) is outstanding value for money, with most of the sound quality of a decent £200 deck.

The hi-fi community tends to look down its nose at auto-reverse cassette decks, but it is not beyond the wit of man

to develop decent transport mechanisms of this type, and speaking personally, I am not sure I would want a cassette deck that couldn't record long plays off radio without having to be nurse-maided between sides at the end of the tape. There isn't a big choice here, but the **Technics RS-BX501** achieved Recommended status in the last issue, and is reasonably priced at £180.

If you are after something really special, a cassette deck that redefines the potential of the medium, then check out a Nakamichi. Short on frills but long on sound quality is the £850 **DR-1**. For full combat purposes there's also the £2,350 **Dragon**, which has more widgets than you can shake a stick at.

Kenwood's **KX-5060** sports a Best Buy tag.



Luxman K-322			Marantz SD-53			Onkyo K-611			Pioneer CT-S830S			Sony TC-K461S			Technics RS-BX601			Yamaha KX-580		
0.11%			0.16%			0.17%			0.064%			0.13%			0.12%			0.072%		
0.10%			0.13%			0.12%			0.048%			0.10%			0.10%			0.059%		
-53.3dB			-30.9dB			-28.7dB			-44.9dB			-47.7dB			-30.6dB			-31.3dB		
-53.5dB			-57.9dB			-56.6dB			-61.4dB			-46.1dB			-57.9dB			-59.0dB		
-59.5dB			-59.6dB			-62.8dB			-61.5dB			-59.9dB			-58.0dB			-64.0dB		
-59.0dB			-58.0dB			-40.2dB			-58.5dB			-59.2dB			-55.9dB			-42.7dB		
IEC Type I	IEC Type II	IEC Type IV	IEC Type I	IEC Type II	IEC Type IV	IEC Type I	IEC Type II	IEC Type IV	IEC Type I	IEC Type II	IEC Type IV	IEC Type I	IEC Type II	IEC Type IV	IEC Type I	IEC Type II	IEC Type IV	IEC Type I	IEC Type II	IEC Type IV
43.8dB	45.0dB	43.8dB	42.8dB	29.2dB	44.4dB	40.8dB	44.9dB	43.9dB	38.2dB	42.3dB	42.4dB	44.5dB	44.4dB	45.8dB	41.1dB	42.7dB	43.2dB	42.3dB	46.3dB	46.4dB
46.0dB	47.1dB	47.1dB	38.9dB	27.8dB	38.7dB	42.1dB	42.4dB	41.6dB	39.4dB	33.4dB	34.2dB	41.6dB	42.3dB	43.8dB	45.0dB	44.6dB	45.4dB	43.7dB	44.9dB	47.1dB
43.9dB	45.2dB	44.0dB	43.0dB	29.4dB	44.5dB	41.2dB	45.0dB	44.2dB	39.0dB	42.5dB	42.6dB	44.7dB	44.7dB	46.0dB	41.2dB	42.9dB	43.3dB	42.4dB	46.6dB	46.5dB
+6.2dB	n/a	n/a	-1.7dB	n/a	n/a	+3.4dB	+1.7dB	n/a	n/a	-1.0dB	n/a	-2.2dB	-1.5dB	-1.8dB	+2.7dB	+0.7dB	+3.7dB	-0.5dB	-1.5dB	-1.0dB
17.4%	16.9%	16.0%	16.6%	16.4%	15.5%	8.22%	9.79%	5.91%	8.64%	12.2%	8.35%	19.2%	17.7%	10.8%	12.6%	12.8%	8.52%	10.8%	16.3%	17.1%
6.03%	16.4%	18.0%	14.8%	17.4%	18.6%	4.84%	5.47%	2.62%	8.19%	10.8%	5.80%	8.97%	8.88%	9.55%	7.3%	7.45%	3.98%	7.41%	12.1%	15.6%
3.36%	3.36%	5.05%	3.41%	2.51%	4.15%	2.62%	4.02%	5.78%	2.91%	1.51%	4.26%	3.77%	3.43%	4.33%	1.64%	11.6%	20.9%	2.49%	1.94%	3.26%
1.13%	0.62%	0.90%	1.69%	7.44%	1.03%	0.77%	0.51%	0.55%	0.94%	0.55%	0.57%	0.83%	0.81%	0.63%	0.83%	0.63%	0.63%	0.80%	0.60%	0.85%
1.71%	1.04%	1.16%	1.86%	1.20%	1.13%	1.26%	0.53%	0.61%	1.17%	0.53%	0.59%	1.50%	1.44%	0.90%	1.46%	0.70%	0.04%	1.41%	0.98%	1.02%
2.18%	1.59%	1.46%	1.98%	1.36%	1.09%	1.63%	0.82%	0.90%	1.47%	1.04%	0.94%	2.37%	2.44%	1.89%	1.76%	0.86%	1.06%	1.80%	1.27%	1.27%
43.8x12.5x27.5 (WxHxD) cm			42.6x12.3x30 (WxHxD) cm			27.5x12x31.4 (WxHxD) cm			42x14x38.1 (WxHxD) cm			43x12x31 (WxHxD) cm			43x12.5x29.3 (WxHxD) cm			43.5x12.6x27.7 (WxHxD) cm		
2 min 38 sec			2 min 25 sec			2 min 10 sec			2 min 39 sec			2 min 55 sec			1 min 07 sec			2 min 20 sec		
£140			£200			£429			£500			£180			£230			£250		

Stand By Your Stands

Malcolm Steward rounds up the latest loudspeaker supports.

For the benefit of newcomers and readers who missed the last *Hi-Fi Choice* stand supplement (July 1994), wherein I preached the Sermon on the Loudspeaker Mount, a brief discussion of the whys and wherefores of loudspeaker stands is probably in order.

In recent years I've had to revise my pet theories regarding stands. I started my audiophile life with a fundamentalist 'flat earth' (Linn/Naim based) approach. This involved chanting 'light-but-rigid-with-spikes' at every opportunity and beating up on anyone seen fixing speakers to stands with Blu-Tack (or any material with a whiff of compliance about it). In those sad old, bad old days the credo was simple: if it moved it wasn't any good.

Then things started to change. I bought a pair of Naim *SBLs*, which came with an integral stand arrangement that held the bass driver cabinet still while allowing the tweeter cabinet to move. Subsequently, I encountered the Shahinian range of omnidirectional floor-standers, all of which bucked the trend for rigidity: these iconoclasts came with rubber feet or, worse still, castors on their bases. The trouble is, the Naims with their 'free' tweeters and the Shahinians with their 'free' cabinets sound significantly less musical if you attempt to stiffen their entire structures.

I'll leave it to those who enjoy theorising to decide why these speakers all succeed in breaking the 'flat earth' rules. My guess is that the 'free' tweeters of the Naim *SBLs* avoid problems by moving outside their pass band and over distances that are relatively far greater than the wavelengths they're handling. The Shahinians, I suspect, are stable because they don't position all their drivers on the same plane. The *Diapason*, for example, has mid and high frequency drivers pointing skywards, so that the equal and opposite forces they produce when energised — which would normally rock the cabinet — effectively push the speaker into the ground. Its bass drivers fire sideways so they don't provoke the normal fore and aft movement that muddles the presentation of conventional designs.

My revised view of supports for typical bookshelf speakers now runs along these

lines. Ideally, you need to have a rigidly mounted bass driver. The large cone excursions of a low frequency unit need to be controlled so that only the unit's diaphragm moves, not the cabinet. However, in making the bass driver 'rigid' you don't want to divert its mechanical excitations into the high frequency driver or its mounting. You can now see this idea creeping into budget models. The £130 Mission 731 uses a novel driver mounting arrangement that mechanically divorces its HF and LF drivers.

In a perfect world, a loudspeaker support would channel away this spurious energy from the speaker's drivers, so that only the diaphragms moved and generated an output that was faithful to the input signal. It would dispose of this energy along discrete paths, so eliminating mutual interference. It would also sink any cabinet resonance to prevent panel-generated coloration. Finally, it would prevent energy travelling from the environment into the loudspeaker assembly.

A universal stand that could perform all these functions isn't really a practical proposition, given the variety of speakers that exist. The best we can hope for is that it will fulfil the most vital of these criteria. A corollary of this is that given any particular loudspeaker, stand and flooring, you need to adopt a flexible approach to setting up the combination for optimum results. In practical terms, this means that after spiking the stand into the floor securely, you're on your own. Try different methods of coupling the speaker to the stand: spikes, cones, Blu-Tack, rubber feet are all possibilities. Where you place them can also prove influential: the Epos *ES11*, for example, responds most favourably to spikes positioned close to the corners of its cabinet. Then experiment with mass loading the stand, or filling it — perhaps partially, perhaps completely — with different materials, like sand and/or leadshot, to give just two examples.

About the only rule I have now for supports is that they need to be sufficiently rigid and stable to keep the bass driver under control. After that, anything goes. The correct stand (and approach to support) for your particular speaker is the one that makes it sing.

Alphason New Concept models

NCI £39.95 NCII £69.95



*New Concept —
one upright or two?*

The *NCI* models (40, 50 and 60, the numbers indicating their height) are the cheapest members of Alphason's *New Concept* family of supports. These simple designs use steel top and base plates, connected by a tensioned steel pillar filled with Sound Sink damping material. The *NCII* range is similarly constructed, but with two closely spaced pillars instead of the *NCI*'s one.

The top and bottom plates of the stands come drilled ready for spikes but, unusually, the holes aren't threaded. Presumably this represents a cost saving for the manufacturer that's reflected in the stands' low retail price — or that of the *NCI* models at least. However, attaching and adjusting the spikes using nuts on either side of the plates is fiddly and inconvenient. I'd gladly pay a little more to have threaded holes.

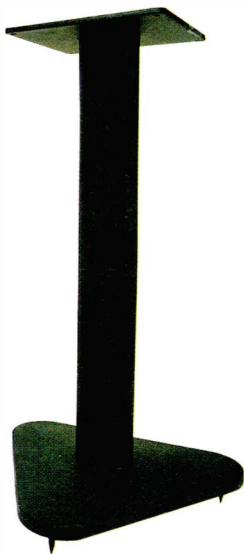
I didn't get on well with the *NCI-50*. Apart from the fun trying to adjust its spikes, its small base plate made it prone to instability through top-heaviness when loaded with a speaker. I'd suggest it as an inexpensive stand for a non-critical application, but not for serious hi-fi use.

I had more success with the taller, heavier *NCII-60*, which rooted itself to the floor more securely. Unsurprisingly, it performed much better than the cheaper stand. *NCI-50*'s presentation was rather lightweight and 'thin', while the *NCII-60* managed to extract more bass weight from speakers and sounded more evenly balanced. Nonetheless, the balance was still such that mid-band and treble information predominated, lending the sound a liveliness and attack, particularly on acoustic guitar, that might appeal to you. Overall, though, there are other models in this round-up that I would be more confident about recommending.

✉ Alphason Designs Ltd., Unit D2, (2) Moss Industrial Estate, St Helen's Road, Leigh, Lancashire WN7 3PT
☎ (01942) 678000

Alphason Titan S50

£99.95



Alphason's *Titan*, unlike its *New Concept* models, proved much more successful and recommendable. It uses a triangular, three-spike base — which is threaded, thankfully — and a single, Sound Sink filled, tensioned steel pillar supporting its small top plate, which is also threaded for upward-facing spikes. The design also proved to be significantly more stable through having a cast-iron base plate whose weight anchored it firmly to the floor.

With the Mordaunt-Short *MS10*s used extensively throughout this test, the *550*'s performance was overtly dynamic and well balanced. Its stability certainly seemed to extract a commendably full-blooded low-end from these compact speakers. Although the bass was slightly on the light side with the *Titan*s, it also proved solid, tuneful and articulate.

In my view, the *Titan* excelled in the mid-band. It avoided adding obvious coloration and allowed voices to come across in a detailed and expressive fashion. It was also nicely controlled in the treble. Instead of sapping the energy of percussion, the *Titan* helped, thrusting it forward without exaggeration. I further appreciated its lack of colour when listening to Terence Trent D'Arby's *If You Go Before Me*, where it gave a powerful and lucid account of TTD's voice and piano. The *Titan*'s openness, control and generally clean character also allowed its presentation to offer rewardingly crisp timing.

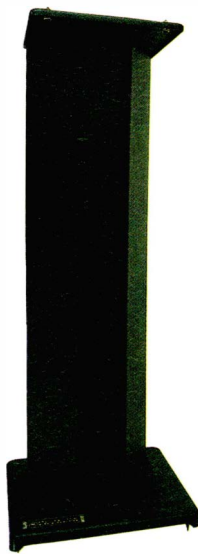
Last year I gave the *Titan* a Recommended tag, but I'm afraid that I am less inclined to bestow such an award this time round. It's still a worthy stand, but if I were in the market for a single column, three-spike model I'd probably spend another £9 on the fully welded, smarter looking *Kudos S50*.

✉ Alphason Designs Ltd., Unit D2, (2) Moss Industrial Estate, St Helen's Road, Leigh, Lancashire WN7 3PT
☎ (01942) 678000



Atacama SE24

£69.99



I discovered the Atacama *SE24* when I wrote the 1993 *Hi-Fi Choice* stand supplement and I've kept a pair around the house ever since. The reason is simple: if these stands don't wrest an excellent performance from a small, budget loudspeaker, at least they don't do it any disservice. If you have a cheap miniature and want to extend its low-end weight, the *SE24*s are generally a sure-fire way of doing so. Typically the bass weight increases, but you don't suffer any of the bloom or temporal problems that often accompany a more substantial presentation.

The stand's format is sturdy base and top plates welded to a large-section single pillar. The folded perimeter of the base plate neatly hides the floor spikes, while the top plate is drilled for upward facing spikes, available as an optional extra.

For best results you need to sand-fill the pillars: the added mass improves stability and the filling deadens the stand. Unfilled they ring out rather enthusiastically.

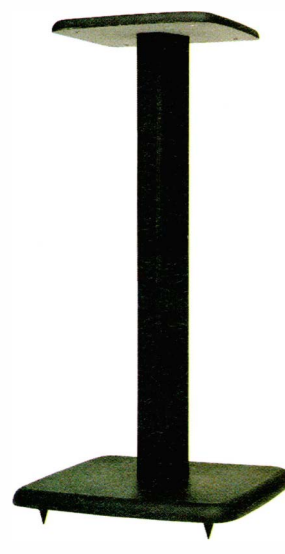
The Atacamas stand out from the budget crowd because of the consistency and overall quality of the performance they offer, and due to the fact that they seem to work so well with a wide range of loudspeakers. Tested with speakers such as the Mordaunt-Short *MS10*, the stands delivered a solid and coherent presentation that was free of the usual inexpensive stand artefacts: the bass was neither insubstantial nor overblown, the high frequencies weren't 'zingy', and they didn't introduce any overt coloration into the mid-band.

Thanks to this thoroughly competitive performance, low price and attractive appearance — it neatly avoids looking as cheap as it is — the Atacama *SE24* easily notches up its third Best Buy award.

✉ Atacama Audio, Sambell Engineering Ltd., Winstone Avenue, Croft, Leicester LE9 3GQ ☎ (01455) 283251

Ixos Deadrock 903

£49.95



There's not much you can do to prettify the tubular steel from which most stands are fashioned. Aesthetically sensitive souls might therefore welcome the *Deadrock* range from the Path Group's Ixos brand. These are single-column designs made from a granite-like composite dubbed Deadrock.

The 600mm 903 is the tallest of the bunch: the 901 is 390mm tall while the 902 stands 470mm high. All are simple self-assembly types, with just a single pillar connecting the contour-edged base and top plates.

Adjustable floor and speaker spikes are supplied for fitting into threaded inserts, but only those for the top plate come with lock-nuts. Rabid pursuers of rigidity could doubtless use other M6 spikes.

However, that's likely to prove fruitless on carpeted wooden floors — like the one on which they were tested — because the 903s are lightweight and have small base plates. As such, they can prove top-heavy and unstable with speakers like the Mordaunt-Short *MS10*.

This resulted in a sonic presentation that was noticeably smooth and tonally even, but short on definition. Deep bass, in particular, was soft with the starts and stops of notes being rounded off. Further up the spectrum, however, music seemed better ordered and cogent, but the lazy bass didn't promote coherent timing with rock albums. Christy Moore's voice and guitar hung together well, while Massive Attack's bass-driven musings sounded temporally ambiguous. In short, folkies will appreciate the 903s' open mid-range but funksters will need to look elsewhere for their rhythmic buzz. However, given the low cost, one can hardly complain too bitterly about a very reasonable looking support.

✉ Path Group plc, Unit 2, Desborough Industrial Park, Desborough Park Road, High Wycombe, Bucks HP12 3BG
☎ (01494) 441736

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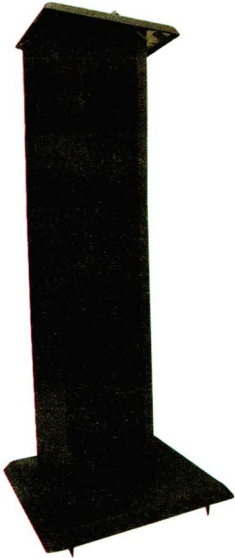
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SPEAKER STANDS



Gale Reference 600

£59.95



To the casual onlooker, the Gale Reference 600s closely resemble the Atacama SE24s, but when you move in closer, there are a few differences to be spotted. Most folks, I guess, will simply stop looking when they realise that the fully welded Gales are £10 cheaper.

The Reference 600 has a slightly smaller top plate than the SE24. Its resin damped but upward-facing spikes are not an option. You either use the self-adhesive cones provided or attach your speakers with Blu-Tack. The 600s I tested were already sand-filled, through a convenient bung in the underside of the base plate. An educated guess says that they'll perform best this way. The added mass is bound to stabilise any tall stand that has a small footprint.

The Reference 600s certainly seem a worthwhile choice for high quality budget speakers. After listening to the Mordaunt-Short MS10s on the Atacamas, the speakers sounded a tad too mellow on the R600s. However, I must confess that this was due in part to one slightly loose floor-spike. After tightening this, the presentation gained some tonal fire, dynamics perked up and spirited vocals sounded more enthusiastic. Percussion also recovered its bite and harmonic colour. Nonetheless, the R600s still seemed a little smoother sounding than the SE24s, which will probably be useful with many budget speakers. The low end was quite impressive, making the MS10s' bass sound fat, fast and funky with Terence Trent D'Arby's *Supermodel Sandwich With Cheese*. Highly appropriate.

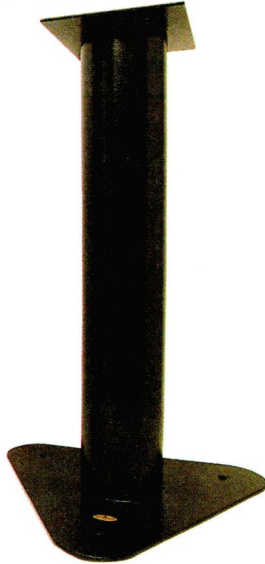
The Atacama SE24 might extract a more vivid performance from some systems, but the performance and build quality of the lookalike Reference 600 still ensures that this new stand merits a well-deserved Best Buy tag.

✉ Gale Electronics, Richer House, Hankey Place, London SE1 4BB ☎ (0171) 407 5525



Kudos S50

£99



Getting four-spike based stands set up so they're level and absolutely stable isn't always easy. Three-spike based stands are inherently more accommodating. Many, though, become less stable when they're loaded with a loudspeaker: they turn top-heavy because their footprint isn't sufficiently large. The Kudos S50, however, doesn't suffer from this problem. Supporting compact bookshelf speakers — the size of an MS10 or Mission 760 — its floor-spikes sit comfortably outside the speaker's perimeter, making it stable.

The S50 comes in two standard sizes — 18 and 24 inches — but Kudos will custom build stands to any height. When you read this the stand will have been revised to have a slightly thicker top plate fitted with upward-facing spikes. I tested the non-upward-spiked version with cones supporting the speakers.

The S50 looks robust, clean and tidy, and it sounded that way, too. Its presentation had the substance, slam and control of a properly balanced mass-loaded design, augmented by the dynamics and energy of a light-but-rigid support. It projected powerful music with impressive might but sounded rather taut and composed. When I cranked the system hard, the sound stayed clean and unmuddled, the stand appearing not to be excited by vibration.

When it wasn't flexing its muscles, the stand treated gentler music, and delicate features within mixes, with fitting dexterity. Percussion detailing came across as crisply as brawny bass lines. The S50 simply enabled the speaker to convey subtle micro-dynamics without allowing them to be swamped by more dominant elements.

Essentially, these elegant stands made baby speakers sound very grown-up. That's not bad for £90, so they deserve a Best Buy rating.

✉ Kudos Audio Ltd., Beeches, Mount Harry Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3JL ☎ (01732) 461648



Mana Soundframes

EACH £125



Multi-storey speakers
— just add Mana.

Not strictly loudspeaker stands but thoroughly deserving a mention are the Mana Soundframes — or three of them to be precise — which I use under each of my floor-standing Naim SBLs. In May's *Hi-Fi Choice* (issue 142), a similarly Mana-smitten reader described using five layers of the company's platforms under his Ruark *Talisman* speakers. Okay, it might look odd, but it works.

In fact, it works extraordinarily well. The multi-platform configuration certainly reduces the absolute rigidity of the speaker, but the speaker sounds faster, punchier, better controlled, and more detailed, which is exactly what you'd expect from a 'flat earth' set-up. The bass depth also seems enhanced, despite the increased distance between the LF driver and the floor. And that, I'm positive, isn't the result of diminishing any cancellation effects.

The greatest benefit of using the Soundframes seems to be the same effect achieved using Mana's supports under source components and amplifiers. The music takes on an effortless quality, free from the intrusion of the 'mechanical artefacts' which so often remind you that you're listening to a recording rather than a performance. This seems to be due in part to a subjective increase in headroom, making dynamics appear more wide-ranging and uncompressed.

Soundframe-supported speakers generally seem to be working less hard. As a result, the lack of perceived strain and muddle allows more of the music to come through. While I can't fathom the physics of this phenomenon I've no qualms about awarding these platforms Recommended status. Only their price — which, although high, is easy to justify in a sophisticated system — prevents them from receiving a Best Buy instead.

✉ Mana Acoustics, 59 Jubilee Close, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 3TB ☎ (0181) 429 0118



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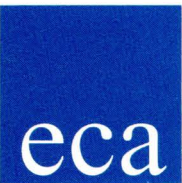
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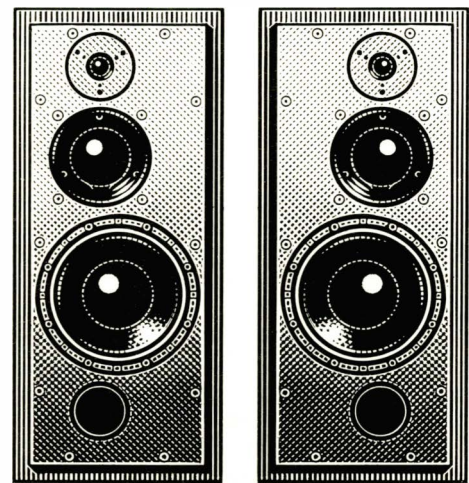
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After all that, you may wonder why there are other speaker systems costing, in some cases, many times the price of ATC?

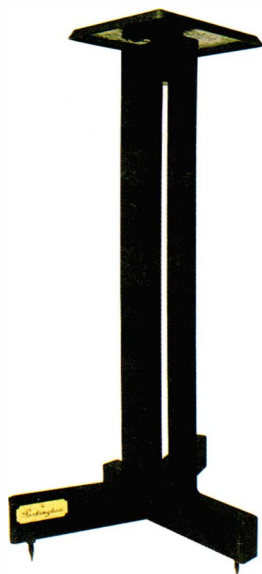
There's only one answer: Before you spend loads of money, talk a little sense with Ashley James on **01285 760561**.



ATC Loudspeaker Technology Limited,
 Gypsy Lane, Aston Down, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL6 8HR.

Partington New Merlin

£59.90



The *New Merlin* is a general purpose stand from Partington, a company better known for its more expensive, high-end models. Bucking the current fashion for bulkier, columnar stands, this is a lightweight, open-frame design — although its maker had filled the lower section to increase its mass. Superficially, the *New Merlin* is unremarkable, save for a couple of distinguishing features.

Its top plate, which is resin-filled to damp resonance, swivels to accommodate differently proportioned speakers and to facilitate toeing-in the speakers while leaving the stands square-on in the room. Although the stand isn't expensive, which would lead you to expect a sloppy swivelling arrangement, the top plate is firmly fixed and requires a hefty tug to alter its alignment. The base section is also unusual: it's near cruciform in shape but its 'arms' aren't at right angles to the main strut. Effectively, it's a tripod arrangement but with a fourth floor-spike at the rear providing extra stability.

Although light in weight, the stand's performance seemed remarkably muscular: there was certainly no significant loss in low frequency power. The bottom E string on Christy Moore's acoustic guitar laid a solid rhythmic foundation for his *Fairytale Of New York*. The instrument's upper strings had a persuasive sense of life and harmonic fullness that lent the music a keen sense of dynamics and pace.

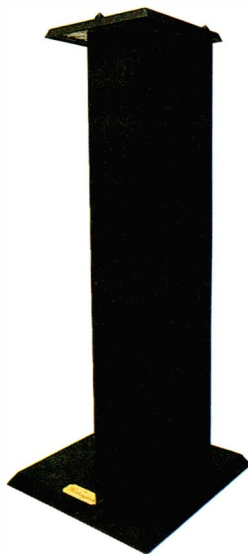
With more complex, busy albums, such as Shane MacGowan's *The Snake*, the presentation's clarity and order diminished slightly. Although fundamentally together, the music wasn't as precisely rendered as it was on some of the heavier and more expensive stands. However, it's unreasonable to expect absolute precision from a £59 general purpose stand.

✉ Partington and Company, Unit 9, Kestner Industrial Estate, King Edward Road, Greenhithe, Kent DA9 9AP
☎ (01322) 383712



Partington Discovery

£79.90



I'm loath to describe the *Discovery* as another Atacama clone: Peter Partington says he had a similar design that preceded the famed *SE24*. So, because most budget stand buyers are familiar with the Atacama, I'll simply say that the appearances of the *Discovery* and the *SE24* aren't too dissimilar.

The *Discovery*, however, comes with silicon-and-iron-resin-damped top and base plates, as well as a central column that buyers can fill with sand or another damping material of their choice. The base is spiked but the top plate is left blank, allowing you to use Blu-Tack or Partington's own *Topper* cones to support the speaker.

I used the latter and was immediately impressed by the amount of worthwhile, musically relevant information the stand extracted from a capable but not exactly exotic little speaker such as the *MS10*. The Christy Moore *Live At The Point* album showed really deep, rich texture on guitar and voice. The depth and substance of the presentation truly added to the convincing nature of the system's portrayal. The music was immediate and enticing, and the presentation believable.

The system's tonal balance was equally compelling, being wholly even from the well-formed bass to the crisp, detailed treble. Dynamics were also persuasive, whether they were subtle changes in level or massive swings. At high replay levels the *Discovery* certainly appeared to help the amplifier keep the speaker under strict control. This helped to make the music sound like it was being hammered out without the intrusive signals that normally accompany drivers bottoming out.

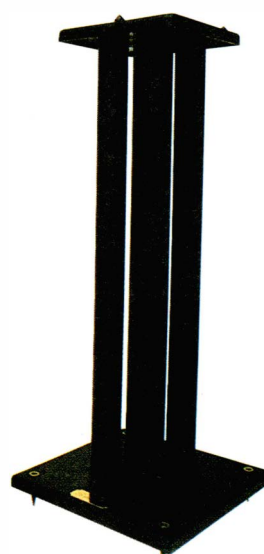
In short, this is one cool stand: an undeniable Best Buy at under £80.

✉ Partington and Company, Unit 9, Kestner Industrial Estate, King Edward Road, Greenhithe, Kent DA9 9AP
☎ (01322) 383712



Partington Trophy (Part Filled)

£99.90



The *Trophy* is one of Partington's higher priced stands, a four-column design with damped top and base plates, its columns fully filled with the same silicon-and-iron-resin mix. In response to requests from dealers for a less expensive version of the stand, the company produced the *Part Filled* model simply by removing the filling from the columns. A plastic bung at the base of each column enables buyers to fill the stand fully with a substance of their choosing.

I tested them with a sand filling and found that they were delightfully easy to set up. The four floor-spikes are easy to adjust through apertures in the stand's base plate. I used the supplied *Topper* cones to support speakers, but Blu-Tack is a more compliant option.

The stand's stability was reflected in the way it presented music — tight and cogent, with excellent, smoothly integrated detail. Bass instruments had outstanding solidity, speed and texture.

Notes started, developed and stopped without any hint of ambiguity. Mid-range instruments and voices appeared unusually open and devoid of artifice, which allowed them a satisfying range of expression and a welcome sense of naturalness.

The stand's lack of intrusive character and the controlled performances it encouraged benefited acoustic music, but also paid dividends with processed rock recordings. On Terence Trent D'Arby's overtly heavy *Vibrator*, the *Trophy PF* allowed me to wind up the amplifier harder than any other stand in this test.

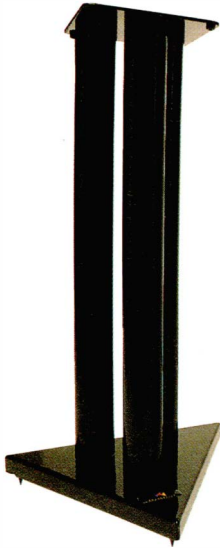
This practical, good-looking stand has just what's required for wince-free excursions into monitoring levels using modest compact speakers, which makes it a definite Best Buy.

✉ Partington and Company, Unit 9, Kestner Industrial Estate, King Edward Road, Greenhithe, Kent DA9 9AP
☎ (01322) 383712

ON TEST

Sound Style Z024

£99.95



I've looked at the self-assembly Z024 a couple of times before. The first time, I found it rang like a bell and wasn't especially stable, which naturally affected its performance adversely: the empty columns and open base make it a rather 'lively' structure. By the time I tested the Z024 in a second round, Veda had enlarged the filler holes and encouraged me to sand-fill the pillars. The bigger holes make the stands far easier to damp and mass load whether you use sand or lead-shot. I'd recommend that you do this as a stability-enhancing and an anti-ringing measure. The stand performs much better when it's loaded.

What hasn't changed about this triangular-based, three-pillar design is its striking high-gloss finish, which is available in a variety of modern, vibrant hues. It even looks appealing in the standard-issue black.

The fully filled Z024 turned in an equally glossy sonic performance. Supporting the Mordaunt-Short MS10s, it projected Christy Moore's acoustic guitar and voice with admirable vigour, sounding enthusiastic but avoiding exaggerated animation. Even the weighty bass line and cranked guitar of Terence Trent D'Arby stayed under control. In fact, the stand sounded impressively coherent with challenging music, demonstrating well-measured dynamics and an even spectral balance that kept instruments and voices in an appropriate perspective. Its low end, although certainly not short of heft, appealed strongly to listeners who appreciate tight, fast bass.

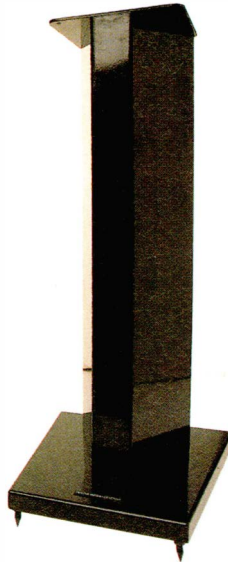
However, I would suggest that you audition this stand within the context of your own system. With the tight, controlled sounding rig I used to test it, the Z024's animated character was fine, but it might prove too enthusiastic with a less taut-sounding system.

✉ SoundStyle, 8 Greyfriars Road, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP32 7DX ☎ (01284) 701101



Sound Organisation Z124

£79.95



The Z124 is Sound Organisation's variation on a theme by Atacama/Partington. It's a tall, single pillar design built around a substantial central shaft. Unlike the SE24, the *Discovery* and Gale's *Reference 600*, however, this stand is a self-assembly number. After fitting the column to the base plate with two hex bolts and pouring in some ring-quashing, mass-augmenting sand, you fit the top plate with another pair of hex bolts. Spike it up — both plates are threaded — and you're away. One individual feature of this lookalike that might appeal is its lacquer finish, which makes its appearance less industrial or a trifle conspicuous, according to your taste.

One less appealing feature is that the self-assembly nature of the Z124 doesn't guarantee that the interface between the sand-filled column and the base plates will be entirely sand-tight. The review pair leaked slightly. So, as a carpet saving precaution, line the columns with the plastic bags that protect them in transit before filling them.

That niggle aside, I liked what the Z124s did for the MS10s' presentation. Christy Moore sounded vibrant and rhythmically persuasive. His voice and acoustic guitar brimmed with energy. The guitar's bottom E string made its presence felt convincingly and the other five projected with natural vigour. In spite of its lively sound, however, the stand didn't appear exaggerated with energetic music. It kept a firm grip on tracks that can provoke misbehaviour, such as Shane MacGowan's *That Woman's Got Me Drinking*.

In all, the Z124 appeared a pleasantly balanced performer, tonally even with good timing and dynamics, and no tendency to rob music of its intrinsic energy. Recommended — even if it did leak!

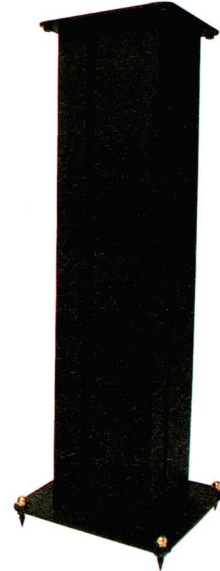
✉ Goldring Products Ltd., 8 Greyfriars Road, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP32 7DX ☎ (01284) 701101

SPEAKER STANDS



Sound Organisation Z129

£109.95



This heavyweight four-pillar design, which is not unlike a slimmed down Target R1, gives the impression of being intended for high performance miniature speakers. It's a self-assembly type, but that doesn't make it flimsy: once assembled, with four hex bolts attaching each pillar to the top and base plates, it's rigid and substantial. Building the Z129 takes a little longer than usual and the process was complicated because the paint finish on the pair I received had coated the inside of the threaded holes for the top-spikes. Trying to insert those little beggars into an otherwise fully assembled stand was not fun.

The Z129's rectangular section columns ring, but filling them with sand deadens that coloration-inducing tendency. Also, it usefully enhances the small-based stand's stability.

These stocky supports certainly seemed to keep any excess energy in the speaker cabinet under strict control. Music remained vibrant and dynamic and the overall presentation was commendably transparent. Slight detail and events buried in mixes emerged distinctly but within a credible perspective — the stand didn't highlight detail unnaturally. The Z129's sound offered the substance and lack of coloration found in the best heavyweight stands but, unlike some massive designs, it didn't slug music's timing or exaggerate its lower registers.

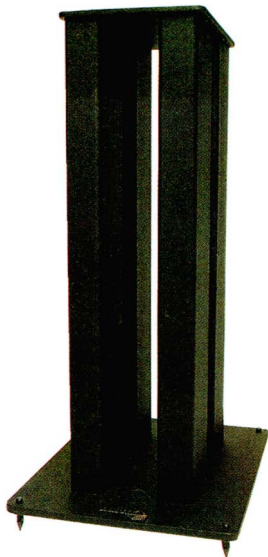
While the Z129 delivered a thoroughly commendable performance, I still felt that the Partington *Trophy* that preceded it in the tests had a more noticeable edge in terms of speed, bass articulation and openness. The Sound Organisation model, therefore, comes Recommended with the important caveat that you might form a different opinion with another system or room.

✉ Goldring Products Ltd., 8 Greyfriars Road, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP32 7DX ☎ (01284) 701101



Target R1

£275



The R1 is a truly high-mass, four-pillar stand designed to support ultra high performance miniatures such as the ProAc *Response One*. While it's probably inappropriate to use it with budget models such as the Mordaunt-Short *MS10*, it's interesting to discover how far you can push the performance of such speakers with a no-compromise stand.

The formula here is fully welded construction using heavy top and bottom plates connected by large section rectangular columns. The large base is threaded for floor-spikes but the smaller top plate isn't, requiring you to use cones or Blu-Tack to secure your speakers. The stand is easy to set up, although not easy to move, simply because its mass and meaty M8 spikes couple it firmly to the floor.

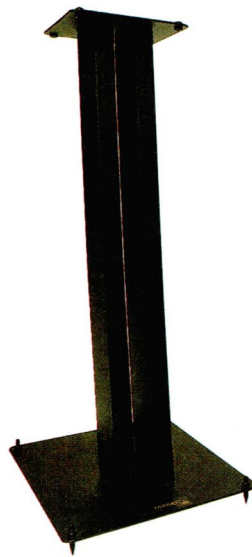
That the speaker cabinet wasn't moving whenever a big signal energised the bass driver became apparent after the opening bars of Terence Trent D'Arby's *Vibrator*. Bass lines were hard-hitting because of their sheer weight and the impressive speed with which notes started and stopped. This extended throughout the speaker's bandwidth, lending drums and electric guitar, in particular, delicious attack. The stand's effect on imagery was equally inspiring, presenting a rock solid soundstage that was completely independent of level. The R1 did, however, make the *MS10* sound a little ragged at the top end, although using Blu-Tack instead of cones alleviated the treble sting. As I noted when I last reviewed this stand, it does tend to reveal a speaker's limitations as well as encouraging its finer qualities to emerge.

Used with more sophisticated speakers, the R1 proved hard to fault. The way in which it enhanced clarity, control, bass extension and dynamics were so appealing. Recommended.

✉ Target Audio Products plc, Suite 6a, Britannia House, Britannia Estate, Leagrave Road, Luton LU3 1RJ
☎ (01582) 401244

Target TR60

£65.00



Easy self-assembly and high performance rigidity rarely go hand in hand, but Target has taken a couple of sensible steps towards attaining that goal with the TR60. Its rectangular base plates, for example, are respectably proportioned with their front-to-back dimension being the largest. This helps them resist fore-and-aft rocking better than a square-based stand. The two columns supporting the spiked top plate rake backwards, placing the speaker's mass centrally over the base, which also helps stabilise the arrangement. Ultimately, though, this stand isn't as stable as the most solid in this group.

Target has used unthreaded holes for the base plate spikes, which makes fine adjustment more difficult than it is with stands using threaded fittings. The only other stands in this group that have a similar arrangement are the Alphason *New Concept* models, which suggests to me that neither design is aimed at hardened audiophiles. For that reason, I doubt that Target expects anyone to try mass-loading the TR60, which is possible if a tad fiddly.

