

\$2.50

N M P S

the VIDEOPHILE

June/July 1981

Issue #31



The Videodisc Question/*The Videophile* Answer

What to Collect . . . and Why

Introducing the World's Smallest Betamax



New dimensions in video.

Enhance the performance of your video system with the addition of Vidicraft quality video components. Our line of image enhancers, stabilizers and video faders is designed to give you the most from your video at an affordable price.

The new **Detailer I** is an image enhancer designed to improve the performance of Beta, VHS and $\frac{3}{4}$ " VCRs. By boosting high frequency picture information, it effectively increases detail and sharpness, providing better video dubs and quality recordings both off-the-air and from your video camera. The Detailer I features a built-in distribution amplifier providing three video outputs, and a core control that reduces the video noise level (snow) brought out by extreme enhancement.

The **Detailer II** is our professional image enhancer. Used for recording, dubbing or viewing it results in greater picture quality by increasing detail and sharpness, giving new dimension to your original or multi-generation tapes. Separate controls provide flexibility for dealing with a wide variety of material, allowing you to reach the proper detail to sharpness ratio. The Detailer II incorporates a built-in video and audio switcher as well as a video distribution amplifier providing four video outputs.

Eliminate prerecorded tape problems with the **Guard Stabilizer**. Most prerecorded video cassettes are copy-guarded to prevent you from making duplicates. Many television sets however will not play prerecorded tapes because the copyguard causes the picture to roll and jitter. The Guard Stabilizer is designed to eliminate this problem by completely removing the coyguard from the video signal.

Our **Guard Stabilizer/RF converter** combines the features of the Guard Stabilizer with the additional feature of a built-in RF converter. Use this unit the same way as the original Guard Stabilizer, to remove the copyguard from prerecorded tapes. In addition, the Guard Stabilizer/ RF converter enables you to convert any video or audio source to RF, providing direct access to any television set.

Create your own fade outs and fade ins with the **Video Fader**. Operating with black and white or color video, it provides fade control ranging between full video and video black. Use the Video Fader for effect or to clean up edits made when dubbing out commercials and editing tapes. Add video black for leader or filler. Place the Video Fader in line between two VCRs for adding fades to dubbed tapes or use it in line between your camera and VCR.

Cabinets are all anodized metal with a black case and midnight blue face.

For the location of the dealer nearest you, call us at (503) 231-4884 or for dealers in GA, AL, MS, AR, KY, NC, SC, MO, LA contact Southland Video Distributors, (800) 238-3274, within TN call 372-0181.

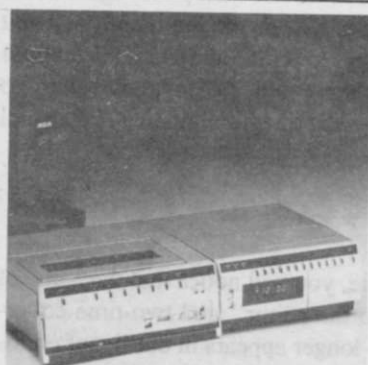
vidicraft inc.
u.s. manufacturers of quality video components

There is an incessant influx of novelty in the world and yet we tolerate incredible dullness.

—H. D. Thoreau (1817-1861)



Product Reports 15



CES Preview 33



Tape Reviews 53

Editor/Publisher:
Jim Lowe

General Manager:
Joyce Hilliard

Technical Editor:
Marcus F. Wielage

Technical Staff:
Mike Clark
Dave Crow
John Fleming
Joe Mazzini

Circulation Manager:
Lois Watson

Office Staff:
Jeanne Oglesby
Keith Holland

Contributors:
Gary Bourgois
Kerry H. Decker
J.M. Edelman, M.D.
Ted Reinhart
Art Vuolo

Assistant to the Editor:
Sharon Lowe

the VIDEOPHILE

THE VOICE OF VIDEO FANDOM

CONTENTS

	Page
TV Wiggles	Your Editor 6
Ask The Videophile	8
The Videophile's Newsletter	9
Product Reports	15
Shooting the Shuttle	Kerry H. Decker 26
What to Collect—and Why	Your Editor 27
Advertisers Index	32
CES Preview	33
Letters	36
The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly	38
The Videodisc Question	Marcus F. Wielage 39
State of the Art	Art Vuolo 44
Satellite TV	J.M. Edelman, M.D. 45
Tele-Communication	Gary Bourgois 48
How-2—the patch bay	Marcus F. Wielage 50
Tape Reviews	53
Western Roundup	Ted Reinhart 56
Mini-Ads	59
Back Issues	68 & 69

The Videophile (ISSN 0164-5862) springs from the private sea and is published bi-monthly at 2003 Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee, FL 32301. Controlled circulation postage is paid at Miami, FL and Tallahassee, FL. A six-issue subscription is \$14 in the United States, its possessions, Canada and Mexico (U.S. Funds). First Class mail subscriptions are \$20, also for six issues. Single copy, \$2.50. This is Vol. 2, No. 16 (#31), the June/July, 1981 issue. Entire contents are copyright 1981 © 1981 by Small Potatoes Publishing Co., Inc. World rights are reserved. Letters of comment are assumed to be for publication unless a contrary intention is clearly stated. Postmaster: send form 3579 to *The Videophile*, 2003 Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee, FL 32301. No part of this publication, particularly the product reviews, may be reprinted without the written permission of the publisher. As to whether it's true that most video shops decline to carry this magazine because they don't want their customers to have access to the sort of information that regularly appears within these pages, we can only remark: Do large mammals of the species *Ursus Americanus* occasionally evacuate their bowels within the boundaries of a dense growth of underbrush and trees? Video shops and other specialty outlets who do wish to carry us should contact: Hal Shuster, New Media Irjax, 1675 Starkey Road, Largo, FL 33540 (813-535-4475). VIDEOPHILE is a registered trademark of Roscor Corporation and is being used herein under license from Roscor Corporation.

T V WIGGLES

The development of our little publishing venture has passed another milestone with the official incorporation of "Small Potatoes Publishing Company" and the ascendancy of your trepid editor/publisher to the further titles of president and chairman of the board. Of course I am also retaining my positions as proofreader and backup paster-upper. What it all means is that we are attempting to stabilize our financial position and get ourselves squared around to where we can proceed to develop some of the plans that have been neglected for far too long.

By the time you read this we hope to be launching a rather large scale drive for new subscribers. Hardly a day goes by that we are not "discovered" by some new reader who eagerly sends in a fat check for a subscription and all the back issues. We suspect that there are thousands of such deprived souls out there in videoland who would cheerfully send in their money if only they knew of our existence. So, over the next few months, through a combination of direct mailing promotion, advertisement in other publications and other means, we expect to make our presence known to as many potential videophiles as possible. It will not be possible for us to cull our present subscribers' names from the mailing lists that we expect to be using, so don't be surprised if one of our subscription flyers lands in your mailbox sometime this summer. If you do happen to get one, please be good enough to pass it along to someone else who might be interested.

★★★

I continue to get a number of calls and letters from those of you who are concerned that *The Videophile* will get too big, too slick, and will lose the very essence that has characterized it from the beginning. May I assure you that as long as I continue to hold a controlling interest, this will not be the case. In order to continue our present efforts and to hopefully bring you even more of the type of coverage that we feel you want most, it is imperative that we increase our circulation to the point that our unit costs are significantly reduced. This would assure us of enough income to pay the printer, the post office, the phone company, the rent, etc., etc. and to also begin to pay ourselves something for the time and creative effort involved in publishing a quality magazine. Yes, after five years of laboring for love, we want to make a profit, but an honest profit based upon the continuing desire, as home video enthusiasts ourselves, to publish a magazine that will inform, enlighten and entertain our readers in the manner to which they have become accustomed.

★★★

You will notice that we have raised the price on several of our back issues. This is due to the fact that supplies are beginning to be depleted. There are fewer than 200 copies remaining of #20 and #21, and fewer than 700 of #'s 13, 19 and 26. We may very well need to raise their prices again in the next issue. We're not trying to gouge you, really. It's just that we would prefer to have them "in print" and available to those of you who *really* want them, rather than allow them to become "sold out" to new readers who automatically order all the back issues.

★★★

On a strictly personal note, you will notice that the name of our long-time "assistant to the editor" and two-time coverperson, Sharon Wright, no longer appears in our list of editorial credits. You will also notice that the name Sharon Lowe now occupies that spot . . . reflecting the result of a rather joyous occasion that took place May 2nd just past. In lieu of flowers, you may send blank video cassettes (either format, Fuji, Sony and TDK preferred) to the happy couple c/o *The Videophile*.

★★★

Speaking of cassette tapes, we're considering the formation of a sort of "clearinghouse" for used video cassettes. If you are, perhaps, changing formats, getting out of the hobby or simply desirous of turning some excess tapes into cash, but don't want to advertise them locally or wait a long time for a response, let us hear from you. Similarly, if you are interested in buying used tape in quantity (at least 10), drop us a line and we will keep your name and phone number on file.

Here's how we expect it to work. If you have some used tape to sell, write or call us describing the number of tapes, condition, format, length and brand. *Do not* tell us what is recorded on them, if anything. We don't want to know! Also let us know the price you expect to realize for the entire lot. Don't expect too much. My recent experience has been that standard-length used tape (Beta L-500, VHS T-120) can be purchased in quantity for something like \$5-\$10 per cassette, depending on brand and condition.

If you are interested in *buying* used tape, let us know what format and quantities you would be interested in and the price you would be willing to pay. Do not request specific titles or even general areas of interest. We are talking about the sale

and purchase of the tape itself, *not* programming.

If there is sufficient response to this idea we may be able to give potential sellers an immediate price quote, and inform potential buyers of what we have on hand and at what price we can offer it. Naturally, our selling price would have to be a tad above our cost, and there would also be postage or UPS charges. For the moment, we will have to limit participation in this experiment to residents of the continental United States.

★★★

It seems that almost no special collectors interest is so narrow as to preclude a publication's being directed at its adherents. I have before me the first issue (March 1981) of "Film Clipper's Journal," the magazine of the slide collector. Editor/Publisher Rory M. MacAuley was kind enough to send me a copy, along with quite an array of film clips from his collection.

What's it all about? Well, it seems that some folks collect the individual little clips from 35mm motion pictures and mount them for display by slide projectors. As I understand it, most of these clips were originally part of the "coming attractions" trailer for the motion picture. It's just another way to collect your favorite films, without the investment in complete 16mm prints or videotape copies.

FCJ is not just a four sided flyer, but a surprisingly big 58 page mimeographed and stapled amateur magazine. Some of

the contents (eg. "The Unreleased Music of Elvis Presley") have no obvious connection with film clip collecting, but if you have an interest in such goings on, or think you might, there are certainly enough articles, tips and advertisements to justify your expenditure. Film Clipper's Journal is published quarterly and is available for \$2.00 a copy (or \$6 for 4 issues) from: FCJ, c/o Rory M. MacAuley, 25142 Dale, Roseville, MI 48066. Wanna know the most amazing part? FCJ is only the latest of *two* publications for clip/slide collectors, the other being "The Clipper Trade Ship." Rory says "the hobby is big enough for two magazines."

★★★

Many thanks to all of you who were concerned enough about the delay in the printing of our previous issue to call and inquire about our well being. Special thanks and mention this issue is also due to: Stan Sieger, Jack Frost, Ron Novinson, John Koenig, Fred Kawabata, David Scott, and Tom O'Brien. One of the next two issues will be our special Fifth Anniversary Issue (see how organized we are). We're looking forward to it and the many more to come.

ALL THE BEST

Jim



Ask the Videophile

L-830 PARANOIA

Q: *I've owned my SL-7200 for almost five years, and aside from having to get its heads replaced twice, haven't had any major problems with it so far. I've been happy recording TV shows and movies off-air at X-1, and rejoiced when the long awaited 90-minute L-750 finally came out a year or two ago. However, I've been told by several local dealers that the new L-830 won't work on my machine, and that I could damage my heads by using them. I've used one or two of them so far and can't see any problem, except for a horizontal line that appears at the top of the screen once in awhile. Could the 830's cause any problem on my deck, or am I just being paranoid?*

J.V.H., San Diego, CA

A: Sony, Toshiba, Sanyo and Zenith all advise that the L-830's should only be used on VTR's with the "B III" (X-3) mode, like Sony's SL-5000 series machines, due to a new type of transport used in those recorders. This transport is a little more gentle on tape and doesn't subject it to the rough start-and-stop actions of earlier models like your own 7200. However, we've found that as long as you're very careful with them, the 830's will work in most Beta machines provided you try to play the tapes all the way through and avoid any unnecessary stopping or shuttling. Thin tapes like the 750 and 830 have a tendency to get scratched very easily by older VTR's (symptomized by that horizontal line you described), so beware.

We've found that all of Sony's SLO-300 series industrial machines can also use 750's and 830's with no problem whatsoever, due to their similarly designed solenoid-controlled transports. Be advised that some X-2 machines, like the 8200 and 8600, may require some minor adjustments by your serviceman for best results.

EARTH STATION FAN

Q: *I've become very interested in owning my own Satellite Earth Station, to receive HBO, Showtime, and so on, free of charge in my backyard. So far, we don't have a cable TV system in my neighborhood, and the over-the-air TV station now in town doesn't do a very good job at broadcasting their movies. When will The Videophile print some information on how we can build our own earth stations cheaply?*

G.B., Miami, FL

A: The answer to that is: when we're convinced that their price has gone down enough and their quality has improved to the degree that we can recommend one given system over another. Despite the plethora of interest in Satellite TV receivers, we have yet to find a good-quality system selling for less than \$5,000, which is way out of reach for most, if not all, of our readers. While in some cases a home-made set-up can be

built for thousands less than this, the complexity and difficulty of designing and building the receivers, as well as the high cost of dishes and low-noise amplifiers, make the whole idea very impractical for 99% of us. For the other 1%, we can't recommend more highly the publications being put out by Bob Cooper and his firm as well as the reprints of his articles in Radio-Electronics (\$5.00 from 45 E. 17th Street, New York, NY 10003). We are in the process of talking to some interested satellite-philas as to the possibility of having them do a regular column.

WINNER OF THE "2nd MOST OFTEN ASKED QUESTION" AWARD

Q: *I was recently hooked up to our local cable TV service, which uses a convertor to select the channel and set it to my TV set or VTR on channel 3. My problem is that since the channel selection is done in the convertor, I can't program my recorder to change channels when I'm not home. Is there a way I can modify my VTR to build a CATV convertor inside its tuner section?*

D.T.H., Arlington, VA (and many others)

A: While we think it's next-to-impossible to modify your VTR's varactor tuner to receive all the mid- or super-band CATV channels, there are accessory devices on the market called "up-convertors" or "block-convertors" designed to bump up all these frequencies to the UHF band. That way, regular VHF channels like channel 2 go to 43, 4 goes to 45, 5 to 47 and so on. The other CATV channels, which are lettered from A-Z, go all the way from 48 to 83 (depending on the convertor used), and appear in between the low-band VHF channels.

Many distributors, like Vidicor in New York and The Cable Works in California are packaging these convertors with instructions and accessory cables for about \$60-70. Be advised that in some cases, you can buy the convertor separately for as little as \$30 by purchasing one directly from a local CATV supply firm or from dealers like Muntz Electronics (7700 Densmore Avenue, Van Nuys, CA 91406). Also, Magnavox sells their MX-40CCBK02 "Channel Plus" convertor for \$27.50 direct from their parts division (P.O. Box 28, Greenville, TN 37743).

Although this will solve your programming problems, using an up-convertor creates a few other difficulties: first, since you're using your UHF section for all your cable tuning, you won't be able to record ordinary off-air UHF channels without a little re-patching. Also, the up-convertors we've seen don't always perform flawlessly, adding a little grain and/or co-channel interference (seen as a series of rolling diagonal lines) to the picture. Also, due to the limitations of varactor-tuned VTR's, most of which have a maximum of 14 available channels, you won't be able to program all of the available CATV channels with some systems, especially those that offer 20 or 30 channels. (Luckily, no more than 14 of these are ones you'll want to record anyway.)

We're hoping that in the near future, manufacturers will start

The Videophile's Newsletter



LPTV -- you'll want to remember those letters, because in the not too far distant future they are going to be as familiar to the world of videophilia as are the now well known abbreviations VCR, RCA, VHS and S/M. "Low-power television" has been mentioned in these pages several times in the past, but the shape and prospect of this extraordinary innovation is now becoming more clear, and I can tell you that is the most exciting thing to hit home video in a long time. The impact should be every bit as great as was that of color TV, cable TV and the video cassette recorder. Indeed, I am so excited about the future of LPTV that we are devoting an inordinate amount of space in this issue's newsletter section to a condensed reprint of the following article on the subject by Robert Ryan of the Knight-Ridder newspaper chain, Washington Bureau.

At first glance you'd be hard pressed to find two men with less in common than Ted Turner, the multimillionaire sports and television impresario, and James M. Groover, the South Georgia hog farmer. Yet both men share a common dream. Each hopes to become a leader in TV's second generation by lashing together a network of cut-rate short-range television stations that will fundamentally alter the viewing habits and tastes of America.

To be sure, there are differences in their approaches. Turner's ambitious venture includes plans for more than 100 low-power stations that will rebroadcast portions of his Cable News Network, plus selections from his Atlanta-based "Super Station", WTBS Channel 17. Groover's plans are more modest. He's hoping for a half-dozen or so stations in such isolated Georgia and North Florida communities as Tallahassee, Valdosta, and Waycross. "These will be Christian stations," Groover said. "We want to reach the people who are not going to church."

Groover and Turner are not alone. Since last September, when the FCC began considering applications for low-power stations, more than 5000 applications have been filed. Indeed the FCC has temporarily halted the receipt of new applications, probably until Fall. "It's incredible," said Don Crosby, a senior attorney with the FCC. "Everybody wants to get into the low-power television industry, and it doesn't even exist yet. There's no such thing as low-power television. It's a proposal that exists only in the minds of the FCC."

The proposals for LPTV that have flooded the commission are as varied as the applicants themselves. The latter range from such corporate giants as Allstate Insurance Co. to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Both NBC and ABC have filed applications, as have a host of newcomers.

Many of the applications include repetitious, standard promises of serving a community's unmet needs, especially those of minorities. Nonetheless, a number of creative proposals have been filed:

-- Microband Corp. of America, an established, New York-based computer services and communications firm, has proposed a two-way broadcast operation that would combine telephone and television service. Similar to the QUBE cable system, Microband would allow viewers to vote on public issues, purchase items from video catalogs, call plays during a football game or even determine the outcome of a broadcast story.

-- The American Christian Television Service, with financial backing from the Southern Baptist Convention, plans what is probably the most ambitious religious network. With dozens of applications filed throughout the Sunbelt states, the organization would offer its viewers religious services and dramatic shows produced in its own production studios in Fort Worth, Texas.

-- The Citizens Television Corp., financed by a Milwaukee-based developer of medical buildings, plans to purchase a New York production firm, the Corporation for Entertainment and Learning. The firm specializes in making films and specials for pay-television outlets such as Home Box Office. Citizens, which plans to broadcast over its own \$3.7 million satellite system, boasts a number of sports and entertainment personalities on its board of directors. Among them are Arthur Ashe, Pearl Bailey, Lou Rawls, Rita Moreno and Ruby Dee.

-- Frontier Broadcasting, a group of five regional networks, would feature entertainment and cultural events in a pay-TV format. They claim to have an extensive film library and raise the possibility of "video disc-jockeying", through which a station could air viewers' requests ranging from a 1970 baseball game to Casablanca to Julia Child cooking a souffle.

One minority-owned venture calls for "a global cultural and television enterprise" that eventually would provide news, special features and local programming throughout the world. Like many applicants, the International Cultural Network is short on assets (\$8900) and big on dreams (projected annual revenues after five years: \$225 million). The mission of this network, according to its application, is to create "a cultural and television center that will attract the masses of the world's population to a festival of man's ancient and contemporary cultures in an atmosphere exciting the senses and dedicated to advancing peace, harmony and understanding in our new world community."

The boom has been spurred by a combination of financial, technological and regulatory conditions that have many experts predicting major changes in broadcasting. LPTV could very well lead to the creation of as many as three or four new networks that would rival the existing giants. The FCC hasn't even adopted final regulations at this point and investors don't know if a temporary limit of 15 stations per owner will be made permanent.

But the investors do know this: LPTV will be freed from strict programming rules that force full-service stations to provide minimum amounts of local programming. In addition, the new stations will be able to rely on various revenue generating techniques, including advertising, donations and pay-TV subscriptions from viewers with rented decoders capable of unscrambling the coded broadcast.

LPTV also won't have to comply with many of the complicated technical restrictions designed to protect the quality of the existing full-power stations. LPTV applicants can apply for any of the frequencies, both VHF and UHF, but if any new station causes problems for an existing station, the newcomer would have to shut down. Although a low-power station will broadcast with only a fraction of the power of a conventional station, its audience size could be nearly as large. The 12-15 mile optimum range could blanket the vast majority of the population of most cities. With the level of competition as fierce as it is expected to be, advertising costs could run as low as operating costs would permit.

Without question, the biggest spur to the embryonic industry has been the anticipated low cost. A conventional full-power station, even one of modest size, can cost \$2 million. An LPTV station, with less equipment and fewer personnel, can be put into operation for only \$50,000 to \$75,000. Many of the proposed LPTV stations will be little more than "translators", relay stations that rebroadcast satellite transmissions of programs originating from other stations or from specialty syndicated services like Showtime, ESPN or The Movie Channel. And although the FCC might not approve the first applications for months, or even years, the scramble for position has begun. Cable and conventional TV trade groups are jockeying for the low-power market, a low-power specialty magazine is planned (Hmmm?), and consultant firms are gearing up to help potential new broadcasters with their applications and other plans.

* * *

Even here in the backwater North Florida woods, no fewer than eight different groups have applied for Tallahassee LPTV stations. Of these, four propose to provide Christian programming, with a smattering of local coverage of events too small to interest the full-power stations (eg. Little League baseball). The others propose to bring The Movie Channel (pay-TV), an independent from Cincinnati, and the relay signal of our closest NBC affiliate, which at 75-90 miles distance is not picked up too well unless you have cable.

As I see it, the main promise of LPTV lies in two areas:

- the origination of local programming that is so specialized that no larger station could possibly be interested in.

- the creation of specialized national networks through the use of satellite transmission hooked into hundreds of LPTV stations around the country. The success of the recent Space Shuttle virtually assures that relatively low cost communications satellites will soon become available for use by a substantially increased number of broadcasters. It should not then be unusual at all to find new "networks" popping up all over the place.

I do hope that if we are to have hundreds of new TV stations, there will be room for innovation. We already have ESPN, the all-sports network, CNN, the all-news network, and The Christian Network, the all religious channel. It doesn't take much mental energy to imagine quite a number of other specialty channels that should be able to claim a healthy national audience. Among them:

MS-TV, the all feminist network, specializing in programming of particular interest to working women, politically active women, and women who are otherwise interested in programming tailored to the feminist viewpoint, be it related to public service, employment, self defense, financial services, or entertainment.

"FLIX", the all old movie channel that never shows anything except old black and white movies from the '30s and '40s.

The Trash Sports Network, featuring non-stop professional wrestling (even the old shows from the '50s), roller derby, re-runs of Battle of the Network Stars, wrist wrestling, and all that good stuff.

The Money Channel, a 24-hour service for capitalists featuring stock market tickertapes, fast breaking financial news, and all the other fascinating stuff that you now have to get while seated in an overstuffed chair down at the broker's office.

Meet Market, the national video dating channel, through which viewers can select from and possibly even meet and marry other viewers whose video introductions would be displayed for all to critique.

COMRADE, a leftist political channel that could feature interminably boring lectures, slanted views of history, and the usual load of commie bull.

The Videophile Network, featuring ideas that are too good to disclose right now, lest someone rip them off before we have a chance.

Oh, gosh, there are lots more. Why not an all-gay channel, an all travelogue channel, an all medical channel, a senior citizens channel (WOLD?), a channel for atheists, a channel for Jehovah's Witnesses, a national video call-in channel, a channel that runs nothing but old TV shows, ... the possibilities are many and varied.

Will all this speciality fragment us into selfish interest groups that are constantly at each other's throats, or will the potential of this technology lead to a world community in which we can all understand each other and thus achieve the lasting peace that now eludes us? Well, that would seem to be food for thought and a subject for another time.

In the meantime, I would suggest that each of you write to the FCC and to your congressmen in Washington expressing your support for LPTV and for the deregulation of television broadcasting in general. Technology has advanced to the point that it is now possible for television to be as common as is radio. Every community can look forward to having 8 or 10 stations or more. The inevitable arguments of established interests to the contrary notwithstanding, there is absolutely no reason why all these new channels should not come into existence, if the public interest and financial support is present, ... and it is!

Although the success of the video disc systems is somewhat in doubt at this point, there continues to be a flood of news with regard to them. RCA has announced the release of 26 new titles, thus bringing their total to 126. Among the new ones are: "Airplane", "Urban Cowboy", "Goldfinger", "Chinatown", "Harold & Maude", "The Mary Tyler Moore Show, Vol. 1.", "The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman", "Fantastic Voyage", "The Great Escape", "North Dallas Forty", "The Shootist", "King Creole", "The Last Waltz", and "Rock Concert, Vol. 1.", featuring 17 performances by Motown artists, Billy Preston, The Commodores, Smokey Robinson, and Bonnie Pointer. Also: "Richard Pryor -- Live in Concert."

As of April 30, RCA claimed to have sold 52,000 disc players to dealers, an estimated half of which have been sold to customers. RCA says that this compares to 30,000 optical disc players sold over a period of two years. Number of RCA discs sold is said to be 200,000. Of 1132 purchasers responding to an RCA survey, 96.4% are said to have been satisfied with the product or that it exceeded expectations. RCA has reiterated its intention to introduce a stereo disc player in 1982. Division vice president, Dr. Jay J. Brandinger says that a number of special features including stop action, slow motion and random program access are technically possible in the CED system. We'll see.

For those of you who are keeping score, United Artists has announced its support of the yet unavailable "VHD" video disc system.

News from the optical disc camp includes the announcement by Paramount that it has agreed to produce a line of laser video discs under the Paramount Home Video label. Already available (we're told) are: "Ordinary People", "Up in Smoke", "Charlotte's Web", "The Warriors", "Urban Cowboy", "Starting Over", "Airplane", and "The Godfather". The following are in Stereo: "Star Trek-The Motion Picture", "The Elephant Man", "Popeye", "Grease", and "Saturday Night Fever". (Yes, there is some duplication with titles also announced by RCA). Optical discs expected from Paramount before the end of the year include: "Barbarella", "The Longest Yard", "Foul Play", "War of the Worlds", "Heaven Can Wait", and "The Godfather Part II."

* * * *

FUJI has made some exciting announcements with regard to blank video tape. An E-240 cassette has been introduced to the European market, where it is being billed as a 4-hour tape. When available to the U.S. and Canadian markets, the tape will be a "T-160", which, if my handy calculator is correct, would translate into 2:40/5:20/8:00. Yes, that would mean you could get 16 half hour shows on a single tape recorded at the *choke* SLP speed. You could also spend a half hour trying to find the one you wanted to watch. The tape is not currently available here because of the extended tests that it must meet at the three speeds offered in our NTSC system, prior to marketing.



FUJI has also announced development of two high density metal video tapes. The two, a metal video tape (MV) and a vacuum videotape (VV) are said to be the first advance tapes of the '80s to achieve high-density recording wavelengths below the one micron range. The MV tape uses an ultra-fine metal particle magnetic formulation called Super Metalix, to achieve a recording wavelength of 0.5 microns. FUJI says that this represents a significant increase over its "Beridox" formulation, which is now in use for its Beta and VHS tapes. (The Beridox formulation is cobalt-modified Berthollide iron oxide, for you trivia buffs.)

FUJI says that when a MV tape is used on a 1/2-speed VHS recorder with special "sendust" heads, the net result is a +13dB increase in video output over the Beridox tapes. At a recording wavelength of 0.6 microns, improvements in video output and S/N ratio are +17dB and +14dB respectively.

What it all means, of course, is that much better quality recordings would be possible at slow speeds, or that smaller cassettes, containing much less tape could be devised to deliver the same quality that we now enjoy. FUJI has supplied samples of MV tape to leading VTR manufacturers, who have begun to develop systems capable of playing them. (In other words: Your's won't.)

However, the other new FUJI tape (VV), which is made via a special vacuum evaporation process, has a cobalt compound magnetic layer, and can be used with a conventional ferrite head VCR. FUJI says that the VV tape has overcome problems that previously plagued vacuum layer tapes, and that the new tape will withstand all the stresses imposed by sophisticated VCR's, including "still framing". Samples of the VV tape have not yet been released.

* * * *

Those of you who can receive the USA Network, via cable or satellite may want to check out a new series entitled "Night Flight" which was to debut June 5. The series will feature rock films and on-location concerts on both Friday and Saturday nights. A two-hour feature will air at approximately 2 A.M., Eastern Time, following the Black Entertainment segment. On Saturday, Night Flight will run twice as long, from 11:00 to 3 A.M. Features announced so far include: "Rust Never Sleeps" with Neil Young, "Quadrophenia" starring The Who, "Tunnelvision", "The Day the Music Died", "Rod Stewart and Faces with Keith Richard", "Jimi Plays Berkeley" with Jimi Hendrix, and "Volunteer Jam" with Charlie Daniels Band.

Warner Brothers has just announced 12 new movies that will be coming up on Pay-TV. Among them: "Oh God! Book II", "The Awakening", "Honeysuckle Rose", "Caddyshack", "Divine Madness", "Black Belt Jones", and "Every Which Way But Loose".

In other Cable/Pay-TV News: ESPN has picked up rights to the Senior Bowl football game for the next three years. // A Federal Judge in Salt Lake City has blocked implementation of a new Utah state law that would seek to regulate the content of cable TV in the state. HBO noted that under the law any film or program containing nudity of any type or degree would be considered indecent. // Showtime will begin 24-hour programming, seven days a week, on July 4.

RCA will join Rockefeller Center Inc. as an equal partner in the development of RCTV, a pay-TV program service. First offering to cable systems is expected to be in 1982. // "PlayCable", an all game TV channel is expected to be available to subscribers this Fall. PlayCable is derived from Mattel's "Intellivision" and will be a 24-hour, 7-day a week channel offering access to the viewers choice of 15 different video games. // CBS Cable, a cultural programming service will debut October 12. It will be fed via Westar III, to cable systems 12 hours per day. // Ted Turner, head of CNN, has filed an anti-trust suit against the three major networks and the White House, claiming that his network is being denied access to news on the same basis as the big three.

* * * * *

When your technical editor lives within driving distance of Palm Springs, we can bring you coverage of the Sony Dealers show (see p. 33). But, it is not our intention to neglect developments in the other camp. The pictures in the opposite column are of new VHS products of particular interest. We'll have more details in the future, but for now they are (top to bottom):

--The Sharp VC-2250, a new "all-in-one" portable unit. The 2-hour recorder has a built-in 24-hour tuner/timer, features forward video search (5 times normal speed), solenoid operation, and a self-contained removable battery pack that can be interchanged with an optional rechargeable battery pack. Suggested retail price: \$999.95.

--Panasonic's new electronic news gathering (ENG) camera/recorder combination that utilizes VHS $\frac{1}{2}$ cassettes. Behind the camera/recorder is the new Panasonic editing system, also for $\frac{1}{2}$ " VHS tape. The press release notes that this equipment is intended for broadcast use only, as its recording time is limited to 20 minutes, and it uses a new recording system that is not compatible with consumer model VHS units.

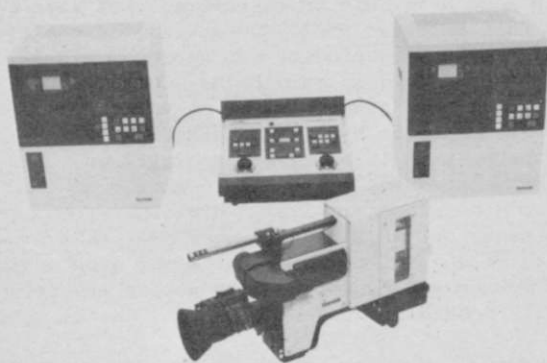
--The Panasonic NV-8050, time lapse recorder. Six hours not enough for you? Then you may want this one which can be set to record 12, 24, 72, 120 or even 240 hours on a single cassette. Ideal for security use, animal behavior studies, or 24-hour spying on your neighbors for periods of up to 10 days. However, this unit too is incompatible with your home-use variety VHS players.

Panasonic has also introduced a high speed VHS tape duplication system that can produce copies of 2-hour or 4-hour VHS videocassettes in approximately four minutes. Each master tape can grind out about 1000 duplicates. We don't have a price on this, but I doubt you'll be wanting one for the home.

RCA has announced four new recorders, among them the top of the line VFT-650 which features a cable ready tuner and wireless remote control. It'll be available in August.

* * * * *

Among new movies being released on tape are "Dumbo", (rental only), "The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh", and new cartoon collections featuring M. Mouse and D. Duck. // MCA has released two Ronald Reagan titles: "The Killers" and "Bedtime for Bonzo". // CBS has released "My Fair Lady". // Video Dimensions has released "Stamp Day For Superman" and "Revenge of TV Bloopers", its third such collection.



Panasonic

The editing system for the new Panasonic electronic news gathering system consists of two editing VTR machines and one editing controller.



Panasonic

Model NV-8050
1/2" Video Cassette Time Lapse Recorder

Rounding it out this time: Kloss Video has gone public with an offering of 310,000 shares. // The discounts on Beta format tapes from MagVid have been extended through July. // ABC Specials in the Fall will include: "The 30th Anniversary of American Bandstand." Also watch for specials featuring: Burt Reynolds, Rodney Dangerfield, Goldie Hawn and Cheryl Ladd. // Attention Dan Rather: Week of May 1 found ABC World News Tonight tied with CBS Evening News in ratings share. // Crown International has released its first package of films to Pay-TV. Titles include: "Galaxina", "Sextette", "Satan's Slave" and "Don't Answer the Phone". // In case you haven't noticed Panorama magazine has gone under as of the June issue. Seems that they just couldn't cut it with only 100,000 circulation. (Sigh) Just goes to show you that success is a relative matter.

The Videophile PRODUCT REPORT

SONY RM-440 AUTOMATIC EDITING CONTROL UNIT

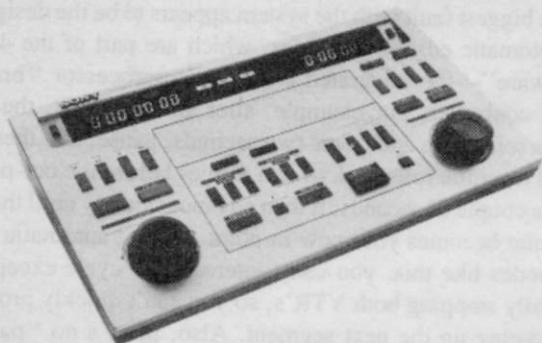
Manufacturer: Sony Corporation, 7-25 Kitashinagawa 60-chome, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo, Japan (distributed by Sony Video Products Company, 9 West 47th Street, New York, NY 10019)

Serial No.: 10123

Source: Reviewer purchase (from Hoffman Video Systems, 800 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90015)

Cost: \$1770.00. Optional accessories include \$110 15-foot 33-pin to 33-pin remote cable and \$110 15-foot 33-pin to 20-pin remote cable (one cable needed for each VTR used with the edit controller).

Despite all the exciting features and capabilities of the SLO-383 (reviewed in issue #30), users will no doubt find operating the editing recorder very difficult and limited without the aid of an external controller. We've already reviewed the earlier RM-430 (issue #23), but Sony's newest editing unit, the RM-440, has several advantages over its predecessors: true high-speed shuttle modes for both the player and the recorder, sophisticated software, and improved accuracy. In addition, Sony has cut the price of the 440 to \$1770—a full \$230 less than the two previous models, the RM-400 and the RM-430, making it the premiere choice for the semi-professional videophile or industrial video producer.



Appearance: The RM-440 looks as slick and impressive as Mr. Sulu's console on the Starship *Enterprise*, with over 30 different buttons, two rotating dials and two red LED digital readouts for exact hours/minutes/seconds and frames tape timing. It's somewhat smaller and lighter than any similar controller on the market at only 15½"×3"×8¾", and it weighs less than five pounds—an incredible achievement considering the greater size, weight and complexity of earlier editing units.

Essentially, the 440 gives you complete control over one editing VTR and one playback VTR, allowing you to slave one to the other for precise starts and stops. Since most, if not all, editing machines require at least a five-second pre-roll before editing—that is, enough time for the VTR's to come up to speed from a dead stop—trying to accomplish professional results without an editing controller is like trying to put a spare tire on your car with a pair of pliers. In short, it can be done, but it's a lot easier with a little mechanical assistance.

Two sets of five buttons provide complete Stop, Rewind, Play, Fast-Forward, and Pause operation of two VTR's, which can be interfaced with any of Sony's 2000-series ¾" or SLO-300 series industrial Betamax decks. These controls are located on the left and right sides of the controller; the right side contains a duplicate set for the player, deleting the record functions. Also provided are Search buttons and rotating "Bidirex" knobs for each deck, which are used to place the machines in the variable-speed mode from 1/20 to 8 times normal speed, forward or reverse.