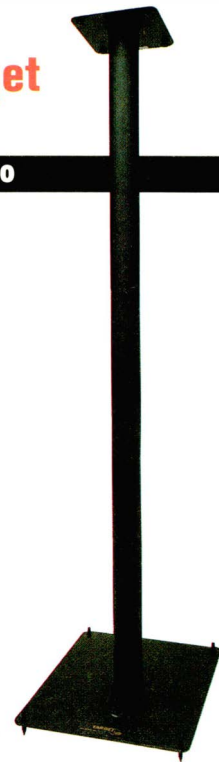
Supporting Mordaunt-Short *MS10*s, the TR60s displayed a lively, dynamic mid-range and a detailed, if not explicit treble. Their presentation of Christy Moore's *Live At The Point* had a seemingly vitality, boosted by a rather undernourished bass register. The latter didn't suit Terence Trent D'Arby's *Vibrator*, where bass lines weren't articulated with the muscle or agility heard using other stands. The lightweight balance also made busier moments sound untidy and excessively forward.

With more capable stands such as the Atacama *SE24* and Gale *Reference 600* available at similar prices, this Target model doesn't seem particularly competitive.

✉ Target Audio Products plc, Suite 6a, Britannia House, Britannia Estate, Leagrave Road, Luton LU3 1RJ
☎ (01582) 401244

Target N100

£59.00



Unlike the rest of the stands in this round-up, the Target *N100* is aimed specifically at the home cinema market. Standing about one metre tall, this self-assembly design is intended for elevating small rear channel speakers to ear-height for a seated listener. It uses a broad base plate with floor-spikes to maximise stability, although a stand this tall and slender is never going to be wholly immovable. Given time and patience the truly keen videophile might find it worthwhile to pour sand or lead-shot into the stand's single pillar. It would be a slow process, though, because you'd need to fill it through the fixing hole for the top plate. That single screw fixing for the upwardly spiked top plate means, incidentally, that you can easily angle your speakers if required.

There is a brace of tall stands waiting in the wings for rear-channel reinforcement. Atacama have a metre-tall variant of the *SE24*, while Alphason and many others are also bringing up the rear. Arf! Arf!

It's a little unfair to compare the *N100* with the rest of the group — they are simply not intended to support a main pair of speakers. However, for rear channel work, they're more than acceptable.

While playing with the *N100*s I found a second application to which they're well suited. If you're running a stereo sound card on your computer and want to keep your desktop clear of clutter, these stands will place typically small multimedia speakers at just about the right height to flank your computer's monitor. *Doom*, *X-Wing* and *Indycar* freaks take note!

While the *N100*s are never going to give the performance expected from an audiophile support, they work well doing their intended job.

✉ Target Audio Products plc, Suite 6a, Britannia House, Britannia Estate, Leagrave Road, Luton LU3 1RJ
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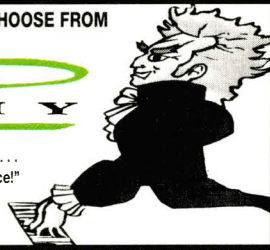
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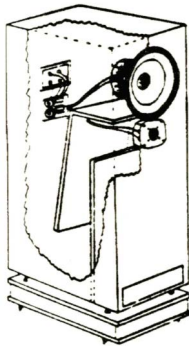
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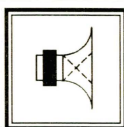
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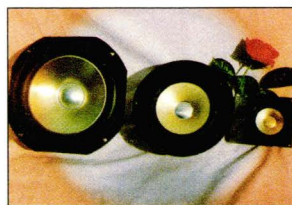
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DAT, Aiwa HD5100, unused, £285. Ian, London (0181) 519 4241

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EPOS ES11, black, mint cond & boxed. Little used, £240 ono. London (0181) 968 8873

HITACHI NMA7500 Mosfet amp & HCA7500 pre, pristine, black, bxd, manuals, handles, £300. Quad 303, £120. 33, £50. FM3, £45. Also perfect: XC Pye Mozart amp & tuner for Leak TL12. Devon (01392) 860182

ISOBARIKS DMS stands, £750. Thorens TD166II, £120. Leek 2000 receiver v.g.c. £100. Ruark Swordsman, black, £165. Wanted: 8000A amp. Jim, Essex (01206) 861457

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LUMLEY Reference ST70 stereo valve power amp. First prototype, mint, £1,195. CAT SLI valve preamp, excellent cond., £2,495 ono. Middlesex (01932) 254638

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MICHELL ISO phono stage, as new, 6 months old, was £415, now £300 ono. Bucks (01296) 86211

MISSION 753 rosewood, £490 ono. Exposure XX amplifier, £350 ono. Both immaculate, boxed. Birmingham (0121) 357 9561

MISSION 765 (floor standing) speakers. Cost £700, will sell £250. Willenhall (01922) 404168 (after 6pm or at weekends)

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STAX Gamma phones Pro Energiser, immaculate, £350. Canon S30 surround speakers, £75. Lancaster (01524) 383499

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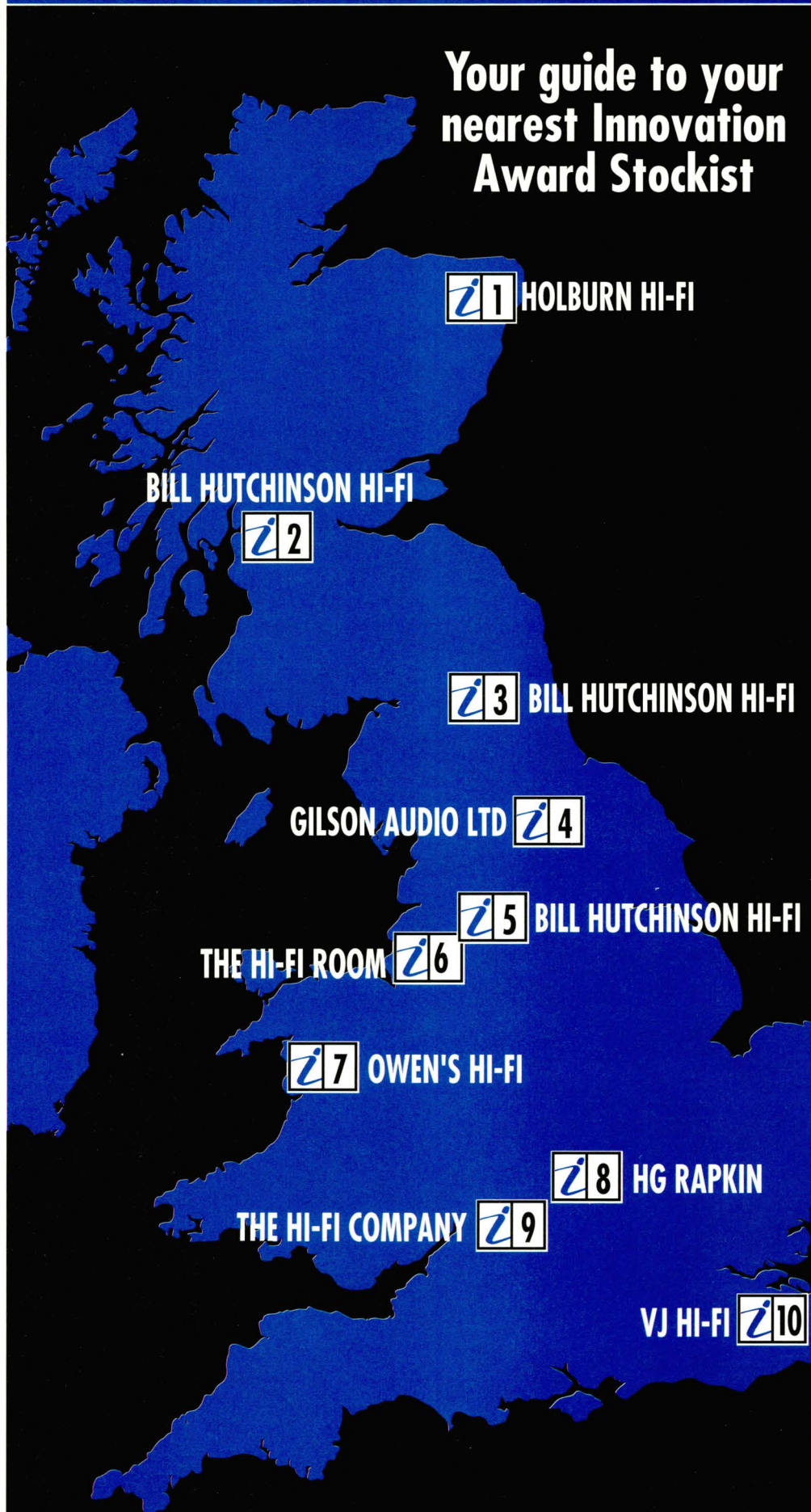
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A B D K W M M S P R T Y

15 HI-FI CORNER, AT THE VIRGIN MEGASTORE, ASTON QUAY, DUBLIN 2, IRELAND. TEL: 00 353 1-671 4343
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16 BILL HUTCHINSON HI-FI LTD, 50/52 DEANSGATE, MANCHESTER. TEL: 0161 832 1600
A B C D J K K W M M S P R S T T Y

17 FORUM HI-FI, 600-602 MANSFIELD RD, SHERWOOD, NOTTINGHAM. TEL: 01159 622 150
A B C M S P T T Y

18 SHROPSHIRE HI-FI, ST MICHAEL'S STREET, SHREWSBURY. TEL: 01743 232 317
A B C D J K K W M P R S T Y

19 OWEN'S HI-FI, UNIT B2, COLWYN SHOPPING CENTRE, COLWYN BAY, CLWYD. TEL: 01492 530 982
A C D K W M P S T

20 UNILET SOUND & VISION, 35 HIGH STREET, NEW MALDEN, SURREY KT3 4BY. TEL: 0181 942 9567
B D K M S P S T Y

A AIWA	K KEF	R REVOLVER
B B&W	KW KENWOOD	S SONY
C CANON	M MARANTZ	T TECHNICS
D DENON	MS MISSION	TY TANNOY
J JVC	P PIONEER	Y YAMAHA

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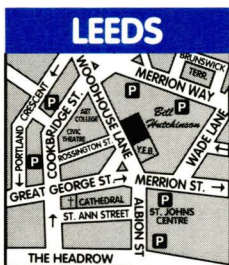
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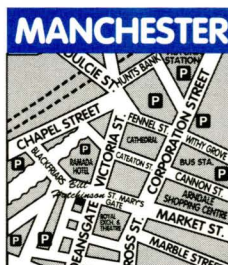
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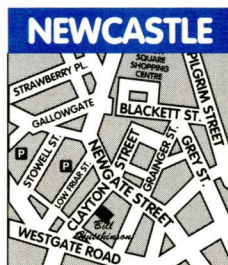
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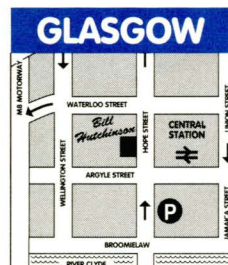
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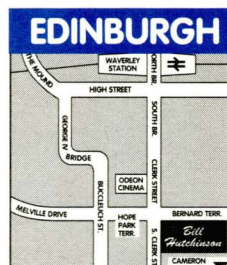
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HEAR TECHNICS'S INNOVATION WINNING STEREO CASSETTE DECK - RS BX501



YAMAHA DSP-2070 - AV AMPLIFIER - INNOVATION WINNER '94

PIONEER PDS-703 - CD PLAYER - INNOVATION WINNER '94

MARANTZ- 1020 - LYFE STYLE SYSTEM - INNOVATION WINNER '94

KEF-100 - SPEAKERS - INNOVATION WINNER '94

DENON DF-10 - CD PLAYER - INNOVATION WINNER '94

MISSION 731 - SPEAKERS - INNOVATION WINNER '95

SONY TV-KVS 3432 - TELEVISION - INNOVATION WINNER '95

TANNOY

MISSION

PANASONIC

TEAC

AKAI

PHILIPS

DENON

YAMAHA

MARANTZ

JVC

SONY

TECHNICS

ROTEL

ALL WITH 2 YEAR GUARANTEE

AIWA

Welcome to the *Hi-Fi Choice* Directory, the most comprehensive listing of hi-fi gear in the known universe. The Directory contains full information about as many components as we could fit into 24 bulging pages. It lists them alphabetically by manufacturer, and then by product type. For each product we list full specifications, with manufacturers' comments where supplied. For products we have reviewed, we include our own comments and measurements, and tell you which back issue contains the full review. The all-important Recommended or Best Buy accolades will be indicated for products that make the grade!

A key innovation is the inclusion of telephone and fax numbers for manufacturers and distributors and, wherever possible, the number of dealers stocking each brand. If you've got a specific sum of money to spend, why not make use of our new Price Guide, available through our Faxback service (page 103)? This lists all products in order of price and type, so you can choose within your budget!

SAMPLE

cass AD-F450 120 136 single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • *Basic but well designed budget deck, astonishing value, only the poor metering vices the game away.*

B'BUY

KEYS

As you'll see from the sample line above, each entry in the Directory is packed with crucial information. In order to fit these facts onto a single line it has been necessary to use some abbreviations, which are explained below, for each type of product. First, the abbreviations which are common to most entries:

Category of productcass
 Model nameAD-F450
 Price in £120
 Issue number (where product has been reviewed)136
 Size in cm: width, height, depth.....43,13,32cm
 There are three types of COMMENTS which you may see. These can be identified as follows:

- plain text indicates manufacturer's comment (product not tested)
- italics indicate reviewer's comment
- bold italics indicate **BEST BUY** or **RECOMMENDED** product

Amplifier category ('amp')

integrated, preamp, poweramp amplifier type
 A/Vincludes surround sound capability
 50Wpower output per channel in Watts RMS
 MM,5L,2T.....number of inputs of each type (L - line, T - tape, MM - moving magnet cartridge, MC - moving coil cartridge)
 hdphheadphone output available

Cable category ('cab')

loudspeaker; interconnect; digital, electrical; digital, opticalthese are the different types of cable
 this information is followed by . . .

for loudspeaker cables

construction type, materials used, capacitance (high, med. or low)
for analogue interconnects

construction type and topology, materials used

for digital interconnects

type of cable (elec. or optical), materials used, impedance in Ohms; prices are quoted per metre

Cassette Deck category ('cass')

single, twintype of cassette deck
 Dolby B, C, HX-Pronoise reduction types
 2 headnumber of heads

CD Player ('cd'), Transport ('cdt') & DAC ('dac') categories

multibit, 1-bitDAC type

THE ALL NEW HI-FI CHOICE DIRECTORY

electrical/optical outdigital output(s)
 remremote control

Digital Recorder category ('digr')

MiniDisc, Digital Audio Tape,
 Digital Compact Cassettetype of recording medium
 electrical, optical indigital input(s)
 electrical, optical outdigital output(s)
 bitstreamDAC type

Equipment Supports category ('supp')

equipment supportsupport type
 3 shelves etcindividual product features

Speaker Stands category ('std')

speaker standsupport type
 3-legconfiguration

Headphone category ('hdph')

open back, sealed, in-earheadphone type
 275gweight in grams
 250 Ohmimpedance

Loudspeaker category ('spkr')

horn, ported, sealed etccabinet type
 2 drivernumber of drive units
 108dBsensitivity @ 1metre for 2.83 volts
 8 Ohmsnominal impedance
 100Wmanufacturer's power rating

Satellite & Subwoofer category ('s/sub')

89dBsensitivity @ 1metre for 2.83 volts
 70 Wpower rating in Watts

Active Subwoofer category ('a.sub')

stereosubwoofer type
 50Wamplifier power
 THXTHX-approved (where appropriate)

Receiver category ('rec')

FM, Mwavebands received
 A/Vsurround sound capability
 75Wpower output/channel in Watts RMS
 30 presetsnumber of presets offered
 MM,3L,3Tnumber of inputs offered (see Amplifier category)
 RDShas Radio Data System compatibility

Tuner category ('tun')

key as for Receiver category above

Turntable category ('tt')

manual, automatictype of operation
 33/45 rpmspeeds offered

Phono Cartridge category ('cart')

fixed stylus, moving coil, moving magnetcartridge type
 1.4 mVcartridge output in millivolts

Tonearm category ('arm')

SME fittype of base into which arm mounts
 233mmeffective length of arm

Best Buys & Recommendations

Perhaps the most influential symbols in the Directory are the **B'BUY** and **REC'D** commendations found at the end of the entries for particularly fine products.

B'BUY A product carrying the Best Buy swagtag is of excellent quality and good value for money in its price category.

REC'D Recommended products are runners up, but still definitely worth considering within their price bands.

Please note however, that an expensive Recommended product will nearly always sound better than an inexpensive Best Buy.

An ideal situation would be to choose suitably priced **B'BUY** or **REC'D** products from relevant categories and create a Best Buy system. However, due to the variety in tonal balance that exists in many audio products, and differences in taste, system building is unfortunately not that simple. These ratings make a useful guideline for short-listing components, but only experiencing the actual combination will tell you whether it works for you.

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marantz AUTHORIZED DEALER CD63 £249 NOW £199 AMPLIFIERS FM34/PM43 £149/£199

CINEMASOUND AV PROLOGIC AV PRO-LOGIC AMPS/RECEIVERS KENWOOD SAGX350LK £329 RXV390 £299

Technics AUTHORIZED DEALER AMPLIFIERS SUN300 £149 RECEIVERS SAGX670/470 £449/£349

aiwa AUTHORIZED DEALER AMPLIFIERS SUN300 £149 RECEIVERS SAGX670/470 £449/£349

KENWOOD AUTHORIZED DEALER AMPLIFIERS KA10602060R £133/£169

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DUAL AUTHORIZED DEALER TURNTABLES CS3700 (MID) £84 CAS40503-2 £129/£179

SONY AUTHORIZED DEALER AMPLIFIERS TAF161/TA261R £139.99/£199.99

JVC AUTHORIZED DEALER AMPLIFIERS AXA662 4/2 £329/£249

YAMAHA AUTHORIZED DEALER AMPLIFIERS AX380 £199 TUNERS AX490/AX590 £249/£299

NAD AUTHORIZED DEALER AMPLIFIERS 310/302 £129/£189 CD PLAYERS 304/306 £259/£369

PIONEER AUTHORIZED DEALER AMPLIFIERS AI03A203 £129/£149 AV AMP & PROCESSORS XA950 100W PCH £229

Technics AUTHORIZED DEALER RECEIVERS SAGX670/470 £449/£349

aiwa AUTHORIZED DEALER AMPLIFIERS SUN300 £149 RECEIVERS SAGX670/470 £449/£349

KENWOOD AUTHORIZED DEALER AMPLIFIERS KA10602060R £133/£169

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UBL AUTHORIZED DEALER SPEAKERS A PAIR 731 was £129. NOW £119

CERWIN VEGA AUTHORIZED DEALER SPEAKERS L7/S/AT6 £149/£299

CELESTION AUTHORIZED DEALER 1/3 £99.99/£119.99 5/7 £159.99/£209.99

HEADPHONES NAKAMICHI AUTHORIZED DEALER CASSETTE DECKS DR1/DR2 £849/£599

UBL AUTHORIZED DEALER SPEAKERS MRS5MR25 £99/£129

Wharfedale AUTHORIZED DEALER DIAMOND MODUS CUBEMICRO £59/£109

CELESTION AUTHORIZED DEALER SPEAKERS DM600/610 £189/£249

HEADPHONES SENNHEISER AUTHORIZED DEALER HD14455 £48/£49

UBL AUTHORIZED DEALER SPEAKERS SC10/S30 £119/£159

Wharfedale AUTHORIZED DEALER DIAMOND MODUS CUBEMICRO £59/£109

CELESTION AUTHORIZED DEALER SPEAKERS DM600/610 £189/£249

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

ACOUSTIC ENERGY LTD • TEL 0181 840 6305 • FAX 0181 579 1761				
spkr	Aegis 1	452 118	ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 21.39,26cm • <i>Rich and slightly heavy balance doesn't mask fine mid/treble coherence and transparency.</i>	REC'D
spkr	Aegis 2	799	ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 33,106,26cm • Floor, reflex, metal cone	
spkr	AE1	870 102	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 26,30,18cm • <i>Amongst best miniatures around, shows exceptional mid focus and coherence, but is pricey and could be more agile.</i>	
spkr	AE2	1,175	ported • 2 driver • 91 dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 24,40,32cm • Twin bass, metal cone	
spkr	AE3	1,650 86	ported • 3 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 37,27,63cm • <i>Solid, authoritative and impressively accurate - if a shade ponderous and slow.</i>	REC'D

AIWA UK • TEL 0181 897 7000 • FAX 0181 564 9446 • DEALERS 2000+				
amp	XA-003	140	integrated • 40W • MM2L,1T • hdph • 2 speaker circuits	
cd	AD-F450	120 136	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • <i>Basic but well designed budget deck, astonishing value, only the poor metering gives the game away.</i>	B'BUY
cd	AD-WX727	170	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • Twin auto-reverse	
cd	AD-F850	230	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • Super DX head, twin capstan	
cd	AD-S950	300 140	single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • <i>High-value, high-spec package featuring Dolby S, 3 heads, tape calibration - well set up and musically well sorted.</i>	B'BUY
cd	XC-300	150	1 bit • optical out • rem	
cd	DX-C100M	500	1 bit • optical out • rem • 100+1 disc autochanger	
hdph	HP-X201	13	sealed • 230g • Dual plug	
hdph	HP-A360	13	open back • 65g • 40 Ohm • Banded, bass resonator ducts	
hdph	HP-X301	20	sealed • 230g • 3m lead, dual plug	
hdph	HP-VX303	25	sealed • 230g • In-line controls, dual plugs	
hdph	HP-X705	40	sealed • 130g • Dual plug, 2m ext cable	
a.sub	TS-W5	150	Stereo • 50W	
a.sub	TS-W7	200	stereo • 100W	

AKG • BARMAN AUDIO UK LTD • TEL 0181 207 5050 • FAX 0181 207 4572 • DEALERS 30				
hdph	K2	23	open back • 70g • 200 Ohm • Mini	
hdph	K33	25	open back • 90g • 50 Ohm	
hdph	K44	42 99	open back • 90g • 50 Ohm • <i>Good quality personal oriented phone, could have a better sense of space but is musically quite communicative.</i>	
hdph	K135	46 63	open back • 160g • 150 Ohm • <i>The K135s doesn't live up to the usual AKG standards, though they do have the ability to convey rhythm well.</i>	
hdph	K141	74	open back • 225g • 600 Ohm	
hdph	K240 Monitor	82 63	open back • 240g • 600 Ohm • <i>Something of a classic, these AKGs are very user-friendly in all respects; sonically on the warm side of normal.</i>	REC'D
hdph	K270	112	sealed • 250g • 75 Ohm	
hdph	K280 Parabolic	117 63	open back • 250g • 75 Ohm • <i>A very revealing and unusual twin-driver design that uses the same design principles as a satellite dish to beam sound into ear.</i>	REC'D
hdph	K400	118 121	open back • 250g • 120 Ohm • <i>Comfortable over long sessions. Sound is exquisitely detailed dynamic and uncoloured.</i>	REC'D
hdph	K270 Studio	121	sealed • 250g • 75 Ohm	
hdph	K500	138 111	open back • 250g • 120 Ohm • <i>Open and clear, they reproduce music with impressive definition. Balance is on the light side but transparency is high.</i>	REC'D
hdph	K340	191 75	open back • 380g • 400 Ohm • <i>Heavyweight cans in most respects, the K340 with its electrostatic tweeter is a very revealing headphone.</i>	REC'D
hdph	K1000	646 99	open back • 270g • 120 Ohm • <i>One of the best dynamics on the market, hooks directly into speaker outputs and makes much of the competition sound lame.</i>	REC'D

ALCHEMIST PRODUCTS • TEL 0181 883 3008 • FAX 0181 883 1160				
amp	Kraken/pre Aniv	395	preamp • MM,3L,2T • 25,9,25cm • Stainless steel/gold finish	
amp	Kraken/Pwr Aniv	399	power amp • 60W • 32,9,25cm • Stainless steel/gold finish	
amp	Kraken/Pre	380 124	power amp • 60W • 32,9,25cm • <i>Quirky Class A number with an equally warm and colourful sound.</i>	REC'D
amp	Kraken/mono	380	power amp • 60W • 32,9,25cm	
amp	Kraken	395 116	preamp • 5L,1T • 25,9,25cm • <i>Class-A objet d'art that's far too sensitive to RF interference. Can sound cold and fierce as a result.</i>	
amp	Kraken/Pwr	399 124	integrated • 60W • 3L,2T • 32,9,25cm • <i>Hardly accurate, but entertaining nevertheless.</i>	REC'D
amp	Kraken Aniv	499	integrated • 60W • MM,3L,2T • 25,9,25cm • Stainless steel/gold finish	
amp	Forseti	899	integrated • 100W • 4L,2T • 47,10,39cm	
amp	Freya	1,020	preamp • 6L,1T • 31,7,30cm	
amp	Odin	1,020	power amp • 80W • 31,14,30cm • Stereo	
amp	Genesis	1,525	power amp • 110W • 25,14,30cm • Pair monoblocks	

ALLISON ACOUSTICS LTD • TEL 01484 603333 • FAX 01484 607774				
spkr	AL100	100 94	2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 33,24,19cm • <i>Loud and lively wall-mount is bigger and beefier than most of the competition, if lacking some sparkle and refinement</i>	B'BUY
spkr	AL105	170 78	2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 24,37,21cm • <i>Pretty enough in appearance, sonically the AL105 doesn't really make the grade at the price.</i>	
spkr	MS200	220	90dB • 4 Ohms • 75W • 13,25,14cm • Boundary, stand mount	
spkr	AL110	220 102	90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 24,40,23cm • <i>Compact bookshelf model is a little dry and mid-forward, but bass is extended and solid.</i>	REC'D
spkr	AL115	280	90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 28,51,26cm • Boundary, stand mount	
spkr	CD6	300	90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 29,29,29cm • Cuboid, wall mount	
spkr	CD7	380	90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 24,70,24cm • Floor standing, free space	
spkr	AL120	420 98	90dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 28,61,29cm • <i>Pretty well balanced if slightly mid-forward, but sound quality is disappointing at the price.</i>	
spkr	CD8	550	90dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 27,73,27cm • Floor standing, free space	
spkr	AL125	650	90dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 28,78,29cm • Open space, free standing	
spkr	AL130	800	90dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 32,95,34cm • Open space, free standing	
spkr	I.C. 10	2,500	87dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 48,102,27cm • Floor standing, free space	
spkr	I.C. 20	5,500	87dB • 6 Ohms • 400W • 53,122,31cm • Floor standing, free space	

ALPHASON • PATE DISTRIBUTION • TEL 0121 749 2240 • FAX 0121 748 3838 • DEALERS 700				
tt	Sonata	835	manual • 33rpm • <i>Good sound in all areas - bass, clarity and neutrality all in top class and bettered by very few decks at price (tested with HR100S MCS).</i>	REC'D
tt	Sonata/Atlas	1,235	manual • 33/45rpm • Motor unit inc PSU	
tt	Symphony	1,860	manual • 33/45rpm • Motor unit & PSU	
arm	Xenon	286	fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 229mm • 1-piece titanium armtube	
arm	Xenon MCS	370	fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 229mm • vdH silver wiring	
arm	HR100S	490 86	fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 229mm • <i>S-shaped arm sounds smooth, but nevertheless reproduces transients with fine attack.</i>	REC'D
arm	HR100S MCS	550	fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 229mm • vdH silver, top bearings	
stnd	NC1-60	40	speaker stand • pillar type • 23w,60h,cm • Double column, steel	
stnd	NC1-50	40	speaker stand • pillar type • 23w,50h,cm • steel	
stnd	NC1-40	40	speaker stand • pillar type • 23w,40h,cm • steel	
stnd	NC11-60	70	speaker stand • pillar type • 23w,60h,cm • Double column, steel	
stnd	NC11-50	70	speaker stand • pillar type • 23w,50h,cm • Double column, steel	
stnd	NC11-40	70	speaker stand • pillar type • 23w,40h,cm • Double column, steel	
stnd	Titan S-50	100	speaker stand • Pillar type • 29w,50h,cm • cast iron	
stnd	Titan S-40	100	speaker stand • Pillar type • 29w,40h,cm • cast iron	
stnd	Tital L-60	130	speaker stand • pillar type • 29w,60h,cm • cast iron	
stnd	Tital L-50	130	speaker stand • pillar type • 29w,50h,cm • cast iron	
stnd	Titan L-40	130	speaker stand • pillar type • 27w,40h,cm • cast iron	
stnd	Titan S-60	130	speaker stand • Pillar type • 29w,60h,cm • cast iron	
supp	R24/24	100	equipment support • 3 shelf, MDF • 60,39,48cm	
supp	R17/17	100	equipment support • 3 shelf, MDF • 60,39,34cm	
supp	R12/12	100	equipment support • 3 shelf, MDF • 60,39,24cm	
supp	TV24/17	120	tv base module • 3 shelves, MDF • 67,39,41cm	
supp	GR24/24	130	equipment support • 3 glass shelves • 60,39,48cm	
supp	GR17/17	130	equipment support • 3 glass shelves • 60,39,34cm	
supp	GR12/12	130	equipment support • 3 glass shelves • 60,39,24cm	
supp	TV24/17S	150	tv base module • 3 shelves, MDF • 67,39,34cm • Swivel top	
supp	VR24/24	160	equipment support • 3 shelves, rosewood • 60,39,48cm	
supp	VR17/17	160	equipment support • 3 shelves, rosewood • 60,39,34cm	
supp	VR12/12	160	equipment support • 3 shelves, rosewood • 60,39,24cm	
supp	AV24/17	200	av base module • 5 shelves, MDF • 127,39,94cm • 'L' shaped	
supp	AV24/17S	230	av base module • 6 shelf, MDF • 127,39,94cm • Swivel base for TV	

AMC • CAMPUS INTERNATIONAL LTD • TEL 01494 431290				
amp	AV81 Control	289	preamp • A/V • 8L,2T • rem	
amp	2445	299	power amp • 45W • 4 channels	
amp	1030	379	preamp • MM	
amp	2030	449	power amp • 30W	
amp	S84	479	preamp • A/V • 8L • rem • Multiroom, bal/unbal inputs	
amp	AV81 H.T Control	499	preamp • A/V • 8L,2T • As AV81 plus Dolby Pro Logic	
amp	CV13030	529 116	integrated • 30W • 6L,1T • hdph • <i>A well meaning and affordable attempt to mix transistors with valves, albeit one that only really shines with simple musical styles.</i>	
cd	CD6	349 124	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • <i>Based on the same 1-bit circuit as Rotel's RCD-965BX, but with a raunchier, beefier and less transparent sound.</i>	REC'D

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

AMC - CAMPUS INTERNATIONAL LTD • TEL 01494 431290

spkr	WM50	120	86dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 19.28,7cm • Ceiling mount	
spkr	WM75	160	86dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 22.30,9cm • Ceiling mount	
spkr	WM100	210	86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 26.36,10cm • Ceiling mount	

APOGEE - ABSOLUTE SOUNDS • TEL 0181 947 5047 • FAX 0181 879 7962

spkr	Centaur Minor	1,345	hybrid • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 30,88,20cm • Ribbon/dynamic	
spkr	Ribbon Wall	1,750	hybrid • 89dB • 27,120,7cm • Ribbon/dynamic	
spkr	Centaur	2,300	hybrid • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 33,102,25cm • Ribbon/dynamic	
spkr	Centarus Slant 6	2,400	Hybrid • 88dB • Ribbon tweeter, dynamic bass	
spkr	CDD Subwoofer	3,490	hybrid • 87dB • 63,38,55cm • Active moving coil sub	
spkr	Stage Sub	3,645	moving coil • 86dB • 58,25,42cm • Active moving coil sub	
spkr	Centarus Slant 8	3,700	Hybrid • 88dB • Ribbon treble, dynamic mass	
spkr	Caliper Sig	3,998	81 ribbon • 87dB • 58,127cm • <i>Power hungry full-range ribbon panels have remarkable transparency and delicacy; loudness and 'grunt' are a bit lacking.</i>	REC'D
spkr	Stage 1 GS	4,100	ribbon • 86dB • 55,82,5cm • Two way	
spkr	Centaur Major	4,980	hybrid • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 40,141,27cm • Ribbon/dynamic	
spkr	Studio Grand	14,900	Hybrid • 87dB • 63,160,55cm • Three way ribbon, active sub	

ARCAM - A&R CAMBRIDGE LTD • TEL 01223 440964 • FAX 01223 863384 • DEALERS 211

amp	Alpha 5	230	134 integrated • 40W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 43,8,30cm • <i>A pared down version of the Alpha 6 that offers little penalty in power, but a significant forfeit in sound quality.</i>	
amp	Alpha 6	330	129 integrated • 50W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 43,8,30cm • <i>A new MOSFET design with a subtle and melodic sound that takes a conservative view of powerful dynamics.</i>	REC'D
amp	Delta 290P	400	power amp • 75W • hdph • 43,9,30cm • Can biamp with Delta 290	
amp	Delta 290	480	116 integrated • 75W • 4L,2T • hdph • rem • 43,9,32cm • <i>Combines the dryness and restraint of Arcam's older models with a refreshing sense of detail, dynamics and colour.</i>	REC'D
amp	Delta 110S	520	124 preamp • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 43,7,30cm • <i>Now in midi guise, this established unit has matured into a very articulate, powerful if dry-sounding unit.</i>	REC'D
amp	Delta 110	750	preamp • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 43,7,30cm • On-board DAC, 2 inputs	
amp	Xeta One	999	integrated • A/V • 50W • MM,5L,2T • hdph • 43,13,32cm • Video switching, 5ch Dolby	
cdss	Delta 100	899	111 single • Dolby B, C, S • 3 head • 43,12,34cm • <i>Superb transport and a ripe, spacious sound. Dolby S installation proved. Some replay incompatibility.</i>	REC'D
cd	Alpha One	300	137 delta sigma • electrical out • rem • 43,8,29cm • <i>The first UK-built player under £300 is hampered by a tidy but rather grey and uninspiring sound.</i>	
cd	Alpha 5 Plus	470	multibit • electrical out • rem • 43,8,27cm • Upgradable DAC, display off	
cd	Delta 270	800	124 hybrid • 2 electrical out • rem • 43,9,28cm • <i>The dry but tightly-focused and supremely detailed sound of this player will either beguile or aggravate, depending on taste!</i>	
cdt	Delta 250	750	130 transport • rem • 43,9,28cm • <i>Arcam's best effort yet is a new design based on Philips CDM9 transport, specification includes Sync Lock facility.</i>	REC'D
dac	Black Box 50	450	127 hybrid • electrical out • optical out • 43,7,28cm • <i>A very measured and sophisticated sound from DAC that leaves plenty in reserve to accommodate future upgrades.</i>	B'BUY
dac	Black Box 500	750	136 bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 43,9,28cm • <i>A very sophisticated unit equipped with Sync Lock and discrete DAC circuitry. Early samples sounded grubby and restrained.</i>	B'BUY
spkr	Delta 2	300	94 ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 22,38,28cm • <i>Pretty luxury compact sounds a shade forward and coloured, but has a dynamic and lively bass for its size.</i>	REC'D
tun	Alpha 5	220	FM • 16 presets • 43,8,27cm • Signal strength meter	
tun	Delta 280	399	120 FM • 20 presets • 43,7,28cm • <i>Fine sound quality marred by mild synthesiser whine; RF performance only average. remote £60 extra</i>	
cart	C77	30	48 moving magnet • 4 mV • removable stylus • 6g • <i>A sensible moving magnet package with good bounce at a competitive price.</i>	B'BUY
cart	C77MG	40	67 moving magnet • 4 mV • removable stylus • 6g • <i>Funchy sound quality with plenty of extra energy to liven things up. The solid body seems well worth the extra £10.</i>	B'BUY
cart	E77	50	moving magnet • 4 mV • removable stylus • 6g • Elliptical stylus	
cart	E77MG	60	48 moving magnet • 4 mV • removable stylus • 6g • <i>Our sample had a disappointing stylus, but gave a coherent, rich and laid back sound, with good 'scale'.</i>	REC'D
cart	P77	63	moving magnet • 4 mV • removable stylus • 6g • 'Profiled' stylus	
cart	P77MG	73	48 moving magnet • 4 mV • removable stylus • 6g • <i>Preferred to its cheaper partner by virtue of a better tip. Channel balance could have been better.</i>	REC'D

ARION - KRONOS DISTRIBUTION • TEL 018687 48632 • FAX 018687 48281

amp	Eros Line	1,050	preamp • 4L,1T • Dual mono construction	
amp	EOS Export	1,099	power amp • 18W • With volume control	
amp	Elektra Export	1,199	integrated • 18W • 4L,1T • Class A valve amp	
amp	Triton	1,250	power amp • 10W • Triode, volume control	
amp	Eros Phono	1,250	preamp • 3L,1T • Dual mono construction	
amp	Talos Line	1,350	integrated • 10W • 4L,1T • Triode Class A valve amp	
amp	Talos Phono	1,550	integrated • 10W • MM,3L,1T • Triode Class A phono amp	
amp	Iycho Pwr	1,650	power amp • 50W • Pure Class A	
amp	Iycho Int	1,899	integrated • 50W • 4L,1T • Pure Class A integrated	
cab	LS0.5	12	loudspeaker • stranded • silver • Priced per meter	
cab	LS1	25	loudspeaker • stranded • silver • Priced per meter	
cab	LS-2	50	loudspeaker • stranded • silver • Biwire, priced per meter	
cab	SA0.5	75	interconnect • Symmetrical • stranded • silver	
cab	DAC1	99	digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • 75ohms • silver	
cab	SA1	99	interconnect • Symmetrical • stranded • silver	
cab	DAC2	199	digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • 75ohms • silver	
cab	SA2	199	interconnect • Symmetrical • stranded • silver	