The center section of the 440 contains two buttons for Edit In and two for Edit Out, allowing you to instruct the controller on the exact frame at which you want the edit to begin and end. An "Entry" button places this information into the 440's memory. Two trim buttons are provided to alter this edit point before or after the previous setting one frame at a time. For example, if you find that your edit has occurred a half-second late, you can automatically re-do it at the proper point by holding down the "Edit In" button while tapping the "Trim-" (trim minus) button fifteen times to signify 15 frames (half a second). The LED display will automatically change to reflect the new edit point.

Also found on the right side are two buttons for Assemble and Insert, which initiate these modes on the editing VTR, as well as Video/Audio 1/Audio 2 buttons for selecting any combination of these for the Insert mode. The main control

buttons on the RM-440 are the five buttons at the bottom, labeled "Preview," "Return/Jump," "Review," "Auto Edit," and "End." Of these, "Auto Edit" is the most important. When depressed, it automatically causes the edit to be made, once the In point is established. "Review" lets you check the edit after you've finished. "Preview" lets you rehearse the edit to make sure that the player and editor are properly cued, and that the edit points you've selected are the correct ones. "Return/Jump" is used to help speed up the editing process by taking the recorder back to the Edit In point in the Preview mode, or five seconds before the Edit Out point during the Review mode.

The 440's twin LED readouts tell you the exact hours/minutes/seconds and frames location of both the playback and record VTR's—a considerable improvement over the RM-430, which displayed the minutes and frames only. Apparently, the hour indicator was added to facilitate using the 383's with L-750's and other longer tapes. Back-lit red indicators for "In" and "Out" show the predetermined edit points for both the player and recorder, and small reset buttons are provided for each display to return them to 0:00:00:00.

The back of the 440 features two large 33-pin jacks used to connect the optional RCC-5F cables to two SLO-383's. Alternatively, RCC-5E 33-pin to 20-pin cables can be used to connect older $\frac{3}{4}$ " or industrial Beta decks that use Sony's standard 20-pin remote sockets. Two switches are provided for letting the controller know whether the recorder or player has reverse-motion capability. Since currently only the SLO-383, VO-2860A and 2260 have this capability, you'll need to switch it off when using any other Beta or $\frac{3}{4}$ " VTR's. For our tests, we used two SLO-383's, both of which have reverse-motion, so we left this switch only.

Normally, the round "Bidirex" Search dials automatically place either the recorder or the player into the search mode when they're turned one way or the other. However, if the rear panel Direct/Step switch is placed into the "Step" position, the search mode will be initiated only when the front-panel Search button is depressed and the dial is turned. Pre-roll time can be adjusted from 5 seconds to 10 seconds via another rear panel switch, and a Frame switch is provided for using the RM-440 either with 30-frame NTSC U.S.-standard tapes or 25-frame PAL or SECAM foreign-standard recordings. For our tests, we left the Search dial switch in the Direct mode and edited on a 5-second pre-roll.

Features/Operation: Sony's 75-page 3-language instruction manual gave us enough information to confuse us for hours (in English, French and German, yet), due mostly to their strange Japanese translations. (Example: "The function of this unit is limited to the function of the videocassette recorder to be connected to this unit. Only the function of the used videocassette recorder can work with this unit." Wha?) With our limitations of time and available space we can't possibly go into every minute detail on the operation of the RM-440, but we can cover a couple of standard editing

operations to give you a good idea as to how it works and what it can accomplish.

There are two basic ways to edit with the RM-440: "Dynamic," which doesn't require entering In and Out points, and "Programmable," which does. To accomplish a dynamic edit, you simply find the proper In points on the source and record machines, leaving them in the Pause mode, and then hit the Auto Edit button. Both machines will roll back five seconds, pause momentarily, then simultaneously go into playback until the record machine noiselessly clicks into the record mode at the appropriate moment. To stop the edit, you press the End button. It's that simple.

Programmable edits are accomplished by again finding the In points on both the player and the recorder, leaving them in the Pause mode as before. This time, however, you depress the entry and In buttons for both the recorder and the player, entering the locations into the 440's memory. Next, you roll the player forward until the scene you're putting together comes to an end, at which point you again place the machine into the pause mode and depress the Entry and Out buttons. This technique is useful mostly in the Insert mode, when you're adding new material right in the middle of an existing sequence, such as reaction shots, or for scenes that have to run for an exact length of time.

As with all editing VTR's, insert edits must be made on tapes that have an existing control track—that is, a stable prerecorded signal recorded on the entire length of the tape. This way, the editing machine can drop in a new segment in the middle of a scene as described above without a glitch before or after the edits. A color camera or professional video black generator can be used to generate a good, stable signal for preparing "insertable" tapes in this manner. Naturally, for regular Assemble-mode editing, you can use any old tape, even a blank one, as long as it has enough of a stable signal at the beginning so that it can roll backwards five seconds for the pre-roll.

Performance: The RM-440/SLO-383 combination works together just as well as they look—which is just great in every way. During hundreds of trial edits, the accuracy on the system was within 2 frames (1/15 of a second). Unfortunately, when the edit was previewed, an additional frame or two was lost on each rehearsal. This is to be expected on any low-cost control track-type editor like the 440.

The biggest fault with the system appears to be the design of the automatic editing functions, which are part of the 440's "software"—the integrated circuit microprocessor "brain" of the controller. For example, after an insert edit, the two VTR's roll for an additional two seconds, pause, and then the record machine rolls back to two frames before the out-point. After a couple of seconds, it then advances slowly until the old out-point becomes your new in-point. During automatic cueing modes like this, you can't interrupt the cycle except by manually stopping both VTR's, so you can't quickly proceed with cueing up the next segment. Also, there's no "panic"

button on the 440. If you're in the process of pre-rolling each VTR for an edit and suddenly discover that you've made a mistake, again, the only solution is to abort the edit by quickly hitting "Stop" on both VTR's. Finally, the edit memories have a habit of retaining the previous edit point long after you've used it, requiring that you re-enter a new point for each edit with the Entry In/Out controls.

Another problem experienced with either $\frac{1}{2}$ " or $\frac{3}{4}$ " editing is "wrong-field edits," which appear as an irritating "whip" or glitch in the upper third of the frame of the edit when it plays back. This is caused by the inability of most videocassette recorders to place the proper video fields one right after the other during an edit. Although the SLO-383's have the proper circuitry to guard against this problem, we did discover an additional drawback of the recorder: occasionally, a one-frame glitch can be seen on the edit point, with two images slightly superimposed on top of each other. This is apparently a result of the azimuth recording system used in the Beta and VHS formats, making it difficult to separate the two fields (which make up one video frame) during editing. Luckily, these glitches aren't very obvious most of the time and when they are, you can simply re-do the edit until it looks acceptable. We didn't have to re-do any edit more than once during most of our tests, and noted that this problem was clearly more the fault of the 383 than the RM-440 itself.

Conclusion: Other than these minor drawbacks, the system did an extremely fine job and provided a considerable improvement over any competing editor in the \$2-3,000 price range. The only better controller would be a professional system like Convergence's excellent ECS-90, which sells for \$2500 more than the RM-440 and is way out of league for most videophiles or low-budget industrial users.

MFW Comments: I know it may be difficult for some of you to appreciate, but for those of us who have been working in video for a number of years, putting together a complete editing system like the 383/440 combination described above for under \$9,000 was an absolute impossibility until this year. In the past, the cheapest thing available was Sony's old VO-2850 and RM-400, which proved to be both unreliable and costly (over \$12,000 in 1975, and even more expensive today with updated U-Matic systems). While $\frac{1}{2}$ " reel-to-reel editors have been available since the early 70's, none have offered the convenience, accuracy and overall quality of Sony's SLO-383 and have all but vanished from the market.

I have to agree with Mike and say that I was very impressed with the capabilities and multiple features of the RM-440. While I know that its description and operation described over the past few pages is, by necessity, somewhat complex and may be perhaps too advanced for the casual video buff, those of you who are looking for ways to get more out of your hobby need look no further for an excellent, low-cost editing system. I also know full well that most of us are not quite at the level where we can easily afford \$3750 recorders and \$1800 editors,

but I felt that our readers should at least be informed as to how these systems work to prepare for the eventual day when these prices will come down to a consumer level—say, under \$3000 for all three components. In addition, I know there may well be several of you who might be able to pool your resources and share a system like the one described here. While I can't tell you that you'll now be able to go out and shoot *Citizen Kane* on tape, I can say that, at last, the tools are available to allow us to produce good quality low-budget tapes with extremely professional results. And that is nothing less than an earth-shattering achievement, almost as significant as the $\frac{1}{2}$ " revolution started by Sony and Matsushita over ten years ago.

After using the system for about half a day, I hit upon a couple of methods to get around the irritating automatic functions described by Mike earlier in his review. After the edit, you can simply reset both LED readouts to "O", which will automatically cause the 440 to "forget" any previous edit points, and then hit both stop buttons for more rapid cueing. Personally, I tend to resent any automatic controls overriding my operation of a machine, and wish that Sony had provided a manual mode similar to that offered with the RM-430, which in some cases seemed to work a little faster than the 440. However, the 440's "Biridex" Search dials, similar to those used on Sony's broadcast editors, along with its programmable in and out edit points and lower costs, make it a much, much better choice than the older controller.

So, although the \$8530 price tag of the SLO-383PAC system (which includes the RM-440 and two SLO-383's) may seem somewhat high, this is honestly a bargain compared with the much more costly systems of yesteryear mentioned before. And, like we said elsewhere, it will, almost without a doubt, usher in a whole new era of low-cost video production. CBS has already ordered dozens of these new units (in a custom-designed configuration, of course) to aid in the off-line post-production of their new film-style videotape shows. Even though they're not for everyone, the RM-440/SLO-383 combo should be a real boon to video groups and diehard enthusiasts looking for a way to get into semi-professional production and editing. It's a must for video producers whose imaginations are far greater than their budgets.

As we go to press, we've discovered two additional major design problems with the RM-440, namely in its use and operation with SLO-320 and SLP-300 Beta decks. Unlike the previous RM-400 and RM-430 edit controllers, the 440 doesn't work at all well with these Beta decks. First, the controller attempts to make a "flying start" edit by rolling the deck(s) in the play mode, then activating the record circuitry at the edit point on the recorder, which results in a profusion of glitches and instabilities. Even worse, the 440 itself puts out a slight amount of interference which shows up in the video outputs of most VTR's to which it is connected. This interference appears as a series of horizontal multi-colored lines in the image, and can usually be eliminated by separating the RM-440 from the VTR's by a minimum of five or ten feet. We will be going into this in depth in an update in our next issue.

TOSHIBA V-8000 BETA VIDEOCASSETTE RECORDER

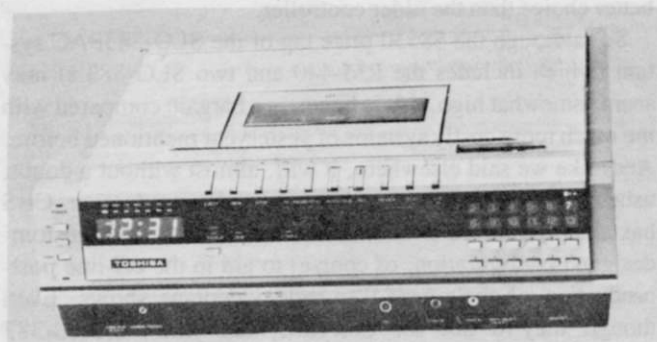
Manufacturer: Toshiba Corporation, 1-6 Uchisaiwai-cho, 1-chome, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100, Japan (distributed by Toshiba America, Inc., 82 Towata Rd., Wayne, NJ 07470)

Serial No.: 86174249

Source: Reviewer purchase

Cost: \$1,245.00 (includes remote control and various antenna cables and adaptors)

Toshiba has always been one Beta manufacturer that has stayed well out of the spotlight. They've allowed Sony to take most of the bows, and have done little more than just keep up with the other Japanese companies, rather than attempting any truly innovative product planning on their own. The V-8000 represents a significant departure from this trend, which started with the V-5210 (identical to Sony's SL-8200 and, in fact, manufactured by them for Toshiba), and leading to the 5310 and the programmable V-5425 (reviewed in #25).



Appearance: If looks were everything, the V-8000 would probably be the hands-down winner over most of the competing consumer Beta decks presently available in North America. It's lightweight (28½ lbs.) and compact (18½"x6"x14½"), with a smartly-finished silver-grey plastic and simulated walnut plastic cabinet. Its low-profile appearance is enhanced by the use of all-solenoid transport function controls, which rest at a slight angle in front of the cassette compartment.

The lefthand side of the machine has three separate pushbuttons controlling "on," "off," and the "timer" mode; green lights nearby indicate which of these have been selected. The cassette compartment rises up automatically whenever the power is turned on, provided no cassette is in the unit at the time. This compartment is nicely damped by a multiple gear action, and, when closed, rests flush with the deck's lid to present an attractive package—almost "semi-professional" in

appearance.

Also at the left side of the machine is the deck's green LED clock. A rectangular LED rides across the top of this display to illuminate the days of the week, which are printed in silver letters. These were easy to read in a bright living room, but a little difficult to decipher in subdued lighting. Also provided are indicator lights for the built-in TV/VCR RF switcher, the dew light sensor, and one for the double-speed (twice X-2) playback mode. An internal heater automatically activates whenever moisture is sensed on the video head.

The top front side of the V-8000 contains 10 silver soft-touch piano keys for the main transport controls, including Eject, Rewind, Stop, Fast-Forward, Pause/Still, Audio Dub, Record, Review (reverse BetaScan), Play, and Cue (forward BetaScan). All of the function buttons except Stop are illuminated by little lights that rest just below the printed control function. Both the Record and Audio Dub keys are slightly recessed to prevent inadvertent erasures and to give them a tactile distinction from the other keys. The Record button also has a second red status light built into the key itself. Front and center on the leading edge of the deck is a large Tracking control knob and a switch to allow you to turn the automatic rewind feature off, a feature I haven't seen in any similarly-equipped VTR.

The tuner section is to the right of the deck and has a twelve-pushbutton varactor layout, as opposed to the more common 14-channel units provided by most other manufacturers. The indicator lights for these buttons are located an inch or two above them, which I found a little confusing. More than once I pressed the button for channel 8 expecting to get channel 2, a natural impulse because of their closely-spaced proximity on the deck. But this seemed to be only a minor drawback.

Recessed into the lower left edge of the V-8000's chassis are the deck's remaining controls, including the speed selector switch, which Toshiba has curiously labeled "SP/LP" instead of the more common "BII/BIII" or "X-2/X-3"—apparently, Toshiba's idea of a VHS joke. Next to that is a sub-mini phone jack for remote camera pause (labeled "Camera Trigger"). The lower right edge has several jacks, including a standard ¼" phone jack for an external mike and two phono jacks for auxiliary audio and video inputs. This is a departure from the standard "Beta camp" practice of using mini-phone jacks for all audio inputs, duplicating the setup found in most VHS recorders. A Line/TV selector switches between the two sets of inputs for recording, and an 8-pin DIN jack is provided for the wired remote control.

The back of the V-8000 is fairly conventional, with F jacks for VHF inputs and outputs, terminal posts for UHF, and two phono jacks for audio and video out. Also found is a switch for the channel 3/4 RF modulator.

Features/Operation: The biggest feature about the Toshiba V-8000 is also, from my point of view, one of its biggest disappointments. Where Toshiba obviously had the

capability of making this a "pseudo SL-J9," complete with full-function remote control, they instead chose to deliver only half of these remote features, packaged in a somewhat chintzily-made plastic box. The VC-101 controller is about 6"x2" and has six small black "doorbell"-type pushbuttons for Pause, 2X (double-speed playback), Review (reverse scan), Play, Cue (forward scan), and Stop. Toshiba calls this "full remote capability" in the product literature, but it doesn't even come close in my book. While you can start and stop the *playback* of a tape by remote, you can't initiate the record mode from your easy chair. For that, you've got to go to the deck. True high-speed rewind and fast-forward are also omitted from the controller, as is the 40X "Super-star Scan" mode, which can only be initiated at the deck itself.

The V-8000's freeze-frame feature is displayed with an uncorrected noise bar in the picture, not unlike Sony's SL-5400 and 5600. The double-speed mode works adequately and, as a bonus, doesn't mute the audio as with most comparable VTR's. When we learned of this feature, we thought, "aha, maybe it'll play back X-1!" By activating the double-speed mode and adjusting the tracking control carefully, the picture becomes watchable, but only barely. It's definitely inferior to the quality of X-1 playback from comparable 5000-series Sony machines, possibly due to the X-2/X-3 pre-emphasis/de-emphasis technique used to improve slow-speed video performance.

One of Toshiba's biggest selling points for the V-8000 is its 40X "SuperScan" search mode. Let's clear up some confusion about that numbers game right away. The 40X speed is its *top* speed in X-3, which you'll get only when the tape pack is nearly gone and most of the program is on the take-up reel. At the beginning of the cassette, when the supply tape is larger, the SuperScan speed is much slower, around 20X. In other words, the precise speed of the scan, just as on most other consumer Beta decks, will vary depending on where you are in the tape. The X-2 scan speed varies between 7 and 20 times according to Toshiba, but you'll have to take Toshiba's word for that one, however. The reason: the picture in X-2 search is totally undecipherable! Apparently, Toshiba left out the circuitry needed to stabilize this mode in an effort to keep the costs down; the X-2 still-framing is likewise very poor.

The "Super-star Scan" feature does deserve a little praise, at least for X-3. At 40X (top speed), the picture is filled with a dozen or more horizontal noise bars. The picture moves by very fast—damn fast, as a matter of fact. For rapid location of desired scenes, I found it to be a real boon. After awhile, the 20X variable speed BetaScan on the SL-5800 seemed almost sedate compared to the Toshiba. I liked this feature on the V-8000 best of all, but wish that they had managed to place its control on the remote, as well as allowing it to work at X-2. The only search mode available on the remote is the "normal" scan speed of 7-17X.

Not surprisingly, the V-8000 lacks slow-motion capability, but then as of this writing, only the SL-5800, SL-2000, and Zenith VR-9750 U.S. Beta decks have this function. One

thing I did like about the Toshiba was its locking search buttons. Instead of having to keep your finger pressed against the button to activate the scan, you only have to touch the button once and release it; it will continue to scan until you depress another function button. The Toshiba responded well to rapid-multi-function cueing and recueing, by means of its all-solenoid transport, which employs logic circuitry to avoid tape stretching and other mishaps. Only once, after much prodding, did I manage to make a rapid function change rough enough to shut the machine off, due to excessive tape slack.

I found another major disappointment in that the V-8000 is not programmable. It's limited to daily one-channel recording, although it can be set to tape the same show daily for a week until the tape runs out. Considering its fairly high list price (nearly \$1250), I think that Toshiba could have come up with at least a 4-event/7-day programmable VTR similar to the middle-priced VHS decks from Panasonic and RCA (eg. the latter firm's VET-450).

Performance: Since this machine has only two heads and should therefore be optimized for X-3 recording, I expected it to excel at that speed. Surprise!—it didn't. I was frankly disappointed with the lackluster quality of the X-3 tapes made on the V-8000. Most of the X-3 test recordings I made exhibited an excessive number of dropouts. If there's a dropout compensator built into this VTR for the "LP" mode, I saw no evidence of it. In addition, the X-3 tapes I made on the V-8000 were very difficult to play on my SL-5800, possibly indicating a major factory alignment problem.

However, one of the curious things I found about the Toshiba was its very good recording quality at X-2. I kid you not, the picture was very good, certainly a tough match for the SL-5800, which is a tough competitor to beat. If its picture search and still-frame performance were a little better, I might almost be inclined to recommend it for its X-2 quality along—almost, I said.

The manufacturer's specifications for the V-8000 include:
Horizontal resolution: 250 lines (X-2); 240 lines (X-3)
Video S/N Ratio: 45 dB (B&W at X-2)
Audio Frequency Response: 50-8000 Hz (X-2); 50-7000 Hz (X-3)

Audio S/N Ratio: 40 dB

Power Requirements: 54 watts @ 120VAC

Like I said, no great shakes, particularly in the audio department, which tends to make the V-8000 look like it matches the audio fidelity of a telephone line. It's actually not that bad—certainly no worse than most comparable consumer decks at their medium-to-slow speeds.

Conclusion: This one could have been a winner. Unfortunately, the manufacturer left out a number of major features that could have easily been included to make the V-8000 more attractive and more competitive. To recap:

1. No programmable tuner/timer.
2. No coherent X-2 picture search.

3. No full-function remote (especially record)
4. Adequate, but not award-winning, X-3 recordings.

For many first-time VCR purchasers, these limitations might not be considered to be major drawbacks. But the statistics indicate that the feature-laden high-ticket VTR's are selling like hotcakes all over the country. With a little more thought behind it, the V-8000 could have been the Beta equivalent of the RCA VET-650 or at least Sony's SL-5800. We're sad to report that it is not.

Perhaps someday Toshiba will rework this attractive-looking VTR and add these features in a newer model. And—dare we hope?—they might even have the foresight and intelligence to someday market a machine that matches the features and capabilities of the fabled SL-J9.—JF

MFW Comments: Judging by the two or three sample V-8000's I played with at a couple of local dealers, I'd say that JF managed to run into one of the better ones: One of the decks I evaluated looked piss-poor in both X-2 and X-3, and the other had been returned several times by an irate customer and eventually traded in on an SL-5600.

Suprisingly, the V-8000 has a twin in Japan—the V-300, which has a slightly more attractive remote control and similar features. However, Toshiba also offers the step-up V-500, which adds variable-speed slow-motion as well as a remote-controllable 30X picture-search mode, which sells for about \$100 more. Best of all, their top-of-the-line Beta deck is the V-800L "ViewStar," which is virtually identical to Sony's SL-J9 except for a dark front panel and a slightly lower (\$1450) list price. Rumor has it that Toshiba will be unveiling a super-deluxe full-featured Beta deck at the upcoming CES (to be covered next issue), and this may be one VTR to watch out for in the near future.

But as far as the V-8000 goes, it's been pretty much a dud, at least on the West coast. I myself take great exception to its minor drawbacks, like the "SP/LP" X-2/X-3 confusion and its half-assed "semi-remote-control" John mentioned, which add up to being great annoyances. All things considered, it would seem to be one Beta deck you can easily live without.

RCA VFT-170 PORTABLE VHS DECK and TFP-1500 TUNER/TIMER

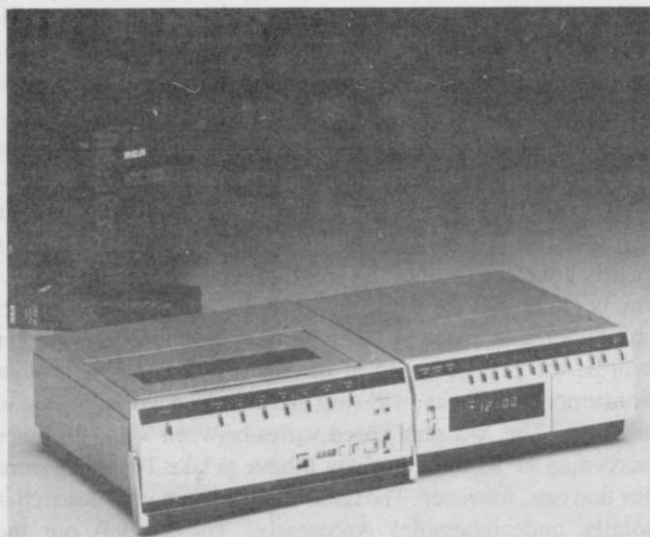
Manufacturer: Hitachi, Ltd., New Marunouchi Bldg. No. 5-1, Marunouchi 1-chome, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100, Japan (distributed by RCA's Consumer Electronics Division, 600 N. Sherman Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46201)

Serial No.: 1134H0095 and 1135H0054 (VFT-170), 1132H0231 (TFP-1500)

Source: Dealer loan (Video Network, 326 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale, CA 91207)

Cost: \$1499.00 (includes full-function remote control, #149722 battery pack, miscellaneous antenna cables and adapters, and sample VK-125 VHS videocassette). Optional accessories include PFP-600 AC Adaptor/Charger (\$169), 146920 DC Car Cord, 149722 1.9 amp battery pack, and KK-161 recorder carrying case (\$41).

The latest in RCA's extensive VFT line of 2/4/6-hour consumer VHS recorders, the VFT-170 replaces last year's VET-150 (similar to the VDP-150 reviewed in #26, except with the added 6-hour capability). The major difference between the VFT and the VET-150 is the addition of its full-function remote control, along with the unusual marketing decision by RCA to sell the portable with its tuner/timer as part of a complete "convertible" VTR system. The deck is not available separately from RCA, although it is essentially identical to Hitachi's VT-6500A, which can be obtained without its companion VT-TU65A tuner/timer.



Appearance: The VFT-170 deck is amazingly small—definitely a lot more compact than we ever thought possible for a 1/2" VTR—and is even tinier than the earlier RCA and Hitachi units at about 4 1/4" x 10 1/2" x 10 1/8", and weighs only 11 pounds. Like the other portables, it has seven light-touch solenoid controls for Rewind, Stop, Fast-Forward, Play, Record, Audio Dub, and Pause, with small LED's above each button to indicate which is in use. At the far top left side is a light-touch Power on/off switch, a departure from the "click-on/click-off" switches used in earlier units. The right front panel contains two jacks labeled Remote, one sub-mini and one mini-phone jack, used for connecting the full-function remote control. Directly underneath is a mechanical lever for Ejecting tapes from the pneumatically-damped cassette compartment. A four-digit index counter with a reset button and Memory Rewind, a small meter for Battery condition (red on the left

and three stages of green on the right), and a mechanical three-position lever for record Speed selection (SLP/LP/SP). The lower left side of the machine contains a small tracking knob, which we noted couldn't be adjusted with the hinged handle in the "down" position.

The right side of the VFP-170 contains all of its audio/video input and output jacks, including two mini-phone jacks for an external Microphone and an Earphone, a 10-pin DIN jack for a Camera, two phono jacks for Audio in/out and two for Video in/out. When a camera is plugged into the 10-pin jack, it automatically overrides the phono jack audio and video inputs. Also provided is a 12V DC jack for connecting an external battery pack.

The back of the deck has an unusual 10-pin DIN jack for connecting the TFP-1500 tuner/timer, an F jack for VHF out, and a channel 3/4 RF modulator switch. Also included is a difficult-to-open compartment made to accept the somewhat bulky 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ "x2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "x1" battery pack which takes up most of the room on the extreme right-hand side of the VTR.

The palm-sized silver plastic remote control provided with the CFT-170 measures about 5"x2"x $\frac{5}{8}$ " and contains ten light-touch pushbuttons for Play/Stop/Record/Rewind/Fast-Forward/Still-Pause/Reverse Search/Forward Search/Frame-by-Frame Advance, and Slow Motion. Also provided are two $\frac{1}{2}$ " rotating knobs for Slow Tracking adjustment and Variable Slow-motion control, from 1/5 normal speed to still-frame. It comes with an attached 10' cable that terminates in a combination stereo mini-plug and sub-mini plug that connects with the two jacks on the front of the VTR.

The TFP-1500 matches the attractive silver, black and grey plastic styling of the deck, and measures about 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ "x9"x10 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". Unlike the previous TDP-1000 and TEP-1000, this tuner/timer is made to sit *alongside* the deck and not underneath it. As a matter of fact, the Hitachi engineers deliberately designed the tuner to be a little bit smaller than the deck, making it look very awkward if the deck is stacked on top of the tuner—a slightly irritating drawback, in my opinion.

The front panel of the tuner/timer has a rather small display with blue $\frac{1}{2}$ " LED's displaying the time, as well as smaller LED's for the days of the week ("Sun." through "Sat."), program numbers ("1" through "7" and "Wk."), and the week number ("1" or "2") for two-week programming. The top edge of the unit contains three red LED's to indicate Charge (when either the deck's battery or an external battery pack is charging), Power on/off, and Timer operation. A silver lever just below it, with three positions for Timer/On/Off, controls these functions. A dozen light-touch silver pushbuttons allow selecting up to twelve channels, which are preset by means of the controls hidden under a flap on top of the tuner. Opening this flap automatically turns off the AFT control. Also provided on the top right side of the tuner/timer is a light-touch button for VTR/TV RF output switching, which also controls the output of the deck when it's connected to the TEP-1500.

A hinged front panel with the RCA logo emblazoned on it

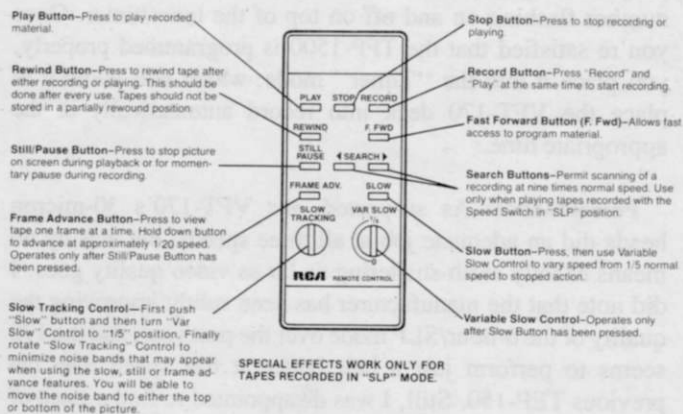
folds down to reveal all the timer-setting controls, very similarly laid-out to those found in the firm's VEP-series recorders (like the VEP-650 reviewed in #28). Up/down time and day-setting is provided, making clock adjustments or programming almost child's play. The "Program" switch allows programming and/or checking the timer's memory, and a "Dim/Bright" switch controls the level of the LED display.

The back of the TEP-1500 contains two attached cables, including a 75 ohm F cable that snaps on the VTR's RF out jack, and a 10-pin DIN cable that connects to the deck's rear-panel "Tuner/Adaptor" jack. Also provided are the usual terminal posts for UHF in/out, and F jacks for VHF in/RF out.

Features/Operation: Like most of RCA's earlier 2/4/6-hour VTR's, the VFT-170 is equipped with only two 30-micron heads, and is optimized for performance at the 6 hour/SLP mode. As a result, the majority of its special functions—Still-Frame, Picture Search, Frame-by-Frame Advance, and Slow-motion—are operational only at the SLP mode. Depressing them during SP or LP playback has no affect at all, except for Pause, which mutes the on-screen image. In addition, only the Pause button is located on the deck, the rest of the special-function controls are found only on the remote control. Like most current VHS decks, both the VFT-170's record and play buttons must be depressed simultaneously to initiate the record mode. When used with a camera, the deck will automatically enter the pause mode and will remain there until the camera pause trigger is depressed.

Remote Control

(Plugs into Remote Control Jack on front of Portable VCR.)



Despite the fact that the 149722 battery pack is somewhat heavy and bulky, it's capable of powering the VTR and a color camera (like the CC-010 used in our evaluation) for nearly an hour and a half—88 minutes, to be exact—as we discovered in our usage tests. The batteries take between 6 and 8 hours to recharge. Although the manufacturer includes an "Auxiliary Battery Charge" jack on the back of the TFP-1500, they advise that this outlet must be disconnected before the deck's internal battery will be recharged. In other words, you can't recharge two batteries at the same time with the TFP-1500

alone. For that, you'll need to purchase the optional PFP-600 AC Adaptor/Charger. As with all portables, we suggest that users purchase at least one or two additional battery packs to prepare for extended recording on location. Even though this deck can run up to 90 minutes, you'll probably run the battery down a lot sooner than this because of pausing, camera set-ups and rehearsals, and playing back previous scenes through the camera's viewfinder.

When used with the companion CC-010 color camera, the VFT-170 can be placed in the special "Standby" mode to conserve power. This cuts all the power to the camera and puts the VTR in pause with the tape ready to be automatically cued up at about the point at which you left off. The pause light flashes on and off to indicate this mode. We noted that there sometimes seemed to be more instability and glitches at the edit points when this "Standby" feature was used, but then, the regular edits weren't always perfect, either. As with most of RCA's current VHS recorders, the VFT-170 provides a back-space editing feature that automatically backs the tape up slightly whenever the pause button is pressed. Naturally, this tends to erase the last second or two of program material just recorded, but perhaps not quite as much as is the case with the VET-650 and 250 reviewed in #28.

The TFP-1500 tuner/timer provides complete 14-day/8-event programmability, and has a built-in back-up power supply for the timer memory in case of short power outages. You program it exactly like the VET-650, using the Program setting to enter up to 8 different events, their start time, their length, and the appropriate channel button, which is selected on the varactor tuner on top of the unit. Once entered, the programming can be checked with the "Manual/Program" controls, which automatically flash out the start time and program length info on the LED readout, with the channel number flashing on and off on top of the tuner/timer. Once you're satisfied that the TFP-1500 is programmed properly, you place it into the "Timer" mode, which will allow it to place the VFT-170 deck into record automatically at the appropriate time.

Performance: As suspected, the VFT-170's 30-micron heads did an adequate job at all three speeds, but was by no means exactly earth-shattering as far as video quality goes. I did note that the manufacturer has been subtly improving the quality of the 6-hour/SLP mode over the past year, and the 170 seems to perform just a hair better at this speed than the previous TEP-150. Still, I was disappointed to find a trace of interference in the image when used with the companion CC-010 camera, which was visible through both the RF output and the direct video output, as well as the camera's viewfinder. This interference was present only during playback, not record, which may indicate a slight alignment problem with the particular deck used for the majority of the report.

I had attempted to review another unit a week or so earlier, but had been unable to get it to enter the record, audio dub, or pause mode and returned it in a huff to the local dealer who had

offered it to us for review. Naturally, it recorded fine once we brought it back to the store, but we were partially justified in that it still refused to pause, despite repeated attempts. I'm going to hope that these two "semi-defective" units are not representative of the thousands of VTR's being manufactured by Hitachi for RCA. If any of you readers would like to share your experiences with the VFT-170, pro or con, perhaps we can print your comments in a future issue.

The manufacturer's specifications were not provided, but would seem to approximate those for most 3-speed VHS portables. The SP mode was at best mediocre, but acceptable for most consumer purposes. The LP mode wasn't all that distinguishable from SP, and the SLP/6-hour mode was, as you might guess, only fair-to-middling—but better than you might think. The audio was about what we've come to expect from slow-speed VTR's—making AM radio sound like a direct-disc master recording by comparison. In short, it was pretty awful, but *choke* still acceptable for consumer purposes and not all that much worse than the low-fidelity sound found in most current TV sets.

Conclusion: For those consumers looking for a well-built, super-lightweight VHS portable, who don't need particularly high-quality recording, the VFT-170 would seem to fit the bill admirably. In addition, considering RCA's strong effort to establish the deck/tuner-timer combination as a "convertible" home VTR, we can see that it might also appeal to those looking for an adequate 2/4/6-hour home deck that provides greater capabilities than the comparable VET-450, which it closely resembles as far as features and picture quality.

For videophile use, however, the VFT-170 falls a little short of the basic requirements most of us are looking for—industrial-type decks capable of providing significantly better overall picture quality in a similarly-sized package. Next issue, we'll have a closer look at exactly what constitutes the "ideal" portable and home VTR's, as well as a prediction of what improvements and changes lie ahead in consumer and industrial VTR's.—MFW

(Special thanks to Vince Dundee and the kind folks at The Video Netowrk for providing the VFT-170 used in this report.)

Manufacturer's Corner

As part of our continuing efforts to keep our readers as informed and up-to-date as possible, and in an effort to present as fair and impartial forum for the discussion of video in *The Videophile*, we're inaugurating a special section designed to allow manufacturers to comment on our reviews or editorials in past or current issues. Below, Fuji vice-president John Dale comments on the Spring '81 **Tape Survey** presented last issue:

due to space limitations, we've chosen to print only the most pertinent sections of this three-page letter.

"Dear Marc:

In reviewing your article on consumer video cassettes performance, I, of course, have developed a few comments and questions.

"First comment—Naturally, I do not agree that any other tape is as good as Fuji. However, in order to be more specific, I would appreciate your detailing your test procedures. Perhaps we can then comment more accurately.

On a more objective line, as a matter of my experience in video tape which dates back to 1959 (I worked in broadcasting on broadcast VTR's), the key ingredient in video has always been consistency. "Reliable and consistent video tape was unheard of until recent years, and while many companies can occasionally make a good piece of video tape, it takes an extremely high technology corporation with tremendous research capability to develop a consistent, reliable long-lasting video cassette.

"Consistency should be a factor when making further tests, so that the consumer who is investing his hard earned money will be able to determine how to get the most from his investment each and every time he buys a video cassette.

"Naturally, at Fuji we take pride in our ability to make probably the world's most consistent, high quality video tapes, not only for the consumer but for industrial and broadcast users as well. (Many of the T.V. shows on commercial and educational T.V. stations are recorded on Fuji broadcast video tape.)

"Another item of importance to the performance and reliability of video tape, and an example of how far Fuji will go to provide this performance, is our exclusive (at least through the WCES 1981) plastic sleeve and plasticized labels. (I've had no indication as yet that anyone else is providing plastic.)

"As was illustrated in our early brochure, paper dust caused by shedding of labels and cardboard sleeves may cause dropouts and eventually damage the tape beyond usability. Our clean plastic also provides the consumer with materials that can be written on and wiped off—not erased so as to cause more debris.