ART AUDIO • TEL 0115 9653604 • FAX 0115 9637795

amp	Minuet	499	preamp • 5L,1T	
amp	Headline	600	preamp • hdph • Single ended triode Class A	
amp	VPL	741	preamp • 6L,2T	
amp	Conductor Phono	750	preamp • MM/MC • Separate PSU, upgradable	
amp	VP1	952	preamp • MM,5L,2T	
amp	Conductor	1,100	preamp • 6L,2T • hdph • Upgradable	
amp	Quintet	1,393	109 power amp • 15W • <i>Switchable triode, ultralinear output stage. In triode mode, these are 15 of the sweetest watts around. Surprisingly gutsy.</i>	REC'D
amp	Integra	1,499	integrated • 30W • 5L,2T • Class A Pentode	
amp	Concerto	1,669	power amp • 50W • 2x mono triode/pentode	
amp	Conductor Export	2,000	preamp • 6L,2T • hdph • rem • Separate PSU, mono	
amp	Tempo	2,499	power amp • 30W • 2x mono Class A triode	
amp	Maestro	3,524	power amp • 100W • 2x mono triode/pentode	

ATC LOUSPEAKER TECHNOLOGY LTD • TEL 01285 760561 • FAX 01285 760683 • DEALERS 25

spkr	SCM10	995	sealed • 2 driver • 80dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 18,38,26cm • Minimum 100wpc, wall/free use	
spkr	SCM20	1,505	86 sealed • 2 driver • 83dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 24,44,31cm • <i>Massively built, invariably informative but the rather forward presentation can be uncomfortable.</i>	
spkr	SCM20 Tower	1,999	sealed • 2 driver • 83dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 24,103,34cm • Floor standing SCM20	
spkr	SCM50	3,480	ported • 3 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 31,72,43cm • <i>Passive/to special order only</i>	
spkr	SCM100	4,033	ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 40,84,53cm • <i>Passive/to special order only</i>	
spkr	SCM50A	4,864	active • 8 Ohms • 350W • 31,72,48cm • With int x'over and amps	
spkr	SCM100A	5,660	active • 8 Ohms • 350W • 40,84,59cm • With int x'over and amps	
spkr	SCM200A	11,207	active • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 850W • 83,73,440cm • With ext x'over and amps	
spkr	SCM300A	11,995	active • 94dB • 850W • 93,88,48cm • With ext x'over and amps	

AUDIO INNOVATION - AUDIO COMPONENTS • TEL 01305 761017 • FAX 01305 761492 • DEALERS 20

amp	L1	299	preamp • 3L,1T • 25,10,30cm	
amp	Alto	299	138 integrated • 35W • 4L,2T • 43,8,30cm • <i>Despite a shortfall in the very deep bass, this unusual amplifier still sounds beautifully open, natural and relaxed.</i>	B'BUY
amp	Alto Chrome	329	integrated • 35W • 4L,2T • 43,8,30cm	
amp	T2	399	preamp • MC • 12,16,8cm • MC stepup	
amp	P2	679	preamp • MM • 50,12,30cm • Phono stage	
amp	L2	699	preamp • 4L,1T • 50,12,30cm	
amp	Ser 800	849	power amp • 25W • 41,15,34cm	
amp	Classic 25	899	integrated • 25W • 4L,1T • 46,15,34cm • Kit amplifier	
amp	P2MC	899	preamp • MM/MC • 50,12,30cm • Phono stage	
amp	Ser 500	999	integrated • 25W • MM,3L,2T • 41,15,34cm	
amp	Ser 700	999	116 integrated • 25W • 4L,1T • 41,15,34cm • <i>Valve amp that can turn the roughest of digital sounds into music, both understated and graceful. Sensitive speakers are a must.</i>	REC'D
amp	1000	1,499	power amp • 50W • 41,15,34cm • Monoblocks	
amp	First Audio	1,549	power amp • 7.5W • 41,15,34cm	
amp	1000SE	2,249	power amp • 50W • 41,15,34cm • Silver circuit board	
amp	2nd Audio	2,999	power amp • 15W • 41,15,34cm • Monoblocks	
cd	Alto	299	bitstream • rem • 43,8,30cm • Dual diff DAC	
cd	Alto Chrome	329	bitstream • rem • 43,8,30cm • Dual diff clock	

AUDIO NOTE • AUDIO BY DESIGN • TEL 01305 761017 • DEALERS 15

amp	Ongaku	POA	Col integrated • 26W • 6L • <i>A single ended, zero negative feedback triode, line-level amplifier and a half. Probably the best amplifier in the world.</i>	REC'D
amp	Oto SE	1,500	126 integrated • 24W • MM/MC,4L,1T • <i>Transparent, very dynamic, excellent clarity and subtlety with limited power make for a very clear sounding amp.</i>	REC'D

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

AUDIO NOTE • AUDIO BY DESIGN • TEL 01305 761017 • DEALERS 15				
cab	AN-D	100 109	loudspeaker • solid core • copper • <i>Supplied in linear, non-polarised lengths that should be twisted into stereo pairs. Sounds rather grippy and forward.</i>	
cab	AN-B	165 109	loudspeaker • solid core • copper • <i>A very high capacitance Litz-type cable whose sound may well act as a taming influence in many systems.</i>	REC'D
cab	AN-SP	1,270	loudspeaker • silver • <i>Some 15 individually insulated silver strands go to make up this very civilised but exceptionally detailed sounding cable.</i>	REC'D
dac	DAC1	600 127	multibit • electrical out • optical out • rem • <i>An oddball DAC with manual deemphasis switching. Shows a high preamp input impedance if bass is not to suffer.</i>	
dac	DAC3	1,650	multibit • rem	
spkr	AN-KB	499	90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 28,46,23cm • Free space, stand mount	
spkr	AN-K/SP	699	90dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 28,46,23cm • Free space, stand mount	
spkr	AN-J/B	799 110	93dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 38,58,25cm • <i>Light damping and local unevenness adds some colouration, but doesn't spoil the very lively, dynamic and coherent sound.</i>	REC'D
spkr	AN-J/SP	999	93dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 38,58,25cm • Free space, stand mount	
spkr	AN-E/B	1,299 106	94dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 36,84,28cm • <i>Lovely coherence, great midband dynamics and transparency, extended bass and high sensitivity - pity it's so damn ugly!</i>	REC'D
spkr	AN-E/SP	1,599	94dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 26,84,28cm • Free space, stand mount	
cart	lo IIV	1,395 100	moving coil • fixed stylus • <i>One of the best, giving an extraordinarily relaxing midrange clarity. Needs a transformer.</i>	REC'D
cart	lo Ltd V	2,950	moving coil • fixed stylus • Needs PSU	

AUDIO PHYSIC • AANVIL AUDIO • TEL 01359 240687 • FAX 01359 240687				
spkr	STEP	1,299	ported • 20 driver • 84dB • 4 Ohms • 60W • 14,33,23cm • Time aligned, space frame stan	
spkr	SPARK	1,599	ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 4 Ohms • 70W • 17,40,25cm • Time align, space-frame stand	
spkr	TEMPO	1,999 143	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 22,107,47cm • <i>Tall and unusually styled floorstander has stunning stereo precision but suspect in-room bass tuning.</i>	
spkr	VIRGO	3,399	ported • 4 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 16,100,42cm • Floor stand decoupled tweeter	
spkr	TERRA	3,499	subwoofer • Active sub, adjustable	
spkr	AVANTI	5,599	ported • 4 driver • 86dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 19,107,40cm • Decoupled mid/tweeter	
spkr	CALDERA	9,999	5 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 25,111,50cm • Pneumatic baffle, 3 cabinet	
spkr	MEDEA	20,999	ported • 4 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 400W • 24,110,50cm • Phase linear	

AUDIO RESEARCH • ABSOLUTE SOUNDS • TEL 0181 947 5047 • FAX 0181 879 7962				
amp	PH-1	1,690	preamp • MM/MC • 48,14,26cm • Phono preamp	
amp	LS-3	1,695	preamp • SL,LT • 48,14,26cm • 1 direct input	
amp	LS-3b	2,250	preamp • SL,LT • 48,14,26cm • 1 direct input	
amp	VT60	2,430	power amp • 35W • Single end tube mono	
amp	D-200	2,800	power amp • 110W • 48,14,31cm • Single ended, balanced	
amp	SP9 II	2,850	preamp • MM/MC,4L,2T • 48,14,26cm • Hybrid	
amp	PH-2	2,895	preamp • MM/MC • 48,14,26cm • Balanced	
amp	LS-2 II	2,997	preamp • SL,LT • 48,14,26cm • 1 direct input/hybrid	
amp	V35	3,355	power amp • 30W • 48,18,37cm • Balanced in, hybrid	
amp	LS-2b II	3,398	preamp • SL,LT • 48,14,26cm • 1 balanced direct input/hybrid	
amp	V70	4,480	power amp • 60W • 48,18,40cm • Balanced in, hybrid	
amp	D-300	4,800	power amp • 160W • 48,18,33cm • Single ended, balanced	
amp	LS-5 II	5,290	preamp • SL,LT • 48,14,30cm • Full balanced in/out	
amp	VT130	5,600	power amp • 65W • Stereo tube, balanced	
amp	D-400II	6,200	power amp • 200W • 48,23,33cm • Single ended, balanced	
amp	V140	8,960	power amp • 120W • 48,22,30cm • Monoblocks, hybrid	
amp	VT150	14,940	power amp • 130W • 37,31,56cm • 2 x monoblocks, tube	
cd	CD1	3,278	rem • 'Bit String' conversion	
dac	DAC2	3,940	multibit • 48,14,26cm • 20bit, 8x o/s	

AUDIO TECHNICA LTD • TEL 0113 2771441 • FAX 0113 2704836 • DEALERS 100				
hdph	ATH-P1	10	open back • 88g • 24 Ohm • 'Omniphones'	
hdph	ATH-S22	11	open back • 5g • 16 Ohm • Inner ear	
hdph	ATH-P3	15	open back • 90g • 22 Ohm • 'Omniphones'	
hdph	ATH-S44	16	open back • 5g • 16 Ohm • Inner ear	
hdph	ATH-P1/TV	20	open back • 55g • 25 Ohm • 'Omniphones', vol control	
hdph	ATH-P5	20	open back • 70g • 40 Ohm • 'Omniphones'	
hdph	ATH-M2A	28	sealed • 115g • 22 Ohm • Mid size	
hdph	ATH-M4A	42	sealed • 139g • 28 Ohm • Mid size	
hdph	ATH-M7A	78	sealed • 210g • 40 Ohm • Mid size	
hdph	ATH911	90	open back • 280g • 600 Ohm • Dynamic, full size	
hdph	ATH910PRO	90 55	sealed • 280g • 40 Ohm • <i>The closed back 910s are an improvement on the 909s, with a nice rhythmic quality rarely found with headphones.</i>	REC'D
hdph	ATH9000	273 111	open back • 240g • 32 Ohm • <i>Electrets which connect to the amp's speaker outputs, it sounds a little too smooth, but would suit aggressive amps.</i>	
cart	AT-91	13	moving magnet • 2.8 mV • removable stylus • 5.8g	
cart	AT-95E	19 48	moving magnet • 2.8 mV • removable stylus • 5.7g • <i>Clear, dynamic if richly balanced.</i>	B'BUY
cart	AT-110E	24	moving magnet • 3.8 mV • removable stylus • 7.2g	
cart	AT-0C5	146 103	moving coil • 0.4 mV • fixed stylus • 8.0g • <i>For the price, it's unusually effortless and detailed, but it tends to become rather relentless and tiring eventually.</i>	REC'D
cart	AT-0C9	245	moving coil • 0.38 mV • fixed stylus • 8.8g	
cart	AT-0C30	619	moving coil • 0.4 mV • fixed stylus • 7.8g • <i>Nude micro linear stylus</i>	
cart	ART-1	944 72	moving coil • 0.4 mV • fixed stylus • 8.8g • <i>This is a delicate and very fluid-sounding MC that tracks well, offers very low distortion and exceptionally good separation.</i>	REC'D

AUDIOLAB • CAMBRIDGE SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY LTD • TEL 01480 52521 • FAX 01480 52159 • DEALERS 82				
amp	8000A	500 140	integrated • 60W • MM/MC,2L,3T • hdph • 45,8,36cm • <i>The 8000A remains a highly disciplined and mature sounding amp.</i>	REC'D
amp	8000M	520 97	preamp • MM/MC,2L,3T • hdph • 45,8,36cm • <i>Very distinctive, almost stark neutrality that will not appeal to all listeners. Good value engineering, nevertheless.</i>	
amp	8000P	700	power amp • 100W • 45,8,36cm • Bi-wire speaker terminals	
amp	8000M	750	power amp • 125W • 45,8,36cm • Single monoblock	
amp	8000PPA	850	preamp • MM/MC • 45,8,36cm • Phono preamplifier	
amp	8000Q	1,000	preamp • 3L,2T • hdph • rem • 45,8,36cm • 'Pure Direct' signal path	
cdt	8000CDM	1,300	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 45,8,36cm • Precision master clock	
dac	8000DAC	800 127	bitstream • 45,8,36cm • <i>Just as smooth and refined as its predecessor yet, sadly, still manages to obscure the passion or fire of music.</i>	
tun	8000T	750 120	FM,M,L • 39 presets • 45,8,36cm • <i>Unusually combination of fine sound quality and RF performance (inc AM), and superb ergonomics</i>	B'BUY

AUDIOMECA • KRONOS DISTRIBUTION • TEL 018687 48632 • FAX 018687 48281				
cd	Kreatura	1,299	electrical out • optical out • rem • 25,14,39cm	
cd	Kreature SE	1,450	multibit • electrical out • rem • 25,14,39cm • Trichord clocked	
cdt	Damnation	950	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 29,10,32cm	
cdt	Damnation SE	1,100	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 29,10,32cm • Trichord clocked	
cdt	Kreatura	1,199	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 25,14,39cm • Heavily modified CDM	
cdt	Mephisto	2,100 144	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 43,15,33cm • <i>Tested with Trichord Pulsar, with which it is usually paired, the duo provide a highly composed and tactile sound.</i>	
dac	Elixir	745	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 25,39,3cm	
tt	Romance	1,675	manual • 33/45rpm • With Romeo unipivot arm	
tt	J1	2,500	manual • 33/45rpm • 50, 40, 2cm • Top of the range model	
tt	J1/SL5	4,250	manual • 33/45rpm • 50, 40, 2cm • With parallel tracking arm	
arm	SL5	1,999	fixed armtube • proprietary fit • Parallel tracking	

AUDIOQUEST • A&R CAMBRIDGE LTD • TEL 01223 440964 • FAX 01223 863384				
cab	F-14	45 109	loudspeaker • solid core • copper • <i>Ideal for laying under c.arpets, F-14 encourages a slightly warm and vibrant sound</i>	REC'D
cab	Video 2	50 108	digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • 75ohms • copper • <i>The very best available with an expressive sound, but generous price to sweeten the pill</i>	B'BUY
cab	Type 4	75 109	loudspeaker • copper • <i>Four 18-gauge OFHC copper conductors wound in a Litz-type fashion increases capacitance but restrains the cable's 'bite'.</i>	
cab	Digital PRO	90 108	digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • 75ohms • silver • <i>A silver cable with all the drive of Video 2 but lacking its clear cut transparency.</i>	
cab	Optlink Z	100 108	digital, optical • glass • <i>Good level of midband detail but frequency extremes lack depth and extension.</i>	
cab	Midnight Hyperlitz	260 109	loudspeaker • solid core • copper • <i>Very similar to Type 4, but with a delicate smoothness that contrasts with the brighter sound of cheap cables.</i>	
cart	MC5	250	moving coil • 1.4 mV • fixed stylus • High output MC, line contact	
cart	404L	599 84	moving coil • 0.5 mV • fixed stylus • <i>Slight harshness detracted from the performance of this otherwise clear-sounding and detailed cartridge.</i>	
cart	404MH	899	moving coil • 1.4 mV • fixed stylus • Baron cantilever	
cart	7000NSX	1,495 91	moving coil • 0.4 mV • fixed stylus • <i>Stunning stereo imaging and good detail at low levels are spoiled by less than perfect tracking and high sensitivity to arms.</i>	

AUDIOVECTOR • THE CHORD COMPANY • TEL 01722 331674 • FAX 01722 411388				
spkr	2X	850	2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 17,90,22cm • Black ash	
spkr	3X	1,500	3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 19,98,32cm • Black ash + cuba	
spkr	5	2,500	4 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 24,110,34cm • Black ash + cuba	
spkr	6	4,600	ported • 3 driver • 92dB • 6 Ohms • 250W • 38,115,42cm • Black piano lacquer	



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TECHNICS

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STG550 £189.90
STG650 £229.90
STG90L* £259.90

YAMAHA

TX480 £139.90
TX580RDS £199.90

YAMAHA

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KX480 £199.90
KX580 £249.90
KXW282 £199.90
KXW482 £249.90

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SLBD22 £149.90
SL1210MII £449.90

THORENS

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TD166 VI* £239.90
TD166 VI REGA* £269.90
TD280* £179.90

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normal price CLEARANCE PRICE

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normal price CLEARANCE PRICE

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KRV6060 £349.90 £279.90
DP7050 £349.90 £259.90
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SONY

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ROTEL

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PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

AURA • B&W LOUDSPEAKERS (UK SALES LTD) • TEL 01903 750750 • FAX 01903 750694 • DEALERS 80

amp	VA100 II	350	138	integrated • 70W • MM.4L.1T • hdph • 43.6,31cm • <i>Our sample failed to confirm Aura's claim for power. The big, smooth yet slightly disjointed sound was equally familiar.</i>
cd	CD50	400	119	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 43.7,34cm • <i>Based on an older Philips board with the new CDM9 transport, this is a slim player with an innocuous sound.</i>
spkr	SP50	400	126	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 120W • 21.40,24cm • <i>Two very tasty drivers rather outclasses the cabinetwork: a capable if slightly dull compact stand mount.</i>
amp	TU80	350		FM, M.L • 30 presets • 43.6,27cm • Chrome finish ES0

AVI • AV INTERNATIONAL LTD • TEL 01453 765682 • FAX 01453 752777 • DEALERS 23

amp	S2000MA	599		power amp • 90W
amp	S2000MI	799		integrated • 100W • 4L.1T • rem • 31.25,9cm • Includes S2000RC handset
amp	S2000MP	799		preamp • 5L.1T • 31.25,9cm • includes S2000RC handset
amp	S2000MM	1,099		power amp • 150W • 2x monoblocks
cd	S2000 MCII	999	119	bitstream • 31.25,9cm • <i>A stylish, midi-width player with an exceptionally refined and comfortable sound. Lacks passion.</i>
cd	S2000MC	1,149		multibit • electrical out • rem • 31.25,9cm • 20 bit Burr Brown DACs
dac	S2000MD	549	136	multibit • 31.25,9cm • <i>Despite using a very different chipset, the S2000MD sounds as civilised and refined as AVI's other digital separates.</i>
ttun	S2000MT	599		FM • 16 presets • 31.25,9cm • R/C via system handset

B&O • BANG & OLUFSEN UK LTD • TEL 01734 692288 • FAX 01734 693388 • DEALERS 167

spkr	Beovox RL1000	215		3 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 60 W • 32.40,13cm • Simplified RL6000
spkr	Beovox CX50	300		sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 12,21,21cm
spkr	Beovox CX100	400		sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 12,32,21cm
spkr	Beovox RL6000	450		3 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 41.54,18cm • Simplified RL7000
spkr	Beovox 4500	450		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 90W • 45,38,8cm
spkr	Beolab 4500	1,200		active • 45W • 45,38,8cm • Attaches to wall, display
spkr	Beolab 6000	1,450		active • 80W • 20,110,21cm • Column, two amps, shielded
spkr	Beolab 8000	1,999		active • 100W • 15,132,15cm • Shielded column, int amps
spkr	Beolab Penta 3	2,500		active • 150W • 22,165,34cm • Line array column, display
rec	Beomaster 7000	920		FM, M.L • 75W • 20 presets • MM,2L,2T • rem
tt	7000	555		auto • 33/45rpm • 42,8,33cm • Inc MMC2 cartridge, RIAA pream
cart	MMC4	1		MM, elliptical diamond
cart	MMC2	1		MM, Contact Line stylus
cart	MMC1	1		MM, Contact Line stylus

B&W LOUDSPEAKERS (UK SALES LTD) • TEL 01903 750750 • FAX 01903 750694 • DEALERS 400

spkr	Solid HCM2	130		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 14,20,14cm • White or black finishes
spkr	CWMS	150		2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 16,22,7cm • In wall
spkr	DM600i	190	135	sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 21,36,25cm • <i>Smart cosmetics and a very even balance overall, but dynamically bland; amp current demands are rather high.</i> REC'D
spkr	Solid Monitor	200		ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 17,24,15cm • Various colours
spkr	CWMM6i	240		2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 23,32,8cm • In wall
spkr	Solid HCM1	250		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 17,24,17cm • White or black finishes
spkr	DM1610i	250	141	sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 24,49,31cm • <i>Large bookshelf model has fine bass extension and a smooth, well-balanced but slightly heavy and laid back sound.</i>
spkr	Solid Powerbass	300		subwoofer • 75W • 33,39,34cm • Active sub to match Solids
spkr	CWMM8i	300		2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 28,38,9cm • In wall
spkr	CDM2	400		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 32,22,25cm • Kevlar bass, metal dome treble
spkr	Solid Verticale	400		subwoofer • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • Lifestyle, 3 boxes
spkr	DM620i	430	126	ABR • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 24,75,31cm • <i>Good material value, this compact floorstander has a beautifully voiced midband, but less happy bass tuning.</i> REC'D
spkr	Signature 7	500		2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 28,37,10cm • In-wall monitor. Kevlar cone
spkr	CDM1	600		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 37,22,28cm • Angled tweeter sub-baffle
spkr	P4	600		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 20,81,24cm • 3 real wood veneers
spkr	P5	800		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 20,90,28cm • 3 real wood veneers
spkr	Matrix 805 V	895	98	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 33,33,21cm • <i>Stylish, with remarkable imaging properties, good balance and low colouration, less successful at musical communication.</i> REC'D
spkr	P6	1,000		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 20,100,30cm • Time aligned tweeter
spkr	Solid 800ASW	1,500		subwoofer • 200W • 43,50,58cm • Active, Matrix enclosure
spkr	Matrix 804	1,595		ported • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 26,92,26cm • Matrix enclosure
spkr	Matrix 803s2	1,995		ported • 4 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 26,101,34cm • Matrix enclosure
spkr	Matrix 802s3	2,795		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 500W • 30,104,37cm • Matrix enclosure
spkr	Matrix 801s3	3,795	81	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 600W • 44,100,56cm • <i>Lacks the transparency of the best panels, and the drama of the best dynamics, but an acoustic tour de force.</i> REC'D
spkr	Silver Signature	5,000		ported • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 25,45,24cm • External crossover
s/sub	Solid Verticale	400		Sub, 2 x sat • 89 • 19,34,45cm
a.sub	Solid Powerbass	300		stereo • 75W • 33,34,39cm
a.sub	800ASW	1,500		stereo • 200W • THX • 43,58,50cm

BASIS • RT SERVICES • TEL 01235 813058

tt	Ovation II	4,800		manual • 33/45rpm • 58,42,14cm • Lead/brass, record clamped
tt	Debut Gold Std III	7,200		manual • 33/45rpm • 58,42,19cm • Belt drive, high mass, four po
tt	Debut Gold Vac	9,250		manual • 33/45rpm • 58,42,19cm • Includes suction platter

BENZ-MICRO • AUDIOFREAKS • TEL 0181 948 4153 • FAX 0181 948 4250 • DEALERS 12

cart	The Glider	600		moving coil • 1 mV • fixed stylus • Semi-nude design
cart	H200	700		moving coil • 2 mV • fixed stylus
cart	M090	700		moving coil • 0.9 mV • fixed stylus
cart	L040	700		moving coil • 0.4 mV • fixed stylus
cart	Wood Ref	1,100		moving coil • 0.3 mV • fixed stylus • Bruyere housing, boron
cart	Ruby Ref	1,400		moving coil • 0.3 mV • fixed stylus • Bruyere housing, boron

BEYERDYNAMIC • TEL 01273 479411 • FAX 01273 471825 • DEALERS 300

hdph	DT211	33		open back • 120g • 40 Ohm
hdph	DT311	49	133	open back • 124g • 40 Ohm • <i>Uncharacteristically tight, unrefined sound quality from this otherwise well engineered 'phone.</i>
hdph	DT331	59		open back • 210g • 40 Ohm
hdph	DT411	69	111	open back • 120g • 250 Ohm • <i>A reasonable but not very thrilling headphone that doesn't really offer enough at the price.</i>
hdph	DT431	89		open back • 210g • 40 Ohm
hdph	DT511	99		open back • 200g • 250 Ohm
hdph	DT531	129		open back • 245g • 250 Ohm
hdph	IRS790	129		open back • 270g • Cordless infra-red
hdph	DT770 Pro	139		sealed • 250g • 600 Ohm
hdph	DT100	139		sealed • 350g • 600 Ohm • Choice of impedances
hdph	DT801	159		sealed • 250g • 250 Ohm
hdph	DT990 Pro	163		open back • 230g • 600 Ohm
hdph	DT811	179		open back • 245g • 250 Ohm
hdph	IRS890	199		open back • 270g • Cordless infra-red
hdph	DT901	199		sealed • 280g • 250 Ohm
hdph	DT911	219	111	open back • 275g • 250 Ohm • <i>Probably too revealing for many headphone amps, these are very subtle and fine, if expensive cans.</i> REC'D

BOSE UK LTD • TEL 01795 475341 • FAX 01795 427227 • DEALERS 496

spkr	XL1000	115		ported • 8 Ohms • 50W • 29,19,17cm
spkr	XL2000	160		ported • 8 Ohms • 70W • 36,23,18cm
spkr	XL3000	180		ported • 8 Ohms • 90W • 47,29,23cm
spkr	101 M'ble Monitor	190		4 Ohms • 60W • 13,23,15cm • Black finish
spkr	XL4000	220		ported • 8 Ohms • 100W • 57,32,30cm
spkr	VS100	250		8 Ohms • 23,15,15cm
spkr	151 Environm'l	270		6 Ohms • 60W • 24,14,16cm • Waterproof/suitable for extrem
spkr	161 Freest le	275		6 Ohms • 60W • 25,14,16cm
spkr	201 Ser III	290		8 Ohms • 60W • 38,20,25cm • Direct/reflecting technolog
spkr	C'puter RoomMate300	300		active • 60W • 24,14,16cm • Self powered AC/shielded, vol
spkr	Video RoomMate	300		active • 60W • 24,14,16cm • Self powered AC/shielded, vol
spkr	Roomate II	300		active • 60W • 24,14,16cm • Self powered AC/12V DC
spkr	301 VM	380		8 Ohms • 75W • 24,43,27cm • Direct/reflecting technolog
spkr	305	430	78	2 driver • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,45,28cm • <i>A bit of an oddball, fine dynamic liveliness and a good room match more than make up for the strange stereo imaging and treble.</i> REC'D
spkr	A'mass AM3 II	500		50W • 36,20,20cm • Acoustimass technolog
spkr	401	500	110	4 Ohms • 100W • 30,30,76cm • <i>Cheaply built but distinctively styled semi-omni floorstander suffers from heavy midband but sounds lively and open.</i>

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

BOSE UK LTD • TEL 01795 475341 • FAX 01795 427227 • DEALERS 496

spkr	SE-5 Ser.II S'st'm	760	100W • 90,100,18cm	
spkr	A'mass AMS11	760	200W • 49,35,19cm • Acoustmass direct/reflecting	
spkr	A'mass AM7	830	100W • 35,49,19cm • Acoustmass direct/reflecting	
spkr	601 MKIII	880	8 Ohms • 200W • 32,31,76cm • Direct/reflecting technology	
spkr	901 VI	1,650	1 driver • 8 Ohms • 33,53,32cm • Direct/reflecting technology	

BOSTON ACOUSTICS • PORTFOLIO MARKETING • TEL 01494 890277

spkr	HDS	139	110	2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 25,16,18cm • <i>Tiny and prettily shaped miniature has an attractive lack of boxiness, but is a little short of drama and dynamic drive.</i>
spkr	325	139		90dB • 4 Ohms • 50W • 17,17,5cm • Wall/ceiling white flush mount
spkr	CR6	149		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 26,15,20cm • Magnetically shielded
spkr	Runabout	169		89dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 22,15,16cm • White indoor/outdoor system
spkr	350	179		4 Ohms • 50W • 24,17,6cm • Wall/ceiling white flush mount
spkr	335	179		90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 18,9cm • Wall mount, white flush
spkr	Satellites	179		2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • Also AV spkrs, black/white
spkr	CR7	199		88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 30,22,24cm • Magnetically shielded
spkr	360 Ser II	209		89dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 22,15,7cm • Wall/ceiling, white, flush mou
spkr	CR8	239		ABR • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 39,22,27cm • Magnetically shielded
spkr	380	249		90dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 31,24,8cm • Wall/ceiling white flush mount
spkr	CR9	279		ABR • 2 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 50,25,29cm • Stand/shelf, shielded
spkr	Voyager	299		89dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 26,16,17cm • White indoor/outdoor, metal
spkr	SW10	449	128	subwoofer • 100W • 34,17,42cm • <i>Clever powered subwoofer system integrates well and improves system loudness and power handling.</i>
spkr	SubSat Six	449		subwoofer • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • Passive subs and two satellite
spkr	SubSat 7	549		89dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • PAssive sub & 2 satellites
spkr	Lynfield 300L	2,000		83dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 23,34,28cm • Inc stands, black
spkr	Lynfield 500L	4,449		85dB • 5 Ohms • 350W • 122,23,47cm • Free stand, separate bass/top

BRYSTON • PROFESSIONAL MONITOR CO • TEL 01923 249119 • FAX 01923 249219

amp	.4	641		preamp • A/V • 4L,1T • 48,5,25cm
amp	BP1	673		preamp • A/V • MM or MC • 48,5,25cm • Phono stepup, bal & unbal
amp	2B-LP	750		power amp • A/V • 75W • 48,5,25cm • Bridgable
amp	BP4	802		preamp • A/V • 4L,1T • 48,5,25cm • Balanced out
amp	BP5	889		preamp • A/V • MM/MC,3L,1T • 48,5,25cm • MM or MC, balanced out
amp	BP20	1,126		preamp • A/V • 8L,1T • 48,5,25cm • Balanced in/out
amp	3B-NRB	1,159		power amp • A/V • 150W • 48,13,23cm • Bridgable, bal & unbalanced
amp	THX3B	1,262		power amp • A/V • 150W • 48,13,23cm • 2 channels, THX approved
amp	4B-NRB	1,756		power amp • A/V • 300W • 48,13,39cm • Bridgable, bal & unbalanced
amp	7B-NRB	1,815		power amp • A/V • 500W • 48,13,39cm • Single monoblock
amp	THX4B	1,858		power amp • A/V • 300W • 48,13,39cm • 2 channels, THX approved
amp	THX7B	1,917		power amp • A/V • 500W • 48,13,39cm • 1 channel, THX approved
amp	8B-NRB	2,195		power amp • A/V • 150W • 48,13,39cm • 4 channels, bridgeable
amp	THX8B	2,400		power amp • A/V • 150W • 48,13,39cm • 4 channels, THX approved

CAMBRIDGE AUDIO • HI-FI DIRECT • TEL 0171 827 9827 • FAX 0171 827 9009 • DEALERS 23

cd	CD200 Mk II	150		1 bit • rem • 42,9,29cm
cd	CD200	150		multibit • rem • 42,9,29cm • Can play in reverse order
dac	DACMagic 1	150	136	hybrid • <i>Ridiculously under-priced, this DAC is better suited to high end transports than the budget players it was intended to partner.</i>

CANON UK PHOTO DIVISION • TEL 01483 740005 • FAX 01483 740054 • DEALERS 300

spkr	S-C10	130		2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 95W • 34,15,15cm • Shielded, wide-imaging stereo
spkr	SV-15	130		2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 24,17,17cm • Utility - wide dispersion
spkr	S-30	180	114	ported • 1 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 23,27,24cm • <i>Clever and unusual moulded design has attractive lively coherence, along with 'wide imaging stereo' effect.</i>
spkr	S-B20	200		subwoofer • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 48,39,37cm • Free standing, passive
spkr	V-100	210		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 75W • 25,33,17cm • Corner mount, wide dispersion
spkr	S-35	250		2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 23,27,24cm • Wide Imaging Stereo
spkr	V-SB100	250		subwoofer • 85dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 37,34,21cm • Subwoofer for V100
spkr	S-50	350	102	ported • 1 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 25,31,25cm • <i>Only a small cone miniature at heart, the fascinating sweet spot feature make it a utterly original.</i>
spkr	S-70	700		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 25,78,25cm • Wide imaging stereo

CASTLE ACOUSTICS LTD • TEL 01756 795333 • FAX 01756 795335 • DEALERS 264

spkr	Trent II	200	122	ported • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 20,34,18cm • <i>Very classy finish for the price, plus a sound that passes muster without setting anything much alight.</i>
spkr	Durham 900	300	135	ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 85W • 22,40,23cm • <i>Lovely veneer and lots of engineering, very upfront, coherent and exciting sound - maybe too much so for budget systems.</i>
spkr	York	370	110	ported • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 26,43,22cm • <i>Pretty little real wood compact has an engaging transparency; good balance and fine timing, could do with some authority.</i>
spkr	Severn	500		ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 110W • 23,77,20cm • Free standing, 9 finishes
spkr	Chester	700	98	horn • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,91,25cm • <i>A brilliant throwback, using a horn type approach to provide startling dynamics and coherence.</i>
spkr	Howard S2	1,100	132	horn • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 26,104,41cm • <i>Ably fills the price/size/sound gap between Chester and Winchester; a spacious semi-omni with a laid back balance.</i>
spkr	Winchester	1,650	90	3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 42,108,23cm • <i>Unconventional and beautifully crafted, large for its bass extension but engagingly agile and attractively open and airy.</i>

CELESTION INTERNATIONAL LTD • TEL 01473 322222 • FAX 01473 729662 • DEALERS 200

spkr	Little 1	99		90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 9,20,15cm
spkr	1	119	114	86dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 16,27,21cm • <i>Pretty basic performance, but at a very basic price - it all sounds a bit scrappy and untidy, but its heart is in the right place.</i>
spkr	CSC	129		89dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 33,13,15cm • Centre channel
spkr	CS135	139	128	86dB • 8 Ohms • 90W • 52,19,34cm • <i>Compact hideaway passive subwoofer lacks serious bass extension; for high sensitivity speakers only.</i>
spkr	3 MKII	139	130	2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 21,31,18cm • <i>Smooth and polished by budget speaker standards, if a bit laid back for some tastes.</i>
spkr	MP1	149		90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 22,30,15cm
spkr	CS2	149		86dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 16,29,22cm
spkr	CS4	169		87dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 18,33,23cm
spkr	Centre 2	179		90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 17,16,42cm • Centre channel
spkr	5 MkII	189		89dB • 8 Ohms • 90W • 25,35,21cm • Larger version of Celestion 3
spkr	7 MkII	239		89dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 31,45,24cm
spkr	9	269	102	89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 21,50,25cm • <i>Nicely presented and fair material value, with impressively flat mid to bass balance.</i>
spkr	11	299		89dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 31,57,24cm
spkr	15	389	114	89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 21,100,25cm • <i>Big box and bang for your buck; short on subtlety and control but long on both enthusiasm.</i>
spkr	SL6Si	429	94	2 driver • 84dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 20,38,27cm • <i>This stereotype luxury compact can sound a bit dull and congested, but really opens up on Slate Audio stands; favours CD.</i>
spkr	CS6i	449		90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 19,85,31cm
spkr	CS8i	499		90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 19,100,31cm
spkr	100	539		84dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 21,42,26cm
spkr	SL600Si	820	68	2 driver • 82 dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 20,37,24cm • <i>Has certain remarkable properties that some will find irresistible, but needs careful system and room matching.</i>
spkr	300	1,099	118	84dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 21,97,33cm • <i>Splendid bass extension and fine panel-like openness and transparency, but dynamics and timing are suspect, balance very laid back.</i>
spkr	700SE	1,435		82dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 20,37,24cm • Aerolam lightweight enclosure
spkr	Kingston	2,500		2 driver • 84dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 101,24,36cm • Polymer box, inc stand

CERWIN VEGA • CSE ADMINISTRATION • TEL 01423 359054 • FAX 01423 359058 • DEALERS 98

spkr	VS8	250		2 driver • 94dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 28,51,29cm • Bookshelf
spkr	SAT-6	300		subwoofer • 95dB • 4 Ohms • 125W • 22,25,32cm • 3 box satellite/subwoofer
spkr	VS10	350		3 driver • 95dB • 6 Ohms • 125W • 33,70,29cm • Floor standing
spkr	VS12	550		ported • 3 driver • 97dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 42,81,38cm • Floor standing
spkr	DC10	550		ported • 3 driver • 96dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 29,94,35cm • Floor standing
spkr	DC12	650		ported • 3 driver • 98dB • 4 Ohms • 300W • 36,98,35cm • Floor standing
spkr	VS15	700		ported • 3 driver • 102dB • 4 Ohms • 400W • 46,90,47cm • Floor standing
spkr	DC15	850		ported • 3 driver • 100dB • 4 Ohms • 500W • 44,103,46cm • Floor standing
spkr	1515	1,300		ported • 6 driver • 103dB • 4 Ohms • 600W • 44,135,46cm • Floor standing, hi sensitivity

CHIMERA INTERNATIONAL AMPLIFICATION • TEL 0181 441 1951

amp	X-150C	800		preamp • 4L,1T • Balanced CD in, balanced out
amp	X-80	800		integrated • 80W • 4L,1T • MOSFET, s/steel & chrome
amp	X-150P	1,200		power amp • 150W • MOSFET, balance, bridgable
amp	X-100	1,200		integrated • 100W • 4L,1T • Outboard PSU, s/steel & chrome

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

CHORD • THE CHORD COMPANY LTD • TEL 01722 331674 • FAX 01722 411388 • DEALERS 210

cab	Flatline Gold	9		loudspeaker • stranded • solid core • low • copper
cab	Flatline Twin	16		loudspeaker • stranded • solid core • low • copper
cab	Chrysalis	30		interconnect • stranded • copper
cab	Codac	32	108	digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • 75ohms • copper • <i>A connection with a stranded inner core and a sound that lacks integration.</i>
cab	Cobra	39		interconnect • stranded • copper
cab	Prodac	49		digital, electrical • 75ohms
cab	Cobra-mono	49		interconnect • stranded • copper
cab	Blue Heaven	58		loudspeaker • stranded • solid core • low • silver
cab	Siren	65		interconnect • coaxial • stranded • Silver plated copper
cab	Chameleon	68		interconnect • stranded • copper
cab	Blue-heaven	95		interconnect • Symmetrical • stranded • solid core • silver
cab	Solid	130		interconnect • coaxial • solid core • copper/silver
spkr	Sys Audio 905	249		2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 27,15,19cm • Black Ash + Kumarka (brown)
spkr	SysAudio Sig	850		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 27,15,25cm • Cherry, rosewood, black ash