"This packaging was no accident and should be considered in the overall value of a video cassette.

"Another consideration for your test procedures: After recording on a video cassette, allow the cassette to sit in a normal home environment for one day, two days, a week and several weeks before replaying. Note: replay, not record, and notice the dropouts. Another recording can be made after that and an additional evaluation made at that time.

"This procedure is suggested since several manufacturer's tapes will deteriorate in storage and possibly cause a consumer to lose a valued recording.

"One last note regarding tape. Repeated usage of some inferior tapes will cause a build-up of oxide on the video heads or other surfaces. This can cause a noisy, grainy picture to

develop, which can be cleared up by the use of a Fuji video head cleaning cassette. This noisy picture is sometimes referred to as a head clog. While the head gap may not actually clog, the oxide build-up will effectively short out the head.

"Another problem with these inferior tapes may be seen in excessive dropouts or scratching. The consumer can protect his investment in tape and recorder by using a tape that does not develop this phenomenon. Of course, Fuji is one. Your evaluation might also include this test in the future.

"Of course, a consumer has no way of determining in advance the brand of tape his pre-recorded movie is on; therefore, we recommend a Fuji video head cleaning cassette be available should the problem occur.

"You are to be complimented on your courage in providing a factual evaluation of potential advertiser products. Not all publications are so brave. If you read most tape evaluations, the reviewers always conclude that the consumer should make his own tests since his opinion may be different, etc. In other words, they refuse to take a hard line stand on performance.

"Thanks for your time.

Very truly yours,

John Dale

Vice President/General Manager

Fuji Magnetic Tape Division"

In an attempt to answer Mr. Dale's remarks, MFW comments:

Our testing has involved a variety of test equipment, including Tektronix 146 signal test generator for providing color bars and color fields, Tektronix 528 waveform monitors, and Tektronix 1420 vectorscopes. Also used are a number of professional and consumer video monitors, including Sony's KX-27HF1 "Profeel," Conrac's 6142RS19 high-resolution color monitors, and a Kloss Novabeam Model One projector. Most importantly, an exhaustive amount of off-air test recordings are made to simulate actual conditions encountered by video enthusiasts. These are performed in addition to our staff's regular habits of taping between 10 and 20 hours of material each week.

During the actual testing, which occurs over a two or three month period, color fields and full-frequency multiburst patterns are used to check output levels and dropout frequency from a batch of sample tapes from each manufacturer—usually not less than 6 samples of each type. (We plan on obtaining a dropout monitor to precisely measure this performance parameter in the near future, but given our limited budget, this may turn out to be the distant future.) The data from this information is correlated with the results of an extensive reader survey, with usually no less than 200 responses. This, too, will be expanded in future issues in order to get the most accurate representations of our reader's opinions possible.

Getting back to your letter, we stressed consistency several

times in our report in #30, by mentioning that practically all tape manufacturers, even the Taiwan "junk" merchants, are capable of making good videotape. The problem is that not very many of them can do this on a regular basis.



The issue of packaging has been refuted by several spokesmen for 3M and Sony several years ago, yet I have noticed that most of their boxes have changed subtly (in the case of Sony) and radically (in the case of 3M) recently. Sony has already introduced plasticized "Dynamicron" packaging in Japan for their standard and "HG" products, so this would seem to indicate a trend toward the direction you discuss here.

While we have not followed your exact suggestion for "replaying" and "reusing" tapes, we've all done enough using and abusing of videotapes over the past few years to appreciate your comment. Considering the literally hundreds of hours of videotapes our editors go through over two or three months, believe me, we take all of that into consideration when the final analysis is put together. In general, it's been my experience that most tapes that perform well on the first use will perform about as well in subsequent use. The main exception to this has been the original "brown-oxide" 3M Beta tapes released in '77 and '78, which look fairly poor today. Their newer tapes have improved appreciably, but are still not quite up to the level of Fuji and the other top tape manufacturers.

Regarding head-cleaning: due to the slightly abrasive nature of head-cleaning tapes, as well as their somewhat high overall cost, we've decided to advise our readers as of this issue to instead rely on commonly available Freon TF (trichlorotrifluoroethane) and foam swabs for head cleaning.

On the tendency for some tapes to develop excessive dropouts and scratching: humidity and temperature can render any videotape almost useless, resulting in an abnormally high number of dropouts—even with Fuji tapes. Likewise, any tape, particularly the ultra-thin 15-micron type used in L-750's and T-150's, can be scratched easily by improperly adjusted VTR's.

As a final note, we, too, have read with interest the so-called "tape reviews" printed in the other video magazines. With the exception of the exhaustive report printed in the March and April '81 issues of *Video Review* written by Len Feldman and

CBS Labs, no one has really tackled the subject of in-depth videotape evaluations to date. However, we'll stand behind our assessment of Fuji's "fine-grain" tapes' performance being roughly equivalent to TDK for the Beta format, and not quite as good as TDK and Maxell's HG tapes. Naturally, Fuji's HG formulation is every bit the equal of the other two tapes, just as stated last issue.

☆☆☆

In addition to Mr. Dale's letter, we received a brief reply from Warner Home Video on the editorial last issue entitled "Why Do Pre-Recorded Tapes Look So Damned Bad," from Ms. Arlyne Willcox, business manager for the firm. However, we decided that their reply was inadequate and did not even begin to answer the many questions raised by the editorial. As a result, we attempted to re-contact Warner Home Video, but weren't able to get a response until well after our deadline. We'll print that letter in full in our next issue, along with comments from several other software firms which have indicated that they, too, are interested in debating the issue.

As always, we welcome any comments, suggestions, complaints, and ego-boosting words of wisdom on our **Product Reports** and editorials, and will provide space to any manufacturer for alternate viewpoints. Send them to:

The Videophile Product Reports
P.O. Box 480315
Los Angeles, CA 90048

Further Thoughts:

Further Thoughts on the Spring '81 Tape Survey (#30):

Just before our last issue went to press, we received a couple of dozen sample Beta and VHS tapes from 3M for testing in our report. We've now had several weeks to evaluate these products carefully, and have come to the conclusion that our feelings about Scotch videocassette products haven't changed much from last time. Four of these cassettes—three VHS T-120's and one L-500—were mechanically defective, and at least half a dozen exhibited a high number of dropouts. Even more interestingly, we found that each tape package appeared to be cellophane-wrapped a little differently than the ones we had purchased in stores several months ago. After doing a little investigating, we found, much to our surprise, that most of the tapes supplied by 3M had half-erased remnants of color bar test signals, indicating the possibility that 3M had carefully tried to hand-select defect-free samples for our testing—a process that wasn't completely successful, considering the half-dozen mediocre tapes found out of the batch. In all honesty, no one at Scotch ever told us that they *wouldn't* pre-test their samples for us, but then we didn't suspect that they'd pull this stunt either. At any rate, their ranking stays about the

same—just above Ampex and DuPont for Beta and just below JVC for VHS.

We've just received some test samples of several T-150 VHS cassettes from an unnamed manufacturer, and also look forward to evaluating Fuji's new T-160's (released in Europe as the E-240). These lengthy tapes have been long-awaited by VHS buffs, and should help increase the keen competitive spirit prevalent in the continuing Beta/VHS battle.

Further Thoughts on the SLO-383 (#30):

MHK of Arlington, VA writes to ask about a mention made in the report on Sony's editing Beta VTR regarding its still-frame and slow-motion modes being inferior to the earlier 323. Sho' nuff, we goofed in our assertion that the SLO-323 has dual-azimuth heads, which is an obvious fallacy. What is correct, however, is that the 383's still-frame mode is visibly worse than the 323's and lacks the latter deck's noiseless still-frame capability. Both VTR's slow-motion performance is sorely lacking, however, and is noticeably inferior to most full-function consumer decks.

Further Thoughts on the Showtime and Vidicraft Image Enhancers (#30):

Our reviews on these products brought some comments from spokesmen from both Showtime Video Ventures and Vidicraft, but due to our usual deadline problems, we weren't able to include them in this issue. There were two major errors in the reviews that we would like to clear up: first, Vidicraft "Detailer II" is now priced at \$299.95. Secondly, their new address is 3357 S.E. 22nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97202. We stand corrected.

Complaints and More Complaints Dept.:

S.I. of Pickering, Ontario, alerted us to a number of inept and bungling errors that have been appearing with unfortunate regularity in past issues. First off, we apologize to the N.V. Philips company of Holland for our continual habit of misspelling their name as "Phillips." (Spelling was never one of our stronger points.) Secondly, S.I. brings up the problem of video head gaps, pointing out that four-headed VHS decks do not exactly have two sets of SP-optimized 58-micron heads and two sets of SLP-optimized 19-micron heads. In reality, they have a 70-micron head and a 90-micron head for SP, each of which overlaps in recording and playback to create the effect of a single pair of 58-micron heads, and a 26-micron and a 31-micron head for LP and SLP. The latter heads overlap very slightly to provide compatible 29-micron LP recording and playback, and overlap somewhat more for SLP's 19-micron tracks. What is true, however, is that many basic 2/6-hour VHS decks have only a single pair of 19-micron heads (like the MGA HS-300 reviewed last issue). We stand corrected.

In addition, S.I. goes on to comment on Sony's SL-5800 (reviewed in #27). He explains: "One head of the scanner is actually two heads in one. The gaps are tilted in opposite directions so that one actually matches the tilt of the head on the opposite side of the scanner and is able to 'read' tracks made by that head. This permits scanning the same track during both head passes and results in a single field being reproduced twice during freeze frame (which should actually be called 'freeze field'). This explains why Sony's freeze-frame is rock-solid, with no time for movement between fields as there is on VHS' freeze-frame, and why, when the heads of my 5800 are clogged, the freeze-frame mode continues to work perfectly. This happens when the normal gap on the double azimuth head is clogged."

We had been meaning to update that original report an issue or two back, but had inadvertently bumped it in favor of other articles and reviews. We might also add that MFW made a considerable effort to contact Sony representatives, both in New York and on the West coast, when the SL-5800 was first introduced, in order to find out all the technical specifications on the Dual Azimuth system, but ran into dead ends time and time again and eventually gave up. To this day, no Sony spokesman has been willing to specify the exact gap sizes of the Dual Azimuth heads found in the SL-5800. (An extremely detailed, well-written report on the subject of head-gaps appeared in the March '81 issue of *Video* magazine, available for \$2.50 from the Reese Publishing Co., 235 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10003.)

Your Technical Editor Continues to Make Mistakes Dept.:

In last issue's **Japan Report** column, we inadvertently omitted the names of our hard-working correspondents from that mystic land of the East: namely Gene Cutler, John Zimmerman, and Charlie Lehman. Also, I stuck in a last-minute line to the effect that Philips (with one "L"!) had recently purchased Superscope/Marantz, which was completely erroneous. Our apologies to Joe Tushinsky, president of Superscope, for this mistake. It does appear, however, that Superscope will be showing some kind of optical LaserVision player in the near future; we hope to have more on this in next issue's extensive "**Summer '81 CES Report**."

Also, there was a typo in our review of the HVC-2000 (now 2200) color camera, on Sony's VO-4800 portapak. As most professional and industrial users are aware, this is a high-quality $\frac{3}{4}$ " U-Matic portable VTR, and not $\frac{1}{2}$ " as mentioned in that discussion.



SHOOTING THE SHUTTLE

(and other far-out objects)

by: Kerry K. Decker

Three . . . two . . . one . . . **Lift-Off!** The *Columbia* has blasted off and our space shuttle is on its way! Although I am about five miles away, I can clearly see its image in my electronic viewfinder as it begins its journey upward. In fact, although it's 56 miles downrange, I can still follow its trail, thanks to the fact that I am using the lenses from my still camera on my portable video camera!

On my drive back home from Cape Kennedy, I was thinking over the day's events and, since the shuttle was a rare historical event, I thought I could share what I learned from this with my fellow readers of *The Videophile*. You, too, may someday have a rare event that requires a similar shooting technique.

There are several things to consider before you jump into this head first. Most important of all, you must own a video camera which has an interchangeable lens. With this, you can simply unscrew the entire lens from the camera body. Be especially careful when you do this as you will be exposing the extremely delicate image-forming tube to light, dirt and dust. Make sure the camera is unplugged and pointed away from any bright light! What you now see is a very small threaded hole. For years, photographers have called this type of lens mounting a "C-Mount." The old 16mm movie cameras had this type

of mount and perhaps there's such a camera lurking in your attic which needs rediscovering. If so, there's an excellent chance that its lenses will work perfectly on your video camera.

You will note that a majority of these lenses only go as high as 75mm. (The higher the number of millimetres, the more telescopic the lens becomes.) Even the lens you just removed from your video camera seldom goes much be-



yond 105mm. Therefore, if you'd like to videotape a future space launch, football game, VIP, or someone at the beach, it's possible to use the lens from your 35mm SLR still camera! This will also allow you to double the power of its strength.

If you own what's commonly called a preset, manual, or a T-2 type of telephoto lens, you're in luck! These lenses are distinctive because the lens mounting unscrews from the back and is replaceable. There have been a number of inexpensive 400mm T-2 telephoto lenses sold over the years; your local

camera dealer may already stock these. You will also need a T-2 C-mount adaptor for use on your video camera. These may be a bit hard to locate, but they are made under the Soligor label and are distributed by the Interstate Photo Supply Corporation to photo dealers.

With a lens such as a 400mm now mounted on your camera, it becomes impressive not only by its size (nearly two feet long), but by its magnification of 16X. Other lenses that fall into the T-2 category are called mirror lenses. Through the use of a small mirror on each of the outer lens elements, the light is "folded" neatly into a much more compact lens. These are commonly available in the 500mm and 1000mm focal lengths.

With an extreme telephoto lens mounted on the front of my video camera, you can understand how shooting the space shuttle from about five miles away was not hard after all. My 400mm T-2 telephoto lens operates manually on the camera but you can easily set the exposure by looking in your finder and setting the lights or dots that are necessary for correct exposure.

A Few Further Notes: If you have to shoot in the early morning Eastern sky as I did for the shuttle, you may discover that even by closing your lens all the way down to f/32, you may be washing out your picture. If so, have several Kodak Neutral Density gelatin filters handy. These are thin, grey filters that can be cut with scissors and placed on the rear of the lens, several thick if necessary, to cut down on the light and can give some leeway to your lens adjustments while on the beach.

Also, if you own a Nikon 35mm camera, you can get a small adaptor that allows use of the Nikkor lenses on a C-mount video camera. It is not cheap (around \$90), but a very nice item.

Lastly, the use of a tripod is mandatory. Not only is your picture enlarged tremendously with the use of such lenses, but every small movement is magnified substantially.

With these tips, I hope that you'll be able to shoot some fantastic tape the next time a long-range special event comes up.

And to those who may visit Florida for the next space shuttle launch, I'll be there next to the VAB . . . the guy with the strange long lens on his video camera. Don't let me be the only one! If you need further help with this, please write (or Beta-tape) me at:

P. O. Box 7194,
Orlando, FL 32854.



WHAT TO COLLECT AND WHY:

A superficial look at the building of an off-the-air library

by: Jim Lowe

It's been over five years now since that day in June when I became the first kid on the block to own a videocassette recorder. At that time, you either had a one-hour Sony Betamax or nothing (unless, of course, you had the really big bucks and were into the $\frac{3}{4}$ " U-Matic format). In those early innocent days the idea of spending \$15 on a blank tape that would only hold one hour of material was pretty intimidating to all but the wealthy. On the other hand, the idea of being able to actually record off the air a permanent copy of anything that your little heart desired was so appealing that the thought of subsequently erasing something, once it had been reduced to your possession, caused many a videophyte to wring his hands in anguish. Afterall, we had all heard about 16mm film collectors who were willing to pay hundreds of dollars for a print of a film that we could get for the price of a tape alone.

Enough years have passed that it is now possible to look back upon our recording/erasing/preserving habits, to reflect upon what we have done, why we have done it, gain some insight into the wisdom of it all and, possibly, even arrive at some guidelines upon which to base our future collecting.

Given the expense, why do we preserve *any* tapes at all? Why not just own one or two tapes and use them over and over again? Presumably, we record and preserve a particular film or TV show with the idea in mind that the time may come when we will desire to view that very tape once again. This is also why we keep phonograph records, books, old magazines, and newspaper clippings. (Why we keep old birthday cards is another matter.) But, we are kidding ourselves to believe that we do not also sometimes keep certain titles for other reasons. Among them:

- the possibility that *someone else* may want the particular title and be in a position to give us something of value in exchange for it.

- the smug satisfaction of knowing that we own a particular title even though we know very well that the occasion to view it again will never arise. (How many times have you watched a repeat of something on the tube, even though you have the very same thing on tape, but just never got around to watching it?)

- the possibility that someday, for some obscure, not readily explainable reason, it will *be important* to have a copy of the particular item in question.

- the ever-present intention to "someday" make up a tape that will combine excerpts from all the tapes which contain some few moments that are worthy of selective preservation. (The day that you sit down with two recorders and all of your

tapes to perform this task, will undoubtedly be the same day that you get all of those old photographs from the box in the closet and mount them in a nice album. You know, the album with the green simulated leather cover that you will make a special trip to K-Mart to buy.)

Thus, we see that many tapes (movies particularly) are kept in our libraries either as status symbols or as a hedge against the coming of that special "someday" when all the activities of a busy world will have reached such a juncture that we will suddenly pause in our daily routine and say: "I think I'll sit down right now and watch that tape of Edward G. Robinson in *Little Caesar* that I made two years ago."

For many video tape collectors, the anguish of whether to erase or not to erase has been solved by simply buying another case of tapes and "hang the cost." Yet now that some of us have been into this madness for half a decade and, upon looking around, find that we have several hundred of these little creatures overflowing our shelves and stereo cabinets, it is becoming less and less possible to avoid facing squarely the question "Why?" "Will I ever watch these tapes? Are there perhaps some of them that *could* be erased?" If your situation, like mine, also includes the embarrassing confession that the shelves and stacks of tapes also include 50 to 100 hours of items that have never been watched for the *first* time, a reevaluation of the whole endeavor is certainly in order.

I submit that the passage of five years is ample time to judge whether or not original expectations have been realized. What have I watched? What should I have erased? What should I have kept, but didn't? In view of everything, should I call a halt at 200 tapes? 300, 500? . . . and, thereafter, buy not a single nother?

In the larger sense, this subject involves fundamental issues of capitalistic society. I do not, by any means, suggest that those of you with the requisite means, space and will, are somehow acting against nature by archiving great numbers of videocassettes. I am only exploring the subject for the benefit of those who, like myself, are sometimes befuddled by it all, and who, in saner moments, question whether or not the whole thing is getting out of hand.

The main reason any of us possess something, beyond sheer need, is quite simple—we choose to. Some of us possess a power lawn mower. Others of us rent one when we need it. Some us pay to have someone else mow our lawn. Others choose not to maintain a lawn at all. Let's relate this sample scope of choice to videocassettes.

Suppose that *Annie Hall* is about to be shown on television.

Suppose further that it is one of your favorite movies, one you expect to watch more than once in the future. For an investment of roughly \$15 in blank tape, and a little shelf space, you can place a copy of this film in your collection. But, there are other choices. *Annie Hall* is available as a rental tape. *Annie Hall* will undoubtedly be shown again and again on TV in the future, and will also be shown in movie theaters, at least in specialty houses and on college campuses. Someone among your acquaintances is very likely to have a copy of *Annie Hall* that could be loaned to you. It may someday even be available on videodisc from the public library. In short, there will be ample opportunity to see *Annie Hall* in the future.

Now suppose that *The Private Lives of Adam and Eve* with Mamie Van Doren is about to be shown on television. Suppose further (this may require some effort) that it is one of your favorite movies. This particular film is little-known and even less appreciated. It may very well be many moons before another opportunity to see it presents itself. It may never be shown in a theater, may never be available on disc, and may very well not be present in the collection of anyone else you will ever encounter (or else they won't admit it). The choice here is obvious. If you have only one tape available, you should choose to tape the film that is least likely to make another appearance in the future.

A corollary to this is that films and television series which enjoy wide popularity are more likely to be repeated or be otherwise available in the future than are those which enjoy little or no popularity with the masses.

As a general rule, I take the position that feature films will always be available as reruns or on videodiscs. I foresee a future in which even relatively obscure feature films will be available on videodisc. The great promise of the disc format is that it will be economical to produce them for specialized audiences in small quantities. In recognition of this, my own collection is notably short on feature films, and distinctly top heavy with television series episodes. Many, many television series are produced every season, but they are virtually never shown in theaters and while their numbers increase continuously the time available for syndicated reruns remains relatively constant. Cable/satellite systems of the future offering 100+ channels may change this, but for the time being a relatively small number of past and present television series will be commonly available in the form of syndicated reruns.

So it is obvious that if you are a big fan of a particular television series, it might be a good idea to keep a copy of any episode that you suspect you will want to view again in the future. Series that run for only a single season or less will almost certainly fail to reappear as a syndicated rerun, because most local stations are interested only in shows that exist in sufficient quantity to run one every day for several months without having to repeat them.

A prime example of a collectible show is *City of Angels*, a show starring Wayne Rogers as a 1930's detective, somewhat in the mold of Jim Rockford but with all the Sam Spade, J. J. Gittes trappings. This show ran for only one season, had a lot of nice touches, good scripts, good production values, and will very probably never be shown on television anywhere ever

again. Those few folks who had the foresight to tape copies of this show have something worth holding on to. Other shows that might be in the same category (at least for some folks) are: *Kaz*, *Toma*, *Fernwood 2Night*, *The Richard Prior Show* and *The Associates*.

Television "specials" are particularly susceptible to being shown only once. Shows such as Bob Dylan's "Hard Rain" Special, Mary Tyler Moore's "Incredible Dream" Special, and the Rolling Stone Magazine Special with the Bette Midler and Jerry Lee Lewis duet, come to mind as shows that are well worth revisiting. Don't ever expect to, however, unless you were sharp enough to make a copy at the time.

So-called made-for-TV movies are also good candidates for preservation on tape. Very few of them ever show up in movie theaters, and the fact that we are not adding any additional hours to the day pretty much dictates that the bulk of them will not enjoy multiple repeated showings in the future. No doubt many of them will show up in local syndicated "movie" packages and, perhaps, even on videodiscs, but for the most part the chance to see a made-for-TV movie in the future is not nearly as certain as is the likelihood of seeing well known theatrical films.

Thus, three legitimate guidelines emerge:

1. The desire to have a copy of the particular item in your collection, so that it may be viewed in the future.
2. A realistic expectation that you will act upon that desire.
3. The relatively slim chance that you will be easily able to satisfy that desire through other means.

If a particular tape can meet these three criteria, by all means hold on to it. If it doesn't, you may as well face the fact that you are either on an ego trip or needlessly expending money and space for a questionable purpose. At the very least, you are avoiding a decision. Perhaps it's worth it, but don't kid yourself into the belief that you "need" or really even "want" such a tape.

In addition to *what* to collect, the decision of exactly *how* to go about it is worth discussion. Let's examine a mere three of the many possible considerations.

Should I edit out commercials?

That's up to you, but I will tell you what I prefer to do. It has been my practice to edit commercials from network broadcasts of both theatrical and made-for-TV films, but not from sitcoms nor most other series episodes. Feature films are quite obviously interrupted, and rudely so, by commercials. It is contrary to nature and, at best, a necessary evil to have them there in the first place. Under no circumstances should they remain within a permanent collection copy of the film. Sitcoms, however, are another matter. The sit-com is a classic television form. It has a rhythm that is familiar to each of us, and it is my view that commercials are an expected, and not necessarily unwelcome, part of that rhythm. I *never* excise commercials from network broadcasts of sitcoms.* In the years to come I expect to revisit those commercials (some of them anyway) with the same fond reverence that I hold for the

*I nearly always *do* delete them from local syndicated reruns, however.

shows themselves. The comparison to book and magazine collecting is easily made. Books have no advertisements and we would feel put upon if they did. Magazines do, and there are few among us who would advocate tearing all of the ads out of one before assigning it a place on the shelf.

With some exceptions, I take this same view toward other (non-sit-com) series episodes. For the most part, I retain the commercials in hour-long dramatic shows, musical/variety specials and late-night programming. The exception would be with respect to the longer breaks (eg. midway through an hour-long show) which often include local commercials, "newsbreaks" and public service announcements. I do not consider these to be part of the format of the show itself.

It's easy to make your own decision on these matters with a simple test. If you were to suddenly come into a collection of old TV series tapes from the '50's, would you prefer that they include the original commercials or not? That's an easy one for me. I'd love to have them.

How can I make sure I don't miss anything?

There is both a flippant and a serious answer to this one. Within the bounds of reason, I would suggest the following. Serious collectors really should have at least two VCR's. This allows you far greater flexibility than would otherwise be the case. Among the advantages are:

- the ability to organize your collection through the duplication and editing of tapes.
- the ability to record two shows at the same time.
- the ability to make two copies of the same show at the same time.
- the ability to record a show while at the same time watching a previously recorded tape.
- the ability to record two shows, while watching a third.
- the ability (by purchasing both a Beta and a VHS unit) to achieve compatability with your fellow videophiles, whatever their persuasion.
- the ability to "keep on tapin'," even when one of your machines is in the shop.

With respect to not missing anything, ownership of two VCR's also makes it much easier to get into the habit of *prospective* recording. That is, the habit of automatically taping every program that you have the slightest advance inclination to preserve. While using one machine to perform the ordinary tasks of your daily life as a videophile, the other one can be recording shows that you would otherwise have missed. This means that when you go to work the next day and everyone is talking about a show that you didn't watch, you will have a better chance of being able to say, "I didn't watch it, but my machine did." Maybe you were busy recording another show that you *knew* you wanted, or perhaps you were having some friends over to watch another tape at that same time. The trusty second machine will have saved the day.

I'm not as monomaniacal as are many of my readers, but I have often thought that it would be a good idea to tape *everything* that I watch, just on the chance that I might later wish I had. This is also a good way of preventing disappointment when you suddenly have to respond to a telephone call, or are

otherwise unexpectedly called away. (Like if your mother has just fallen down the chimney.)

At what speed should I record?

This depends on what economists refer to as the cost/benefit ratio. A single T-120 VHS cassette can accomodate as few as four ½-hour situation comedies, complete with commercials, recorded at the SP speed, or as many as fifteen of them recorded without commercials at the SLP speed. Assuming that you have purchased the blank tape for \$15, it is readily apparent that we are talking about the difference between investing as little as \$1 per show versus as much as \$3.75 per show. In addition, the more expensive route would require nearly 4 times the amount of shelf space. But, . . . *BUT*, if the show is important enough to preserve in your personal archives, you should seriously consider whether or not it is important to you to have the best copy possible. There is no doubt that the tapes recorded at the fastest available speed are of the highest quality, both for purposes of playback and duplication, not to mention compatability with machines other than the one on which it was recorded.*

Certainly, if you expect to be duplicating your most prized recordings you would be doing yourself a disservice to record your "master" copy at a slow speed simply to save a few dollars. If a ½-hour show isn't worth \$3.75 (half the cost of a record album, these days) to you, your desire to have it must be on pretty shaky ground. It is distressingly easy to slip into the habit of recording at the slowest speed once you get a machine that includes such a feature. (Take it from one who knows.) I have found that I am constantly being surprised by the quality of my older recordings (all at Beta X-1), whenever I have occasion to pull one of them from the shelf for viewing. Alas, I now do nearly all of my recording at Beta X-2 or VHS LP speed, but I do so with the knowledge that I am cheating myself out of a certain amount of future enjoyment by not keeping the integrity of my collection at the highest possible level.

Then why do I do it, you may ask. There are two primary reasons:

1. I am concerned enough about expense to sacrifice a certain amount of quality for the price differential. With notable exceptions, I am content to have twice as much programming on tape for the same amount of expenditure as I would if everything were recorded at a faster speed. This is the cost/benefit ratio of which I spoke. My enjoyment would not increase in the same proportion as would the cost, if I were to record everything at X-1 or SP. I say this knowing full well that Marc Wielage and many other serious videophiles among our contributors and readers will disagree with me.

2. The length of many feature films is such that it is not possible to fit them onto a single cassette (at least in the Beta

*I should qualify this by saying that on certain VCR's (eg. the Sony SL-8200) the recording heads are maximized for the slower speed, so that recording and especially "editing" may well be more satisfactory at the slower speed than at the faster.

format). Again, with notable exceptions, I prefer to record feature films without having to change the cassette.

My views on this would change substantially if I were able to afford to purchase and store large quantities of blank tape, if I were viewing my tapes on a large screen projection TV set, and if I were making my recordings on an industrial version VCR with heads maximized for fast speed recording. If and when I find myself in that position, I may very well do a complete turnaround and arrogantly proclaim that anyone who is worthy of the name "videophile" would not demean himself and his collection by recording at one of the lesser speeds. Until then, consider me as just one of the guys, i.e. one who cares enough to consider quality important enough to choose X-2 and SP over X-3 and SLP, but not so fanatical as to choose recording over eating (not to mention the maintenance of my other hobbies and vices).

Having decided what to collect and how to go about it, it remains only to enjoy the fruits of your labor. It is my opinion that this is something that cannot be fully appreciated in the privacy of your sanctum sanctorum (unless, of course, your collection is of purely onanistic significance).

Every collector likes to share (translation: "show off") his collection with others, whether it consists of coins, comic books, salt & pepper shakers, barbed wire, or celebrity nail clippings. We are no different. One of the greatest satisfactions that my collection has given me is the ability to put on my own little film festivals. Each Spring, for the past few years, I have put together a list of five or six films, spread out over a couple of months, and invited a group of friends and film fans to drop by at a regularly scheduled time.

A group of 8-14 folks is manageable, even if you don't have a large projection type TV set. Everyone else can bring drinks, food, or whatever, and you can supply the popcorn and entertainment. A typical evening's fare at one of my get-togethers might include an old film like *Larceny, Inc.* (with Edward G. Robinson), old TV show (eg. the *Honeymooners* episode in which Ralph tries to learn how to play golf), and a cartoon or short subject. I prefer to show stuff that folks wouldn't otherwise have a chance to see every day of the week. Titles on my schedule during the past two seasons have included: *Harold and Maude*, *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, *Twelve Angry Men*, *The Front*, and *Quackser Fortune Has a Cousin in the Bronx*, among others. I hasten to add that you absolutely must not charge admission to any such event, or otherwise use it in a promotional way. It is simply an outlet through which the enjoyment of your collection can be greatly enhanced. Many of the tapes in my permanent collection reside there more because I want to share them with others than because I expect to sit down and watch them again someday in my solitude.

O.K., so five years have passed and I've taken a hard look at my collection. What have I decided to do? I have to admit that aside from resolving to exercise reasonable restraint in the future, I have not found any great number of tapes that I expect to erase. Does this mean that I have passed judgment on my selections and decided that they were all good ones? Not at all. It means a couple of things. One, I am an incurable pack rat.

I'm long on advice, but short on following it myself. Also, I can live with the rationalization that five years is too short a time to prove whether or not a particular tape will suddenly become one that I am glad I have. Ask me again in 1986.

The Dodo, the Auk, and the Gong Show:

Back in an early issue of this magazine, I suggested that each of us devote some small portion of our video tape collection to the archiving of shows that might otherwise not ever be preserved. I repeat that plea today. I'm not suggesting that you keep something that you have absolutely no interest in whatsoever, but I am saying that if each of us will invest a small portion (no more than 2%) of our collections in certain examples of mundane, trashy, and mostly worthless programming, we may well find that in the distant future we alone will have been responsible for the preservation of some items which, in retrospect, may not seem to be as lacking in merit as we originally thought.

Examples of such things would be:

—Soap operas: My favorite is *The Young and the Restless*. My collection contains one or two episodes which were classics in their own right. I suspect that the network has a complete collection, but there's little likelihood that they'll ever be rebroadcast. Certain other daytime offerings have some really outrageous stuff that somebody out there really should be keeping examples of.

—Local news: I no longer have a copy, but I used to (sigh) have a couple of copies of an outrageous "happy" news format show from Los Angeles which took its name (it escapes me just now) from a parody of the then popular *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman*. I recall that one of the reports was so dedicated that he did his reports on location from his bed at home when he was too sick to make it to the station. It would be a shame if no one has kept a copy of this ridiculous show.

—Special Interest Shows: I'm thinking of ethnic shows (*Soul Train*), religious shows (*The PTL Club* and the Christian Network's game show *Bible Baffle*), children's shows (yes, even *Mister Rogers*), and fluffy syndicated game shows (*Family Feud* and *The \$1.98 Beauty Contest*). Even stupid claptrap like *Wrestling from Georgia* shouldn't be allowed to die away without a trace. The incredible exercise show *Body Buddies* is another prime candidate.

There's lots more, but I think you get the idea. Please consider joining me in this. No one of us is wealthy or foolish enough to do this on his own, but collectively we would amass quite an unimpressive load of this stuff. If the Sandhill Crane is worth saving, surely these lowpoints in the history of popular culture are also worth a nod. Besides, where else can we count on getting choice items to show at the annual videophile's convention of the future?

THE IMPOSSIBLE COLLECTION

or

You tell me your dream, I'll tell you mine

What could be more fun than daydreaming over the "impossible collection"—those tapes that we will never have, either because they just plain don't exist, or because their owners would never permit them to be put into circulation. I'm thinking of the shows that were on in the early days of TV that I'd dearly love to see again, and never will. The live programs that were lost at the very moment they were broadcast. Those fleeting images which, like our very own past, can be recaptured only through remembrance. Some would suggest it is best that certain things elude revisitation. I have no quarrel with this view, as it is the rare special moment that could ever really be the same. Yet, there is an undeniable yearning in the breast of the avid video tape collector for those few shows, those few extra special items, that keep coming to mind whenever we reminisce over the "good old days."

What I'd like to do is get some reader input on this and encourage each of you to send in a short list of TV shows that might be on your own "impossible collection" list. I'll print as many as possible, maybe even compile a "Top Ten" if the response permits. I'd love to be reminded of shows that I may have forgotten, and there's even the chance that I can have the pleasure of telling you that some of the items you recall, and assume to be lost forever, are indeed alive and well, afterall.

To start the ball rolling, here are a few items on my own dream list:

—Any episode of the old *Tonight Show* with Steve Allen, in which the "goo-goo" doll was featured. Back in the summer of 1956 (I think), I sat up nearly every night to watch the *Tonight Show* with Steve Allen, and enjoyed it immensely. Steve was always pulling great stunts, like taking the camera out of the side door of the studio and *literally* interviewing the man on the street. He established the pattern for the late night format on NBC that still persists today. One of the meaningless gimmicks that he and the crew got hooked on for a while was the innocuous goo-goo doll, a small rubber toy that would emit a squeaking "goo-goo" sound whenever the lower section of it was squeezed. The stupid thing enjoyed such popularity that the manufacturer was deluged with requests and Steve let us all in on where one could be ordered. I once had two of the darn things (and would buy another right now if I could), but the cheap rubber construction of the toy was such that it couldn't be expected to hold up for very long. There was no explaining the fascination that the fool thing held for fans of the show (sort of like the "pet rock"), but before it was all over, Steve had even written and recorded "The Goo-Goo Doll Song" which was released on Coral Records. Needless to

say, my 45 rpm record collection proudly contains a copy of this rare and valuable item.

There was no such thing as video tape in those days, and I doubt that films or kinescopes of these shows were ever made. The expense of preserving lengthy live shows that aired five times a week would have dictated against it.

—Any episodes of the old *Tonight Show* with Jack Parr, on which Tim Moore, the "Kingfish," appeared as a guest. As you know, I'm quite a fan of the old "Amos 'n' Andy" TV show (see the article and interview in issue #27). Just prior to his death in 1958, Tim Moore made at least two appearances as a guest on the *Tonight Show* with Jack Parr. He appeared out of character, and just talked with Jack about his show business career in the same way that other guests did. I remember these shows very vaguely, and to say that it would be a thrill to see them again is an understatement of some magnitude. Do they exist? It's not likely. Perhaps on audio tape? Who knows, but it sure would be nice.

—The original (black and white) *Honeymooners* episode in which Ed Norton wins a TV set at the movies with a ticket that Ralph Kramden bought. Now before you write and tell me about it, let me say that I am already aware that this skit has been performed more than once. I have seen it more recently on a color *Honeymooners* special in which an attempt was made to recreate the original skit with some changes in the script and, of course, with a new Alice and Trixie. But I'm thinking of the original version which was probably less than the length of the episodes that later got packaged for syndication. According to the book, *The Honeymooners Companion* (reviewed in #17), only 39 of the original *Honeymooners* episodes were filmed. The remainder are gone forever, except for the chance that they will someday be recorded on an ultra-sophisticated VCR in another corner of the universe when the signals reach the vicinity of a curious alien videophile.

There are many other "impossible" shows, especially if you include local telecasts like the bandstand type show that I appeared on in Charleston, West Virginia back in 1957 or so, or the local country music show ("Pieces of Eight") on WCHS-TV, Channel 8 in that same city, with Eddie Seacrist and the boys. But, I won't include these, and will ask you not to either. They may be personally of great significance, but except in the extreme case will be of little interest to our readership at large.