CLASSE AUDIO • ABSOLUTE SOUNDS • TEL 0181 947 5047 • FAX 0181 879 7962

amp	Audio 3D	1,320		preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T • 48,7,28cm
amp	Audio 70	1,399		power amp • 75W • 48,12,30cm • Single ended, balanced
amp	Audio 4L	1,697		preamp • 5L,1T • 48,9,34cm • Remote option
amp	Audio 4	1,735		preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T • 48,9,34cm • Remote option
amp	Audio 10	2,299		power amp • 125W • 48,17,42cm • Single ended, bal bridgable
amp	Audio 5L II	2,395		preamp • 5L,1T • 48,15,43cm • Remote option
amp	Audio 5 II	2,657		preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T • 48,15,43cm • Remote option
amp	Audio 15	3,399		power amp • 175W • 48,19,42cm • Single ended, bal bridgable
amp	Audio 6L II	3,469		preamp • 5L,1T • 48,15,43cm • Remote option, sep PSU
amp	Audio 6 II	3,817		preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T • 48,15,43cm • Remote option, sep PSU
amp	Audio 25	4,639		power amp • 250W • 48,20,53cm • Single ended, bal bridgable
amp	Audio M-700	7,690		power amp • 700W • 48,19,44cm • Single ended, bal monoblock
amp	Audio M-1000	9,968		power amp • 1kW • 48,22,53cm • Single ended, bal monoblock

CONRAD-JOHNSON • AUDIOFREAKS • TEL 0181 948 4153 • FAX 0181 948 4250 • DEALERS 12

amp	PV10AL	995		preamp • 5L • Line version of PV-10A
amp	PV-10A	1,250	78	preamp • MC,4L • <i>Fabulous preamplifier. Beautiful imaging, superb detail, plenty of gain on the phono input; classy build quality too.</i>
amp	PV-12L	2,250		preamp • 5L • Line version of PV-12
amp	PV-12	2,750		preamp • MC,4L • Tube
amp	Premier 11A	3,500		power amp • 70W • Baby Premier 8
amp	Premier 10	3,900		preamp • 5L • Line version of Premier 7B
amp	Evolution 20SPED	6,700		preamp • MC,4L • Poor man's Premier 7B
amp	Premier 12	7,000		power amp • 140W • Monoblock pair
amp	Premier 7B	11,000	Col	preamp • MC,4L • <i>The 7 is designed without compromise, and is clearly one of the finest (valve) preamplifiers money can buy.</i>
amp	Premier 8A	16,000		power amp • 275W • Monoblocks, price per pair

COPLAND • ABSOLUTE SOUNDS • TEL 0181 947 5047 • FAX 0181 879 7962 • DEALERS 32

amp	CSA14	999		integrated • 60W • MM,3L,1T • 43,13,38cm • Hybrid tube/transistor
amp	CTA-301	1,250		preamp • MM,3L,1T • 43,13,38cm • Tube, soft start
amp	CTA-501	1,420		power amp • 30W • 2L • 43,18,38cm • Tube, has vol control
amp	CTA-401	1,495		integrated • 30W • MM,3L,1T • 43,18,38cm • Tube push/pull ultra-linear
amp	CTA-504	1,750		power amp • 50W • 43,18,38cm • Switchable tetrode/triode

COUNTERPOINT • MPI ELECTRONIC UK LTD • TEL 01483 454993 • FAX 01483 454992

amp	Solid 1EM	995		power amp • 100W • 25,6,27cm • Mono
amp	SA-1000E	1,195		preamp • MM/MC,3L,1T • 49,12,32cm
amp	Solid 8E	1,195		preamp • 3L,1T • 49,6,27cm
amp	SA100E	1,495		power amp • 100W • Hybrid
amp	Solid 1E	1,495		power amp • 100W • Mono
amp	SA-2000E	1,695		preamp • 4L,2T • 49,12,33cm
amp	NPS-100E	1,995		power amp • 100W
amp	SA-3000E	2,195		preamp • MM/MC,4L,2T • 49,12,33cm • Separate PSU
amp	Solid 2E	2,495		power amp • 200W • 49,17,49cm • Hybrid
amp	NPS-200E	2,995		power amp • 200W • Rated at 4ohms, hybrid
amp	SA4	3,575		power amp • 140W • Hybrid
amp	SA-5000E	3,995		preamp • MM/MC,4L,2T • 49,12,27cm • Separate PSU
amp	SA-9	3,995		preamp • MM/MC • 49,12,37cm • Phono stepup
amp	Nat Progress	4,125		power amp • 150W • Mono, hybrid
amp	NPS-400E	4,395		power amp • 400W • Rated at 4 ohms, hybrid
amp	NPM-E	8,995		power amp • 150W • 49,18,49cm • Twin monoblocks
cdt	DA-11.5E	1,895	130	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • <i>By rights this transport should be highly incompatible yet it delivers a remarkably vivid and natural sound.</i>
dac	AD20	255		multibit • DACCard for DA-10E
dac	CS18	395		multibit • DACCard for DA-10E
dac	BB69	655		multibit • DACCard for DA-10E
dac	UA20	1,295		multibit • DACCard for DA-10E
dac	DA-11E	1,495	144	electrical out • optical out • rem • 49,6,27cm • (Tested with DA-11E). Although an early DA-11E screwed up a bit, this DAC sounded harsh and fatiguing.
dac	DA-10E	1,895		electrical out • optical out • rem • Interchangeable DACs, optional

CREEK AUDIO LTD • TEL 0181 361 4133 • FAX 0181 361 4136 • DEALERS 40

amp	OBM-8	99		preamp • MM • 10,6,11cm • Phono stepup
amp	OBM-9	110		preamp • MC • 10,6,11cm • Phono stepup
amp	A42	250		power amp • 50W • 42,6,20cm • 150 watts in mono
amp	F42	270		preamp • 50W • 4L,2T • hdph • 42,6,20cm • Plug-in modules available
amp	4240	270	134	integrated • 40W • 3L,1T • hdph • 42,6,20cm • Bearing no relation to earlier Creek designs, this radical rethink is very much more successful via MM than CD.
amp	4240SE	358		integrated • 50W • 3L,1T • hdph • rem • 42,6,20cm • Optional MM/MC

CRIMSON • VIRTUAL REALITY AUDIO SYSTEMS • TEL 01277 227355 • FAX 01277 224103

amp	CS610C	450		preamp • MM/MC,3L,1T • 9,10,35cm
amp	CS620C	450		power amp • 40W • 9,10,35cm
amp	CS630C	800		power amp • 90W • 9,10,35cm

DAWN AUDIO LTD • TEL 01932 355040 • FAX 01932 355041

amp	Cmd 2 by 200	890		power amp • 200W • 38,11,26cm • Single monoblock
amp	Prelude +50	951		preamp • MM/MC,2L,2T • 38,9,26cm • Pre out line driver
spkr	Chorus BS	482		sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 26,38,21cm • Bookshelf
spkr	Chorus FS	698	11	sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 26,88,21cm • Compact floorstander with superb coherence but rather forward midband. Would suit smaller rooms best.
spkr	Symphony	1,995		sealed • 3 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 34,113,32cm • Floor standing

DAY SEQUERRA • ABSOLUTE SOUNDS • TEL 0181 947 5047 • FAX 0181 879 7962

tun	FM Ref	5,937		FM
tun	S B'dcast Mon	14,640		FM

DEADROCK • PATE DISTRIBUTION • TEL 0121 749 2240 • FAX 0121 748 3838 • DEALERS 700

supp	701	40		equipment support • Single module
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DENON • HAYDEN LABORATORIES LTD • TEL 01753 888447 • FAX 01753 880109 • DEALERS 350

amp	PMA-250 III	160	121	integrated • 30W • MM,3L,1T • hdph • 44,10,28cm • <i>Pretty high resolution for the price, occasionally loses its grip but is generally engaging and enjoyable.</i>
amp	PMA-350 II	230	134	integrated • 50W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,12,28cm • <i>In-depth modifications have bought the PMA-350 out of its shell with a powerful up-front and compelling performance.</i>
amp	PMA-480R	230		integrated • 50W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,12,29cm
amp	PMA-450SE	280	142	integrated • 60W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,14,36cm • <i>A racey little number based on the original '450 that offers a similarly fast, furious but undeniably entertaining sound.</i>
amp	PMA-715	300		integrated • 60W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,16,40cm
amp	AVC-1530	480		integrated • A/V • 70W • MM,2L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,14,34cm



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Credit facilities are variable. Please ask for written details

For further information contact:

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 Arcam, Denny Industrial Centre, Waterbeach, Cambridge. CB5 9PB Tel: 01223 440964 Fax: 01223 863384
 Audiolab, Ermine Business Park, Huntingdon. PE18 6XY Tel: 01480 52521 Fax: 01480 52159

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

DENON • HAYDEN LABORATORIES LTD • TEL 01753 888447 • FAX 01753 880109 • DEALERS 350

cd	DRM-540	160	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,28cm	
cd	DRW-580	200	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • Music search, hi speed dub	
cd	DRS-640	210	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,31cm • <i>Drawer loading deck, with simple facilities and smooth, well adjusted sound.</i>	B'BUY
cd	DRW-760	260	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,28cm	
cd	DRM-740	270	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,13,28cm • <i>Breathed-on DRM-710, with good external treatment offers good, if somewhat detached sonics.</i>	
cd	DRS-810	310	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,13,32cm • <i>Drawer loading deck, carefully designed yet lacking in subtlety on audition.</i>	
cd	DCD-315	150	bitstream • rem	
cd	DCD-825	200	multibit • electrical out • rem • <i>Despite extensive revisions, this latest player still sounds like a typical 18-bit Denon, which is no bad thing!</i>	REC'D
cd	DCD-625	200	multibit • electrical out • rem • 44,11,29cm • Digital attenuator	
cd	DCD-825	240	multibit • electrical out • rem • 44,11,28cm • UK design	
cd	DCD-1015	300	multibit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44,11,28cm • Alpha processor	
spkr	SC-M2	80	2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 19,28,20cm	
spkr	SCM2	80	sealed • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 19,28,20cm • UK designed & built	
spkr	SC-E313	160	2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,36,23cm • Shielded, red mahogany veneer	
spkr	SC-E313	160	ported • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 22,75,23cm • UK designed & built	
rec	DRA-265R	200	FM, M • 35W • 40 presets • MM, 2L, 1T • rem • 44,12,31cm	
rec	DRA-365RD	250	FM, M • 45W • 40 presets • MM, 3L, 1T • rem • 44,12,32cm • System remote	
rec	DRA-565RD	320	FM, M • 55W • 40 presets • MM, 3L, 2T • rem • 44,12,32cm • RDS	
rec	AV-1000	530	FM, M • A/V • 70W • 16 presets • MM, 2L, 2T • rem • 44,15,33cm • Auto input balance	
tun	TU-260L	120	93 FM, M, L • 20 presets • 44,8,24cm • <i>Bare minimum of features. Careful design promises a surprisingly open and vivacious sound, so don't overlook it.</i>	B'BUY
tun	TU-380RD	200	FM, M • 40 presets • 44,8,24cm • RDS Radiotext/EON	
cart	DL110	70	48 moving coil • fixed stylus • <i>Firmly recommended as a fine all-rounder, this high output MC model is likely to perform well in nearly all circumstances.</i>	B'BUY
cart	DL160	90	43 moving coil • fixed stylus • 6g • <i>Although listeners just preferred the 110, its brother here proved a twin lab tests and is still 'thoroughly competent'.</i>	
cart	DL103	100	103 moving coil • fixed stylus • 9g • <i>Good performance in bass and good 'life' is seriously let down by its spherical stylus which kills subtle detail.</i>	
cart	DL304	200	moving coil • fixed stylus • Elliptical stylus	

DNM • VIRTUAL REALITY AUDIO SYSTEMS • TEL 01277 227355 • FAX 01277 224103

amp	3 Start	950	preamp • MM/MC, 2L, 1T • 27,13,16cm • Solid core, slit foil caps	
amp	3A Start	1,500	preamp • MM/MC, 2L, 1T • 27,13,16cm	
amp	PA1	1,750	power amp • 45W • 27,13,18cm • Triwire output	
amp	3B Twin E	3,050	preamp • MM/MC, 4L, 1T • 27,13,16cm	
amp	3B Primus E	3,630	preamp • MM/MC, 4L, 1T • 27,13,16cm	
amp	PA2BE	4,250	power amp • 90W • 27,13,18cm • Triwire output	
amp	3B Six E	4,780	preamp • MM/MC, 4L, 1T • 27,13,16cm	
amp	PA2BS	5,250	power amp • 90W • 27,13,18cm • Triwire output	
amp	PA2BS-1	5,650	power amp • 90W • 27,13,18cm • Triwire output	
cab	DIG75	18	digital, electrical • copper • Non-coaxial	
cab	DIGS100	20	digital, electrical • coaxial • copper	
cab	DIG100	20	digital, electrical • copper • Non-coaxial	
cab	MLJ25UK	25	mains • solid core • 13A • High purity copper	
cab	Rainbow	84	109 loudspeaker • solid core • copper • <i>High impedance can influence the treble response of some speakers, but this was an out-and-out winner on sound per pound.</i>	B'BUY
supp	DOMOWS	125	turntable wall stand • Lightweight • 37 deep, cm	
supp	DOMOPS	125	turntable support • Lightweight • 37,50,46cm	

DNM RESON • VIRTUAL REALITY AUDIO SYSTEMS • TEL 01277 227355 • FAX 01277 224103

tt	Rota 1	3,500	manual • 33/45rpm • 59,14,37cm • Inc arm & cartridge	
tt	Rota 2	4,800	manual • 33/45rpm • 59,14,37cm • Inc arm & cartridge	
cart	Mica	150	moving magnet • removable stylus	
cart	Acioce	199	moving coil • fixed stylus	
cart	Reca	225	moving magnet • removable stylus	
cart	Etile	299	moving coil • fixed stylus	
cart	Leve	899	moving coil • fixed stylus	

DPA • TEL 01222 795621 • FAX 01222 794267 • DEALERS 17

amp	DSP200S	495	124 preamp • 5L, 1T • 22,30,8cm • <i>The very dramatic but exceptionally detailed and transparent sound belies its modest power rating (tested with DPA-200S).</i>	REC'D
amp	Renaissance	595	140 integrated • 60W • MM, 4L, 1T • hdp • 40,28,8cm • <i>DPA's first integrated amp is typically innovative, but a little too 'crisp 'n dry' for our tastes.</i>	
amp	DPA200S	750	124 power amp • 40W • 22,30,8cm • <i>The very dramatic but exceptionally detailed and transparent sound belies its modest power rating (tested with DSP-200S).</i>	REC'D
cab	Opti-link	20	108 digital, optical • plastic • <i>Very similar to Bandridge AL560 with an equally naff sound.</i>	
cab	Digi-link	28	108 digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • 75ohms • copper • <i>Can seem slightly impassive but there's no avoiding its exceptionally detailed sound.</i>	B'BUY
cab	IS19	275	109 loudspeaker • solid core • silver/copper • <i>Shares the clear, neutral and transparent sound of the older 8S without the tremendous clarity of Gortex Black 16.</i>	
cd	Renaissance	895	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 40,28,8cm • DPA DP16 DAC	
cdt	Enlightenment	635	transport • rem • 40,28,8cm • Clock locks to DPA DACs	
dac	Renaissance	550	bitstream • 20,28,8cm • Unique DPA DX16 DAC	
dac	Enlightenment	795	multibit • 20,28,8cm • Unique DPA DX32 DAC	
dac	PDM256	2,995	133 bitstream • electrical out • optical out • 20,28,8cm • <i>Highly advanced, with adjustable dither. Sadly the different settings only usher in different compromises.</i>	
dac	PDM10924	5,995	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • 40,30,8cm • Unique DPA DX128 DAC	

DUAL • RAM UK LTD • TEL 0161 973 0505 • FAX 0161 905 1965 • DEALERS 450

cd	CC8000 RS	200	twin • Dolby B, C • 2 head • 44,13,25cm • Remote via 9000RS	
cd	CD1135RC	140	multibit • electrical out • rem • 42,8,28cm • Var. headphone out	
cd	CD1150RC	150	multibit • electrical out • rem • Var. headphone out	
cd	CD1000RS	170	bitstream • electrical out • Remote control via CR9000RS	
cd	CD1180RC	180	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,9,29cm • Var. headphone out	
rec	CR9000RS	200	FM, M, L • 55W • 30 presets • MM, 4L, 2T • rem • 44,14,30cm • System component	
tt	CS3700/3701	85	semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 36,10,36cm • Midi-sized turntable	
tt	CS435	130	33/45rpm • 44,12,36cm • Turntable includes cartridge	
tt	CS503-2	170	91 semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 44,13,37cm • <i>Not wholly inspiring; generally coarse and woolly sound at least not inoffensive, but easily bettered by the CS-505-3.</i>	REC'D
tt	505-4 UK	200	103 semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 44,15,37cm • <i>Consistent sounding and well isolated. It is slightly lacking in balls, but compensates with a consistently unuddled presentation.</i>	REC'D
tt	CS750-1	350	semi arm lift • 33/45/78rpm • 44,14,38cm • Turntable includes cartridge	
tt	Golden II	500	semi arm lift • 33/45/78rpm • 44,14,38cm • Piano finish CS750-1	

DYNAVECTOR • PEAR AUDIO LTD • TEL 01665 830862

amp	P100	1,495	preamp • MM, MC • 44,6,22cm • Phono stepup	
amp	L100	1,995	preamp • 3L, 2T • 44,6,24cm	
amp	HX1.2	3,995	power amp • 130W • 44,13,37cm • High current capability	
cart	50X	159	moving coil • 2 mV • removable stylus • 4.5g • High output, exchange scheme	
cart	10X	189	moving coil • 2 mV • fixed stylus • 4.6g • High output, exchange scheme	
cart	23RS	375	moving coil • 0.15 mV • fixed stylus • 5.3g • Jewel cantilever, exchange	
cart	1702	450	91 moving coil • 0.15 mV • fixed stylus • 5.3g • <i>Clear, detailed, neutral and generally informative - excellent.</i>	REC'D
cart	XX-1L	998	84 moving coil • 2 mV • fixed stylus • 12g • <i>Very clear, very detailed, no troubles with tracking; response lift around 20kHz seems to do no harm.</i>	REC'D
cart	XX-1	998	84 moving coil • 2 mV • fixed stylus • 12g • <i>Good, but not immensely competitive at the price, and not helped by comparison with the low output version.</i>	
arm	507	1,400	fixed arm tube • proprietary fit • Biaxial design	

ECA DISTRIBUTION • TEL 0181 830 5128 • FAX 0181 208 1271 • DEALERS 5

amp	Vista S	880	preamp • 4L, 1T • 39,10,39cm • Phase coherent design	
amp	Lectern S	880	power amp • 50W • 39,10,30cm • Phase coherent design	
amp	Prisma	880	preamp • MM, MC • 39,10,23cm • Phono stepup	
spkr	SERVO A.2	2,450	ported • 2 driver • 80dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 22,102,30cm • True ribbon tweeter	

ECLIPSE • HI-FI DIRECT • TEL 0171 827 9827 • FAX 0171 827 9009 • DEALERS 23

cd	CD101	80	multibit • rem • 36,8,29cm	
cd	CD420	100	multibit • rem • 42,8,29cm	

ELECTROCOMPANET • ESOTERIC AUDIO IMPORTS • TEL 01243 533030 • FAX 01243 533030 • DEALERS 12

amp	ECP-1	535	preamp • MM/MC • 24,7,16cm • Adjusts to match cartridge	
amp	ECP-1 SF	699	preamp • MM/MC • 24,7,16cm • auto-adjusts, blue stone fascia	
amp	ECL-2	990	integrated • 50W • 3L, 1T • 46,11,38cm	
amp	ECL-2SF	1,095	integrated • 50W • 3L, 1T • 46,38,11cm • As ECL-2 + Blue Stone fascia	

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

ELECTROCOMPANIEET • ESOTERIC AUDIO IMPORTS • TEL 01243 533030 • FAX 01243 533030 • DEALERS 12

amp EC-4 Line	1,315	preamp • 5L,2T • 48,9,23cm • inc XLR balanced in/out	
amp EC-3MM	1,485	preamp • MM,4L,2T • 48,9,23cm • Balanced XLR in/out	
amp EC-4 SF Line	1,565	preamp • 5L,2T • 48,9,23cm • XLR in/out, blue stone fascia	
amp EC-3MC	1,810	preamp • MC,4L,2T • 48,9,23cm • XLR in/out, adj MC input	
amp EC-3MM SF	1,995	preamp • MM,4L,2T • 48,9,23cm • XLR in/out, blue stone fascia	
amp AW1000MB	2,030	power amp • 100W • 48,13,36cm • High current (80A)	
amp EC-3MC SF	2,075	preamp • MC,4L,2T • 48,9,23cm • XLR in/out, blue stone fascia	
amp EC1-1	2,100	integrated • 100W • 5L,2T • 45,13,36cm • High current (80A)	
amp AW1000MB-SF	2,175	power amp • 100W • 48,13,36cm • High current, blue stone fascia	
amp EC1-1 SF	2,350	integrated • 100W • 5L,2T • 45,13,36cm • High current, blue stone fascia	
amp AW2500MB	3,620	power amp • 250W • 48,22,45cm • High current (100A)	
amp AW2500MB-SF	3,980	power amp • 250W • 48,45,22cm • High current stereo	
amp AW180MB	4,200	power amp • 180W • 28,29,48cm • High current, price per pair	
amp AW180MB-SF	4,430	power amp • 180W • 28,29,48cm • High current, price per pair	
cab EC-K3 Mk 2	100	mains • stranded • 13A • copper • terminated, woven conductors	
spkr The Qube	1,265	2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 200W	

EPOS ACOUSTICS • TEL 01705 407722 • FAX 01705 400099 • DEALERS 64

spkr ES11	445	94	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 20,38,25cm • <i>Integral baffle/driver to give a remarkable combination of low colouration, transparency and speed. Bass is a bit shy.</i>	B'BUY
spkr ES14	675	98	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,49,29cm • <i>Substantial stand mount delivers delightful midrange focus and delicacy with good bass control. System sensitive.</i>	REC'D
spkr ES25	1,650	143	ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 90,24,35cm • <i>Handsome floorstander with fine intrinsic sound quality but a rather uneven and bass heavy balance.</i>	

EXPOSURE ELECTRONICS • TEL 01273 423877 • FAX 01273 430619

amp XX Super	699	integrated • 55W • 4L,2T • 43,85,35cm • Upgraded model	
amp XIX	799	preamp • 5L • 43,85,35cm • Line only version of XVII	
amp XV Super	799	integrated • 55W • MM,MC,3L,2T • 43,85,35cm	
amp XVII	849	preamp • MM,MC,3L,2T • 43,85,35cm • MM/MC optional	
amp XVIII Super	849	power amp • 70W • 43,85,35cm • Upgraded model	
amp XIV	1,400	preamp • MM,MC,3L,2T • 48,8,30cm • Needs 9 power supply	
amp XVIII (pr)	1,599	power amp • 65W • 43,85,35cm • Upgraded 2x monoblocks	
amp IV	2,199	power amp • 80W • 48,13,35cm • Fully regulated	

GALE • HI-FI DIRECT • TEL 0171 827 9827 • FAX 0171 827 9009 • DEALERS 23

spkr Ref Monitors	100	2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • Bookshelf, black finish	
spkr Model 2	150	2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • Bookshelf, black finish	
spkr Model 4	200	2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • Bookshelf, black finish	

GAMMA ACOUSTICS • TEL 01753 526939 • FAX 01753 526939

amp Aeon Signature	POA	power amp • 98W • 29,21,53cm • Single ended Class A £78,600	
amp Gemini	699	integrated • 12W • 3L • 33,23,8cm • Single ended, triode	
amp Era Standard	999	preamp • MM,3L,1T • 44,17,30cm • Triode, fully regulated	
amp Rhythm	1,999	integrated • 22W • MM,3L • 38,30,53cm • Single ended phono integrated	
amp Era	2,499	preamp • MM • 44,17,30cm • Triode, fully regulated	
amp Space Reference	3,999	power amp • 18W • 3L • 43,22,31cm • Line integrated	
amp Era Reference	3,999	preamp • MM,3L • 44,17,30cm • Si Triode	
amp Aeon	11,999	power amp • 26W • 29,21,53cm • Single ended Class A, mono	
amp Era Signature	19,999	preamp • MM,5L,1T • 44,24,39cm • Triode preamp, regulated	
spkr Epoch Five	799	90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 25,20,50cm • Time aligned, piano black	
spkr Epoch Ref Five	2,999	90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 95,26,26cm • Time aligned, floor stand	

GENEXKA • INTERTAN LTD • TEL 01922 434000 • FAX 01922 710789 • DEALERS 346

spkr GX330	80	6 Ohms • 50W • 35,21,24cm	
spkr GX650	140	90dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 23,76,26cm	
tt Lab-710	60	manual • 33/45rpm • Includes MM cartridge	
tt Lab-810	70	semi arm li t • 33/45rpm • Includes MM cartridge	

GILL • GOODMAN'S GILL • TEL 01705 492777 • FAX 01705 470875 • DEALERS 250

spkr Arena	89	87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 26,23,14cm		
spkr Maxim	119	122	86dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 10,26,17cm • <i>Budget miniature offers well balanced strengths and few weaknesses at a very realistic price; a bit feeble.</i>	REC'D
spkr Mezzo	169	141	2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 21,36,25cm • <i>Good value budget compact has splendid midband but fox extremes; dull treble could suit budget systems well.</i>	REC'D
spkr Magnum	199	86dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 25,42,29cm		

GOLDRING PRODUCTS LTD • TEL 01284 701101 • FAX 01284 750040 • DEALERS 100

cart Elan P	17	moving magnet • 5 mV • removable stylus • T4P version of Elan		
cart Elan	17	67	moving magnet • 5 mV • removable stylus • <i>A lightweight and frisky-sounding MM that appears to be based upon the same body as the Nagaoka MM4</i>	REC'D
cart Elektra	25	moving magnet • 5 mV • removable stylus • Elliptical stylus		
cart 1006	50	moving magnet • 6.5 mV • removable stylus • Elliptical stylus		
cart 1012GX	65	85	moving magnet • 6.5 mV • removable stylus • <i>Slightly harsh sound but plenty of life and quite good detail. Some very high frequency colouration apparent.</i>	REC'D
cart 1022GX	85	85	moving magnet • 6.5 mV • removable stylus • <i>As with 1012, a touch harsh; detail and transient purity improved, though, and it goes well with electric guitar!</i>	REC'D
cart Eroica LX	100	84	moving coil • 0.5 mV • fixed stylus • <i>Not the most subtle cartridge in the world: can sound edgy at times, but lively and informative.</i>	REC'D
cart Eroica	100	moving coil • 2.5 mV • fixed stylus • Gyger II stylus		
cart 1042	105	91	moving magnet • 6.5 mV • removable stylus • <i>Not terribly subtle, and not such good value alongside 1012 and 1022. Quite lively though.</i>	
cart Elite	200	103	moving coil • 0.5 mV • fixed stylus • <i>The basics are right, and it will cheerfully tackle any source material, but it's sound possesses a certain dirtiness.</i>	

GOODMANS INDUSTRIES LTD • TEL 01705 673763 • FAX 01705 664333

cass Delta 700W	100	123	twin • Dolby B • 2 head • 36,13,28cm • <i>Compact and ultra-basic twin deck which is rough and bass shy, with a less than stable tape path.</i>	
cass GSW650	130	twin • Dolby B • 2 head • 43,12,27cm • Both auto-reverse		
cd Delta 700	110	128	multibit • rem • <i>A 16-bit alternative to the CD650II that furnishes a colourful and animated sound.</i>	REC'D
cd GCD360R	120	multibit • rem		
spkr Active 75	65	active • 80W		
spkr M100	80	2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 17,26,20cm • Bookshelf, close to wall		
spkr HT100	100	86dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 25,53,20cm		
spkr HT170	150	92dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 25,70,22cm		
tun GST650	90	FM, M, L • 36 presets		
tun Delta 700	100	FM, M, L • 36 presets • 36,11,30cm		
tt Delta 700	55	semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 36,90,37cm • Part of Delta system		

GRADO • GOLDRING PRODUCTS LTD • TEL 01284 701101 • FAX 01284 750040 • DEALERS 50

cart ZTE+1	27	moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux, high output	
c art ZCE+1	37	moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
cart Z3E+1	47	moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
cart ZF1+	82	moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
cart Signature Junior	149	moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
cart Signature 8MZ	250	moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
cart Signature MCZ	375	moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
cart Signature TLZ	650	moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
cart Signature XTZ	975	moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	

GRUNDIG INTERNATIONAL LTD • TEL 01788 577155 • FAX 01788 562354

amp V210	130	integrated • 50W • MM,5L,1T • hdph • rem • 36,12,30cm • Pre-main split	
amp Fine Arts V1	150	integrated • 50W • MM,5L,1T • hdph • rem • 43,14,30cm • Tone defeat	
amp V310	170	integrated • 70W • MM,5L,1T • hdph • rem • 36,12,30cm • Pre-main split	
amp Fine Arts V2	200	integrated • 80W • MM,5L,1T • hdph • rem • 43,14,30cm • Tone defeat	
amp Fine Arts V3	250	integrated • 120W • MM,5L,1T • hdph • rem • 43,14,30cm • Pre-main split	
cass CCF210	150	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B • 2 head • 36,12,30cm • AMS, CD copy, hi speed dub	
cass Fine Arts CCF2	170	twin • Dolby B • 2 head • 44,13,30cm • AMS, remote, display off	
cass CCF310	190	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HK Pro • 2 head • 36,12,30cm • Elapsed time, CD copy, AMS	
cass Fine Arts CCF3	200	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HK Pro • 2 head • 44,13,30cm • Elapsed time, display switch	

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

GRUNDIG INTERNATIONAL LTD • TEL 01788 577155 • FAX 01788 562354			
cass	Fine Arts CF4	250	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,13,30cm • Manual bias, AMS monitor
cd	CO210	120	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 36,8,30cm • 30 mem, random repeat
cd	Fine Arts CD1	140	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,9,30cm • 30 track memory, auto-space
cd	Fine Arts CD2	190	128 bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,9,30cm • <i>A stylish looking player, with a disappointingly vague approach to music making.</i>
cd	Fine Arts CD3	240	bitstream • rem • 44,9,30cm
cd	CD3	240	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,9,30cm • FTS, display off, fade, DAC7
spkr	MBX220	40	ported • 2 driver • 4 Ohms • 30W • Stand/shelf use
spkr	MBX310	80	ported • 3 driver • 4 Ohms • 70W • 18,42,29cm • 3 drivers, 2 way
spkr	BX1	160	ported • 2 driver • 4 Ohms • 60W • 23,40,30cm • 16 litre
spkr	BX2	230	ported • 3 driver • 4 Ohms • 80W • 24,49,33cm • 22 litre
spkr	BX3 II	350	ported • 2 driver • 4 Ohms • 120W • 24,107,34cm • 53 litre, 3 drivers, 2 way
rec	R210	150	FM, M, L • 50W • 59 presets • MM, 5L • rem • 36,12,30cm • Gain switch, remote
rec	Fine Arts R2	250	FM, M, L • 50W • 59 presets • MM, 5L • rem • 44,14,30cm • RDS, Radio text, remote
tun	T210	120	FM, M, L • 59 presets • Manual station name
tun	Fine Arts T1	130	FM, M, L • 59 presets • 44,9,30cm • User station name, gain switch
tun	T310	140	FM, M, L • 59 presets • RDS • 36,8,30cm • RDS (PS, CT, RT, PTY)
tun	Fine Arts T2	170	FM, M, L • 59 presets • RDS • 44,9,30cm • RDS (PS, RT)
tun	Fine Arts T4	210	FM, M • 59 presets • RDS • 44,9,30cm • RDS (PS, CT, RT, PTY)
tt	TT1	180	auto • 33/45rpm • Black finish

HARBETH ACOUSTICS LTD • TEL 01444 440955 • FAX 01444 440688			
spkr	BBC LS3/5A	675	66 sealed • 82dB • 10 Ohms • 30W • 30,19,18cm • <i>Still a classic miniature, though not to every taste, and none the better for the recent update under our listening conditions.</i>
spkr	HL-P3	699	118 sealed • 83dB • 8 Ohms • 45W • 31,19,18cm • <i>Very limited loudness but impressive full-range scale from uncoloured and very well balanced but time-smearing subminiature</i> REC'D
spkr	BBC LSS/12A	1,195	ported • 81dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 30,18,23cm • Free standing, biwire
spkr	HL Compact 7	1,295	ported • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 52,27,32cm • Free-space, shielded, biwire
spkr	HL-5	1,495	ported • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 64,32,31cm • Free standing, biwire

HARMAN-KARDON • HARMAN AUDIO UK LTD • TEL 0181 207 5050 • FAX 0181 207 4572 • DEALERS 120			
amp	PA2100	349	power amp • 45W • 45,11,37cm
amp	HK1400	399	129 integrated • 40W • MM/MC, 3L, 2T • 45,11,37cm • <i>HK's first line-only amplifier exudes a relaxed but confident sound that is only troubled by the most dense of recordings.</i> REC'D
amp	AP2500	499	preamp • MM/MC, 6L, 2T • 45,11,35cm
amp	PA2200	579	power amp • 70W • 45,14,38cm
amp	PA2400	899	power amp • 120W • 45,16,41cm
cass	TD4400	349	127 single • HX Pro • 2 head • 45,13,35cm • <i>Simple features plus excellent engineering make this a model of integrity.</i> REC'D
cass	TD4500	499	single • HX Pro • 2 head • 45,13,35cm
cass	DC5500	599	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 45,13,35cm
cass	TD4600	699	117 single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 45,13,35cm • <i>Original Dolby S deck has improved over the years and now sounds very acceptable. A strong, solid sounding deck - but expensive.</i>
cass	DC5700	699	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 45,13,35cm • Both transports record
cass	TD4800	1,299	single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • 45,13,35cm
cd	HD7225	230	bitstream • rem • 45,10,33cm
cd	HD7325	299	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 45,10,33cm
cd	HD7425	349	multibit • electrical out • rem • 45,10,33cm
cd	HD7525	449	multibit • electrical out • rem • 45,10,33cm
cd	HD7625	549	multibit • electrical out • rem • 45,10,33cm
cd	HD7725	799	124 multibit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 45,10,33cm • <i>This flagship implementation of RLS sounds impressively bold and dynamic - a genuine rock 'n roller!</i> REC'D
spkr	LS0200	149	130 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 21,35,30cm • <i>Laid back to a fault but entertaining nevertheless, and a big box for the price.</i> REC'D
spkr	LS0300	199	88dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 21,38,80cm
rec	AVR-30	999	FM, M • A/V • 50W • 16 presets • MM, 3L, 3T, 6V • rem • 45,13,35cm • Dolby Pro Logic
tun	TU9400	299	93 FM, M • 24 presets • 45,8,33cm • <i>Striking in appearance and with a sound to match, it comfortably exceeded our expectations. On stereo FM, it's HK's best yet</i> REC'D
tun	TU9600	499	109 FM, M • 24 presets • 45,8,33cm • <i>Good bass, detail - and slightly enhanced dynamics</i>

HEYBROOK HI-FI LTD • TEL 01752 731313 • FAX 01753 733954 • DEALERS 75			
amp	Integra	555	integrated • 75W • MM/MC • hdhp • 77,44,30cm
amp	SIG C/P	649	preamp • MM/MC/5L, 2T
amp	SIG MNEX	698	power amp • 140W • Mono, uses ext SIG/DCPS PSU
amp	SIG CAP	829	preamp • 6L, 2T • Line only
amp	SIG /SP	922	power amp • 140W • Stereo power amp
cab	Heywire	66	109 loudspeaker • solid core • copper • <i>This well-meaning facsimile of earlier ribbon cables ends up sounding lumpy and uneven.</i>
spkr	Prima	139	110 ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 60W • 20,29,18cm • <i>Neat miniature delivers fine coherence, pace and timing, though balance is a little forward and bass a bit tight.</i> REC'D
spkr	Solo	199	90 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 23,36,23cm • <i>Discreetly styled, sounds a little untidy in both bass and treble, but handles complex rhythmic material much well.</i> REC'D
spkr	H81	269	2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 29,47,23cm • Boundary, shielded option
spkr	Trio	373	118 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 24,47,25cm • <i>Same drivers as HBS1 in prettier real wood enclosure give s sweeter and more forgiving, if less committed sound.</i> REC'D
spkr	Heystak	499	ABR • 3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 98,22,28cm • Inc stands
spkr	Quartet	575	122 ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 24,41,22cm • <i>Beautifully presented and built large bookshelf model with good sensitivity and a lively, forward sound.</i> REC'D
spkr	Sextet	1,129	102 ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 27,90,20cm • <i>Engagingly coherent and highly analytical, partly due to not always comfortable upper-mid forwardness.</i> REC'D

IMPULSE LOUSPEAKERS • TEL 0181 766 0474 • FAX 0181 766 0468 • DEALERS 11			
spkr	Kora	1,095	horn • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 1,86,31cm • Floor standing
spkr	Lali	1,595	horn • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 25,99,36cm • Floor standing
spkr	Talus	2,695	horn • 94dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 31,121,49cm • Floor standing

INFINITY • GAMEPATH LTD • TEL 01908 317707 • FAX 01908 322704 • DEALERS 85			
spkr	SM65	150	ported • 94dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 34,20,19cm • Auto reset protection circuit
spkr	Reference II	150	sealed • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 50W • 34,20,20cm • Pedestal
spkr	Reference 11i	200	sealed • 6 Ohms • 75W • 39,22,34cm • Pedestal
spkr	SM85	250	ported • 98dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 46,29,27cm • Auto reset protection circuit
spkr	Reference 21i	300	Floor standing
spkr	Inf IV Sat	300	sealed • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 80W • 16,24,18cm • Wall mount, shielded
spkr	SM105	350	ported • 100dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 53,30,30cm • Auto reset protection circuit
spkr	SM115	450	ported • 3 driver • 100dB • 8 Ohms • 175W • 76,34,32cm • Auto reset protection c
spkr	SSW-10 Sub	500	active • 34,34,33cm
spkr	SM125	550	ported • 3 driver • 100dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 89,37,32cm • Auto reset protection circuit
spkr	SM155	650	ported • 4 driver • 102dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 102,45,32cm • Auto reset protection circuit
spkr	Kappa 6, 1i	995	132 ported • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 31,95,25cm • <i>Good extension and laid back balance from high-tech drivers in classy cabinet, but bass is fat and slow and dynamics unconvincing.</i>
spkr	Kappa 7, 1i	1,195	ported • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 225W • 36,108,26cm • Floor standing
spkr	ARS Epsilon	9,995	sealed • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 500W • 152,47,41cm • Includes own servo control amp

INTERAUDIO • BOSE UK LTD • TEL 01795 475341 • FAX 01795 427227			
spkr	XL1000	100	8 Ohms • 50W • 19,29,17cm
spkr	XL2000	140	8 Ohms • 70W • 23,36,18cm
spkr	XL3000	160	8 Ohms • 70W • 29,46,23cm
spkr	XL4000	200	8 Ohms • 75W • 32,56,29cm

IXOS • PATH DISTRIBUTION • TEL 0121 749 2240 • FAX 0121 748 3838 • DEALERS 700			
cab	603	2	loudspeaker • stranded • copper
cab	601	3	loudspeaker • stranded • OFC • 6 core
cab	604	5	loudspeaker • stranded • copper • Bi-wire
cab	602	5	loudspeaker • stranded • OFC • 12 core
cab	104	20	interconnect • coaxial • stranded • OFC • 24 karat plugs
cab	603/10	20	loudspeaker • stranded • copper • Unterminated
cab	105	25	digital, electrical • 75ohms • copper • OFC screen
cab	103	40	interconnect • coaxial • stranded • OFC • Double shielded, locking plugs
cab	102	60	interconnect • coaxial • stranded • OFC • Double shielded, locking plugs
cab	101	100	interconnect • coaxial • stranded • silver plated OFC • Double shielded, locking plugs
std	903	50	speaker stand • single column • 60h, igh, cm
std	902	50	speaker stand • single column • 47 high, cm
std	901	50	speaker stand • single column • 39 high, cm
supp	800	35	equipment support • single shell • Mini/midi pedestal

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

IXOS • PATE DISTRIBUTION • TEL 0121 749 2240 • FAX 0121 748 3838 • DEALERS 700

supp 701	40	equipment support • single module
supp 711	60	equipment support • 1 shelf • Toughened glass shelf
supp 802	70	equipment support • 2 shelf • Mini component, 215mm spacing
supp 803	90	equipment support • 3 shelf • Mini component, 125mm spacing
supp 802P	100	equipment support • 2 shelf • mini - with pedestal/CD store
supp 703	100	equipment support • 3-shelf
supp 803P	110	equipment support • 3 shelf • mini - with pedestal/CD store
supp 804	110	equipment support • 4 shelf • Mini component, 125mm spacing
supp 713	130	equipment support • 3 shelf • Toughened glass shelf
supp 804P	140	equipment support • 4 shelf • mini - with pedestal/CD store
supp 704	140	equipment support
supp 705	170	equipment support • 5 shelf
supp 714	190	equipment support • 4 shelf • Toughened glass shelves
supp 715	230	equipment support • 5 shelf • Toughened glass shelves

JAMO UK LTD • TEL 01327 301300 • FAX 01327 300511 • DEALERS 300+

spkr Studio 80	60	ported • 2 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 45W • 22,35,17cm
spkr Studio 110	100	ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 50W • 24,42,22cm
spkr Sat 160	100	sealed • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 14,20,88cm • Shelf/wall mount, with wall br
spkr D115	100	91dB • 75W • 24,42,22cm
spkr Cornet 30.4	100	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 55W • 20,32,23cm • Black ash - Mahogany £20 extra
spkr Sat 200	110	2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 15,22,88cm • Stereo passive sub
spkr Sat 300	120	2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 15,21,8cm • Use with SW500
spkr Cornet 40.4	140	130 ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 20,32,23cm • <i>Pretty presentation and a strong box, but poor driver fixing. Decent if bright sound.</i>
spkr Studio 180	150	ported • 3 driver • 92dB • 80W • 22,50,26cm
spkr Artina	150	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 29,25,8cm • Small, flat wall speaker
spkr Sat 500	150	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 16,21,14cm • Satellites for SW500
spkr D135	150	94dB • 90W • 28,52,25cm
spkr Converta	150	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 9,25,24cm • Lamp-like appearance
spkr Cornet 60.4	180	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 23,42,27cm • Black ash - Mahogany £20 extra
spkr D165	190	94dB • 100W • 28,52,25cm
spkr SW160 System	200	90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 20,34,48cm • Subwoofer, adjustable
spkr Art	200	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 35,40,9cm • Shape and size of shallow 20 i
spkr Classic 4	230	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 20,47,25cm
spkr D265	300	ported • 3 driver • 95dB • 150W • 44,68,32cm
spkr Classic 6	300	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 20,84,29cm • Inc spiked feet
spkr BX100A	300	ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 32,55,28cm • Floor or stand mount
spkr 307A	300	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 18,31,27cm • Stand mount
spkr Cornet 90-4	330	sealed • 3 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 140W • 26,87,27cm
spkr 407	350	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 80W • 22,41,29cm • Stand mount
spkr Graphic	350	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 39,44,8cm • Wall mount
spkr Atmosphere	380	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 27,37,16cm • Wall mount, doubles as lamp
spkr Cornet 100-4	400	sealed • 3 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 32,95,27cm
spkr Classic 8	400	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 23,90,29cm • Inc spiked feet
spkr Silhouette	400	90dB • 5 Ohms • 80W • 25,122,17cm
spkr D365	400	96dB • 200W • 46,78,35cm
spkr BX150A	400	ported • 3 driver • 92dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 38,63,31cm • Floor mount
spkr SW500 System	430	2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 140W • 41,38,53cm • Passive stereo subwoofer
spkr BX200A	450	ported • 3 driver • 93dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 29,17,13cm • Floor mount
spkr 447	500	138 ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 19,77,29cm • <i>Very prettily styled, but build and sound quality are disappointing at the price.</i>
spkr 507A	700	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 22,91,37cm
spkr 707A	900	132 ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 24,104,39cm • <i>Superb styling and cosmetics but indifferent build and engineering quality; decent balance apart from detached bass.</i>
spkr Onel	6,000	3 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 300W • 40,178,30cm • Floor standing, coupled cavity
s/sub System 50/60	160	Sub, 2x Sat • 88
s/sub System 4000	200	Sub, 2x sat • 88
s/sub System 4000S	200	Sub, 2x sat • 4/8 • 88
s/sub System 600	450	Sub, 2x sat • 90
a.sub SW900E	330	stereo • 90W • 39,24,49cm
a.sub SW600E	500	stereo • 100W • 39,58,48cm

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spkr Control One	115	90 ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 24,156,14cm • <i>Sub-miniature with forward midrange and real bass; highish price partly justified by near-indestructible Pro build</i>
spkr Ti 1000	1,500	118 sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 20,30,13cm • <i>Ultra-engineered, beautifully crafted bookshelf model. Performance compromised by enthusiastic midbass output from port.</i>
spkr Ti 2000	2,000	sealed • 3 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 33,82,30cm • Asymmetric, double wall
spkr Ti 3000	2,499	sealed • 3 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 46,105,35cm • Asymmetric, double wall
spkr i 5000	3,499	sealed • 3 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 300W • 48,114,38cm • Asymmetric, double wall

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spkr Minim SGL SHD	50	2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 19,28,20cm • Shielded, single speaker
spkr Satellite SGL SHD	50	2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 13,24,11cm • Shielded, single speaker
spkr Satellite	80	2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 13,24,11cm • Shielded, single speaker
spkr Minim	80	82 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 19,28,20cm • <i>Very civilised but dynamically limited, the Minim is well suited to the smaller room and where limited loudness is acceptable. REC'D</i>
spkr Minim Pair Solid	89	2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 19,28,20cm • Shielded
spkr Sonata Vinyl	100	2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 23,32,22cm
spkr Sonata	120	71 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 23,32,22cm • <i>Well balanced and integrated, offers fine sound if limited bass and dynamic range, plus real tree wood at a nearly silly price. B'BUY</i>
spkr Subwoofer	130	1 driver • 95dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 26,51,27cm
spkr P1 Vinyl	150	102 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 26,44,25cm • <i>A lot of highly competent loudspeaker for the price, with a safe sound that's unlikely to disappoint. B'BUY</i>
spkr P1	170	141 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 26,44,25cm • <i>Longstanding design is remarkable material value (real wood etc) and sounds pretty too - a touch aggressive maybe. B'BUY</i>
spkr AP2	200	106 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 26,44,25cm • <i>Offers real wood veneer at a bargain price; performance is cleaner but broadly comparable to P1 Vinyl overall. REC'D</i>
spkr AP3	230	46 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 26,52,29cm • <i>Pretty good stereo and well balanced overall it had its own character which is well suited to vinyl replay. REC'D</i>
spkr Ruby 1	500	139 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 120W • 32,19,21cm • <i>Very pretty but pricey luxury metal-cone miniature has good, if slightly edgy balance.</i>
spkr Ruby 2	700	2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 43,22,25cm • Alloy cones
spkr Ruby 3	1,000	3 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 75,19,22cm • Alloy cones
spkr Ruby 4	1,300	3 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 90,22,26cm • Alloy cones
s/sub AV2	300	sub & 5 sats • 80hms • 87dB • 51,26,27cm • Minim/Subwoofer
s/sub AV1	300	sub & 5 sats • 80hms • 85dB • 51,26,27cm • Satellites/Subwoofer
s/sub AV4	400	2 sub & 5 sats • 80hms • 87dB • 51,26,27cm • Minim/Subwoofer
s/sub AV3	400	2 sub & 5 sats • 80hms • 85dB • 51,26,27cm • Satellite/Subwoofer
stnd WB	30	speaker support • Wall brackets
stnd MS2	45	speaker stand • 3 leg • 39,29,45cm • for Sonata
stnd MS3	55	speaker stand • 3 leg • 37,30,61cm • For Minim
stnd MS1	80	speaker stand • 4-leg • 39,32,46cm • For AP2, AP3, P1
stnd HS2	130	speaker stand • For Ruby 2 • 26,29,45cm
stnd HS1	130	speaker stand • For Ruby 1 • 23,25,58cm
supp Add-on	50	equipment support • Add-on shelves (x2)
supp 3 tier	80	equipment support • 3 shelf rack

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amp AX-V6BU	230	integrated • 95W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,13,46cm
amp AX-A472BK	250	142 integrated • 65W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,15,36cm • <i>A rather unpredictable performer that can initially sound quite impressive but often ends up sounding starchy and tiring.</i>
amp AX-A662BK	330	integrated • 90W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • 44,13,31cm
cass TD-W106BK	120	twin • Dolby B • 2 head • 44,13,24cm • Twin, one recording deck
cass TD-218BK	170	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,33cm • 'Compu' auto tape calibration
cass TD-W208BK	170	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,33cm • Twin, one recording deck
cass TD-X372BK	170	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,33cm
cass TD-318BK	200	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,14,34cm • 'Silent' mechanism
cass TD-W308BK	200	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,33cm • Twin, one recording deck
cass TD-V562BK	220	123 single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,13,33cm • <i>Ultra-sophisticated transport at a silly price; sound quality is stable but slightly opaque. REC'D</i>

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

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class	TD-718BK	250	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44.14,34cm • Tape calibration, stabiliser
class	TD-W708BK	250	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44.13,33cm • Twin record/play
class	TD-V662BK	270	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44.13,33cm • Dual capstan
cd	XL-V174BK	140	1 bit • rem • 44.10,28cm
cd	XL-284	160	1 bit • rem • 44.11,28cm
cd	XL-V274BK	160	139 1 bit • rem • 44.10,28cm • <i>This appears to be a re-badged version of JVC's XL-V264, retaining an over-heavy bass and generally gaudy sound.</i>
cd	XL-F116	180	1 bit • rem • 44.13,40cm • 5-disc carousel
cd	XL-F216	200	1 bit • rem • 44.13,40cm • 5-disc carousel
cd	XL-Z674	300	1 bit • rem • 44.11,28cm
cd	XL-M408BK	300	1 bit • rem • 44.13,32cm • Six disc
cd	XL-Z1050TN	500	119 1 bit • electrical out • rem • 45.11,34cm • <i>Technically advanced and luxuriously equipped, this player remains rather bland and unsatisfying on audition.</i>
cd	XL-MC100	800	1 bit • rem • 36.37,38cm • 100 disc player
digr	XM-D1BK	900	MiniDisc • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • optical out • bitstream • 18,5,13cm
hdph	HA-22	6	in-ear model • 38g • 32 Ohm
hdph	HA-M3	6	sealed • 33g • 32 Ohm • 1.2m dual plug lead
hdph	HA-F15	9	open back • 6g • 16 Ohm • Mini 1.2m, 3.5/6.3mm plug
hdph	HA-X55	12	sealed • 45g • 32 Ohm • 2m dual plug lead
hdph	HA-D410	15	sealed • 90g • 32 Ohm • 2m, 3.5/6.3mm plug
hdph	HA-X77	16	sealed • 40g • 32 Ohm • 2m dual plug lead
hdph	HA-F35	16	open back • 6g • 32 Ohm • Mini 1.2m, 3.5/6.3mm plug
hdph	HA-CD88	18	open back • 38g • 32 Ohm
hdph	HA-D525	20	sealed
hdph	HA-F65	20	in-ear model • 32 Ohm • In-ear
hdph	HA-D510	20	sealed • 110g • 32 Ohm • 3m, 6.3/3.5mjacks
hdph	HA-D625	25	sealed
hdph	HA-D610	25	sealed • 120g • 32 Ohm • 3m, 6.3/3.5mjacks
hdph	HA-D727	43	sealed
hdph	HA-D710	55	sealed • 210g • 32 Ohm • 3m, 6.3/3.5mjacks
hdph	HA-D910	65	121 sealed • 220g • 32 Ohm • <i>Broadly acceptable if unexciting design with low level losses and some colourations.</i>
hdph	HA-D1000	250	sealed • 340g • 32 Ohm • 5m, 6.3/3.5mjacks
hdph	HA-F25	699	in-ear model • 32 Ohm • In ear
spkr	SPX220TBK	100	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 24,66,24cm
spkr	SPX550BK	130	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 24,66,24cm
spkr	SPX770BK	150	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 28,75,25cm
spkr	SPX990BK	230	ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 31,86,27cm
spkr	SX-SW9	300	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • Satellite subwoofer system
spkr	SX911WD	660	ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 38,63,35cm
spkr	SX500	700	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 180W • 27,45,28cm
rec	RX-212XBK	200	FM,M,L • 50W • 40 presets • MM,3L,1T • rem • 44,13,34cm • 4ch surround
rec	RX-308BK	230	FM,M,L • 70W • 40 presets • MM,3L,1T • rem • 44,13,34cm • 4 channel surround
rec	RX-416VBK	270	FM,M,L • A/V • 50W • 40 presets • MM,1L,3T • rem • 44,13,35cm • Dolby Pro Logic
rec	RX-616RBK	350	FM,M,L • A/V • 50W • 40 presets • MM,1L,3T • rem • 44,16,41cm • Dolby Pro Logic
rec	RX-508VBK	350	FM,M,L • A/V • 50W • 40 presets • MM,1L,3T • rem • 44,13,34cm • 5ch Dolby Pro Logic
rec	RX-816RBK	570	FM,M,L • A/V • 70W • 40 presets • MM,1L,3T • rem • 44,16,41cm • Dolby Pro Logic
rec	RX-808VBK	570	FM,M,L • A/V • 70W • 40 presets • MM,1L,3T • rem • 44,16,40cm • 5ch Dolby Pro Logic
tun	FX362BK	130	129 FM,M,L • 40 presets • 44,8,30cm • <i>Disappointing all-round performance - watch out for aural overload in strong signal areas. Tuning knob unspecial</i>

KEF AUDIO LTD • TEL 01622 672261 • FAX 01622 672939 • DEALERS 240			
spkr	Coda 7	129	ported • 2 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 18,30,24cm • 2-way stand/shelf
spkr	Coda 8	179	ported • 2 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 20,33,29cm • Black ash finish
spkr	Q10	229	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 19,32,26cm • Uni Q, shielded
spkr	70S	299	sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 17,25,12cm • Uni-Q, shielded, AV surround
spkr	Q30	369	126 ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 125W • 19,73,30cm • <i>Fine focus from Uni-Q driver, but lacks drive and time coherence, acoustically smaller than it looks.</i>
spkr	Q50	529	139 ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 19,83,30cm • <i>Compact twin-driver floorstander with Uni-Q treble and a rather midbass, heavy overall balance.</i>
spkr	101/3 Black	569	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 22,33,26cm • Uni Q, shielded, bookshelf
spkr	LS3/5a	649	sealed • 2 driver • 82dB • 11 Ohms • 30W • 19,30,16cm • Raymond Cooke Special Edition
spkr	Q70	729	ported • 4 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 175W • 19,105,30cm • Uni-Q, shielded, floor stand
spkr	Model One	1,099	coupled cavity • 3 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 23,86,30cm • Uni-Q, floor stand, shielded
spkr	Model Two	1,499	coupled cavity • 4 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 23,101,30cm • Uni-Q, floor stand, shielded
spkr	104/2 REC	1,799	60 coupled cavity • 5 driver • 92dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 28,90,41cm • <i>A reference point for dynamics, preferred without KUBE, suited to many rooms. Good sound, high levels.</i> REC'D
spkr	Model Three	1,999	coupled cavity • 5 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 300W • 27,114,34cm • Uni-Q, floor stand, shielded
spkr	107/2 REC	3,999	coupled cavity • 4 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 300W • 33,116,45cm • Raymond Cooke Special Edition

KENWOOD • TRIO-KENWOOD UK • TEL 01923 816444 • FAX 01923 819131 • DEALERS 1000			
amp	KA-1060	140	integrated • 140W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,13,25cm • Logical Flow' construction
amp	KA-2060R	170	integrated • 65W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44cm • System control
amp	KA-3020SE	200	integrated • 50W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,14,35cm • UK Special Edition
amp	KA-3060R	230	142 integrated • 45W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,13,30cm • <i>Oodles of class engineering, but a sound that's over-dry, often frustratingly restrained and usually rather unsophisticated.</i>
amp	KA-4060R	280	integrated • 70W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,14,35cm • System control
amp	KA-V3700	300	integrated • A/V • MM,4L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,14,30cm • Dolby Pro Logic
amp	KA-5050R	350	129 integrated • 95W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,15,40cm • <i>A listenable but neither particularly communicative nor captivating amplifier that puts features ahead of sound.</i>
amp	KA-V7700	600	integrated • A/V • MM,1L,1T • hdph • rem • 44,13,30cm • Pro Logic, learning remote
cass	KX-W4070	170	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • Auto bias function
cass	KX-3060	170	139 single • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,12,37cm • <i>Based on the same DAC filter as Marantz's CD-53, but with a more transparent, sober and highly insightful sound.</i> B'BUY
cass	KX-W6070	200	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • Auto-bias function
cass	KX-5060S	235	140 single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,12,30cm • <i>Well engineered single-capstan transport and Dolby S star in this refined and detailed sounding design.</i> REC'D
cass	KX-W8070S	280	twin • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • Auto bias function, power load
cass	KX-7060S	329	single • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,13,30cm • Auto tape calibration
cd	DP-2060	160	1 bit • rem • 44,10,26cm • Central mechanism
cd	DP-R4070	200	1 bit • rem • 5-disc tray loading
cd	DP-R4060	200	1 bit • rem • 44,12,38cm • Five disc carousel
cd	DP-3060	200	139 1 bit • rem • 44,10,26cm • <i>Based on the same filter/DAC as Marantz's CD-53, but with a more transparent, sober and highly insightful sound.</i> B'BUY
cd	DP-M5570	250	1 bit • rem • 6+1 disc changer
cd	DP-5060	250	1 bit • optical out • rem • 44,12,31cm • D.R.I.V.E.
cd	DP-7060	380	1 bit • optical out • rem • 44,12,31cm • D.R.I.V.E.
cd	DP-J2070	600	1 bit • rem • 44,19,38cm • 100 disc autochanger
hdph	KH-535	15	in-ear model • 32 Ohm • 3.5mm plug
hdph	KH-757	20	in-ear model • 32 Ohm • 3.5mm plug
hdph	KH-1000	20	121 open back • 30g • 32 Ohm • <i>First step up from a true mini: a near miniature which is cheap, comfortable and inoffensive</i>
hdph	KH-959	25	in-ear model • 32 Ohm • 3.5mm plug
hdph	KH-2020	40	sealed • 210g • 32 Ohm • 2.5m OFC lead
hdph	KH-5000	70	sealed • 280g • 32 Ohm • 2.5m OFC lead
spkr	LS-200G	200	ported • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 60W • 21,35,30cm • European design
spkr	LS-300G	300	ported • 82dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 21,35,30cm • European design
spkr	LS-500G	500	118 ported • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 22,44,28cm • <i>Japanese built luxury compact delivers an invigorating ad exciting sound, an interesting contrast to some lazier models.</i> REC'D
spkr	LS-700G	1,200	ported • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 120W • 30,90,30cm • European design
spkr	LS-1000G	1,700	ported • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 160W • 34,110,38cm • European design
a.sub	SW-500	250	stereo • 50W • 29,50,48cm
a.sub	SW-900	260	stereo • 70W • 21,40,56cm
rec	KR-A4070	230	FM,M • 60W • 20 presets • rem • 44,13,35cm
rec	KR-A4070	230	FM,M • 60W • 20 presets • MM,3L,2T • rem • 44,13,33cm • RDS
rec	KR-V570	300	FM,M • A/V • 50W • 20 presets • MM,L,2T • rem • 44,14,34cm • Dolby Pro Logic, RDS
rec	KR-V6070	350	FM,M • A/V • 70W • 20 presets • MM,4L,2T • rem • 44,17,34cm • RDS, Dolby Pro Logic
rec	KR-V7070	400	FM,M • A/V • 100W • 20 presets • MM,3L,2T • rem • 44,15,40cm • Dolby Pro Logic, RDS
rec	KR-X1000	1,300	FM,M • A/V • 110W • 20 presets • MM,8L,2T • rem • 44,17,40cm • THX, Dolby PL, RDS
tun	KT-1060L	120	FM,M,L • 30 presets • 44,8,26cm • Preset scan
tun	KT-2060L	140	FM,M,L • 30 presets • 44,8,26cm • Built-in timer, RDS
tun	KT-3050L	170	120 FM,M,L • 39 presets • RDS • 44,10,28cm • <i>Excellent RF performance and plenty of features including RDS, but it did sound rather ordinary under our conditions.</i>

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

KRELL - ABSOLUTE SOUNDS • TEL 0181 947 5047 • FAX 0181 879 7962 • DEALERS 17

amp	KSL-2	3,331	preamp • 4L, 1T • 48,7,36cm • Opt. MM/MC stage
amp	KSA-50s	3,690	power amp • 50W • 48,22,40cm • Sustained Plateau Bias
amp	KRC-2s	4,190	preamp • 6L, 1T • rem • 48,7,36cm • Opt MM/MC stage
amp	KSA-100s	5,843	power amp • 100W • 48,22,50cm • Sustained Plateau Bias
amp	KRCs	6,949	preamp • 6L, 1T • rem • 48,7,36cm • Opt MM/MC stage
amp	KSA-200s	7,987	power amp • 200W • 48,22,54cm • Sustained Plateau Bias
amp	KSA-300s	9,500	power amp • 300W • 48,22,62cm • Sustained Plateau Bias
amp	K.A.S. 2	18,804	power amp • 200W • 2x mono
amp	K.A.S.	29,500	power amp • 350W • 48,34,64cm • Monoblocks
cd	CD-DSP Mk II	5,000	rem • 42,13,28cm • Digital inputs facility
cd	CD DSPII 5000	5,000	multibit • 2 electrical out • rem • 42,13,28cm • Has digital in, balanced out
cd	KSP20i	9,950	electrical out • rem • Balanced out, top loader
cd	KPS20i	9,990	electrical out • rem • Balanced out, Bit String conv
cdt	MD-20	4,999	transport • rem • 42,13,28cm • Top load, AT&T optical out
cdt	MD-10	7,990	transport • 2 electrical out • optical out • rem • 42,13,28cm
cdt	KPS 20T	8,490	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • AT&T, AES/EBU balanced in
cdt	DT-10	9,090	transport • 2 electrical out • optical out • rem • 42,13,28cm • Front loader
dac	Studio 2	3,198	multibit • 42,13,27cm • AT&T in
dac	Studio	4,450	multibit • 42,6,32cm • AT&T in
dac	Reference 64	14,900	multibit • 42,13,39cm • AT&T in

LINN PRODUCTS • TEL 0141 644 5111 • FAX 0141 644 4262

amp	Majik-1 (Line)	524	integrated • 33W • 4L, 2T • hdph • 32,8,33cm • Works as pre/int multi room
amp	LK100	549	power amp • 50W • 32,8,33cm • Stereo
amp	Majik-1 (Phono)	593	integrated • 33W • MM, MC, 3L, 2T • hdph • 32,8,33cm • The cornerstone of Linn's modular hi-fi system has many innovations to its credit, but its sound is vague and confused.
amp	Kairn Pro	998	preamp • 4L, 2T • 32,8,33cm • Multi-room compatible
amp	Kairn Preamp	1,398	preamp • MM, MC 3L, 2T • 32,8,32cm • Multi-room compatible
amp	Klout	1,895	power amp • 80W • 32,8,33cm • Stereo, tri-wire connectors
cd	Mimik	798	delta sigma • electrical out • rem • 32,8,33cm • BNC digital
cd	Karik	1,497	119 delta sigma • electrical out • optical out • rem • 32,8,33cm • Based on Linn's original CD transport, this player sounds dry but very positive, detailed and engrossing. REC'D
dac	Numerik	1,075	multibit • 32,8,33cm • A new 20 bit DAC and revised Karik transport have cleaned up, this pair have a performance that is perhaps a little too dry and humourless.
spkr	Index	259	sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 21,44,24cm • 30 watts minimum
spkr	Tukan	398	sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 30W • 19,30,18cm • Multipurpose
spkr	Kelidh Passive	595	114 sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 60W • 20,83,28cm • Stunning timing and coherence and awesome bass drive, especially with ceramic plinth; sounds a bit shut in. REC'D
spkr	Kelidh Aktiv	1,090	sealed • 2 driver • 20,83,28cm • Floor standing, boundary
spkr	Kader	1,298	3 driver • 4 Ohms • 60W • 20,28,90cm • Black ash or walnut
spkr	Kaber Passive	1,298	118 sealed • 3 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 60W • 20,90,28cm • Dry, bright balance emphasises superb dynamic range and transient precision, but can sound unforgiving. REC'D
spkr	Kaber Aktiv	1,995	sealed • 3 driver • 20,90,28cm • Integral stands, boundary
spkr	Keltik Aktiv	4,400	sealed • 3 driver • 26,104,37cm • Integral stands, boundary
tn	Kremlin	1,995	120 FM • 80 presets • 32,8,33cm • Controversially good sound at a very high price. The reviewer's saving up but you should check it out for yourself. REC'D
tt	Basik	349	103 manual • 33/45rpm • 45,14,36cm • Strong midband analysis and imagery; clean if sharp treble is matched to a good if occasionally wooden bass. REC'D
tt	LP12 Basik	745	103 manual • 33rpm • 45,14,36cm • Tested with Akito, trails the full LP12 significantly, but pace, rhythm, timing etc still in top class, and bass auter than of old. REC'D
tt	LP12 Valhalla	894	manual • 33/45rpm • 45,14,36cm • Electronic PSU, upgradable
tt	LP12 Lingo	1,345	91 manual • 33/45rpm • 45,14,36cm • The classic reference is improved by the Lingo, but charming character remains. REC'D
cart	K5	54	67 moving magnet • 4.5 mV • removable stylus • 6g • Not as crisply focussed as the costlier Linn magnetics, the K5 offers a smoother presentation. REC'D
cart	K9	109	Col moving magnet • 4.5 mV • removable stylus • 7g • Linn threw this model into the leading pack by beefing up the Basik's bodywork and adding a super stylus. B'BUY
cart	K18/II	197	moving magnet • 4.5 mV • removable stylus • 8g • Metal body
cart	Klyde	449	moving coil • 150 mV • fixed stylus • 8g • Alloy body
cart	Arktiv	998	moving coil • 150 mV • fixed stylus • 7g • Three point mt, machined body
arm	Akito	209	fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 229mm • Statically balanced
arm	Ekos	1,297	67 fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 229mm • Superb, state of the art design which builds significantly on predecessors strengths. REC'D

LIVING VOICE • DEFINITIVE AUDIO • TEL 01602 813562

spkr	Horning Agathon	3,400	horn • 96dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 36,48,115cm • Floor standing
spkr	Tone Scout	7,249	horn • 104dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 64,110,70cm • Floorstanding, three-way
spkr	Air Partner	16,400	117 horn • 108dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 64,160,90cm • Formidable horn design with outstanding transparency, dynamics and speed. Its ideosyncrasies are compensated by sheer energy.

LUXMAN • HI-FI DIRECT • TEL 0171 827 9827 • FAX 0171 827 9009 • DEALERS 23

amp	A-312	200	integrated • 40W • MM, 4L, 2T • hdph • 13,44,36cm • CD direct, A/B speakers
amp	A-331	250	integrated • 60W • MM, 4L, 2T • hdph • 13,44,36cm • Inc CD direct
amp	A-353R	350	integrated • 60W • MM/MC, 4L, 2T • hdph • rem • 13,44,37cm • Motorised vol control
amp	A-37R	400	integrated • A/V • 80W • MM/MC, 4L, 2T • hdph • rem • 13,44,37cm • Also has AV inputs
cass	K-322	200	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 13,44,18cm • Remote control, music search
cass	K-373	400	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 13,44,35cm • System bus, mic inputs
cd	D-322	200	multibit • rem • 44,10,28cm • 18bit, 8x oversampling
cd	D-373	520	multibit • optical out • rem • 44,11,35cm • System bus remote
cd	D500XS	4,500	multibit • optical out • rem • 44,12,39cm • Top loading
tn	T-353	200	FM, M • 30 presets • 9,44,36cm • System bus remote control

LYRA • PATH PREMIER • TEL 01494 441736 • FAX 01494 461209

cart	Lydian	649	moving coil • removable stylus
cart	Clavis Da Capo	995	moving coil • fixed stylus
cart	Parnassus	1,995	moving coil • removable stylus

MAGNUM • BAILEY AUDIO LTD • TEL 01992 442425 • DEALERS 6

amp	IA120	249	integrated • 50W • MM, 5L, 2T • hdph
amp	Quartet	329	121 integrated • 36W • MM, 3L, 2T • hdph • An integrated model that incorporates four monoblocks optimised for bi-wiring, but sound is sandy in the treble.
amp	MF125	515	power amp • 140W • Monoblocks
amp	MF300	595	power amp • 180W • Monoblocks
amp	Class A	599	116 integrated • 60W • MM/MC, 3L, 1T • Lashings of rich and compelling music, trading a hint of lushness for stark accuracy. An unexpected find. Phono optional. REC'D
amp	MA500	1,295	power amp • 280W • Monoblocks
tn	Dynalab FT11	550	FM • Analogue, black finish
tn	Dynalab FT101	825	72 FM • Although fairly expensive given its minimum set of facilities, it's excellent sound provided ample compensation. REC'D
tn	FT101 Etude	1,250	FM • Analogue, black finish

MANA ACOUSTICS • TEL 0181 868 2788 • FAX 0181 429 0118

supp	Mini Table	150	equipment support • Glass shelf
supp	Sound Table	235	equipment support
supp	2 Tier Amp stand	325	equipment support • 2 shelves • Glass shelves, steel frames
supp	Reference Table	350	equipment support
supp	3 Tier Amp Stand	450	equipment support • 3 shelves • Glass shelves, steel frames
supp	4 Tier Amp Stand	500	equipment support • 4 shelves • Glass shelves, steel frames
supp	5 Tier Amp Stand	600	equipment support • 5 shelves • Glass shelves, steel frames
supp	6 Tier Amp Stand	700	equipment support • 6 shelves • Glass shelves, steel frames

MARANTZ HI-FI UK LTD • TEL 01753 680868 • FAX 01753 680428 • DEALERS 2000+

amp	PM-34	150	integrated • 40W • MM, 3L, 2T • hdph • 42,14,28cm • Source direct
amp	PM-44 Mk IIse	200	134 integrated • 40W • MM, 3L, 2T • hdph • 42,14,28cm • Two generations on from the PM-40SE, Marantz's latest £200 contender provides a disappointingly grey view of the music.
amp	PM-43	200	integrated • 55W • MM, 3L, 2T • hdph • 42,14,30cm • Twin speaker sockets
amp	MA-500	250	power amp • 125W • 9,15,45cm • D-bus, monoblocks, bridgable
amp	PM-53	250	integrated • 65W • MM, 3L, 2T • hdph • rem • 42,14,30cm • Remote control
amp	PM-63	300	integrated • 70W • MM, 3L, 2T • hdph • rem • 42,14,30cm • Remote control
amp	PM-700AV	450	125 integrated • A/V • 45W • MM, 5L, 2T • hdph • rem • 42,16,34cm • Sounds just great through front and centre channels but surround sound is very weak.
amp	AV-500	699	preamp • A/V • MM, 7L, 2T • rem • 42,10,34cm • Dolby Pro Logic
amp	SC-22	900	preamp • 4L, 1T • 25,9,22cm • Audiophile micro component
amp	PH-22	1,000	preamp • MC, MM • 25,9,22cm • Phono stepup
amp	MA-22	1,600	power amp • 50W • 23,9,22cm • Audiophile monoblock x2
amp	MA-24	2,400	power amp • 30W • 21,17,36cm • Class-A monoblock x2