In addition to the "impossible shows," there are many

items which probably do reside in the vaults of the studio or network, but which are unlikely to ever see the light of day except in the form of snippets included in anniversary-type retrospectives. Some of these, which I am certain exist, but which, because they were broadcast prior to the debut of 1/2" home recording, probably are unavailable, include:

—Joey Heatherton singing "Let's Take It Slow and Easy" on *The Dean Martin Show*. Broadcast, as near as I can recall, in about 1970, this musical number may well be the most erotic thing to ever have been seen on network television. I'm not the only one who remembers it well, after more than ten years.

—Nikita Krushchev at the United Nations banging his shoe on the desk. This is a well known occurrence, which I had always taken for granted to be extant. But a couple of years ago Paul Loewenwarter, of *60 Minutes*, told me with smug confidence that no film or tape of this otherwise documented event actually exists. I'd love to prove him wrong. Perhaps some day I will.

—The episode of the *Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson in which Debbie Drake (the exercise honey) appears in an incredible lilac see-through harem girl outfit and (as I recall) ends up rolling around on the floor with Johnny in a supposed demonstration of some exercise technique. Upon just now checking my pulse, I find that I have yet to completely recover from seeing Miss Drake on that occasion. Whoever wrote "I Enjoy Being A Girl" must have had her in mind to sing it at the time.

—While I'm in this frame of mine, I may as well admit to one more leering desire, i.e., to have a complete collection of *Aqua Velva* commercials featuring Mamie Van Doren.

There you have it. Some impossible and some improbable items that should be in my tape collection, but probably never will be. Let me hear from you about the secret longings of your heart, and I'll pass them along to the eager hordes of TV nostalgia lovers that make up a most dedicated portion of our readership.



offering VTR's with built-in random-access tuning similar to the touch-tone keypads found on sets like Sony's KV-2645R, allowing you to dial up any and all channels including all of these "inbetween" CATV frequencies.

THE "MOST-OFTEN-ASKED QUESTION" AWARD-WINNER

Q: *How can I dub from one machine to the other? What's the best way? What's a dropout? What does OEM mean? And what do the pigs mean?*

Paulie Herman, Piscataway, NJ

A: Don't tell us—you're from Jersey. In any case, we've already covered dubbing backwards and forwards in Issues #11, #12 and #16 all of which are available from our Back Issue Department, 2003 Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee, FL 32301. Essentially, for VHS, use two phono-to-phono cables and connect the audio and video outputs of one machine to the audio and video inputs (sometimes called "camera") of another. For Beta, you'll need one phono-to-phono cable and one mini-phone plug to mini-phone plug cable. To dub between VHS and Beta, you'll need a phono-to-phono for the video and mini-phone plug to phono plug adapter cable for the audio. There are exceptions to this brief explanation, but these cables should work for 95% of machines. While professional video cables are preferred, short lengths (under 3 feet) of standard shielded audio cable will work fine.

A dropout is a minute imperfection on a tape, usually a bit of oxide that's flaked off either during recording or playback and prevented one line of the video signal from being seen. A special circuit called a "dropout compensator" inside your VTR minimizes this effect, but it can't eliminate the really bad ones, which appear as little white horizontal lines that dart from left to right on your TV set. "OEM" is industry jargon for "Original Equipment Manufacturer"; for example, Matsushita, the giant electronics conglomerate in Japan, is the OEM supplier to Quasar, Panasonic, Magnavox, RCA, and most other VHS brands. That's why a certain Magnavox deck may closely resemble a comparable RCA deck, and so on.

As far as the pigs go, we don't know, either. Hey—all we do is answer these stupid questions. It's Jim's pigs, and his magazine for that matter. (Would you believe he's a charter member of the Arnold Ziffel Fan Club?)



Index of Advertisers

CinemaX	52	MLF Sales	61	UDS	66
Consumer Video Outlet	67				
Creative Video Products	47	Radio Wholesale	64	VidCanada	61
				Video Service Center	62 & 63
Films Albion	61	Satellite Technology	64	Video Guard-Off	61
		Shokus Video	64	Video Merchant	61
Home Video Only	65	Super Sound & Sight Systems	64	Vidicraft	4
Kappa Video	Back Cover	Ted Reinhart	52		

Summer CES Preview: The New Sony Video Products

In early May of this year, Sony held their national dealer show in Palm Springs to introduce some 45 new video products, in addition to a large number of audio-related items like clock radios, Walkman portable cassette players, and compact stereo systems. In an effort to give our readers a sneak preview of what Sony will be bringing out at the CES in Chicago, just after this issue goes to press, here's a rundown of their latest consumer video hardware:

The World's Smallest Betamax

Without a doubt, the most exciting and long-awaited news is the arrival of Sony's new SL-2000 "Betapak" VTR, replacing the venerable SL-3000 (the latter reviewed way back in *TV* #20). The 9 lb. 4 oz. portable is being touted as being not only the world's smallest Beta format recorder, but also the smallest $\frac{1}{2}$ " VTR of any kind, at only $3\frac{1}{8}$ "x $11\frac{1}{8}$ "x $8\frac{1}{2}$ ". This compares with 3"x9 $11/16$ "x $10\frac{3}{16}$ " for the Funai/Technicolor CVC portable reviewed last issue!



Sony's SL-2000 is the world's smallest $\frac{1}{2}$ " VTR, and features a full-function wireless infrared remote control with its companion TT-2000 tuner/timer.

Aside from its incredible size and weight, the SL-2000 boasts an improved picture search mode called "BetaScan II" with "Videola," which allows viewing tapes at either high speed, regular speed, or slow speed, in both forward and reverse—a first for any $\frac{1}{2}$ " consumer VTR. Also provided is automatic X-1/X-2/X-3 playback mode switching, not unlike the SL-J9, along with manual X-2/X-3 record mode selection.

Perhaps the Betapak's most exciting feature is found in its companion TT-2000 tuner/timer/AC adaptor module, which

comes with a wireless infrared full-function remote control that allows you to put the entire package through its paces from up to 50 feet away. The TT-2000 is about the same size as the recorder and includes a programmable 14-day/4-event microprocessor similar to those found in the SL-5600 and 5800, except with an improved "up/down" digit-setting control—a much appreciated improvement over the "fast/slow" programming controls found in the earlier units.

The front of the SL-2000 contains most of its operating controls, and features an LCD display for hours, minutes and seconds (the latter reading off once every ten seconds), playback speed indicator, dew light and tape run direction indicator. Also provided are a number of light-touch solenoid-type buttons for its transport controls—a first for any Sony consumer VTR introduced in the U.S.

The biggest problem with the new portable would seem to be availability. Sony officials indicated that the SL-2000 will be trickling out sometime in July or August, but it would seem that they'll be in short supply until later on in the year. No firm pricing has been announced, but it's expected that the combined SL-2000/TT-2000 system will sell for under \$1500, including the RMT-311 remote control.



Got \$10,000 that's burning a hole in your pocket? Then consider Sony's KV-3000, a 30" Trinitron console that features two full-range stereo speakers, on-screen graphic displays for color and brightness adjustments, and comes built in a hand-finished Tano Ash wood cabinet.

The World's Biggest Trinitron

Perhaps the most bizarre new product unveiled by Sony at the Palm Springs show was the 30" KV-3000R, called by the

manufacturer "a limited edition aristocrat of Trinitrons," and "the epitome of years of research." Only 1000 of these sets are being produced to commemorate Sony's 35th anniversary in the consumer electronics industry, and each will be personalized with a brass plaque bearing the name of the purchaser and the serial number of the set. The 30" color Trinitron tube is built in a huge cabinet made with rare reddish-brown Japanese Tano Ash wood, hand finished and crafted, and features three audio/video inputs, two RF inputs, full-range stereo speakers, and electrically-operated doors that conceal the screen when not in use. The sets will be delivered and installed by a fully-qualified Sony representative, and will include a 3 years (!) parts and labor warranty.

But, of course, we've saved the most amazing thing about the KV-3000 for last. If your heart has been captured by our description of the KV-3000, get prepared to take out a mortgage on your home and sell your car, 'cause its "parked in your driveway" price is a cool \$10,000 . . . *ten thousand big ones*. Well, it's only money. Still, for that kind of stratospheric dough, we'll go on record as preferring Sony's 30" broadcast monitor, which goes for about \$3,000 less, or their PVM-2550 25" industrial monitor, which goes for about 1/3 the price of the KV-3000.

We have to admit that the set really is impressive—not so much for its picture quality, which didn't exactly knock our socks off—but for its sheer *size*. If you can imagine Stanley Kubrick's *2001* "Monolith" turned on its side, you'll get an idea of what this thing looks like. To top it off, its remote control has what is undoubtedly the most elaborate on-screen display of its functions we've ever seen—three horizontal colored graphs that read-out at the bottom of the screen to aid in adjusting color, hue, brightness, and sound level. Also provided is a large digital channel readout in the upper right-hand corner of the screen which disappears after a few seconds. All things considered, it's definitely quite an incredible achievement . . . though we'd recommend it only to our readers who have seven-figure bank accounts and an overpowering

urge to be "the first on their block." Akio Morita, president of Sony, apparently fits this description; his personal set was the one on display at the show, emblazoned with his personal nameplate.

Meanwhile, back on planet Earth, Sony also unveiled over a dozen regular Trinitron sets for us "po' folks," with the much-heralded "Profeel" series as the flagship of their line. The two new U.S. models, the 26" KX-2501 and the 19" 1901, boast a couple of features not found on the Japanese Profeels reviewed last issue; a front-panel selector switch that allows watching direct RGB inputs from home computers or professional broadcast equipment, and the unique VTX-1000R "Access" tuner which allows selecting between three direct audio/video sources (with *stereo* audio, yet!) and two RF sources. Also provided is complete CATV tuning to any UHF, VHF, mid-band or super-band channel via a 10-key touch-pad. Like the Japanese Profeels, the U.S. models feature the Dynamic Picture system for automatic contrast adjustment, Dynamic Color circuitry for improved color stability, and a Colorpure comb filter for the highest possible resolution. The 26" also features Sony's Velocity Modulation scanning system to overcome the difficulties of providing high resolution in a large screen size. The preliminary literature rates the KX-2501 at more than 350 lines, and the 1901 at 340 lines.

No definite price or availability was announced for the U.S. Profeel models, but Sony officials estimated that the 26" would sell for under \$1250, and will be available sometime this Fall. Also to be released to complete the system will be a companion cabinet made to hold a Profeel set and a VTR, add-on speakers, and a wireless remote control for the VTX-1000R tuner.



Sony's Profeel component TV monitor is designed to interface with other video products to provide a complete home entertainment system.



The KV-2648R matches most of the Profeel series' features, and comes in an attractive cabinet with two built-in stereo speakers, for \$1799.95.

Essentially matching most of the Profeel's features and picture quality is Sony's top-of-the-line 26" console, the KV-2648R. It features the same "matrix sound system" for simulated stereo sound as the earlier KV-2645R, and adds the multiple-input capability and a cable-ready tuner. The 2648 should be available by the time this issue reaches your hands, and will sell for under \$1800.

Other smaller Trinitrons introduced at the show include the KV-2145R, their top-of-the-line 21" set at \$959.95, and the KV-1945RS 19" at \$759.95. The latter features a cable-ready tuner, as do all the models with the "RS" suffix. The KV-4000 "Baby Trinitron" now has a new brother, the KV-4100,



The KV-4100 "Dictavision" color portable combines a TV set, AM/FM radio and a microcassette audio recorder into one compact battery-operated package, and doubles as a monitor for the videophile on-the-go.

which matches the size and styling of the earlier 3.7" color portable and adds an internal AM/FM radio and built-in microcassette recorder. Both sets can be used as monitors, by virtue of their direct audio/video inputs. Also unveiled was the "Stadium for One" TV-415, a black-and-white version of the above two 3.7" sets, which features a unique "zoom-in" feature for magnifying the center part of the screen about 1.5 times. It, too, features direct audio/video inputs, and can play for up to 4½ hours with its optional BP-41 rechargeable battery pack.

New "Videoscope" Large-Screen Projectors

Also introduced at the Palm Springs show were two unique one-piece console projectors, the 4' KP-5040 and the 6' KP-



Sony's 50" KP-5040 features improved picture quality and an electrically-controlled front section that slides open automatically when the remote switch is activated.

7240, which replace last year's 5020 and 7020, respectively. Each unit represents "a quantum leap ahead in large screen TV technology," according to a company spokesman, and has a newly-designed tuner section they call "the most sophisticated available anywhere in the world." Perhaps the new projectors' most unique feature is their all-electronic operation, with their doors unfolding and turning on at the touch of a button, or automatically closing back in place when not in use.

Both projectors appeared to be considerably sharper and brighter than earlier one-piece console designs, not only from Sony but also most other manufacturers, though it remains to be seen as to how they'll compare with deluxe two-piece units. Also featured in the new projector series are stereo speakers and direct audio/video inputs for connection to a wide variety of program sources. No prices were offered for the new models, though one official estimated the price of the 6' model as being "under \$4,000," to be available this Fall.

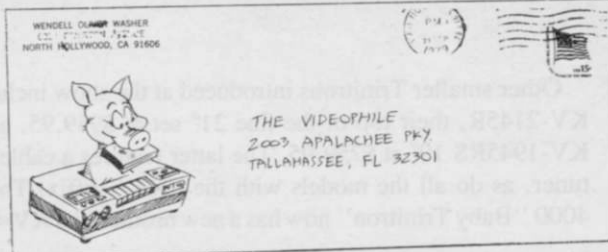
We'll have more information on these and other products in next issue's Summer CES Report. If we can comment a little further on Sony's marketing philosophy, it would seem that they're now attempting to compete very aggressively with the VHS format, though we were very disappointed that there was no sight of any replacement for the SL-5600 or 5800—like a U.S. version of the SL-J9—nor were there any confirmations of the rumors of a new stripped-down model to replace the SL-5400, designed to compete with the new under-\$700 disc players. We did get the impression that Sony may release VTR's like these by the end of the year, though no one was willing to offer any additional information as to exactly when we'll be able to see them and how much they'll cost. However, as one Sony executive explained, "we think the component-styling of our SL-2000 should satisfy most videophiles looking for a deluxe, top-of-the-line Betamax." Indeed, it does just about everything the J9 will do except for stereo sound and variable-speed slow-motion and variable BetaScan. However, we wouldn't doubt that the Japanese equivalent of the SL-2000 will have stereo capability, which might make it preferable when used with a U.S.-compatible tuner.

It would seem that Sony has begun to set their sights toward capturing the low- and mid-range level of TV set buyers, with their introduction of several medium-priced 12" and 15" models. Even though they've been a leader in the deluxe, high-end TV area for some time, this is the first time they've taken such a step in recent years. But the high-end deluxe sets are still an important part of their line, as witnessed by sets like the \$809 KV-1945SR 19" model, or the \$959.95 KV-2145R 21" TV.

We'll have detailed reviews and Product Reports on a number of these items in future issues.



Letters:



Dear Jim & Company,

I assume issue #30 will be up to your former standards ("a really good one every other time") because #29 left something to be desired (and I'm being polite). What happened to your product reviews? Maybe they're between the lines of Wielage's "magnumopus"? Much, too much, space was devoted to the latter. If I want to read travelogues, I'll subscribe to International Globetrotter.

Please add to Amirault's list:

21. Do not put your name or address on your tape list itself. Even if you think you're 100% legal you never know when the Feds are going to crack down on everyone with copies of Devil Girl From Mars. Why make it easy for them?

22. Do subscribe to your local PBS station. \$25 a year (but, the more the better) is cheap for all the great stuff you can get for "free". (You ought to be ashamed for not thinking of this yourself, Jim). -- Stan Sieger, Sepulvada, CA

Thanks for the constructive criticism, Stan. Also for all the great clippings, especially the one from Trade-A-Tape Gazette, wherein the writer professes to know all about every little S.K. video sheet in the land, except this one.

Dear Jim:

Marc Wielage's "Japan Diary: a Video Odyssey" (Feb. '81) was one of the finest articles you've run in The Videophile. ... The basic virtue of "Japan Diary" is that it provides cogent information for the videophile at the same time that it manages to be an entertaining travelogue.

-- Brad Linaweaver, Atlanta, GA

Dear Sirs,

Just a quick note to say how much your mag is appreciated. I've been a subscriber since issue #2. There was a certain charm in Xeroxed and stapled sheets I guess, but not much. Now there are rumors you are being swallowed by a big publisher. Well the times they are a changin'. -- Dave Morris, Belleville, IL

Don't believe everything you hear, Dave. It could happen someday, I guess, but right now we have only been swallowed up by our own Small Potatoes Publishing Company, Inc.

Dear Mr. Lowe:

As a video repair specialist for over 15 years, I am appalled by the number of respectable magazines that have jumped on the Beta bandwagon. Repairs to Beta machines (especially head replacement) run about double those of VHS machines in our shop.

This figure is even more significant when you take into account that the machines sell at a 60% VHS 40% Beta ratio.

Any non-technical dullard can see the failing of keeping the tape in contact with the heads during high speed modes, not to mention an overly complex load pattern. VHS may not have the theoretical edge as regards picture quality, but from every other point of view VHS one-ups Beta everytime. -- Gavin Mayeaux, 369 1/2 Agate Street, Laguna Beach, CA 92651

Dear Jim:

Marc's Beta bias is showing again ... It seems whenever a Sony has a short-coming, it is glossed over and played down -- like a defect in a favorite son. If a VHS has a short-coming of comparable magnitude it is highlighted. If a Sony has a good feature over its competition, it is praised to the heavens. ... (etc.) ... I would be interested in the story behind the story on how each system was developed and why all serious videophiles are reputed to prefer Beta. -- James R. Bannister, Fort Wayne, IN

I very much appreciated your very lengthy letter. Speaking as a non-technical dullard, I stand by my recommendations in issue #28. At the high speeds available in both formats there is not enough difference to justify a choice based on picture quality alone.

Dear Jim:

The people who sell prerecorded tapes are really beginning to get to me. Being overseas, I buy a larger number than I probably would if I was in the States. On a couple of occasions, people who know that I am a Sci-Fi nut have sent me copies of movies off HBO that I have already bought. It is on these occasions that I find that I get a better deal from HBO. I have a copy from Columbia of the "special edition" of Close Encounters of the Third Kind. The same film on HBO (again the special edition) had scenes that were not in the tape I bought. Also the HBO version was panned so that in their version you see the alien coming out of the space ship. In the one I bought, the alien is off screen to the left. When you think of what they charge for these tapes, you would think that the better version would be the one you pay the most for. I also have The Black Hole from Disney. While the HBO version is identical to the one I bought, HBO ran the Mickey Mouse Disco cartoon along with it, which is something that Disney is offering only to those who rent their tapes. If you buy, you're SOL. And then they complain about people taping off the TV. -- Ron Novinson, American Embassy, (somewhere in the Far East)

Many thanks Ron for the brochure on the tri-standard Toshiba Betamax (Model V-5480). I couldn't read a word of the darn thing, but the pictures sure were pretty.