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

MARANTZ HI-FI UK LTD • TEL 01753 680868 • FAX 01753 680428 • DEALERS 2000+				
cass	SD-53	200	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,14,30cm • D-bus	
cass	SD-535	250	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,14,32cm • Synchro record	
cass	SD-63	270	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 43,14,30cm • D-bus	
cass	CP-230	400	single • Dolby B • 2 head • DC portable, semi-pro	
cass	SD-635	400	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,9,32cm • Drawer loading	
cass	CD-1010	450	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,8,31cm • Inc CD player module	
cass	CP-430	500	single • Dolby B • 3 head • Portable, dbx NR, anti-roll	
cd	CD-53	200	139 bitstream • electrical out • rem • 43,9,30cm • Looks identical to CD-63, but component costs are cut inside, exposing a slightly ragged but enthusiastic performer.	REC'D
cd	CC-45	250	bitstream • optical out • rem • 44,12,40cm • 5 disc carousel	
cd	CD-63	250	137 bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 42,9,30cm • New technology has enabled Marantz to steal a march on its old CD-52 series and regain the upper hand.	REC'D
cd	CD-1010	300	1 bit • optical out • rem • 42,8,31cm • Slim Series component	
cd	CD-1020	334	1 bit • optical out • rem • 42,8,31cm • Slim Series, motorised cover	
cd	CD-72 Mk II	600	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 42,13,30cm • DAC7	
cd	CD-10	1,200	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 46,14,36cm • Twin DAC-7, heavy build	
cd	CD-16	1,400	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 25,29,13cm • Twin DAC-7	
cd	CD-15	3,000	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 46,14,36cm • Twin Star Mark DAC-7	
cd	CD-23	4,000	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 25,29,13cm • CDM-9/DAC-7 DAC	
rec	SR-73	599	FM, M • A/V • 75W • 30 presets • MM, 3L, 3T • rem • 43,15,38cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
rec	SR-82	899	FM, M • A/V • 75W • 30 presets • MM, 3L, 2T • rem • 43,17,43cm • Dolby Pro Logic, multi-room	
tun	ST-55	150	FM, M, L • 59 presets • 42,10,34cm • D-bus	
tun	ST-72	300	FM, M, L • 59 presets • RDS • 42,10,34cm • D-bus, IF switch, local switch	
MARK LEVINSON • PATH PREMIER • TEL 01494 441736 • FAX 01494 461209				
amp	29	3,450	power amp • 50W	
amp	No 38	3,995	preamp • 6L, 2T • rem • Fully remote, balanced	
amp	27.5	5,399	power amp • 100W	
amp	No 38S	6,495	preamp • 6L, 2T • rem • Special Edition, balanced	
amp	23.5	7,399	power amp • 200W	
amp	20.6	15,790	power amp • 100W • Monoblocks, Class A	
dac	No 36	3,995	multibit • electrical out • 20 bit, FIFO input buffer	
MARTIN-LOGAN • ABSOLUTE SOUNDS • TEL 0181 947 5047 • FAX 0181 879 7962 • DEALERS 20				
spkr	Aerius	2,286	hybrid • 89dB • 23,122,30cm • Two-way	
spkr	Stylos	2,993	hybrid • 2x2b • 88 Ohms • 23,35,28cm • In wall	
spkr	Sequel II	3,277	hybrid • 89dB • 31,160,29cm • Dynamic bass/electrostatic, tw	
spkr	CLS IIz	4,333	electrostatic • 86dB • 62,127,32cm • Full range panel	
spkr	Quest Z	4,998	hybrid • 90dB • 42,160,29cm • Dynamic bass/electrostatic, tw	
spkr	Monolith IIIIP	8,730	hybrid • 89dB • 59,163,28cm • ESL/dynamic, two-way	
spkr	Monolith IIIIX	9,354	hybrid • 89dB • 59,163,26cm • ESL/dynamic, active crossover	
MERIDIAN AUDIO LTD • TEL 01480 434334 • FAX 01480 432948 • DEALERS 98				
amp	501	625	preamp • MM, 4L, T • hdph • 33,9,34cm • MC option, system handset	
amp	555	625	power amp • 60W • 33,9,32cm • Stereo	
amp	562	685	preamp • MM, 8L, T, 6D • 33,9,34cm • Digital main out, MC option	
amp	551	695	integrated • 55W • MM, 4L, T • hdph • rem • 33,9,34cm • MC option	
amp	501V	785	preamp • A/V • MM, 4L, T • hdph • 33,9,34cm • As 501, plus video switching	
amp	562V	895	preamp • A/V • MM, 8L, T, 6D • 33,9,34cm • As 562, plus video switching	
amp	601	2,750	preamp • MM, 4L, T • hdph • rem • DSP tone control, MC option	
cd	506	875	delta sigma • electrical out • optical out • 33,9,34cm • Recently improved sound	
cd	606	1,350	1 bit	
cd	508	1,475	delta sigma • electrical out • optical out • 33,9,34cm	
cdt	200	895	96 transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 32,32,10cm • Broadly comparable and offering a light, fresh and very bubbly sound that is natural, engaging and unfatiguing.	REC'D
cdt	500	1,095	133 transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 32,33,9cm • Used with its recommended 563 DAC, the combination sound disappointingly thin, brash and uncomfortable.	
cdt	602	1,750	120 transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 32,33,10cm • With matching 606 DAC, Meridian's top player is distinctive and elegant; the perfect partner for a cultured system	REC'D
dac	563	750	127 delta sigma • 3 electrical out • optical out • 33,9,34cm • Warmer but no less detailed than the earlier 200-series, the 563 really comes into its own with top-flight transports.	REC'D
diag	CDR	4,500	CD-R • electrical in • optical in • electrical out	
spkr	A500	695	2 driver • 90dB • 100W • 83,20,28cm • Shelf/stand, shielded	
spkr	DSP6000	850	133,28,43cm • Digital active DSP based	
spkr	DSP5000	2,995	225W • 90,21,30cm • Digital active DSP floor stand	
tun	504	625	FM • 30 presets • 33,9,34cm • System handset	
tun	604	1,350	120 FM • 30 presets • Unique digital converter makes most sense in Meridian system context: smooth, sweet sound with fine front end.	REC'D
MICHELL ENGINEERING • TEL 0181 953 0771 • DEALERS 8				
amp	Iso	412	preamp • MM or MC • smallcm • Phono stage	
amp	Argo	715	preamp • 3L, 1T • 33,7,19cm • 2 pairs outputs	
amp	Iso HR	879	preamp • MM or MC • smallcm • Phono stage	
amp	Alecto Stereo	1,150	power amp • 50W • 32,20,36cm	
amp	Argo HR	1,339	preamp • 3L, 1T • 36,8,22cm • 2 pairs outputs	
amp	Alecto Mono	1,989	power amp • 100W • 32,20,36cm	
tt	Mycro	397	manual • 33/45rpm • 46,14,34cm	
tt	Mycro/arm	539	manual • 33/45rpm • 46,14,34cm • Includes Rega RB300 arm	
tt	Gyrodek	765	55 manual • 33/45rpm • 53,19,41cm • Sweet and natural sounding player, well matched with the Rega RB300. Aesthetics and the acres of clear acrylic are very distinctive.	REC'D
tt	Gyrodek/arm	907	manual • 33/45rpm • 53,19,41cm • Includes Rega RB300 arm	
tt	ORBE	1,950	manual • 33/45rpm • 55,29,71cm • Inc QC power supply	
MICHI • GAMEPATH LTD • TEL 01908 317707 • FAX 01908 322704 • DEALERS 18				
amp	RHC-10	795	preamp • 5L • 47,8,34cm • Passive	
amp	RHB-05	995	power amp • 100W • 47,8,36cm	
amp	RHQ-10	995	preamp • MM, MC • 47,8,34cm • Phono equaliser	
amp	RHA-10	995	preamp • 5L • rem • 47,8,34cm • Active	
amp	RHB-10	1,650	power amp • 200W • 47,19,37cm	
tun	RHT-10	895	FM • 16 presets • 47,8,34cm • Remote control	
MICROMEGA • TEL 0181 502 1416 • FAX 0181 502 1438 • DEALERS 104				
amp	Tempo 1	700	integrated • 50W • 6L, 1T • hdph • 43,9,28cm • Optional MM/MC	
amp	Tempo 2	900	integrated • 75W • 6L, 1T • hdph • 43,9,28cm • Optional MM/MC	
amp	Amp	1,250	power amp • 100W • 43,9,28cm	
amp	Tempo P	1,250	preamp • 7L, 1T • hdph • 43,9,28cm • Optional MM/MC	
cd	Stage 1	550	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 43,28,88cm • Upgradable	
cd	Stage 2	700	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 43,28,88cm • Upgradable	
cd	Stage 3	900	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 43,28,88cm • Upgradable	
cd	Trio	6,450	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 34,48,31cm • AES/Toslink digital output	
cdt	Drive 1	700	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 43,28,88cm • Upgradable, AES/EBU out	
cdt	Drive 2	1,000	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 43,28,88cm • Upgradable, AES/EBU out	
cdt	T-Drive	1,200	transport • electrical out • rem • 22,28,88cm • Tray loading, AES/EBU out	
cdt	Duo CD3.1	1,500	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 34,9,31cm • Top loading, AES/EBU out	
cdt	Duo CD2.1	2,750	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 34,9,31cm • Top loading, AES/EBU out	
dac	Microdac	349	113 bitstream • electrical out • optical out • 22,5,15cm • Described as a modest but entertaining performer, achieving its sweetest balance with Arcam's D170.3 transport.	
dac	Duo BS2	650	101 bitstream • 8,28,9cm • Has a tendency to sound light, airy and 'fast' but it can also become a little hard or fatiguing with some digital outputs.	
dac	DAC	700	bitstream • 43,28,88cm • AES/EBU input	
dac	T/DAC	800	bitstream • 22,28,88cm • Four inputs	
dac	Duo Pro 2	1,500	bitstream • 34,48,31cm • AES input	
MISSION ELECTRONICS • TEL 01480 451777 • DEALERS 259				
amp	PSX-R	300	22,8,36cm • Outboard PSU	
amp	Cyrus III	500	140 integrated • 50W • MM, 5L, 1T • hdph • 22,8,36cm • The classic Cyrus II is given a new lease of life with full remote control. Sounds convincing, masterful and musical.	B'BUY
cab	Stranded	20	109 loudspeaker • stranded • copper • This Swedish made cable proved a real fit with our listeners - a slick performer and Best Buy upgrade.	B'BUY
cd	DAD7	900	multibit • electrical out • rem • 22,8,36cm	

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

MISSION ELECTRONICS • TEL 01480 451777 • DEALERS 259			
cd	Disc/Dacmaster	1,900	multibit • electrical out • rem • 22.8,36cm • Two box, inc Dacmaster DAC
dac	DAC5	300 113	bitstream • 7,11,29cm • <i>Another modest DAC, but one capable of a lean but clean and detailed sound that's typical of the DAC7 breed.</i>
spkr	735	100	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 15,26,15cm • Stand mount, shelf, w/brackets
spkr	731	130 141	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 31,17,20cm • <i>Good looking and cleverly conceived high-tech miniature sounds best when driven hard; could have more brio.</i>
spkr	73C	150	2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 16,20,43cm • TV top, shielded
spkr	732	200 141	2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 41,21,31cm • <i>Attractive presentation but a rather dull and thick sounding speaker, and a tad pricey too.</i>
spkr	780SE	270	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 18,30,26cm • Stand mount, boundary siting
spkr	733	300 139	2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 84,21,31cm • <i>Stylish floorstander represents a lot of speaker for the money, and sounds pretty good too.</i>
spkr	751	300 125	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 19,32,27cm • <i>Attractive luxury miniature has great sonic potential, but our review samples have been marred by sample variations.</i>
spkr	734	430	3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 84,21,33cm • Floor standing, boundary
spkr	752	500 138	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 20,84,26cm • <i>Brilliant style, great engineering and build plus a sound quality that can give the 753 a run for its money.</i>
spkr	735	600	3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 106,21,33cm • Floor stand, boundary
spkr	753	700 114	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 21,88,32cm • <i>Georgous presentation and potential for transparency. Floor stander with lots of drivers that give lots of loudness.</i>
tun	Cyrus FM7	400	FM • 29 presets • 22.8,36cm • Remote control bus

MONITOR AUDIO LTD • TEL 01223 242898 • FAX 01223 214532 • DEALERS 45			
spkr	MA301	200	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 27,17,20cm • Gold dome tweeter
spkr	Monitor 1 Gold	200	sealed • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 16,24,16cm • Miniaturestand/shelf mount
spkr	Monitor 7 Gold II	245	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 17,35,17cm • Stand/shelf mount
spkr	MA100G	280	sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 16,24,16cm • Shielded for AV use
spkr	Sub W/200/92	300	8 Ohms • 100W • 48,25,36cm
spkr	MA201	300 135	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 22,41,40cm • <i>Good looking sounds lively and coherent with plenty of power handling, but also a bit shut in and coloured.</i>
spkr	Monitor 9 Gold II	350	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 20,37,21cm • Stand/shelf mount
spkr	MA302	400	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 50,17,20cm • 2 bass units, front port
spkr	MA202	450 139	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 22,89,27cm • <i>Uneven but informative and easy-listening floorstander delivers decent scale from big, vinyl box.</i>
spkr	MA303	500	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 92,17,20cm
spkr	Monitor 14 Gold II	500	3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 20,76,24cm • Floor/shelf standing
spkr	Studio 2	600	2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 27,17,20cm • Shielded for AV use
spkr	MA901	800	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 27,17,20cm • Metal bass cone, wood veneer
spkr	Studio 6	900 118	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 22,35,25cm • <i>Pretty compact has clear and transparent midband but is ultimately lacking in vim, vigour and drive.</i>
spkr	MA902	1,000	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 50,17,20cm • Dual metal cone, wood veneer
spkr	Studio 12	1,000 141	2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 92,17,20cm • <i>A beautiful looking compact floorstander, but sound and content are a bit on the small side for the price.</i>
spkr	MA903	1,300	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 92,17,20cm • Dual metal cone, wood veneer
spkr	Studio 20SE	2,200	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 20,92,26cm • Floor stand, metal cone bass
spkr	Studio 50	4,000	2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 20,104,30cm • Floor stand, metal bass & mid

MORDAUNT-SHORT LTD • TEL 01705 407722 • FAX 01705 400099 • DEALERS 485			
spkr	CS-1 Dialogue	60	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 16,23,13cm • Shielded, Postec protected
spkr	MS05	110 141	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 26,17,18cm • <i>Tiny and hence bass ight, but fine voicing at a competitive price; could well suit the smaller room.</i>
spkr	CS1 Stereo	115	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 16,23,13cm • Shielded, Postec protected
spkr	MS10	140 130	ported • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 19,31,22cm • <i>High tec baby has fine bass/mid integrity but the top end is less appealing.</i>
spkr	HT30	150	ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 25,43,29cm • Shielded, Postec protected
spkr	SW1	150 128	subwoofer • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 24,58,26cm • <i>Pretty finished and inexpensive passive subwoofer is only really useful with sub-miniature speakers</i>
spkr	MS20	190 135	ported • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 22,37,22cm • <i>Sober 'bookshelf' uses hi-tec plastics to deliver a notably good midband at a very sharp price - a fine all round compromise.</i>
spkr	CS-1 Triple	200	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 16,23,13cm • Shielded, Postec protected
spkr	MS30	270	ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 25,43,28cm • Alloy tweeter, MCS woofer
spkr	HT50	275	ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 25,87,33cm • Postec, integrated subwoofer
spkr	MS40	400	ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 23,82,28cm • Alloy tweeter, MCS woofer
spkr	MS50	530 138	ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 25,87,33cm • <i>Big value big box with fine engineering content and a big, laid back sound; lacks charisma.</i>
spkr	Performance 860	1,450	90dB • 6 Ohms • 225W • 86,26,35cm • Time-aligned, ResinRock enc

MOTÉ MARKETING • TEL 01234 741152 • DEALERS 30			
amp	30 Passive	149 109	preamp • 4L,1T • 5,10,35cm • <i>A modular system capable of cracking results. (tested with 30/60 amp)</i>
amp	30 RIAA	199	preamp • MM/MC • 5,10,35cm • Stand alone phono stage
amp	30 Series Power	239	power amp • 30W • 5,10,35cm
amp	30 Active	249	preamp • 4L,1T • 5,10,35cm
amp	30 RIAA 100VA	299	preamp • MM/MC • 5,10,35cm • Stand alone phono stage
amp	30 Integrated	320	integrated • 30W • 8L,T • 8,18,35cm
amp	30 Active 100VA	349	preamp • 4L,1T • 5,10,35cm
amp	30 Mono/40	459	power amp • 40W • 5,10,35cm • 2x monoblocks
amp	30 Stereo/60	549 109	power amp • 60W • 5,15,35cm • <i>A modular system capable of cracking results. The passive preamp and power (tested with 30 Passive).</i>
amp	30 Mono/100	879	power amp • 100W • 5,15,35cm • 2x mono, separate PSU
cab	Leyline Datalink	140 108	digital, electrical • coaxial • 75ohms • copper • <i>A thin, coaxial version of Leyline Black with a warther hard and unforgiving character. Too expensive.</i>
tt	Alamo	175	manual • 33/45rpm • Comes with RB250 arm
tt	Turntable	199	manual • 33/45rpm • Split-plinth design
tt	Kanoot Mk I Arm	249	manual • 33/45rpm • Inc Rega RB250 arm
tt	Kanoot Mk III Arm	299	manual • 33/45rpm • Inc Rega RB300 arm
arm	Arm	95 60	fixed armtube • <i>The ultimate budget arm? Refined, sweet, detailed and natural.</i>
arm	Mk III	146	fixed armtube • Rebadged Rega RB300

MUSICAL FIDELITY LTD • TEL 0181 900 2866 • FAX 0181 900 2983 • DEALERS 145			
amp	E10	299	integrated • 40W • MM,4L,1T • hdhph • 44,10,34cm • Optional phono/DAC modules
amp	A1 Final Edition	399	integrated • 40W • MM/MC,3L,1T • 41,6,25cm • Separate PSU, limited edition
amp	E200	599	preamp • 5L,2T • hdhph • rem • 44,12,35cm • Optional phono/DAC modules
amp	E100	599 140	integrated • 70W • MM,4L,1T • hdhph • rem • 44,12,35cm • <i>A beautifully crafted amp with a vibrantly colourful, almost dramatic</i>
amp	E300	699	power amp • 100W • 44,12,35cm • Mono/stereo switch
amp	F22	999	preamp • 5L,1T • rem • 49,12,33cm • Optional phono/digital boards
amp	FX	1,099	power amp • 90W • 49,12,38cm • Bal/unbalanced in
amp	A1000	1,399	integrated • 50W • MM/MC,3L,1T • 49,13,36cm • Separate PSU
amp	F15	1,899	power amp • 100W • 49,19,38cm • Bal/unbalanced in/hybrid
amp	F18	3,999	power amp • 220W • 49,19,67cm • Bal/unbalanced in/hybrid
cd	E60	299	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,10,34cm
cd	E600	599	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,12,35cm • Balanced XLR output
cd	FCD	1,499	bitstream • 2 electrical out • optical out • rem • 49,12,33cm • XLR balanced out, tube o/p
tun	E50	300	FM • 20 presets • 44,10,34cm
tun	E500	499	FM • 20 presets • 44,12,35cm • AGC/IF switch, remote control
tun	FT	899	FM • 20 presets • 49,12,33cm • Remote control, AGC/IF switch

NAD MARKETING LTD • TEL 0181 343 3240 • FAX 0181 346 4925 • DEALERS 380			
amp	302	189 116	integrated • 25W • MM,3L,2T • hdhph • <i>A spritely and uplifting performance. Sounds loud, but never intrusive or fatiguing.</i>
amp	Monitor 1000	229	preamp • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdhph
amp	304	249 121	integrated • 35W • MM,4L,2T • hdhph • <i>Equally effective with CD and vinyl, this is another successful and entertaining NAD amplifier for your shortlist.</i>
amp	Monitor 1000S	349 124	preamp • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdhph • <i>Sounds a little restrained.</i>
amp	306	349	integrated • 50W • MM,4L,2T • hdhph
amp	Monitor 208	999 124	power amp • 250W • <i>One of the beefiest amplifiers we've ever tested.</i>
cass	602	199 127	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • <i>Minimalist deck for the audiophile market. Unfortunately engineering is minimalist too.</i>
cass	614	270	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,32cm • Play Trim, CAR compression
cd	501	189 139	bitstream • <i>A thoroughly typical frills-free player with a slightly too cautious, even restrained musical outlook.</i>
cd	502	239 119	mash • electrical out • rem • <i>This updated version of the 5425 has traded the spontaneity of its forebear for a more precise, but mechanical style of music.</i>
cd	517	400	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,108,40cm • 5-disc carousel player
spkr	800	149	ported • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 60W • 20,32,24cm • 10 litre enclosure
spkr	802	249	ported • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 80W • 20,40,26cm • 11.5 litre enclosure
rec	701	279	FM.M • 25W • 24 presets • MM,2L,1T • rem
rec	705	349	FM.M • 40W • 39 presets • MM,2L,2T • rem
tt	5120	129	semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • Includes arm

NAIM AUDIO • TEL 01722 332266 • FAX 01722 412034 • DEALERS 70			
amp	Flat-Cap	317	43,56,30cm • Power supply

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

NAIM AUDIO • TEL 01722 332266 • FAX 01722 412034 • DEALERS 70			
amp	NAP90/3	416	power amp • 30W • 43,56,30cm • Latest style. Suits 92
amp	NAC92	435	preamp • 5 (L or T) • 43,56,30cm • Latest style. Suits 90/3
amp	Hi-Cap	649	21,76,30cm • Power supply
amp	NAC72	670	preamp • 2MM/MC, L2T • 21,76,30cm • Upgradable with PSU, MC I/P
amp	NAP140	699	power amp • 45W • 21,76,30cm
amp	NAP180	987	power amp • 60W • 43,76,30cm
amp	NAP135	1,529	power amp • 70W • 43,76,30cm
amp	NAP250	1,529	power amp • 70W • 43,76,30cm
amp	Super-Cap	1,909	43,76,30cm • Power supply
amp	NAC82	1,997	preamp • 6 (L or T) • rem • 43,76,30cm
amp	NAC52	5,006	preamp • 6 (see note) • rem • 43,76,30cm • Optional phono board
cab	NAC05	44	109 loudspeaker • stranded • copper • <i>Described as a 'dinosaur of a cable' by our listening panel, this stiff rod of wire has little application outside a Naim system.</i>
cd	CD3	949	multibit • rem • 43,56,30cm • 1 box
cd	CD1	1,997	multibit • rem • 43,56,30cm • One box
cd	CD5	3,642	multibit • rem • 43,56,30cm • Two box
spkr	S-NAO 3-6	699	21,76,30cm • Active crossover
spkr	S-NAO 2-4	699	21,76,30cm • Active crossover
spkr	IBL Active	776	65W • 25,80,28cm • Boundary, floor standing
spkr	IBL Passive	895	94 86dB • 6 Ohms • 65W • 25,80,28cm • <i>The tiny floorstanding wall mount delivers outstanding dynamics, speed and detail; marred by pronounced upper mid forwardness.</i>
spkr	SBL Active	1,692	75W • 27,89,27cm • Boundary, floor standing
spkr	SBL Passive	1,821	143 88dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 27,89,27cm • <i>Clever multi-box enclosure gives bg scale sound with small box agility. Lively and punchy - smoother but more upfront than before.</i>
spkr	DBL Active	6,991	200W • 65,120,40cm • Boundary, floor standing
spkr	DBL Passive	7,672	92dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 65,120,40cm • Boundary, floor standing
tun	NAT03	549	FM • 43,56,30cm
tun	NAT02	998	FM • 43,56,30cm
tun	NAT01	1,599	50 FM • 43,56,30cm • <i>There may be better sounding tuners in the world, but we have yet to hear one.</i>
arm	ARO	963	changeable armtube • proprietary fit • Unipivot

NAKAMICHI • B&W UK LTD • TEL 01903 750750 • 01903 750694 • DEALERS 70			
amp	IA4s	200	integrated • 30W • 3L,1T • 43,7,32 cm • 'Harmonic Time Alignment'
amp	IA2	600	integrated • 50W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 43,12,36cm • 'Harmonic Time Alignment'
amp	IA1	750	integrated • 80W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 43,12,36cm
cass	DR3	400	123 single • Dolby B, C • 2 head • 43,10,32cm • <i>Refined, exquisitely detailed and solid sounding 'budget' Nakamichi 2-header.</i>
cass	DR2	600	127 single • Dolby B, C • 3 head • 43,10,32cm • <i>Accomplished design with simple features (manual tape select!) but superb sound/serviceability.</i>
cass	DR1	850	117 single • Dolby B, C • 3 head • 43,10,32cm • <i>Typically ideosyncratic Nakamichi with everything. Good azimuth adjustment and dynamic, authoritative sound.</i>
cass	Dragon	2,350	Dolby B, C • 3 head • 45,14,30cm • Auto azimuth correct
cd	MB4s	300	132 multibit • rem • 43,9,27cm • <i>Entry level Music-Bank player that sounds like it's come from a studio control room; plenty of dynamics and detail but little stereo depth.</i>
cd	MB3s	500	multibit • rem • 43,9,38cm • 6+1 Music Bank, 18 x 8 o/s
cd	MB2s	700	multibit • electrical out • rem • 43,9,38cm • 6+1 Music Bank, 18 x 8 o/s
cd	MB1s	900	multibit • electrical out • rem • 43,9,27cm • 6+1 Music Bank, 20 x 8 o/s
digr	10007		Digital Audio Cassette • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • optical out
hdph	SP7	70	open back • 150g • 45 Ohm
tun	ST3s	350	FM • 30 presets • 43,7,32cm

NOTTINGHAM ANALOGUE • TEL 01773 762947 • FAX 01773 533566 • DEALERS 4			
tt	Spacedeck	600	manual • 33,45rpm
tt	Illusion	600	manual • 33/45rpm
tt	HyperSpacedeck	1,200	manual • 33/45rpm
tt	Graphic	1,200	manual • 33/45rpm
tt	Mentor	2,200	manual • 33/45rpm • 75lb alloy or graphite platter
tt	Mentor Ref	4,800	manual • 33/45rpm • 150lb platter, graphite top
cart	Tracer I	98	moving magnet
cart	Tracer II	175	moving magnet
cart	Tracer III	350	moving magnet
cart	Tracer IV	550	moving magnet •
arm	Space	350	changeable armtube • proprietary fit • Optional silver wiring, unipiv
arm	Mentor	750	changeable armtube • proprietary fit • Silver wiring, unipiv
arm	Alien	1,200	changeable armtube • proprietary fit • Graphite tube, unipivot

ONIX ELECTRONICS • TEL 01273 517358			
amp	OA30	300	integrated • 40W • 5L,1T • hdph • 43,77,33cm
amp	OA24	400	preamp • MM/MC,2L,2T • 75,23,37cm • Internally switchable MM/MC
amp	OA401	400	power amp • 50W • 75,23,37cm • With internal supply for OA24
amp	OA21S	430	97 integrated • 50W • MM/MC,3L,1T • 75,23,37cm • <i>Via MM disc, this amplifier comes alive with a fresh and vibrant sound, but its CD input sounds utterly dead by comparison.</i>
amp	OA31	480	integrated • 60W • MM/MC,4L,1T • hdph • 43,77,33cm
amp	OA601	699	power amp • 70W • 75,46,36cm • Regulated PSU
amp	OA801	849	power amp • 190W • 75,46,36cm • 2x monoblocks, massive PSU
cd	CD33	999	bitstream • 43,8,33cm • DAC7
tun	BWD1	420	FM • 75,23,37cm • In-house front end

ONKYO UK • TEL 0181 343 2082 • FAX 0181 346 4925 • DEALERS 120			
amp	A801	200	integrated • 40W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 46,12,33cm
amp	A803	260	142 integrated • 60W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 46,12,33cm • <i>This amplifier certainly looks the part but, sadly, sounds surprisingly lifeless, vague and disinterested in the music at hand.</i>
amp	A-911	350	integrated • 70W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 28,12,33cm • Mini component, 4ohm rating
amp	A850	370	integrated • 60W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 46,15,35cm
cass	TA-RW313	250	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 46,12,31cm
cass	KR-609	350	Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 28,12,31cm • Mini component
cass	TA250	350	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 46,12,31cm
cass	K-W606	370	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 28,12,32cm • Mini component
cass	K-611	430	Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 28,12,32cm • Mini component
cd	DX710	200	1 bit • optical out • rem • 46,11,31cm
cd	DX703	240	1 bit • optical out • rem • 46,11,31cm
cd	C-711	290	1 bit • optical out • rem • 28,8,30cm • Mini component
cd	DX750	350	1 bit • optical out • rem • 46,11,31cm
tun	T-401	160	FM, MW • 40 presets • 46,8,31cm
tun	T430RDS	190	FM, MW • 30 presets • RDS • 46,9,30cm
tun	T-409	230	FM, MW • 30 presets • 28,8,30cm • Mini component
tun	T-450RDS	260	FM, MW • 30 presets • RDS • 46,9,31cm
tun	T-411RDS	280	FM, MW • 30 presets • RDS • 28,8,30cm • Mini component

ORELLE HI-FI • TEL 0181 908 4126 • DEALERS 30			
amp	SA-100	379	integrated • 50W • 6L,1T • 44,7,23cm • DC coupled MOSFET
cd	CD-100	500	multibit • electrical out • rem • 44,10,28cm • DC coupled
cdt	CD10-T	799	transport • electrical out • rem • 44,10,32cm • Isolated PSU, silver wiring
dac	DA-188	399	multibit • 22,7,23cm • DC coupled, optical & coax in
spkr	Orator II	699	ported • 2 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 27,40,30cm • Time aligned, b/wire

ORTOPON UK LTD • TEL 01753 888949 • FAX 01753 889636 • DEALERS 200			
cart	VMS2	10	moving magnet • 5 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • Entry level elliptical cart
cart	OM-5E	16	moving magnet • removable stylus
cart	OMP-5E	17	moving coil • 4 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g
cart	OM Pro S	21	moving magnet • 5 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • Budget disco cartridge
cart	OM10 Super	25	moving magnet • 4 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • Elliptical stylus
cart	OM Night Club S	32	moving magnet • 6 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • Sphencal stylus
cart	510/P	32	85 moving magnet • 3 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • <i>For the price, a good blend of virtues - weight, clarity and neutrality.</i>
cart	OM Night Club E	37	moving magnet • 6 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • Elliptical stylus
cart	Concord Pro S	40	moving magnet • 5 mV • removable stylus • 19g • Pro use, inc headshell
cart	Concord NC S	55	moving magnet • 6 mV • removable stylus • 19g • Pro use, inc headshell

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

ORTOFON UK LTD • TEL 01753 888949 • FAX 01753 889636 • DEALERS 200

cart	520/P	55	67	moving magnet • 3 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • <i>Very sensitive to load capacitance, this new Ortofon maintains the company tradition for a lively, effervescent sound quality.</i> REC'D
cart	OM20 Super	60		moving magnet • 4 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g
cart	MC1 Turbo	60		moving coil • 3.3 mV • removable stylus • 4.1g
cart	Concord NC E	60		moving magnet • 6 mV • removable stylus • 19g • Spherical version of Concord
cart	OM30 Super	80		moving magnet • 4 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • Fine line stylus
cart	MC10 Super	85	48	moving coil • 0.3 mV • fixed stylus • 7.0g • <i>'What a delightfully sweet-sounding cartridge this is....' we said.</i> B'BUY
cart	530/P	85		moving magnet • 3 mV • removable stylus • 6.0g • T4P fit
cart	MC3 Turbo	110	103	moving coil • 3.3 mV • fixed stylus • 4.1g • <i>Not terribly subtle, but obviously doesn't aim to be. The 3 Turbo is bright, cheerful and bouncy - take it as it comes.</i> REC'D
cart	MC15 Super II	110	103	moving coil • 0.35 mV • fixed stylus • 7.0g • <i>A good all-rounder, with outstanding performance in detail retrieval, even if it can be very slightly bright and clos up.</i> B'BUY
cart	540/P	110		moving magnet • 3 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g
cart	MC25E	160		moving coil • 0.5 mV • fixed stylus • 10.5g • High output, elliptical stylus
cart	MC25FL	210		moving coil • 0.5 mV • fixed stylus • 10.5g • High output, Fine Line stylus
cart	MC10 Supreme	250		moving coil • 0.5 mV • fixed stylus • 10.7g • High output MC
cart	MC20 Supreme	350		moving coil • 0.5 mV • fixed stylus • 10.7g • High-output elliptical MC
cart	MC30 Supreme	450		moving coil • 0.5 mV • fixed stylus • 10.7g • High output
cart	MC2000II	650		moving coil • 0.12 mV • fixed stylus • 9.6g
cart	MC3000II	950	84	moving coil • 0.12 mV • fixed stylus • 9.5g • <i>Low levels of body resonance are a real eye-opener. Nothing to criticise elsewhere, one of the very best.</i> REC'D
cart	MC5000	1,500	91	moving coil • 0.12 mV • fixed stylus • 9.5g • <i>Review sample could not be fully run-in, limited tracking ability, bright and forward sound, though imaging is excellent.</i>
cart	MC7500	2,000		moving coil • 0.13 mV • fixed stylus • 11g • 75th Anniversary model

PHILIPS • TEL 0181 689 2166 • DEALERS 5000+

amp	FA930	200		integrated • 65W • MM,2L,3T • hdph • rem • 44,14,30cm
cd	CD710	120		multibit • rem • 16 bit continuous technology
cd	CD740	130	139	multibit • electrical out • rem • <i>One of several Philips players using a hybrid of DAC technologies. Still sounds insufferably boring, however.</i>
cd	CD720	130		multibit • rem • 16 bit Continuous Calibration
cd	CDC745	199		bitstream • electrical out • rem • Multi-disc tray
cd	CD750	199	137	bitstream • electrical out • rem • <i>The costliest model in Philips range and the last to use its BS DAC lacks a sense of integration and stereo focus.</i>
digr	DCC300	179		Digital Compact Cassette • electrical in • 36,11,30cm
digr	DCC600	199	123	Digital Compact Cassette • electrical in • 44,12,30cm • <i>Simplified circuit and mechanism, but the Philips badly needs a DA converter transplant.</i>
digr	DCC951	300		Digital Compact Cassette • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • multibit • Turbodrve mech, 18 bit
spkr	Legend FB720	200	122	ported • 80dB • 7 Ohms • 75W • 21.37,31cm • <i>Liveliness, coherence and fine information retrieval justifies the odd looking moulded baffle construction.</i> B'BUY
spkr	DSS930	1,300		active • 75 Ohms • 22.58,33cm • Active digital loudspeaker
rec	FR940	450		FM, M.L. • A/V • 100W • 30 presets • MM,4L,4T • rem • 44,14,30cm • Dolby Pro Logic
tun	FT930	160		FM, M.L. • 40 presets • RDS • 44,11,30cm

PINK TRIANGLE PROJECTS • TEL 0171 703 5498 • DEALERS 47

cdt	Cardinal	795	144	transport • 46.8,36cm • <i>Sound quality is warm and communicative, but over-polished compared to PT Ordinal (tested with DaCapo and DC PSU).</i>
dac	Ordinal	837	136	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • 23.8,35cm • <i>The cheapest dual-differential DAC7 converter available. Offers interchangeable digital filters and top-flight sound quality.</i> B'BUY
dac	DaCapo	1,536	144	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • 46.8,35cm • <i>With Cardinal & DC PSU, preferred with its 22-bit option. Sounds warm and communicative, but over-polished</i>
dac	DC	1,590		46.8,35cm • Massive battery PSU for DaCapo
spkr	Ventrical	896		hybrid • 86dB • 11 Ohms • 100W • 15.80,32cm • Ribbon hybrid
tt	Export	948	91	manual • 33/45rpm • 46,15,37cm • <i>The PT100 with built-in PS. Retains features of great transparency and neutrality. Review sample had highish motor noise.</i> REC'D
tt	Anniversary	1,797	91	manual • 33/45rpm • 45,15,37cm • <i>Possibly the most detailed, clear and neutral sounding deck around. Likeness to master tape is uncanny.</i> REC'D
tt	Anni/DC PSU	2,173		manual • 33/45rpm • 45,15,37cm • Battery PSU version of above

PIONEER HIGH FIDELITY (GB) LTD • TEL 01753 789564 • FAX 01753 789536 • DEALERS 500

amp	A-103	130		integrated • 30W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 42,11,31cm
amp	A-203	150		integrated • 45W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 42,11,31cm
amp	A-303R	200	134	integrated • 45W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 42,13,36cm • <i>A surprisingly fresh and uncomplicated sound that bests much of its audiophile competition.</i> REC'D
amp	A-300X	230	116	integrated • 40W • MM,3L,2T • 42,13,36cm • <i>This revamped version of the A300 sounds more confident via CD than MM, yet our panel were still left unmoved.</i>
amp	A-400	280	92	integrated • 60W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • 42,13,36cm • <i>Pioneer's design concept snaps into focus with music that seems to bubble with musical detail. A budget benchmark.</i> B'BUY
amp	A-400X	300	138	integrated • 50W • MM/MC,4,2 • hdph • 42,13,36cm • <i>Now firmly in production, this erstwhile Best Buy was totally unchanged but less compelling on audition.</i> REC'D
amp	A-503R	300	138	integrated • 70W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 42,13,36cm • <i>At it's best via MM disc, the dull and claustrophobic sound of this remote controlled amp is otherwise deeply uninspiring.</i>
amp	A-602	350		integrated • 80W • MM/MC,3L,3T • hdph • 42,17,44cm
amp	VSA-701S	500		integrated • A/V • 55W • MM,2L,2T,5V • hdph • rem • 42,17,42cm • Dolby Pro Logic
amp	VSA-D802S	600	125	integrated • A/V • 55W • MM,2L,2T,5V • hdph • rem • 42,17,42cm • <i>The disappointingly grey sound lacks attack and confidence, undermining the tension of movie soundstage.</i>
cass	CT-5330	170		single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,13,28cm • Audio tape setup, FLEX
cass	CT-W503R	200		twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,13,25cm • Auto NR, FLEX
cass	CT-5430S	200	136	single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,13,28cm • <i>Against the odds - a 2-head Dolby S deck that works. Well set up and fully equipped.</i> B'BUY
cass	CT-W603RS	230		twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,13,25cm • Auto tape setup, FLEX, Dolby S
cass	CT-W803RS	300		twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,13,25cm • Twin record, mic i/p
cass	CT-5630S	300	140	single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • 42,13,38cm • <i>3 heads and Dolby S feature in an excellent deck that is underbiased with Type IV tapes.</i> REC'D
cass	CT-M601R	380		Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,14,38cm • Six tape record/play, r/cntrl
cass	CT-S830S	500		single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • 42,14,38cm • Slant Z transport mech
cass	CT-95	1,000		single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,15,38cm • Copper plated chassis
cd	PD-77	100		1 bit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44,13,33cm • Satin gold finish
cd	PD-103	140		1 bit • 42,11,28cm • Display off
cd	PD-203	160		1 bit • rem • 42,11,28cm • As 103, variable output & remo
cd	PD-5503	200	139	1 bit • rem • 42,11,29cm • <i>The cheapest Legato Link player yet, but another that sounds unpredictable and generally hard work.</i>
cd	PD-M603	250		1 bit • rem • 42,11,30cm • Six disc
cd	PD-S703	300	137	1 bit • optical out • rem • 42,13,27cm • <i>Legato Link and bitstream are combined in a cheaper IC though the player sounds as manipulative and intriguing as ever.</i> REC'D
cd	PD-M703	300		1 bit • rem • 42,13,30cm • Six disc, DSP soundfield cntrl
cd	PD-DM802	450		1 bit • rem • 42,14,31cm • Dual magazine 12-disc
cd	PD-S901	499		1 bit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 42,13,33cm • SPM, Legato Link, Twin DAC
cd	PD-TM3	500		1 bit • rem • 42,18,35cm • Triple magazine, 18-disc
cd	PD-F100	600		1 bit • rem • 42,19,40cm • 100 disc, Legato Link
cd	PD-95	2,500		1 bit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44,16,34cm • Balanced out, Legato, SPM
digr	D-05	800		Digital Audio Cassette • 96kHz sampling
digr	D-07	1,150		Digital Audio Cassette • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • optical out • 44,14,38cm • 96kHz record, Legato Link
hdph	SE-5	16		open back • 60g • 30 Ohm • 2m OFC cable
hdph	SE-15	20		open back • 65g • 30 Ohm • 2m OFC cable
hdph	SE-32	23		open back • 94g • 40 Ohm • 2.5 OFC cable
hdph	SE-52	25		open back • 104g • 40 Ohm • 2.5 OFC cable
hdph	SE-15V	30		open back • 65g • 30 Ohm • 5m OFC cable
hdph	SE-330D	35		sealed • 165g • 35 Ohm • 3m cable, bass boost duct
hdph	SE-400D	37	133	sealed • 185g • 35 Ohm • <i>Acceptable, if unexciting all-rounder, this supra-aural phone has good long-term comfort levels.</i> REC'D
hdph	SE-500D	48		sealed • 175g • 35 Ohm • 3m cable, dual bass horn
hdph	SE-700D	60		sealed • 180g • 35 Ohm • 3m cable, dual bass horn
spkr	CS-3030	120		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 27,54,24cm • Bookshelf
spkr	CS-5030	170		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 140W • 31,53,25cm • Bookshelf
spkr	CS-7030	230		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 190W • 35,70,28cm • Bookshelf
spkr	S-4UK	250	139	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 80W • 21.37,28cm • <i>Latest version now balances pretty well, with a coherent if bass light sound, dull packaging.</i> REC'D
spkr	S-60	270		2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 80W • 22,47,28cm • Bookshelf
spkr	CS-9030	280		ported • 3 driver • 92dB • 8 Ohms • 220W • 39,75,29cm • Bookshelf
spkr	S-80	370		2 driver • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 80W • 23,56,28cm • Bookshelf
spkr	S-200	600		2 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 120W • 26,90,34cm • Biwire, floor standing
spkr	S-400	950		2 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 160W • 27,96,38cm • Biwire, floor stand, shielded
rec	SX-203RDS	200		FM, M • 35W • 30 presets • MM,2L,2T • rem • 42,14,29cm • RDS tuner
rec	SX-303RDS	250		FM, M • 50W • 30 presets • MM,2L,2T • rem • 42,14,34cm • RDS tuner
rec	VX-452	400		FM, M • A/V • 50W • 30 presets • MM,2L,2T,2V • rem • 42,14,35cm • Dolby Pro-Logic
tun	F-203RDS	130		FM, M.L. • 30 presets • RDS • 42,8,29cm • RDS at very budget price
tun	F-303RDS	180		FM, M • 40 presets • RDS • 42,8,29cm • RDS with FON
tun	F-502RDS	250		FM, M • 40 presets • RDS • 42,9,34cm • 2 ariel inputs
tt	PL-225	120		semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 42,10,36cm • Belt drive, fitted cartridge
tt	PL-335	150		auto • 33/45rpm • 42,10,36cm • Belt drive, fitted cartridge

POLK AUDIO • TEL 01727 827311 • FAX 01727 827284 • DEALERS 104

spkr	RT3	190		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 19,32,22cm • Shielded stand/shelf
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PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

POLK AUDIO • TEL 01727 827311 • FAX 01727 827284 • DEALERS 104			
spkr	M3 II	220	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 17,29,21cm • Multi-app, including wall brac
spkr	R15	250	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 22,39,25cm • Shielded stand/shelf
spkr	R17	300	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 24,48,29cm • Shielded stand/shelf
spkr	M5	300	ported • 2 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 21,33,23cm • Multi-app, inc brackets
spkr	R18	380	ported • 2 driver • 80dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 19,80,26cm • Shielded floorstander
spkr	R110	440	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 22,86,26cm • Shielded floorstander
spkr	LS f/x Surround	449	2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 22,28,16cm • AV surround & utility speaker
spkr	R112	580	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 19,93,32cm • Shielded floorstander
spkr	R116	680	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 22,102,39cm • Shielded floorstander
spkr	R116	680	ported • 3 driver • 80B • 90 Ohms • 250W • 22,102,39cm • Shielded floorstander
spkr	LS50	800	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 27,83,29cm • Plenty of power and beautiful overall balance from a good looking compact floorstander.
spkr	LS70	1,200	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 31,94,37cm • Lots of loudness potential, but in-room balance has far too much midbass boom, mid and treble are very laid back.
spkr	LS90	1,700	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 31,94,37cm • Floorstanding, biampable
s/sub	M Solution	999	sub, 4 sats • 80hms • 89dB • 28,50,36cm
s/sub	RM7000	999	80hms • 89dB • 28,50,36cm • su, 2 x sat, 1 x centre
a/sub	PSW100	499	1-box sterep • 65 W • 28,50,36cm

PRO-JECT • ORTOFON UK LTD • TEL 01753 888949 • FAX 01753 889636 • DEALERS 70			
amp	Model 7	259	142 integrated • 40W • MM.3L.2T • A minimalist amplifier brimming with good intent, but too quirky for its performance to be reliably predicted. Either MM or MC.
tt	0.5	145	semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 42, 11, 3cm • With Ortofon OMS cartridge
tt	1	185	manual • 33/45rpm • 42, 11, 3cm • With Ortofon 510 cartridge
tt	1 (E)	209	semi arm lift • 33,45rpm • 42,11,32cm • Semi-auto version of Pro-ject
tt	2	249	manual • 33/45rpm • 46, 12, 3cm • Metal/glass platter, clamp
tt	2/Ortofon	275	manual • 33/45rpm • 46, 12, 3cm • With Ortofon MC1 cartridge
tt	6	379	manual • 33/45rpm • 46, 17, 3cm • Suspended turntable
tt	6/Ortofon	435	manual • 33/45rpm • 46, 17, 3cm • As above, with Ortofon MC15
tt	6/Sumiko	699	manual • 33/45rpm • 46,17,3cm • With Sumiko arm

PROAC • DNA MARKETING • TEL 01403 753180 • FAX 01403 753181 • DEALERS 19			
spkr	Tablet 3	479	87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 17,28,23cm • Stand mount
spkr	Studio 100	699	87dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 20,40,25cm • Stand mount
spkr	Tablette 3 Sig	779	87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 16,28,23cm • Stand mount
spkr	Response One S	999	87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 18,30,23cm
spkr	Response Two	1,634	88dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 23,45,28cm
spkr	Studio 200	1,850	89dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 23,115,28cm • Floor standing

QED AUDIO PRODUCTS LTD • TEL 01276 451166 • FAX 01276 452211 • DEALERS 150+			
amp	Vector One	199	preamp • 4L,1T
amp	Vector Reference	299	preamp • 4L,1T
cab	42 Strand	1	loudspeaker • stranded • med • low • copper • PVC outer, figure-of-8
cab	Fl-4	2	loudspeaker • stranded • med • low • copper • Flat construction, poly outer
cab	79 Strand	2	loudspeaker • stranded • low • low • copper • PVC outer, fig-of-8
cab	Qudos	2	loudspeaker • stranded • low • low • OFHC copper • Polyethylene cover
cab	Ri-4	3	loudspeaker • stranded • med • low • copper • 4-core, round construction
cab	Digitflex	19	108 digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • copper • A top performance, low-loss 75ohm coax with a very open, almost liquid quality that allows its music to ease naturally across.
cab	P2 Gold	22	interconnect • Symmetrical • stranded • OFHC copper
cab	Incon P1 Gold	23	interconnect • Symmetrical • stranded • OFHC copper
cab	Optiflex	25	digital, optical • plastic fibre
cab	Incon P2 Seald	25	interconnect • coaxial • stranded • OFHC copper
cab	Incon P1 Seald	26	interconnect • Symmetrical • coaxial • stranded • OFHC copper
cab	Qudos Terminated	33	loudspeaker • stranded • low • low • OFHC copper • Various lengths, terminated
cab	Bi-wire 79 strand	35	109 loudspeaker • stranded • copper • Reminiscent of curtain track, this bi-wire version of 79-strand is unfortunately saddled with a 'loud, hard and untidy' balance.
dac	Positron	89	Upgrade PSU for Digit
dac	Digit Plus	139	113 bitstream • electrical out • Bearing in mind its expensive but very forgiving performance, the Digit is almost embarrassingly cheap.
dac	Digit Reference	299	136 bitstream • No great advance on the basic QED dDigit yet its enthusiastic sound is more than competitive at the price.

QUAD ELECTROACOUSTICS LTD • TEL 01480 52561 • FAX 01480 413403 • DEALERS 130			
amp	306	350	power amp • 50W • 33,7,21cm • Stereo power amp
amp	34	398	44 preamp • MM.2L.T • 33,7,21cm • Well built and durable preamp, with good filtering and above average tone controls, but was found lacking in sound quality (viz. detail/dynamics)
amp	77	595	integrated • 50W • 2L.T • 33,6,30cm • System remote £279
amp	606	690	124 power amp • 140W • 33,14,24cm • Amplifier with classic lineage but compromised by an equally dated, soft and undynamic sound (tested with 66).
amp	66	863	124 preamp • MM.4L.2T • rem • 33,8,26cm • Amplifier with classic lineage but compromised by an equally dated, soft and undynamic sound (tested with 606).
cd	CD67	825	124 delta sigma • electrical out • rem • 33,8,26cm • Deceptively sleek in appearance but with a powerful, fluid and captivating sound reminiscent of Meridian's 206.
cd	ESL-63	2,860	60 electrostatic • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 66,93,27cm • This classic electrostatic may not be punchy in the bass, but has strengths some can't live without.
tun	FM4	434	50 FM • 7 presets • 33,7,21cm • Fine sound, excellent ease of use, good build and finish and a more than satisfactory technical performance.
tun	FM66	532	120 FM • 19 presets • 33,8,26cm • Very pretty and compact but technically unadventurous. Sound is smooth, but only makes sense in Quad system context.

REGA RESEARCH LTD • TEL 01702 333071 • FAX 01702 432427 • DEALERS 54			
amp	Brio	229	integrated • 30W • MM.3L.1T • 43,7,15cm
amp	Elex	398	116 integrated • 50W • MM.3L.1T • 43,7,25cm • Minimalist amplifier that sounds too forward, hard and unforgiving for its own goo. Shows plenty of promise, however.
amp	Elicit	730	integrated • 70W • MM.MC.3L.1T • 43,7,25cm • Full dual mono
spkr	Kyte	198	114 2 driver • 87dBdB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 19,31,19cm • Has splendid timing and coherence, sounds very explicit and informative, if a bit bright and short of grunt.
spkr	EL8	298	122 2 driver • 8 Ohms • 17,12,20cm • Kyle drivers in compact floorstander gives more bass but a shade less coherence; good for small rooms ad budget systems.
spkr	ELA Mk II	498	2 driver • 8 Ohms • 30,80,20cm • Floor stand
spkr	XEL	1,040	132 2 driver • 89dBdB • 6 Ohms • 40W • 20,82,30cm • Looks good, measures well and sounds great: balance is bright but even, with delightful bass to mid coherence and timing.
tt	Planar 78	198	manual • 78rpm • 45,13,37cm • As Rega Planar 2, 78 only
tt	Planar 2	198	48 manual • 33/45rpm • 45,13,37cm • A remarkable product at the price, surprisingly articulate ad confident.
tt	Planar 3	260	48 manual • 33/45rpm • 45,13,37cm • A long time leader in its category, the '3 (with excellent RB300 arm) sounded nicely musical in a balanced and coherent manner.
cart	Bias	34	67 moving magnet • removable stylus • 4.1g • Difficult to mount in some arms due to its shallow hull, the Bias offers a gentle, refined sound.
cart	RB78	34	moving magnet • 4.0g • for 78rpm records
cart	Super Bias	52	moving magnet • 4.1g
cart	Elys	74	67 moving magnet • removable stylus • 4.7g • Clearly superior to the Bias, despite their common heritage, the Elys is both more detailed, accurate and musically convincing.
arm	RB250	95	fixed armtube • 237mm • Scaled down RB300
arm	RB300	139	60 fixed armtube • 237mm • Despite its modest price it sets exceptional standards and could be used on many high end turntables.

REVOLVER • RAM UK LTD • TEL 0161 973 0505 • FAX 0161 905 1965			
spkr	Beretta	100	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 80W • 30,19,22cm • Bookshelf/stand mount
spkr	Colt	149	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 30,19,22cm • Bookshelf/stand mount
spkr	Purdey	249	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 120W • 75,19,22cm • Floor stand, with plinth

ROGERS • SWISSTONE ELECTRONICS LTD • TEL 0181 640 2172 • DEALERS 100+			
spkr	LS1	199	2 driver • 6 Ohms • 85W • 20,20,30cm • Stand required
spkr	LS2a/2	250	106 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,36,21cm • Balance is a bit warm and rich, but a delightful mid to treble coherence and transparency, and more wellie than Mk I.
spkr	LS4a/2	330	110 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 25,65,45cm • Civilised but a tad lazy, this large bookshelf model hasn't quite the timing or agility to be particularly engrossing.
spkr	AB1 Subwoofer	499	1 driver • 8 Ohms • 50W • 57,19,16cm • Passive subwoofer
spkr	Studio 3	499	118 2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 45W • 19,30,16cm • Pricely LS3/5A derived wall mount sub miniature is excitingly coherent if a bit lightweight, no real loudness capabilities.
spkr	P20	599	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 26,42,30cm • Stand mount
spkr	LS3/5A	699	sealed • 2 driver • 88dB • 11 Ohms • 30W • 31,19,16cm • (Tested with AB1 sub). Clever AB1 stand/sub helps the 3/5A monitor give its best shot. Loudness is limited but balance lovely.
spkr	Studio 5	699	138 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 25,25,48cm • Luxury finish bookshelf size model has genuine monitoring capabilities, but can sound a little thin and unromantic.
spkr	P22	832	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 26,85,30cm • Floor stand, sloping baffle
spkr	Studio 7	899	122 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 30,63,30cm • Latest variatio on classic BBC-monitor theme looks old fashioned but has beautifully voiced, laid back sound.
spkr	P24a	1,268	3 driver • 86dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 25,104,35cm • Internal bass, floor standing
spkr	LS5/9	1,531	2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 28,46,27cm • BBC monitor

ROKSAN LTD • TEL 01895 436384 • FAX 01895 436385 • DEALERS 35			
amp	ROK-L2.5	995	preamp • 4L,1T • 43,8,33cm • Revised
amp	ROK-S1.5	1,495	power amp • 70W
amp	ROK-L1.5	2,250	preamp • 4L,1T • 43,8,33cm

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

ROKSAN LTD • TEL 01895 436384 • FAX 01895 436385 • DEALERS 35

amp	ROK-M1.5	4,500	power amp • 160W • 48.11.34 • Pair monoblocks	
cd	ATT-DP2P MkII	1,495	delta sigma • electrical out • rem • 46.12.35cm • Player, four level isolation	
cdt	ATT-DP2 MkII	1,295	transport • electrical out • rem • 46.12.35cm • AT&T optical, AES/EBU optional	
dac	ATT-DAC2	549	delta sigma • 22,10.33cm • DAC 4 inputs, optional AT&T	
spkr	Ojan 3 Black	795	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 28.76.46cm • <i>Squat and stylish, with unusual tweeter decoupling, great bass extension and flat but somewhat uneven balance.</i>	REC'D
spkr	Ojan 3 Rosew'd	995	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 28.74.46cm	
spkr	2	1,195	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 28.76.48cm • As Ojan 3, improved drivers	
spkr	Ojan 3X Rosew'd	1,395	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 28.74.46cm • As Ojan 3, improved drivers	
tt	Radius	595	manual • 33/45rpm • 45.12.35cm • Motor unit	
tt	Radius/Tabriz	795	manual • 33/45rpm • 45.12.36cm • As above, with Roksan arm	
tt	Radius/Tabriz zi	895	manual • 33/45rpm • 45.12.35cm • <i>Design is subtle, refined and easy on the eye. Musically it offers exceptional performance with a minimum of fuss.</i>	REC'D
tt	TMS	2,475	manual • 33/45rpm • 45.12.35cm • Suede black	
tt	TMS	2,750	manual • 33/45rpm • 45.12.35cm • Black lacquer	
cart	Corus Black	130	moving magnet • 6.5 mV • removable stylus • <i>Recognisably related to the Corus Blue, but more civilised and smoother.</i>	REC'D
cart	Shiraz	975	moving coil • 0.2 mV • fixed stylus • 3-pt generator mount, no glues	
arm	Tabriz	275	fixed armtube • proprietary fit • 240mm • <i>Targetted at the Xerxes, this is a good alternative to the Rega arm in many cases - a touch bright though.</i>	REC'D
arm	Tabriz Zi	396	fixed armtube • proprietary fit • 240mm • 'Intelligent' counterweight	
arm	Artemiz	895	fixed armtube • proprietary fit • 240mm • Flagship arm, new style	

ROTEL • GAMEPATH LTD • TEL 01908 317707 • FAX 01908 322704 • DEALERS 232

amp	RC970BX MkII	175	preamp • 3L.2T • hdph • 44.8.29cm	
amp	RB970BX MkII	225	power amp • 60W • 44.8.29cm • New upgrade	
amp	RA935BX MkII	250	integrated • 50W • 3L.2T • hdph • 44.10.35cm • Separate listen/rec selectors	
amp	RA970BX	300	integrated • 60W • 4L.2T • hdph • 44.7.35cm • <i>Sounds lively, fresh and perky with plenty of power. Not so clever with complex recordings, however.</i>	REC'D
amp	RC980BX	350	preamp • MM/MC.3L.2T • hdph • 44.7.33cm • <i>Plenty of watts per pound, sound is expansive but lacks a sense of poise, cof control and fine detail - a disappointment (tested with RB980BX).</i>	
amp	RB980BX	450	power amp • 120W • 44.12.33cm • <i>Plenty of watts per pound, sound is expansive but lacks a sense of poise, cof control and fine detail - a disappointment (tested with RC980BX).</i>	
amp	RC990BX	500	preamp • MM/MC.2L.2T • hdph • rem • 44.7.33cm	
amp	RB990BX	750	power amp • 200W • 44.12.38cm	
cd	RCD-930AX	200	1 bit • rem • 44.9.29cm	
cd	RCD-940BX	250	multibit • rem • 44.10.32cm • <i>A sea change in transport and DAC technology lies behind the most untidy-sounding and irritating player to emerge from Rotel.</i>	
cd	RCD-965BX	300	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44.10.32cm • <i>An exceptionally refined bitstreamer: transparent, exquisitely detailed and powerfully emotive. A landmark player.</i>	B'BUY
cd	RCD-970BX	375	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44.8.30cm	
cd	RCD-965BX D	375	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44.10.32cm • Discrete output	
cd	RCD-965BX LED	425	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44.10.32cm • Discrete & slit foil caps	
tun	RT-950BX	220	FM.M.L • 20 presets • 44.8.24cm	
tun	RT-990BX	500	FM • 16 presets • 44.8.29cm • Remote control	

ROYD LOUDSPEAKERS CO LTD • TEL 01952 290700 • FAX 01952 290190 • DEALERS 65

spkr	The Herald	198	ported • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 31.20.18cm • Stand mount	
spkr	Minstrel	259	ported • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 69.18.12cm • <i>Imaginatively packaged super-slimline floorstander. Not much wellie or loudness but fine coherence and timing, a bit bright.</i>	B'BUY
spkr	Merlin	298	ported • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 31.20.18cm • Veneered	
spkr	Doublet	449	ported • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 120W • 91.18.17cm	
spkr	The Sorcerer	595	ported • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 31.20.18cm • Front port, near field monitor	
spkr	Abbot	665	ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 81.20.30cm • <i>Engaging and dramatic dynamics and fine transient coherence are hampered by a rather colour mid-forward balance.</i>	
spkr	The Prior	978	ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 96.37.26cm • Floor standing, free space	

RUARK • TEL 01268 728890

spkr	Swordsman+II	329	sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 20.38.27cm • Near wall/stand mount	
spkr	Sabre II	449	sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23.37.27cm • Wall/free, on stands	
spkr	Templar	499	sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 19.70.27cm • <i>Compact floorstander with striking baffle has decent bass/mid but dull treble; could tame over-bright system.</i>	
spkr	Talisman II	749	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23.84.32cm • <i>Less ideologically committed than some compact floorstanding rivals, its strength lies in fine all-round coherence.</i>	REC'D
spkr	Broadsword II	899	sealed • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 29.43.38cm • Free space, stand mount	
spkr	Paladin	1,099	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 88.29.38cm • Floor standing	
spkr	Crusader II	1,599	ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 24.92.32cm • Free space, floor standing	
spkr	Equinox	1,849	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 25.88.34cm • Free space, stands included	
spkr	Accolade	2,699	ported • 3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 29.100.38cm • Free space, floor standing	

SANSUI UK • TEL 01204 700139

amp	AU-X117	170	integrated • 30W • MM.3L.1T • hdph	
amp	AU-X3172	275	integrated • 40W • MM.3L.1T • hdph	
amp	AU-X417R	280	integrated • 45W • MM.3L.2T • hdph • <i>Unusually clean and precise with more subtlety than is usually attributed to remote control amps.</i>	B'BUY
amp	AU-X517R	450	integrated • 60W • MM/MC.3L.2T • hdph • rem	
amp	AU-Alpha 607	1,300	integrated • 90W • MM/MC.2L.1T • hdph • rem	
amp	AU-Alpha707	1,500	integrated • 90W • MM/MC.4L3T • hdph • rem • Built in BS DAC	
cass	D-X117HX	220	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head	
cd	CD-270	180	bitstream	
cd	CD-117K II	200	multibit	
cd	CD-X217i	200	multibit • electrical out	
cd	CD-X317	250	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • <i>Not in the same class as older CD-X311 Mk II. Same technology but the sound is neither as responsive nor as engaging.</i>	
cd	CD-X617	350	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • <i>This 'double-DAC' version of the CD-X317 is more impressive, slightly light and tizzy with pop, but dull with classical CDs.</i>	
spkr	SP-X111K	125	89dB • 6 Ohms • 50W • 18.30.20cm	
rec	RZ790	250	FM.M • 30W • 30 presets • MM.2L.2T • rem	
rec	RZ-3500 II	370	FM.M • 30W • 30 presets • MM.2L.2T • rem	
tun	TU-X317	170	FM.M • 20 presets	
tun	TU-X519	220	FM.M • 30 presets	

SD ACOUSTICS • TEL 0181 399 6308 • FAX 0181 399 6308

spkr	SD3R	399	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 20.38.30cm • <i>Port firmly blocked, this has the agility and charm of a quality miniature, with good bass extension and low sensitivity.</i>	REC'D
spkr	SD5	1,235	ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 20.110.30cm • <i>Bass and coherence suspect but forward midband is delightfully smooth; classy drivers include ribbon tweeter.</i>	REC'D
spkr	SD1E	2,695	ported • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 30.125.30cm • <i>A large scale, airy and unusually detailed system with excellent dynamics. A warmer balance than original model.</i>	REC'D

SENNHEISER UK LTD • TEL 01628 850811 • FAX 01628 850958

hdph	HD16	10	open back • 45g • 32 Ohm • Mini, 1.2m lead, dual plug	
hdph	HD36	13	open back • 62g • 32 Ohm • Mini, 1.2m lead, dual plug	
hdph	HD56	15	open back • 72g • 32 Ohm • Mini, 1.2m lead, dual plug	
hdph	Vegas	28	open back • 118g • 32 Ohm • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm	
hdph	Manhattan	28	open back • 118g • 32 Ohm • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm	
hdph	HD60TV	38	open back • 118g • 32 Ohm • 6.8m lead (inc vol control)	
hdph	HD440 II	38	open back • 125g • 60 Ohm • <i>Still the one by which others at the price are measured, though now slightly leaden sounding, with a cold treble</i>	B'BUY
hdph	HD414 Classic	50	open back • Limited edition HD414	
hdph	HD455	50	open back • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm	
hdph	HD465	65	open back • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm	
hdph	HD475	75	open back • Single sided cable	
hdph	HD25 SP	85	sealed • 115g • 85 Ohm • Monitoring headphone	
hdph	HD535	100	open back • 255g • 150 Ohm • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm	
hdph	HD545 Reference	120	open back • 255g • 150 Ohm • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm	
hdph	HD565 Ovation	140	open back • 255g • 150 Ohm • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm	
hdph	HD265 Linear	140	sealed • 260g • 150 Ohm • Closed back	
hdph	IS450	150	160g • Infra-red cordless • hi-fi	
hdph	HD25	160	sealed • 140g • 70 Ohm • Professional, closed back	
hdph	IS550	180	170g • Infra-red cordless	
hdph	HD 580 Precision	200	open back • 260g • 300 Ohm • Flagship model	
hdph	Charleston	225	open back • 210g • 140 Ohm • 3m lead, dual plug, leather tr	
hdph	HD580 Jubilee	230	open back • Limited edition HD580	
hdph	IS850	860	330g • Digital audiophile infra-red	
hdph	HE60/HEV70	998	open back • 260g • Electrostatic with energiser	
hdph	Orpheus	9,652	open back • 365g • Electrostatic, valve energiser	

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

SHERWOOD • HI-FI DIRECT • TEL 0171 827 9827 • FAX 0171 827 9009 • DEALERS 23				
amp	AI 1110	100	integrated • 55W • MM,4L,1T • hdph	
amp	AI 5010	170	integrated • 70W • MM,3L,2T • hdph	
amp	AM/AVP8500	800	A/V • 230W • hdph • rem • A/V Pre/power amp	
cass	DS1150	80	single • Dolby B, C • 2 head	
cass	DS1010C	100	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • Mic input	
cass	DD1030C	100	twin • Dolby B • 2 head	
cass	DS3010C	120 117	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • <i>Good range of facilities, let down by poor transport and iffy electronics.</i>	
cd	CD3020R	130 119	bitstream • <i>Although this budget wonder has little respect for musical convention, what emerges is still remarkably entertaining.</i>	B'BUY
cd	CDC5030R	200 132	1 bit • rem • 44.10,38cm • <i>This replacement for the successful 5-disc CDC-5010R sounds messy, disjointed and generally unpleasant. A great disappointment.</i>	
rec	RX1010	120	FM,M • 30W • MM,2L,1T	
rec	RV5030R	330	FM,M,L • A/V • 80W • MM,4L,4T • rem • Dolby Pro Logic	
rec	RV6030R	400	FM,M,L • A/V • 100W • MM,4L,4T • rem	
tun	TD1120	90	FM,M • 24 presets	
tun	TX1010C	100	FM,M • 30 presets	
tun	TX3010C	120 120	FM,M • 30 presets • <i>Lots of features and fine FM discrimination for price. Sound is communicative but inconsistently tacky.</i>	
tt	PS1870	70	semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • Budget turntable with arm	

SME LTD • TEL 01903 814321 • FAX 01903 814249 • DEALERS 125				
tt	Model 20	2,950	manual • 33/45/78rpm • 42.16,32cm • Precision turntable	
tt	Model 20A	4,244 118	manual • 33/45/78rpm • 42.15,32cm • <i>Supplied with Series V arm. Engineered to last a lifetime, giving excellent stereo and detail retrieval.</i>	
tt	Model 30	10,166	manual • 78rpm • 45.22,35cm • Flagship turntable	
tt	Model 30A	11,460	manual • 33/45/78rpm • 45.22,35cm • As above, with SME Series V ar	
arm	Series III S	242	changeable armtube • SME fit • 233mm • Economy version of Series III	
arm	3009 Ser II Imp	268	fixed armtube • SME fit • 231mm • Fixed headshell, low mass	
arm	3009 S2 Imp	292	removable headshell • SME fit • 231mm • Detachable headshell, medium m	
arm	Series III	335	changeable armtube • SME fit • 233mm • Ultra-low mass for hi-complan	
arm	Series II 3009-R	445	removable headshell • SME fit • 233mm • Heavier version of Ser II S2 I	
arm	Series II 3010-R	455	removable headshell • SME fit • 239mm • Detachable headshell, 10 inch	
arm	Series II 3012-R	489	removable headshell • SME fit • 308mm • Detachable headshell, 12 inch	
arm	Series 300-309	597 79	removable headshell • SME fit • 232mm • <i>Beautifully made and finished: fully adjustable and a highly neutral performer.</i>	REC'D
arm	Series 300-310	611	removable headshell • SME fit • 238mm • 10 inch (nom) version of 300-3	
arm	Series 300-312	694	removable headshell • SME fit • 308mm • 12 inch (nom) version of 300-3	
arm	Series IV	869 60	fixed armtube • SME fit • 233mm • <i>Superb engineering and finish with a finely balanced sound, impressive stereo focus and low colouration.</i>	REC'D
arm	Series V	1,294 60	fixed armtube • SME fit • 233mm • <i>Excellent in all respects, this arm arguably sets the standards for pivoted arms, regardless of price.</i>	REC'D

SONIC FRONTIERS • MPI ELECTRONIC UK LTD • TEL 01483 454993 • FAX 01483 454992 • DEALERS 0				
amp	SFP-1	1,095	preamp • MM/MC • 45,12,28cm • Tube/J-FET phono stage	
amp	SFL-1	1,395	preamp • 4L,2T • 45,12,28cm • Tube/FET hybrid line stage	
amp	SFP-1 Signature	1,495	preamp • MM/MC • 45,12,28cm • Tube/J-FET phono stepup	
amp	SFS-40	1,695	power amp • 40W • 40,18,32cm • Stereo tube power amp	
amp	SFC-1	1,795 126	integrated • 50W • 4L,2T • 45,19,43cm • <i>Smooth, sophisticated Canadian valve amp with a decent direct input and more features than average.</i>	
amp	SFL-1 Signature	1,795	preamp • 4L,2T • 45,12,28cm • Tube/FET hybrid line stage	
amp	SFS-80	2,895	power amp • 80W • 45,22,35cm • Stereo tube power amp	
amp	SFL-2	3,795	preamp • 4L,2T • 45,12,33cm • Tube, dual mono, balanced	
amp	SFS-160	5,495	power amp • 160W • 45,22,35cm • Twin tube monoblocks	
dac	Transdac	699	multibit • 24.5,17cm	
dac	UltraJitter Bug	699	24.5,17cm • Jitter reduction interface	
dac	SFD-1 Mk2	2,495	multibit • 48,10,33cm • HDCD compatible, tune output	
dac	SFD-2 Mk2	5,295	multibit • 48,10,33cm • HDCD compatible, tune output	

SONIC LINK • AUDIOKITS • TEL 01332 674929				
amp	DM30	725	integrated • 25W • MM/MC,3L,1T • 23.8,43cm	
cab	First Mains	10	mains • stranded • 12A • silver plated copper • PTFE insulated	
cab	Pure Mains	20	mains • stranded • 3A • HPMC • PTFE insulated	
cab	Super Mains	30	mains • stranded • 30A • silver plated copper	
cab	Light Brown	30 108	digital, electrical • coaxial • 75ohms • PTFE • <i>A solid-core, twisted pair interconnect that deviates from the 75ohm standard and provides an equally ubalanced sound</i>	
cab	Pink	30	interconnect • coaxial • stranded • silver plated copper	
cab	AST150	40	loudspeaker • stranded • low • copper	
cab	Red	40	interconnect • coaxial • stranded • HPMC	
cab	Green	50	digital, electrical • coaxial • 75ohms • PTFE	
cab	Derwent	50	interconnect • stranded • silver plated copper	
cab	Violet	75	interconnect • Symmetrical • stranded • HPMC	
cab	Grey	80 109	loudspeaker • solid core • silver plated copper • <i>A spaghetti-thin cable composes of silver plated OF-copper and PTFE insulation. Lacks bass impact and treble 'air'.</i>	
cab	AST150X2	80	loudspeaker • stranded • low • copper • Biwire	
cab	Blue	100	interconnect • Symmetrical • solid core • HPMC	
cab	Black	125	interconnect • stranded • silver plated copper	
cab	Care Music	150	loudspeaker • stranded • low • silver plated copper	
cab	Blue	200	loudspeaker • solid core • high • HPMC • Biwire	
cab	Derwent/spkr	200	loudspeaker • low • silver plated copper • Biwire	

SONUS-FABER • ABSOLUTE SOUNDS • TEL 0181 947 5047 • FAX 0181 879 7962 • DEALERS 30				
spkr	Minuetto	898	2 driver • 88dB • 23.35,28cm • Compact, stand mount	
spkr	Minima Amator	1,498	2 driver • 88dB • 20.34,31cm • Compact, stand mount	
spkr	Electa	1,790	2 driver • 88dB • 38.27,24cm • Compact, stand mount	
spkr	Amator	2,992	2 driver • 88dB • 37.22,35cm • Compact, stand mount	
spkr	Guarneri	5,500	2 driver • 88dB • 19.38,38cm • Compact, limited edition	
spkr	Extrema	5,991	2 driver • 88dB • 55.27,46cm • 'Reference Standard'	

SONY UNITED KINGDOM LTD • TEL 0932 816000 • FAX 0932 817000				
amp	TAF211B	150	integrated • 30W • MM/2L • hdph • 43.14,31cm • Source direct	
amp	TAF244B	200	integrated • 40W • MM/2L • hdph • 43.14,31cm • MOSFET power stage	
amp	TAF444E	250 142	integrated • 50W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 43.15,38cm • <i>A hi-tech MOSFET based amplifier that sheds all frippery for an audiophile approach. Still sounds grubby and stilted, however.</i>	
amp	TAF542E	300	integrated • 90W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • 43.15,38cm • UK optimised sound	
amp	TA-AV570B	400	integrated • A/V • 70W • MM,4L,5T • hdph • 43.15,36cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
cass	TCX211B	100	single • Dolby B, C • 2 head • 43.12,29cm	
cass	TCX 215B	130	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43.12,31cm • Tape calibration	
cass	TCX311B	130	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43.12,31cm • Auto calibration	
cass	TCW445B	150	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43.12,31cm • Full logic control	
cass	TCX415B	180 136	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 43.12,31cm • <i>Mainly UK designed with audiophile intent, but spoiled by erratic output, at worst with metal tape.</i>	
cass	TCWR545B	200	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43.12,29cm • Auto calibration	
cass	TCWR645S	250	twin • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 43.12,31cm • UK optimised sound	
cass	TCX511S	250	single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • 43.12,31cm • UK optimised sound	
cass	TCX611S	300 127	single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • 43.12,30cm • <i>Good Dolby S deck - slightly let down by lack of attention to detail.</i>	REC'D
cd	CDP-N302	130	1 bit • rem • 36.10,33cm • Midi-size, full remote control	
cd	CDP-312	150 139	1 bit • rem • 43.10,29cm • <i>Something of a rough diamond, offering a raft of features and good build but a decidedly Technicolor sound</i>	
cd	CDP-C325M	230	1 bit • rem • 36.10,39cm • Midi size, 5-disc player	
cd	CDP-C345	230 132	1 bit • rem • 43.13,39cm • <i>Sony's Hybrid Pulse DAC sounds great in the CDP-311 but in this 5 disc carousel it provides a mere skeleton of a performance.</i>	
cd	CDP-715E	250 137	1 bit • optical out • rem • 43.11,30cm • <i>Advanced Pulse technology collides with UK tweaking to produce one of the most fabulous CD players in recent memory.</i>	B'BUY
cd	CDP-915E	300	1 bit • optical out • rem • 43.11,36cm • UK optimised sound	
cd	CDP-CX100	800	1 bit • optical out • 43.13,38cm • 100 disc autochanger	
digr	MBS501	800	MiniDisc • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • optical out • bitstream • 43.9,35cm • Sample rate converter	
digr	DTC80ES	800	Digital Audio Cassette • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • optical out • bitstream • 43.11,55cm • SBM	
hdph	MDR-E505	8	in-ear model • Supplied soft case	
hdph	MDR-E515EX	8	in-ear model • 5g • 1m lead, mini plug	
hdph	MDR-007 Mk II	8	open back • 36g • 2m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
hdph	MDR-009	10	open back • 40g • 2m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
hdph	MDR-W07L	11	in-ear model • 13g • 1m mini plug	
hdph	MDR-A009	12	open back • -	

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BADA

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BADA

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Sony to TDL: THE DIRECTORY

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

SONY UNITED KINGDOM LTD • TEL 0932 816000 • FAX 0932 817000				
hdph	MDR-E515V	12	in-ear model • 5g • 1m lead, mini plug	
hdph	MDR-V50	13	sealed • -	
hdph	MDR-E525	15	in-ear model • 5g • 1m lead, mini plug	
hdph	MDR-24	15	open back • 7m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
hdph	MDR-25	16	open back	
hdph	MDR-W12L	16	in-ear model • 1.2m mini plug	
hdph	MDR-008TV	17	open back • 5m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
hdph	MDR-E535	18	in-ear model • 5g • 1.2m lead, mini plug	
hdph	MDR-44	18	open back • 7m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
hdph	MDR-009TV	19	open back • 5m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
hdph	MDR-35	20	open back	
hdph	MDR-CD30	20	sealed • 2m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
hdph	MDR-E747MP	20	in-ear model • 6g • 1.2m lead, mini plug	
hdph	MDR-CD50	20	sealed • 180g • 24 Ohm • 2m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
hdph	MDR-5747	20	in-ear model • 6g • 1.2m lead, mini plug	
hdph	MDR-P1TV	22	sealed • 5m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
hdph	MDR-A22L	22	in-ear model • 1.2m mini plug	
hdph	MDR-CD250EX	28	sealed • 5m, 3.5/6.3mm lead	
hdph	MDR-CD450	45	133 sealed • 260g • 24 Ohm • <i>Fair acoustic isolation and comfortable construction, moderate sound.</i>	REC'D
hdph	MDR-IF210	50	infra-red cordless • 170g • Extra h/phone w/o transmitter	
hdph	MDR-CD550	60	99 sealed • 270g • 45 Ohm • <i>A very competent headphone, creates a remarkable sense of space for a closed back design and sounds natural to boot.</i>	B'BUY
hdph	MDR-D33	70	sealed • 120g • 45 Ohm • 1.5m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
hdph	MDR-IF210K	80	infra-red cordless • 170g • Seven meter range infra red	
hdph	MDR-D55	90	sealed • 120g • 45 Ohm • 1.5m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
hdph	MDR-CD750	90	111 sealed • 290g • 45 Ohm • <i>Reasonably comfortable and eminently listenable, these Sonys have characteristically good bass power and relaxed HF.</i>	REC'D
hdph	MDR-D77	120	sealed • 140g • 45 Ohm • 1.5m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
hdph	MDR-610K	190	infra-red cordless • 470g • Seven meter range infra-red	
hdph	MDR-CD1000	200	111 sealed • 330g • 45 Ohm • <i>A fine sounding and comfortable headphone that's likely to work well with most sources.</i>	REC'D
spkr	SS-E300	50	sealed • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 160W • 73,41,20cm • Magnetically shielded	
spkr	SS-V77	50	90dB • 16 Ohms • 19,9,14cm • Full range surround speakers	
spkr	SS-E500	80	sealed • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 35,47,20cm • Magnetically shielded	
spkr	SS-J90AV	100	167 Ohms • 19,12,15cm • Shielded centre speaker	
spkr	SS85E	100	sealed • 85dB • 4 Ohms • 70W • 9,32,24cm • UK optimised sound	
spkr	SS125E	120	sealed • 86dB • 4 Ohms • 90W • 22,38,38cm • UK optimised sound	
spkr	SA-W90	350	70W • 22,49,51cm • Active subwoofer	
spkr	SSA1L	450	sealed • 85dB • 4 Ohms • 120W • 19,30,32cm • Bio-cellulose tweeters	
rec	STRD311	230	FM, M.L • A/V • 60W • 30 presets • MM, 2L, 2T • rem • 43,14,30cm • System remote	
rec	STRD511	280	FM, M.L • A/V • 50W • 30 presets • MM, 3L, 2T • rem • 43,14,30cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
rec	STRD611	330	FM, M.L • A/V • 60W • 30 presets • MM, 3L, 2T • rem • 43,14,30cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
tun	STS211LB	130	FM, M.L • 30 presets • 43,9,30cm • Station naming	
tun	STS311LB	200	FM, M.L • 30 presets • RDS • 43,9,30cm • RDS EON, 'Autobetical' select	
tt	STS505E	250	FM, M.L • 30 presets • RDS • 43,9,35cm • UK optimised sound	
tt	PSLX150H	90	semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 43,10,36cm • Player, with MM cartridge	
tt	PSLX431B	150	auto • 33/45rpm • 43,11,36cm • Player, auto rec size select	
SPENDOR AUDIO SYSTEMS • TEL 01323 843474 • DEALERS 17				
spkr	LS3/5A	630	2 driver • 83dB • 8 Ohms • 40W • 19,30,16cm • BBC inspired location monitor	
spkr	S20	760	102 ported • 2 driver • 84dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 22,38,26cm • <i>Maintains Spendor's tradition for peeries mid-to-treble coherence and perspectives. Bass is rather unconvincing.</i>	REC'D
spkr	SP3/1	890	2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 40,22,25cm • Stand mount, free space	
spkr	SP2/3	1,100	2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 28,55,33cm • On stands, free space	
spkr	SP1/2	1,430	3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 90W • 30,63,30cm • Stand mount, free space	
spkr	SP7/1	2,000	2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 85,30,35cm • Floor standing	
spkr	SP100	2,230	3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 37,70,43cm • Classic monitor, free space	
spkr	SP9/1	3,300	3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 106,37,44cm • Floor standing monitor	
STAX • PATH PREMIER • TEL 01494 441736 • FAX 01494 461209				
hdph	SR34	169	open back • 170g • Electrostatic	
hdph	SR Gamma	239	55 open back • 300g • <i>The next model down in the Stax range from the Lambda, the Gamma is an excellent headphone with little to criticise bar the price.</i>	REC'D
hdph	SR84	259	open back • 160g • Electrostatic	
hdph	SR Lambda	349	open back • 325g • Electrostatic	
hdph	Gamma Pro	399	63 open back • 300g • <i>With SRD-X Pro, the Gamma Pro is like a stethoscope for your hi-fi, revealing subtleties that many loudspeakers fail to resolve.</i>	REC'D
hdph	Lambda Pro	448	55 open back • 325g • <i>Tested with SRD-7B PSU, this is an industry reference, frighteningly revealing, bringing across more information than loudspeakers costing twice as much.</i>	REC'D
hdph	Lambda Sig	549	72 open back • 325g • <i>With SRM-TL, the Signature must be the most transparent headphone available.</i>	REC'D
hdph	Omega	1,695	open back • 400g • Electrostatic	
STEMFOORT AUDIO • AUDIO SYNERGY LTD • TEL 01924 406016 • FAX 01924 410069				
amp	SF60	549	integrated • 60W • 4L, 1T • 43,8,35cm • Passive line amplifier	
amp	SF100	849	integrated • 100W • 4L, 1T • 43,8,40cm • Passive line amplifier	
SUMIKO • PATH PREMIER • TEL 01494 441736 • FAX 01494 461209				
cart	Oyster	30	moving magnet • removable stylus	
cart	Black Pearl	50	moving magnet • removable stylus	
cart	Pearl	70	moving magnet • removable stylus	
cart	Blue Point	100	moving coil • fixed stylus • High output MC	
cart	BPS	250	moving coil • fixed stylus • Nude stylus	
SYSTEM AUDIO • THE CHORD COMPANY • TEL 01722 331674 • FAX 01722 411388 • DEALERS 210				
spkr	905	250	2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 15,27,21cm	
SYSTEMDEK LTD • TEL 01294 271251 • FAX 01294 277095				
tt	I/920	136	manual • 33/45rpm • Semi-suspended deck	
tt	IIX/900	230	103 manual • 33/45rpm • <i>A high performance budget turntable which is particularly strong at fine detail resolution and imagery.</i>	B'BUY
tt	I/920/Moth	235	115 manual • 33/45rpm • <i>The motor is derivative of the Rega Planar 2 with a Moth arm. Uptempo, even bright at times but never lacks enthusiasm.</i>	REC'D
tt	IIXE/900Ap	388	103 manual • 33/45rpm • <i>The acrylic platter'd IIXE is one of the most capable budget decks on the market: good resolution, dynamics and timing.</i>	REC'D
TANNOY LTD • TEL 01236 420199 • FAX 01236 428230 • DEALERS 400				
spkr	631	149	141 ported • 3 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 19,34,15cm • <i>High class miniature is beautifully balanced, open, unboxy and quite lively, if a bit short of real muscle.</i>	B'BUY
spkr	632	189	135 ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 90W • 51,43,27cm • <i>Cabinet shape avoids boxiness and promotes focus and imaging, fine bass extension but tricky stand compatibility.</i>	B'BUY
spkr	633	319	139 sealed • 3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 29,75,28cm • <i>Compact floorstander with slammin' bass - real extension and coherence without boom - but dubious midband.</i>	B'BUY
spkr	Subsat3	399	ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 11,16,9cm • Subsat system with ICT tech	
spkr	636	419	sealed • 3 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 120W • 29,75,28cm	
spkr	637	499	sealed • 3 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 33,86,32cm	
spkr	625	595	active • 90W • 58,49,45cm • Servo, current drive subwoofer	
spkr	638	599	138 ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 175W • 33,96,32cm • <i>Big box has pretty good balance and lots of loudness capability, but needs a good amp and bass isn't entirely convincing.</i>	
spkr	D100	649	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 25,36,22cm • 6.5 inch Dual Concentric	
spkr	D500	1,470	143 ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 175W • 31,93,34cm • <i>Big luxury heavyweight has muscle and balance bit a little short of poise and delicacy. Fine stereo, but had work for amps.</i>	
spkr	Sterling TW	1,750	2 driver • 93dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 48,70,31cm	
spkr	D700	2,100	ported • 3 driver • 93dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 37,99,36cm • 10 inch Dual Concentric	
spkr	Edinburgh TW	2,700	2 driver • 95dB • 8 Ohms • 180W • 66,102,42cm	
spkr	GRFM TW	3,500	2 driver • 95dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 80,100,48cm	
spkr	Canterbury 12	5,500	2 driver • 94dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 58,90,43cm	
spkr	Westminster TW	6,000	Col 2 driver • 99dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • <i>These awesome horn loaded speakers are remarkably controlled and impressive, if only suited to a few pockets and rooms.</i>	REC'D
spkr	Canterbury 15	7,000	2 driver • 96dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 68,110,48cm	
spkr	Westminster Royal	13,500	2 driver • 99dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 98,139,56cm	
TDL ELECTRONICS LTD • TEL 01494 441191 • FAX 01494 461803 • DEALERS 274				
spkr	NFM2-S	100	2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 18,45,17cm • Priced for single speaker	
spkr	Near Field Monitor	120	130 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 18,30,17cm • <i>A disappointing underperformer in our tests, at a price that's not very nice either.</i>	

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

TDL ELECT ONICS LTD • TEL 01494 441191 • FAX 01494 461803 • DEALERS 274				
spkr	NFM2	180	3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 18.45,17cm	
spkr	RTL2	300	2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 20.73,22cm • Reflex transmission line	
spkr	RTL3	400	3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 20.90,37cm • Bargain price floorstander has rich, heavy and bright sound with a good scale and fine basic neutrality.	REC'D
spkr	Studio 0.5	499	2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 20.62,30cm • <i>Tiny floorstanding transmission line has good agility but doesn't provide the coherence or even the balance of Studio 1.</i>	
spkr	Studio 1	699	2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 23.77,33cm • Genuinely extended bass from a compact enclosure, very detailed but a shade clinical and detached in presentation.	REC'D
spkr	Studio 1m	899	2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 23.77,34cm • Transmission line helps bring the best from metal cone driver: lovely transparency and fine bass extension.	REC'D
spkr	Studio Monitor M	2,449	3 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 27.112,43cm • TLS, metal drivers, int stands	
spkr	Ref Standard-M	4,999	7 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 800W • 56,121,50cm • Dual TLS, metal drivers	

TEAC UK LTD • TEL 01923 819630 • FAX 01923 236290 • DEALERS 200				
amp	A-X1030	180	integrated • 40W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,13,36cm • Mic input	
amp	A-X3030	220	integrated • 60W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,13,36cm • Mic input	
amp	A-X5030	260	integrated • 75W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • 44,16,36cm	
amp	A-BX10	999	integrated • 100W • MM/MC,3L,2T • Balanced input	
cd	V-600	150	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,15,29cm • Fine bias	
cd	R-550	200	Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,14,29cm • Blank scan	
cd	W-750R	200	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,15,29cm	
cd	V-1010	250	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,15,29cm • Fine bias adjust	
cd	V-3010	350	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,15,36cm • Remote control, pitch adjust	
cd	W-6000R	450	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,15,33cm • Pitch control, remote	
cd	R-9000S	500	105 • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 49,15,36cm • Much better than average auto-reverse deck, well worth considering. Nicely engineered too.	
cd	V-6030S	550	single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • Dual capstan	
cd	V-8030S	650	single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • Quartz locked, dual capstan	
cd	V-8000S	699	105 • single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • 48,15,36cm • Superb stability and real subtlety, this must be the best Teac yet. The only disappointment was Dolby C.	REC'D
cd	CD-P3200	150	multibit • rem • 44,12,28cm	
cd	PD-D880	250	multibit • rem • 44,11,38cm • 5-disc carousel	
cd	CD-3	250	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 45,13,28cm • Central mechanism	
cd	CD-P4500	280	107 • bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,12,29cm • Teac's first genuine 1-bit player its sound described as having a certain 'organic warmth', very composed and easy going.	REC'D
cd	VRDS-7	599	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 45,15,34cm • Twin BS, VRDS mech	
cd	VRDS-10	770	119 • bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 45,15,34cm • <i>A basic analogue stage compromises the potential of Teac's superb engineering and digital electronics. Lacks bass energy.</i>	
cd	VRDS-20	1,299	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 50,15,34cm • Twin DAC7, balanced output	
cd	X-1	2,500	multibit • rem • 46,14,40cm • Balanced out, 4x20bit	
cdt	VRDS-T1	499	144 • transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44,15,33cm • Quality engineering with a performance that's equally tidy and composed (tested with D-T1).	REC'D
cdt	P-700	899	120 • transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 23,14,40cm • Tested with D-700, they may lack the resolution, but still sound warm, bubbly and perpetually entertaining.	B'BUY
cdt	P-2S	4,299	130 • transport • rem • 23,14,49cm • <i>The latest version of Teac's luxury P-2 transport sounds as over-engineered as it looks.</i>	
dac	D-11	450	144 • bitstream • electrical out • optical out • 44,10,33cm • Teamed with VRDS-T1, offers superb engineering, with a performance that is equally tidy and composed.	REC'D
dac	D-700	599	120 • multibit • electrical out • optical out • 23,14,40cm • With P-700, the D-700 may lack the resolution, but still sounds warm, bubbly and perpetually entertaining.	B'BUY
dac	D-2	2,499	133 • multibit • 23,14,49cm • <i>Assessed in partnership with the P-2s, Teac's VRDS statement looks a million dollars, but sounds rather thin and uninviting. A great disappointment.</i>	
digr	R-9	1,200	Digital Audio Cassette • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • optical out • bitstream • 45,16,36cm • Based on TASCAM technology	
spkr	LS-X8	80	2 driver • 8 Ohms • 30W • 11,18,11cm • In black or white	
spkr	S-W1	120	subwoofer • 6 Ohms • 100W • 17,44,30cm • Coaxial, shielded	
spkr	S-300	3	0 • ported • 2 driver • 6 Ohms • 100W • 17,24,17cm	
rec	AG-V3020	450	FM, M • A/V • 95W • 30 presets • MM,4L,3T • rem • 44,16,38cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
tun	T-4030	120	129 • FM, M • 20 presets • 44,9,28cm • Not much special, but still a well balanced, tolerable and capable all-rounder at a very reasonable price.	B'BUY

TECHNICS • PANASONIC UK LTD • TEL 01344 853550 • FAX 01344 853081 • DEALERS 2000				
amp	SU-V300	150	integrated • 25W • MM,2L,1T • hdph • 43,13,32cm • A/B speaker select	
amp	SU-A600 MkII	200	integrated • 37W • MC/MM,3L,2T • hdph • 43,13,32cm • MOS, R-Core transformer	
amp	SU-A700 MkII	250	integrated • 45W • MC/MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 43,13,32cm	
amp	SU-A800 Mk2	350	134 • integrated • 55W • MC/MM,3L,2T • rem • 43,14,37cm • <i>A quick audition might convince you that the '800 is something special, but longer term listening shows it's little but bluff.</i>	
amp	SU-A900 Mk2	400	138 • integrated • 90W • MC/MM,3L,2T • rem • 43,14,37cm • A Jeckyl and Hyde amplifier with a dismal-sounding phono stage but delightfully transparent and engaging CD input.	REC'D
amp	SU-C2000	700	preamp • rem • 45,13,35cm • Rotary resistor attenuator	
amp	SE-A2000	1,050	power amp • 100W • rem • 45,19,44cm • Meters, R-Core, MOS AA	
cd	RS-TR373	180	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • 2 head • 43,14,29cm • Play transport unidirectional	
cd	RS-TR474	200	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,14,29cm • High speed FF/REW	
cd	RS-BK601	230	Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 43,13,29cm • Mic inputs, auto tape cal	
cd	RS-TR575	250	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,14,29cm • Optical quick reverse	
cd	RS-BK701	270	136 • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 43,13,30cm • Not cheap, but extremely well built deck, moderately well equipped, and a pleasure to operate and listen to.	REC'D
cd	RS-BK747	300	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 43,13,30cm • Fine bias adj, THC lo-red base	
cd	RS-TR979	380	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,13,28cm • Both decks record, quick rev	
cd	SL-PG370	120	mash • Remote control ready	
cd	SL-PG470AK	140	mash • optical out • rem • CD edit	
cd	SL-PG570AK	160	mash • rem • Digital servo, THCB base	
cd	SL-PS670AK	200	mash • optical out • rem • 45,12,29cm • Virtual Battery operation	
cd	SL-PS770	250	mash • optical out • rem • 43,13,29cm • S-Advanced MASH	
cd	SL-PS840	450	mash • optical out • rem • 43,13,34cm • Advanced MASH converter	
cd	SL-P2000	1,000	mash • optical out • rem • 45,13,33cm • THCB base, R-Core transformer	
hdph	RP-H777	30	sealed • 160g • 32 Ohm • 3m lead, OFC wire	
hdph	RP-H786	40	sealed • 165g • 35 Ohm • 3m lead, XBS acoustic load	
hdph	RP-HT600	50	sealed • 3m lead, double headband	
hdph	RP-H700	60	sealed • 5m lead, double headband	
hdph	RP-F10	100	121 • sealed • 300g • 32 Ohm • <i>Another very comfortable sealed circum-aural model, has modest sound isolation and uneven, sound favouring bass.</i>	
hdph	RP-F30	180	sealed • 340g • 32 Ohm • 3m lead, XBS double drive	
spkr	SB-CS55	80	ported • 2 driver • 8 Ohms • 60W • 25,43,25cm • Shelf/stand, shielded	
spkr	SB-CS75	100	ported • 3 driver • 8 Ohms • 60W • 27,49,25cm • Composite mica cone mid	
spkr	SB-CS95	150	ported • 3 driver • 8 Ohms • 100W • 29,54,25cm • Composite mica cone mid	
spkr	SB-M20	200	ported • 2 driver • 60W	
spkr	SB-M300	350	ported • 3 driver • 70W	
rec	SA-GX170L	230	FM, M, L • 60W • 30 presets • MM,2L,2 • rem • 43,13,31cm	
rec	SA-GX370L	280	FM, M, L • A/V • 80W • 40 presets • MM,2L,2T • rem • 43,13,31cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
rec	SA-GX470L	350	FM, M, L • A/V • 80W • 30 presets • MM,4L,1T • rem • 43,14,36cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
rec	SA-GX670L	450	FM, M, L • A/V • 100W • 30 presets • MM,4L,1T • rem • 43,16,36cm • Dolby Pro-Logic, help function	
tun	ST-GT350L	140	FM, M, L • 30 presets • 43,7,30cm • Remote control capable	
tun	ST-GT550L	190	FM, M, L • 39 presets • RDS • 43,7,31cm • Remote control capable, RDS	
tun	ST-GT650L	230	FM, M, L • 39 presets • RDS • 43,10,31cm • Class AA, remote control ready	
tt	SL-BD20	140	semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 43,10,38cm • Belt drive, includes T4P cartr	
tt	SL-BD22	160	semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 43,10,38cm • Belt drive, includes T4P cartr	
tt	SL-1210MkII	500	manual • 33/45rpm • 46,17,36cm • Quartz DD, no cartridge	
tt	SL-1200MkII	500	manual • 33/45rpm • 43,10,38cm • Quartz DD, includes T4P cartri	

TESSERAC RESEARCH LTD • TEL 0181 669 0011 • FAX 0181 773 0406				
amp	TAA4	1,500	preamp • MM/MC	
amp	TALA	1,500	preamp • 5L,1T	
amp	TAHA	1,800	preamp • MC, • hdph	
amp	TAP-A	5,300	preamp • MM,3L,2T	
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cdt	Data II N/SC	3,290	transport • electrical out • rem • 42,12,40cm • AT&T, AES/EBU option	
cdt	Data II PAL	3,490	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 42,12,40cm • AT&T, AES/EBU balanced in	
dac	Pro-Prime II	1,800	bitstream • electrical out • 42,5,23cm	
dac	Probasic II	2,299	multibit • 42,5,29cm	
dac	Pro Gen III	5,690	multibit • 42,8,34cm • AT&T input option	
dac	Pro Gen V	8,500	multibit • electrical out • 42,8,34cm	

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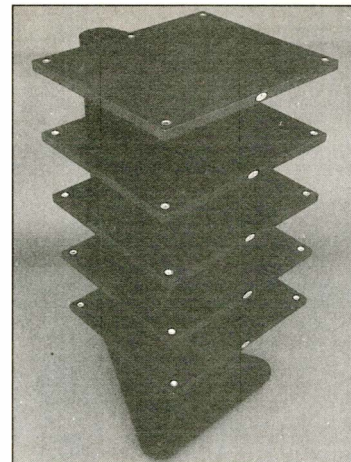
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PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

THIEL • MPI ELECTRONIC UK LTD • TEL 01483 454993 • FAX 01483 454992

spkr	CS1.5	1,499	87dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 22,28,63cm • 2-way, 15 wood veneers + black
spkr	CS-5	1,499	87dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 20,28,80cm • 2-way, 15 wood veneers + black
spkr	CS2.2	2,749	86dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 30,33,106cm • 3-way, 15 wood veneers + black
spkr	CS3.6	3,899	86dB • 4 Ohms • 400W • 32,43,123cm • 3-way, 15 wood veneers + black
spkr	CS7	10,476	88dB • 4 Ohms • 500W • 35,48,140cm • 4-way, 15 wood veneers + black
spkr	CS51	13,669	87dB • 3 Ohms • 500W • 33,43,162cm • 5-way, 15 wood veneers + black

THORENS • PORTFOLIO MARKETING • TEL 01494 890277

amp	TTP2000	500	preamp • MM/MC, 4L • Minimalist, shoebox form
amp	TTA2000	550	power amp • 35W • Matches TTP2000, neo-Class A
amp	TRP3000	1,500	preamp • MM/MC • Phono stepup, valve
amp	TRA3000	2,000	power amp • 90W • Valve
tt	TD-180/AT91	180	semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • Belt drive
tt	TD180/S500	200	33/45/78rpm • Belt drive, plays 78s
tt	TD-280 IV/UK	200	semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • Electronic belt drive, AT95E
tt	TD-166 VI BC	200	manual • 33/45rpm • Blank arboard, cut to shape,
tt	TD-166 VI AT95E	270	manual • 33/45rpm • Inc IP50 manual arm, AT95E
tt	TD-166 VI RB250	300	103 manual • 33/45rpm • Refined and solid sound with well focussed imagery; suitable for use with good MM and budget MC cartridges.
tt	TD-3001BC	630	manual • 33/45rpm • No arm, various arboards avai
tt	TD-2001	700	91 semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • Similar to TD320 but much dearer - why? Sound is comfortable but not very detailed.
tt	TD-3001/UK	770	103 manual • 33/45rpm • Excellent middle ranking esoterica, with strong all-round abilities rather than excellence in particular areas.
tt	TD-520	900	semi arm lift • 33/45/78rpm • Pitch control, no arm

THULE • VIRTUAL REALITY AUDIO SYSTEMS • TEL 01277 227355 • FAX 01277 224103

amp	IA50	549	140 integrated • 50W • 4L, 1T • Best used as part of Thule's balanced-line system, otherwise its performance lacks any meaty substance.
amp	IA100	949	integrated • 100W • 4L, 2T • Fully balanced operation
cd	CD100	849	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • Balanced out, Crystal chipset
ctd	TR200	749	transport • rem • Balanced AES/EBU input
dac	DAC-200	849	87 bitstream • electrical out • optical out • A good first effort from Thule, even though its fizzy and over-eager sound could do with some house-training.

TOTEM • MAY AUDIO MARKETING (UK) LTD • TEL 01943 864930 • FAX 01943 863814 • DEALERS 6

spkr	Model One	995	122 ported • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 120W • 17,31,23cm • Utterly delightful but exasperatingly expensive luxury miniature sets the benchmark for its size.
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TOWNSHEND AUDIO • TEL 01784 455866

tt	MMIII Rock	799	manual • 33/45rpm • Headshell end arm damping
arm	Excalibur	799	fixed arm tube • proprietary fit • 220mm • Outrigger headshell damping

TRANSFIGURATION • REFERENCE INTERNATIONAL • TEL 01435 868004

cart	AF-1 Mk II	1,595	moving coil • 230 mV • fixed stylus • 7g • MC, transformer & preamp
cart	Supreme	1,995	moving coil • 200 mV • fixed stylus • 7g • Yokeless ring magnet system

TRIANGLE • KRONOS DISTRIBUTION • TEL 018687 48632 • FAX 018687 48281

amp	TE60SE	650	integrated • 70W • MM/MC, 3L, 1T • hdph
amp	Nemo Allion 02	1,550	integrated • 80W • 5L, 2T
spkr	Titus TZe	325	90dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 20,25,32cm • New tweeter, lifetime warranty
spkr	Comete TZe	475	91dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 22,28,40cm • High sensitivity
spkr	Antal	975	92dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 22,102,30cm
spkr	Zays	1,399	92dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 99,22,28cm
spkr	Aitinis	1,950	90dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 104,22,22cm
spkr	Altair	2,850	92dB • 4 Ohms • 300W • 35,120,30cm • Proprietary tweeter
spkr	Octant TXe	3,950	94dB • 4 Ohms • 300W • 42,150,19cm • Ultra high sensitivity
a.sub	SAT III	650	stereo • 140W

TUBE TECHNOLOGY • TEL 01932 850354

amp	Seer Line	575	preamp • 5L, 1T • 35,8,25cm • Entry level, 10 yr guarantee
amp	Seer Phono	649	preamp • MM, 4L, 1T • 35,8,25cm • Tube phono stage
amp	Unisis Power Amp	1,099	power amp • 30W • 35,17,27cm • Stereo power amp
amp	Prophet	1,199	preamp • 4L, 1T • 35,8,25cm • Two box pre, separate PSU
amp	Unisis Super Line	1,399	integrated • 30W • 4L, 1T • 35,17,27cm • Line level version of Unisis
amp	Unisis	1,399	integrated • 30W • MM, 3L, 1T • 35,17,27cm • One tube phono stage
amp	Genesis	2,599	power amp • 100W • 35,15,27cm • 2x monoblocks
amp	Synergy 1	3,999	integrated • 150W • 5L, 1T • rem • 47,18,47cm • Bias monitor, soft-start

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cab	MV Videolink 75	30	108 digital, electrical • coaxial • 75ohms • copper • An AV-cum-digital cable that comes very close to besting QED's Digiflex. Still some emphasis on vocal sibilants, however.
cab	The Clearwater	50	109 loudspeaker • stranded • silver/copper • Despite its evocative title, the Clearwater turns out to be a disappointingly murky sounding cable.
cab	The Magnum	265	109 loudspeaker • stranded • copper/silver • Touted as vdH's most prestigious twinlead speaker cable, the Magnum sounds surprisingly soft and old fashioned.
cab	The Wind	330	109 loudspeaker • stranded • silver/copper • Blown-in from the continent, 'The Wind' kicks up a storm with its lush midrange and bone-crunching bass!
cart	MM-1	250	103 moving magnet • 5.5 mV • removable stylus • If woody midrange colouration could be tamed, the excellent imaging and admirable security would make it excellent.
cart	MM-2	299	moving magnet • 5.5 mV • removable stylus
cart	DDT-II	699	moving coil • 0.4 mV • fixed stylus • Silver coils
cart	MC-10	799	60 moving coil • 0.4 mV • fixed stylus • A neutral, balanced performer giving a transparent midrange, fine depth and focus and a firm, extended bass. Gosh!
cart	MC-One	999	60 moving coil • fixed stylus • This extended all the positive qualities of the '10, but added greater authority and scale - worth all the extra money.
cart	MC-One/Hi	1,149	84 moving coil • fixed stylus • Slight softening on transients was the only real flaw, but it didn't quite seem to have that special touch one expects.
cart	MC-Two	1,349	72 moving coil • fixed stylus • Connected directly to any standard MM input, it rewards with a highly deailed yet fluid and musically convincing portrayal.



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cart	G'hopper III SLA	2,200	moving coil • fixed stylus • Silver coils, Alnico magnet
cart	G'hopper III SLN	2,200	moving coil • fixed stylus • Silver coils, Neodymium magnet
cart	G'hopper III CMN	2,750	moving coil • fixed stylus • Copper coils, medium output
cart	G'hopper III GLN	2,999	moving coil • fixed stylus • Gold coils, Neodymium magnet
cart	G'hopper III GLA	3,200	122 moving coil • fixed stylus • <i>Undoubtedly one of the finest cartridges available, it has tremendous bandwidth, energy and finesse.</i>
cart	G'hopper III CHN	3,400	moving coil • fixed stylus • Copper coils, high output
cart	G'hopper IV GLA	3,450	moving coil • fixed stylus • Silver coils, Alnico magnet

VIVANCO UK LTD • TEL 01442 231616 • FAX 01442 235421 • DEALERS 1000+

hdph	SR60	3	open back • Mini, fits outer ear
hdph	SR12	3	open back • In ear, with spare plug
hdph	SR52	5	open back • Mini headphones 3.5mm plug
hdph	SR54	7	open back • Mini, volume control, 3.5mm
hdph	SR14	7	open back • In ear, micro
hdph	SR16	8	open back • Micro, volume control 3.5mm
hdph	SR250	19	sealed • Xtra bass feature
hdph	SR606	40	133 open back • 225g • 32 Ohm • <i>Although slightly overblown at times, this model is easy on the ears and essentially enjoyable</i>
hdph	IR5700	50	Infra-red cordless
hdph	IR5000	50	Mono, infra-red cordless
hdph	SR850	50	open back • Double bow design for comfort
hdph	IR6000	70	Stereo infra-red cordless
hdph	SR909	70	open back • 285g • 600 Ohm • Remote control lead, all plugs
hdph	IR6500	90	Stereo infra-red with charger
hdph	SR10001FL	110	open back • 265g • 100 Ohm • In-front localisation
hdph	IR7100	120	Stereo infra-red cordless
hdph	IR7600	140	Stereo infra-red cordless
hdph	SR2001FL	140	open back • In-front localisation

VOYD TURNTABLES LTD • TEL 01242 574528

tt	The Voyd	1,570	manual • 33/45rpm • 51.16.42cm • Original three-motor model
tt	0.5	3,940	72 manual • 33/45rpm • 51.16.42cm • <i>Halfway between standard and Reference Voyds with the latter's platter and bearing. Superb finish, colourful and dynamic sound.</i>
tt	Reference	6,500	91 manual • 33/45rpm • 51.16.48cm • <i>Voyd's flagship, equipped with three substantial motors, a Lexan platter and brute PS. A strong contender for world's best.</i>

WADIA • ACOUSTIC ENERGY LTD • TEL 0181 840 6305 • FAX 0181 579 1761

cd	16	7,395	multibit • Glass, plastic, BNC & AES/EBU
cdt	8	3,195	130 transport • rem • 35.16.41cm • <i>Includes a budget version of Teac's VRDS mechanism in a fancy case; just too expensive for the performance on offer.</i>
cdt	20	4,370	transport • Glass, plastic, BNC, AES/EBU
cdt	7	9,995	transport • rem • 35.16.46cm
dac	12	1,530	multibit • electrical out • optical out • Balanced and AT&T input
dac	15	3,790	multibit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 35.9.41cm • Software upgradable
dac	64.4	4,750	multibit • electrical out • optical out • 35.8.28cm • Balanced output
dac	9	12,790	multibit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44.9.36cm • Digital volume, separate PSU

WEARFEDEALE LOUDSPEAKERS LTD • TEL 0113 2601222 • FAX 0113 2600267

spkr	Centre Cube	49	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 14.13.12cm • Shielded centre speaker
spkr	Valdus 100	89	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 180W • 27.17.18cm • 2-way bookshelf
spkr	Diamond 6R	99	ported • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 16.27.22cm • Stand/bookshelf mount
spkr	Valdus 200	109	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 180W • 38.21.22cm • Stand/bookshelf
spkr	Modus Micro	109	ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 14.23.12cm • Shielded
spkr	Modus Centre	119	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 46.14.12cm • Shielded centre speaker
spkr	Modus Mini	139	AGR • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 14.39.12cm • Shielded two-way
spkr	Valdus 300	149	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 180W • 47.25.23cm • Stand/bookshelf
spkr	Modus One	159	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 22.41.29cm • Stand/bookshelf mount
spkr	Modus Sub-bass	179	ported • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 57.23.38cm • Two channel double tuned sub-w
spkr	Modus Three	199	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 22.57.29cm • Stand/bookshelf mount
spkr	Valdus 400	199	ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 80.25.26cm • Floor standing
spkr	Modus Five	259	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 22.65.29cm • Stand/bookshelf mount
spkr	Valdus 500	299	ported • 4 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 350W • 108.25.29cm • Floor standing
spkr	Modus Seven	339	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 22.81.20cm • Floor standing
spkr	Modus One-Three	439	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 22.109.29cm • Floor standing

WILSON • ABSOLUTE SOUNDS • TEL 0181 947 5047 • FAX 0181 879 7962 • DEALERS 7

spkr	WAP Puppy II	5,600	subwoofer • 91dB • 25.53.35cm • Passive subwoofer for WATT
spkr	WAP Puppy 5	7,375	subwoofer • 91dB • Passive sub for WATTS
spkr	WATT 5	8,800	2 driver • 91dB • 27.31.36cm
spkr	WHOW II	12,500	subwoofer • 98dB • 88/65.36cm • Active subwoofer for WATT
tt	Benesch	1,550	manual • 33/45rpm • High-tech turntable
arm	Benesch ACT1	975	fixed armtube • proprietary fit • Carbon-fibre armtube, unipivot

WOODSIDE ELECTRONICS • TEL 01934 520248

amp	SC27 Line	705	preamp • 2L,1T
amp	SC27 MM	881	preamp • MM,2L,1T
amp	ISA230 Disc	899	116 integrated • 30W • MM,2L,1T • <i>Smooth and inoffensive valve amplifier, if one that lacks the sparkle and euphony required for a truly entertaining sound.</i>
amp	ISA230 Line	899	integrated • 30W • 4L,2T
amp	ISA 240	949	power amp • 40W
amp	SC27 MC	999	preamp • MC,2L,1T
amp	MA50 Class A	1,224	power amp • 50W • 1 channel monoblock
amp	STA35	1,323	100 power amp • 35W • <i>Synergistic pairing with SC26, with a cool, controlled sound, good focus and transparency. More about poise than grunt (tested with SC26).</i>
amp	SC25 Line	1,420	preamp • 2L,2T
amp	SC26 Phono	1,931	100 preamp • MM/MC,3L,2T • <i>Synergistic pairing with STA35, with a cool, controlled sound, good focus and transparency. More about poise than grunt (tested with STA35).</i>
dac	DAC2	509	101 multibit • electrical out • optical out • <i>Offering a sharp and dynamic sound, all the more captivating for its lack of graininess and 'tizz'. A reliable upgrade.</i>
dac	DAC1	909	87 multibit • electrical out • optical out • <i>Fine but slightly dated and costly package in performance terms - but flexible, musical and well built.</i>

YAMAHA ELECTRONICS UK LTD • TEL 01923 233166

amp	AX-490	239	integrated • 85W • MM,MC,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44.15.39cm • UK specified, system remote
amp	AX-590	299	integrated • 100W • MM,MC,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44.15.39cm • UK specified, system remote
cass	KX-380	169	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44.13.29cm • Play Trim, manual bias
cass	KX-W282	199	twin • Dolby B, C • 2 head • 44.13.28cm • Twin auto-reverse, 1 records
cass	KX-480	199	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44.13.28cm • Auto-tape tuning, Play Trim
cass	KX-W482	249	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44.13.28cm • Twin recording auto-reverse
cass	KX-580	249	single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 44.13.28cm • Award winning Dolby S deck
cass	KX-W952	599	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44.16.37cm • Twin record, opt remote
cd	CDX-480	169	bitstream • rem • 44.10.28cm • Entry level model
cd	CDX-555	199	multibit • rem • 44.11.39cm • Entry level
cd	CDX-580	229	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44.10.28cm • UK specified o/p stage
cd	CDX-655	249	bitstream • optical out • rem • 44.11.39cm • Tray load multi-player
cd	CDX-880	339	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44.10.29cm • UK specified components
spkr	NS-C80	99	90dB • 6 Ohms • 80W • 14.45.17cm
spkr	NS-E80	120	90dB • 6 Ohms • 50W • 27.20.7cm
spkr	NS-C110	149	90dB • 6 Ohms • 120W • 15.47.18cm
spkr	NS10M	250	90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 21.38.20cm
spkr	NS-1000	1,399	90dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 38.68.36cm
rec	RX-385RDS	269	FM, M • 40W • 40 presets • MM,3L,1T • rem • 44.13.30cm • System remote
rec	RX-V390RDS	299	FM • A/V • 60W • 40 presets • MM,3L,2T,2V • rem • 44.14.30cm • AV amp, 'stereo' surround
rec	RX-V590RDS	449	FM • A/V • 70W • 40 presets • MM,3L,3T,4V • rem • 44.15.39cm • True DSP
tun	TX-480L	139	FM, M, L • 40 presets • 44.9.30cm
tun	TX-580RDS	199	FM, M • 40 presets • RDS • 44.9.30cm

Personal Messages

Paul Messenger explains why bass is rarely cheap, and the equipment is sometimes pretty deep...

NEW YORK BASS 4 BY THE PATRICK EGGLE MUSIC COMPANY

How important is deep bass reproduction? In Britain not very important, judging by the way small speakers dominate the sales charts. But I suspect that disinterest has much more to do with the price and compactness advantages claimed by the tinies, rather than actual consumer aspirations.

The trouble with deep bass is that it never comes cheap, and the very best deep bass is not only very expensive but also physically very obtrusive indeed — 20 foot architectural horns and the like! But discount the bottom end and settle for seven litre miniature speakers at your peril. Those who choose to pretend that the bottom octave-and-a-bit (20-50Hz) doesn't exist, simply don't know what they're missing.

I've always been a bass nut. Jack Bruce, Jack Cassidy, Phil Lesh and Jaco Pastorius were the main men back when I was discovering rock music, followed by Sly and Robbie *et alia*, so getting the best bottom end has always mattered a lot. Yes, I know bass guitar fundamentals don't really extend down into the very low bass, but there's no denying that they sound a whole lot better — as does the mid-band — when the deep bottom end is properly reproduced. The whole sound opens up in scale, and everything somehow seems to breathe properly.

For me at least, bass performance ranks higher than mid-range transparency and top end sweetness on the scale of priorities. Which in turn probably explains my enthusiasm for speakers such as Linn *Isobariks* and Naim *DBLs* over the years.

My wall-mounted Tannoy 15inch dual-concentric drivers are also distinguished by an extraordinarily open, clean, full and extended bass, thanks to the absence of any cabinetwork and box-loading, though I'll happily concede they'd benefit from somewhat tighter damping (which would almost certainly mess up the midband).

The trouble with a deep bass addiction is that perfection remains perversely elu-

sive. The Tannoy drivers illustrate it perfectly. Wall mounted, they have all the quantity and weight one would possibly want. They sound great with movie soundtracks, but are just a bit on the heavy and sluggish side with music. Inside their designated (and enormous) *Westminster Royal* horn enclosures, the bottom end tightens up beautifully — but the net result is distinctly bass light.

My other current favourite, the Rehdeko 175, is even more extreme. I love its coherence and dynamic integrity, but the lack of weight can be a pain. With music the trade-off seems acceptable enough for the most part, but even Weber Rehde admits his speakers aren't the ideal choice for home cinema sound. With real bass you can have quantity or quality, but getting both at the same time is the difficult part.

All of the speakers mentioned above (save the wall-mounts) also suffer from being relatively enormous, and that fact alone will rule them out for most people.

Those not prepared to let speakers dominate their lifestyles ought to check out the modern active subwoofer, which is an increasingly interesting option, with distinct advantages in cost as well as bulk. I last did so for *Choice* some eighteen months back (March 1994), but have more recently encountered the new-to-Britain MKs from California (*Sessions* last month), as well as undertaking a group test for *Hi-Fi Choice's* sister magazine *Home Entertainment*.

The latter was, of course, oriented towards movie soundtrack reproduction, which seems to follow a somewhat different agenda from music replay. (Defining precise differences is difficult, but to these ears movie soundtracks need weight and drama, whereas music requires more delicacy and tighter timing.)

The first surprise of that recent test was how obviously different the subwoofers sounded from one another, irrespective of the source or the satellite speakers. I'd anticipated that the auditioning would be a

tricky hair-splitting procedure of the does-it-really-matter-anyway variety, but ended up seeking to try out some more upmarket alternatives, just for fun.

The sonic differences between subwoofers are neither small nor subtle, yet the improvement in total system performance can be quite remarkable, as well as exceptionally space- and cost-effective. Trouble is, adding the wrong subwoofer can just as easily result in a degradation of the total sound quality — which, I'm sure, is one reason subs have historically been regarded with suspicion here in Britain.

The shining beacon from that 1994 *Choice* test was REL's £500 *Strata*, a very successful model which remains a key market reference point today. Cheaper subwoofers should be approached with considerable caution; passive models should definitely be avoided; and I've yet to hear anything less expensive than a *Strata* which sounds anywhere near as good. The implication that £500 is the effective minimum subwoofer entry price might be out of line with other hi-fi components, but seems appropriate nonetheless.

The other big surprise of the *Home Entertainment* group test was discovering how much better REL's new £700 *Storm* sounded than the aforementioned *Strata* — well worth the extra £200 in my book. Its outline concept is actually very similar, but the *Storm* is significantly beefed up in every respect, (it's nearly twice as heavy), and the net result is altogether more dynamic, authoritative, and transparent.

Transparency is not a quality I've previously ascribed to subwoofers, yet it seems not merely relevant but critical for hi-fi music applications. The essence of excellent subwoofering should be to add bass weight and extension without hearing the sub in action, and this is where the RELs excel thanks, I suspect, to their very flexible (and gentle) filtering.

I'll be the first to admit that there's still a lot I don't know about subwoofers. There's plenty of exploring still to be done, and some of the experiments are quite difficult to organise. But I think it's high time the UK took the advice printed on MK's cones to 'discover deep bass'. If you don't try it, you won't know what you're missing. ▲



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