Dear Jim-

... our hobby or should I say our way of life is getting too particular about quality. A couple of times I had people over to look at some tapes. People would say they look great, but I would sit there and worry about dropouts, etc. It got to the point that I would not enjoy the tapes at all. One friend said this hobby is getting as bad as "those stereo freaks". The point I'm trying to make is let's stop worrying about dropouts, etc. and start enjoying the show. ... This guy I know bought the RCA Disc and I've seen it a couple of times. I think the disc serves the purpose -- it shows a prerecorded movie at a very good price. The video is as good as any prerecorded tape that you can buy. ... I also think that this new hobby of video should be more than just old movies. -- Stephen Gerardi, Douglaston, NY

As a consumer, I tend to agree with you. It is a shame if our enjoyment is ruined by the fact that we are compulsively aware that the tapes or discs could be better. But as an editor of this magazine, I must fully support our technical staff in its endeavor to critically assess video equipment against an ideal standard. How else can we recognize and appreciate true excellence when we encounter it? Yes, the hobby should be, and is, more than just old movies. It is the very desire to produce our own tapes, and otherwise push equipment to the limits of its capability that makes it so important that we settle for nothing short of what is the best possible consumer video equipment at a reasonable price.

Dear Mr. Lowe:

I enjoy all of your features, but Ted Reinhart's section is one of my special favorites; please keep his fine column in your magazine. It would be nice to have regular features which reviewed video tapes of other types too, such as science fiction/horror, comedy, "golden age" favorites, etc. Of course, you'd need writers of Mr. Reinhart's quality for any other such special columns. -- J.G., Birmingham, AL

We have every intention of including specialized columns of the type you mention. I'd do one or two myself if only I could convince Mother Nature to add another day or two to each week. Keep reading, we're hoping it won't be much longer!

Dear Jim-

Just got back from the Photo Marketing Ass'n convention in Miami -- had a few items of interest -- like Eumig, a reknowned manufacturer of Super 8, has come out with an NTSC, 32 channel VHS recorder, monaural Dolby audio, wireless infrared remote, direct-drive quartz-locked motor, scads of slo-mo/freeze frame capability, headphone out jack, CCJ- 10 pin camera in socket -- all in a solid metal cabinet that bears no resemblance to any other manufacturer. Eumig wouldn't say if they made it, nor would they comment on delivery. Elmo is coming out with a very well made CED disc player this Fall. -- Johnny Bartley, Harmon Industries, Inc., 3134 Cleveland Avenue, Fort Myers, FL 33901

Things could get very interesting once Kodak and the other photo folks get into the VCR business in as big a way as is anticipated.

Dear Jim,

I got a kick out of Tom Dunahoo's letter in a recent Videophile (#29) and just had to unearth the enclosed to share the joke with you and your readers.

So Dunahoo, who began as a film pirate, now complains bitterly of being ripped off by people who copy his public domain stuff! Well, Tom, I guess that's what you guys in California call karma. -- Bob Hagan, Halcyon Films, 3827 N. Lincoln, Chicago, IL 60613

Thanks for the clippings, Bob (which recount the oft-told tale of Tom's switch from film piracy to legitimate businessman, and also report on the recent \$40,000 fine that Columbia, Universal, MGM, 20th Century-Fox and American International got against him, and which is now on appeal), but I must say that, while no one could fail to observe the irony (humor if you will) in the situation, Mr. Dunahoo is performing a true service. While I have never had the pleasure of meeting him personally, we have enjoyed off and on correspondence, and I am of the view that the world of film and video tape collecting is a much better place because Tom is among us. Indeed, I often recommend that folks write him at THUNDERBIRD FILMS, P.O. Box 65157, Los Angeles, CA 90065, to inquire about his rather unique catalog. (I continue to wish that he would send me a copy of "Glen or Glenda" to review.)

Dear Jim:

I've just met my first rip-off artist, trade-wise and since he answered my ad in the VIDEOPHILE, I hope you will list his name in the "good, bad, and ugly" column. He is (name withheld) of Autauga (or Autaugaville), AL 36003. Fortunately, I only lost one L-750 to the bait he dangled (he said he had one of my prime wants, the musical ATHENA with Judy Powell). A friend of mine just told me he knew someone else who had lost a couple of tapes to _____.

If you for some reason (libel laws or lack of confirmations?) can't list bad traders, would it be possible for me to pay for an ad; something on the order of "Beware of _____ of Autaugaville, AL, who has not made good on trades." Or somesuch? It would be worth it to me to see such people discouraged (and to protect the innocent trader).

You should advise persons placing or answering mini-ads never to make a trade until they have spoken by phone to a trader (my mistake with him -- I knew he didn't have a phone, but I wanted ATHENA sooooo much I took a chance. At least I knew I might be letting myself in for a rip-off and only made 1 trade; other people blithely send out 2,3, even 4 tapes to new contacts). Also, never send more than one tape to start out with and if possible ask the trader for the name of a reference (someone else he/she has traded with). -- Linda Bushyager, 1614 Evans Ave., Prospect Park, PA 19076

P.S. How about mentioning which cable companies show "Pirate This Program", if you can find out and the list isn't too long.

Linda, we do have to be careful about the libel laws, but I would be inclined to print such a mini-ad, so long as it was accompanied by a copy of a letter to the offending party notifying him/her of the intention to have such an ad printed, if satisfaction was not made, also a copy of the person's signature on the certified mail "return receipt requested" form. // Yes, I would be interested in an article from you on the tips for traders that you mentioned.

The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

The following are unsolicited remarks with respect to the indicated dealers. To be fair, we cannot ordinarily list someone as a bad egg simply on the basis of a single complaint. This policy accounts, in part, for the fact that some of the remarks you may have sent in are not reproduced here. All comments with respect to particular dealers are excerpted from readers' correspondence that we have on file. With respect to Chapter 770, Florida Statutes, relating to civil actions for libel, publication of these excerpts is in the good faith belief that said readers' comments are a true account of their experiences. Also, since it is not practical to repeat everything each issue, new readers may want to pick up copies of TV #19-29, in which the first eleven installments of GB & U appear.

I want to kick off this issue with an "ugly" of my own. Few things rile me as much as seeing someone try to take advantage of someone else by means of misrepresentation. That is one of the reasons that this is the only magazine that you are likely to find with a column of this nature.

A common form of misrepresentation is reprinting favorable portions of a review in such a way as to give the impression that a product has been endorsed, when, in fact, that is not the case. You may have noticed that we do not permit anyone to reprint our reviews without written permission. Our reviews are protected by copyright, and besides it doesn't do much for our reputation to have some yahoo running around saying that his product is great "just like it says in the Videophile". A case in point is XS Productions, 1614 South Fairview, Park Ridge, Illinois, 60068. This firm is circulating a promotional brochure for its "Comedy Tonight" tape which lifts a portion of our review that appeared in issue #21. It is not indicated that the review is only reprinted in part, indeed it appears to be complete. But, what do you know, they seem to have left out all of the negative remarks.

Yes, we had some moderately favorable remarks to make about the tape, but the bottom line was that we were not really thrilled with it and did not think that its content justified its price. The same promotional flyer carries a statement from "Steve Allen" ("the" Steve Allen? or Steve Allen, of Numbbutt, Alaska?): "I enjoyed it immensely". Does this mean that he liked the tape? For all I know, he said this just after backing his car over the cassette. After I cool down, I will be considering legal action for copyright violation.

Gentlemen:

In your February '81 issue, you reviewed a new video tape produced by the Mitchell Brothers in San Francisco. Because your review did not mention the price or whether it is available in the VHS format, I wrote a letter to them and asked them these two questions. I am enclosing their reply.

"Dear Valued Customer,

We are now offering our 48-page catalogue at the price of \$5.00 which includes the cost of shipping handling. Send a check or money order to the address above."

Can you imagine that? Here they receive an excellent review in an important video magazine, and snare a prospective customer for one of their products, and they goof the whole thing up by trying to sell me a \$5.00 catalog! I don't intend to buy their catalog. If they had simply answered my questions, they may have had a sale. -- P.S., Chicago, IL

Looks like somebody in the form letter department was not on the ball the day your inquiry arrived. But, while I'm on the subject of inquiries, I have found that it is always a good practice to enclose a self addressed stamped envelope (SASE) whenever writing to someone from whom I expect a reply. Never mind that you shouldn't have to pay the postage yourself when you have a complaint that is justified, you are doing it for your own good, even though you may be saving some jerk 18¢ (ouch).

You'd be surprised how many letters I get from folks who want my advice on something, who not only request that I respond immediately, but never think to include an SASE, or even a loose stamp for gosh sake. I rarely have time to answer individual inquiries anyway, but without a stamp, at least?!

Gentlemen:

I just want to add my two cents about Video Service Center in Sacramento, CA: I have purchased a number of items from Ben Saia, and he and his company are tops! I feel very fortunate that the first (and only) company that I have contacted since I started in video (my first recorder, VHS in Oct. 77) was THE most dependable one in the country. And, I first heard about him from an ad in your magazine. ... Keep up the good work!!! -- Francis C. Williams, Honolulu, HI

I know this is beginning to sound like a broken record, but Ben and his crew at Video Service Center must be doing something right judging from the letters that we continue to get.

We don't have more than one complaint on the following, but the nature of what we do have is such that I am prompted to at least inquire if any of you have anything to report either pro or con with respect to:

Video V, P.O. Box 8456, Kansas City, MO 64114, and Video Information Systems, Inc., makers of the time charts that we reviewed in issue #28.

That's it for this time. Please remember to document your complaints with copies of letters, checks, etc. Also, we do want to know about the good guys, as well.

The Videodisc Question

By: Marcus F. Wielage

LaserVision, CED, VHD. All of these are words none of us had heard back in 1976, when our first issue appeared. We've followed the few victories and the many "agonies of defeat" endured by the laser optical system over the past couple of years, from our first in-depth examination of the Magnavox Model 8000 player in #18 to our condemnation of DiscoVision Associates' poor disc pressings over a year ago in #23. Now, in 1981, we're at the threshold of what's being touted as the biggest revolution in the history of the consumer electronics business, far and above more gigantic than the early color TV standards battle and the stereo-FM arguments of the '50's, and there's little doubt that the biggest casualty in this billion-dollar war will almost certainly be the consumer.



To give our readers a better understanding of the problems surrounding The VideoDisc Question, we should briefly go back and review the progress (or lack thereof) in this fledgling industry for the past few years. The laser optical format, now going under the generic trademark "LaserVision," first began as MCA DiscoVision in 1972, developed by the corporation that owns Universal Studios in an attempt to perfect a way of economically selling their feature films to the consumer market. MCA's early prototypes included a unique optical disc changer, not unlike a standard phonograph, with a clear plastic lid into which up to a half-dozen flexible discs could be placed for playback. Not long after, the Dutch electronics conglomerate N.V. Philips came out with the "VLP" (video long play) system, another videodisc concept using a very similar laser/optical approach, but with several minor differ-

ences such as playing the discs from the inside groove to the outer grooves, and relying on a slightly different pickup design and rigid disc pressings.

After a year or two of negotiating, Philips and MCA resolved all their differences in September of 1974 and pooled their considerable resources towards developing a compatible videodisc system, each compromising their own systems slightly to allow for complete interchangeability. Yet it wasn't until four years later that the first few players began to roll off Philips' assembly line in Holland, with just a few discs being produced by MCA's Carson, California pressing plant. As documented in this and many other electronics publications, those first players and discs had more than their fair share of technical bugs, mostly concerning the problematic and complex laser assembly and the fact that a large number of defective videodiscs slipped through their Q/C inspectors.

Meanwhile, MCA, always anxious to keep their options open and spread as widely as possible, secured a partnership with Pioneer in Japan to supply them with an industrial optical player (the PR-7820) as part of their newly formed Universal/Pioneer division. We understand from several sources that Philips was somewhat taken aback by this competitive step and made overtures towards Sony, with whom they later signed an agreement in order to exchange patents on a variety of products, specifically including the optical disc. Needless to say, this infuriated MCA, since they were (and still are) in the process of fighting a major legal battle with Sony over the issue of off-air video recording.

So, these internal struggles continued. Back in California, we were told by one highly-placed source that many of DiscoVision's early pressing problems were due to the very stringent demands on technical accuracy in disc replication, which in turn required an extremely carefully-adjusted laser assembly in the player for problem-free playback. After rejecting fully 2/3 of their output as being defective, MCA DiscoVision realized a need to "soften" their standards slightly, which would allow them a little more margin for error with their pressings. This would, in turn, greatly help them increase their disc output, with fewer overall rejects. Unfortunately, because of the rift between MCA and Philips, communication between the two firms wasn't exactly operating at peak efficiency and Philips didn't learn of these optical disc standard modifications until almost a year later. As a result, thousands of Philips-made MagnaVision players were not completely

compatible with these new "relaxed-standard" discs. On the other hand, because of MCA's close relationship with Pioneer, the latter firm's industrial and consumer LaserVision players were designed from the start to operate with a larger tolerance for disc problems. As of this year, however, all Magnavox players have been (or should have been) modified to handle these discs with a new, improved laser assembly, according to a company spokesman.

Meanwhile, the optical disc defects continued. The key problem here seems to be the fact that each disc is assembled from two separate halves, thus adding significantly to the possibility that either one or both sides will have a problem. In addition, the troublesome "CLV" (extended play) discs proved to be much harder to produce than the R&D engineers first envisioned. Realizing that their expertise lay more in the area of entertainment than in manufacturing, MCA turned to business giant IBM to help them get the bugs out of their pressing plant. This new MCA/IBM partnership was called DiscoVision Associates ("DVA" for short) and most of their efforts over the past two years has been toward perfecting the 1-hour-per-side CLV discs. The 30-minute CAV discs require twice the expense in materials—often as many as five sides of three discs for a two-hour feature film. This was the main reason for their 50% price hike two years ago.

Most, if not all, of the CLV discs we've seen up to this point have been abysmal—visibly inferior to the one-hour discs from RCA and JVC with their competitive systems, as a matter of fact—but DVA spokesmen insist that they have finally conquered almost all of their initial problems and have lowered their defect rate substantially. We have learned through an informed source that DVA is still unable to press CLV discs longer than 55:00 minutes, despite earlier claims that the system can handle up to 60:00 minutes. A spokesman for Pioneer confirms this fact, though he revealed that their own pressing plant in Japan has been able to successfully reach the magic one-hour mark with a number of test-pressings.

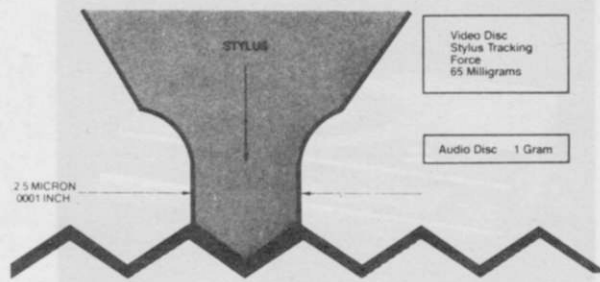
However, all of the LaserVision system's highly-touted features of still-frame, slow-motion, and random-frame access are kaput with these CLV discs, making them roughly equivalent, operationally, to RCA's "CED" system. It's expected that once a major breakthrough occurs with digital frame-store technology, future optical players may be able to provide at least a still-frame with CLV discs, though this isn't expected to happen for at least five years.

As of this writing, Philips will be selling LaserVision players through their Magnavox and newly-acquired Philco and Sylvania sub-divisions. Pioneer already manufactures two players, the industrial unit and the consumer VP-1000H (reviewed in issue #30). Advent is the only other U.S. firm definitely known to be coming out with a LaserVision player (apparently identical to the Pioneer), although Fisher has displayed a Sanyo-built optical prototype at several trade shows. Many Japanese firms, including Kenwood and Sony, all have licenses to produce optical disc players, but all of them are fence-sitting for the present time.

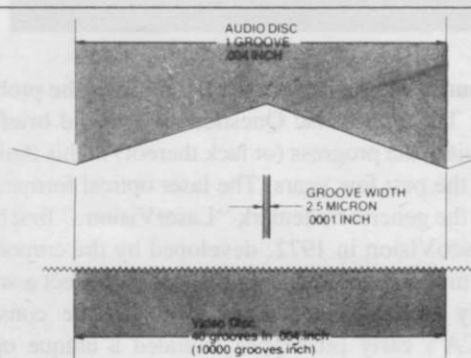
Sony has the real "wild card" in the videodisc war, since they've already unveiled their industrial LaserVision player, which plays only 30 minute CAV discs, and recently opened an optical disc pressing plant in Japan. Sony chairman Akio Morita has insisted that they don't feel the videodisc is a viable concept just yet, and has announced plans to stick with videotape for the time being.

Next, we have RCA. RCA's videodisc plans have been under development for at least as long as MCA's, since the early '70's, although their basic system has undergone a number of changes since the initial demonstrations in 1975. RCA's engineers have been working toward perfecting the simplest videodisc system possible, both in terms of manufacturing as well as consumer operation, and there's no question that they've achieved this goal with their current SFT-100 player and caddy-enclosed videodiscs (reviewed in issue #30).

RCA's amazing CED technical statistics read almost like an episode of *That's Incredible*. For example: their stylus is so small ("how small is it?") that 50 of them would fit on the edge of a dollar bill. The stylus pressure against the videodisc is a mere .065 grams—less than 1/20 the weight of even the best audio styli and tone arms. And the CED grooves are incredibly dense—more than 10,000 to the inch—making audio disc grooves look like the Grand Canyon by comparison.



The CED stylus tracks at a mere .065 grams—much less than any conventional audio disc stylus.

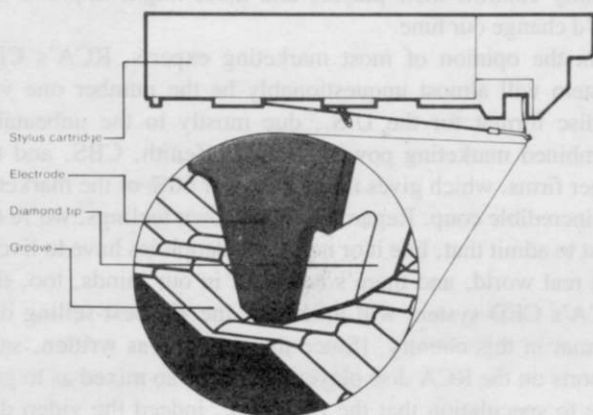


As shown in this diagram, the CED grooves are so narrow that 38 of them will fit inside a standard audio disc groove.

The only problem with CED, or should we say, the *main* problem, is that its lifespan is significantly less than the other consumer videodisc and videotape systems. However, RCA's engineers are correct in pointing out that their system approxi-

mately equals the durability of standard audio discs, which we understand is roughly 1000 hours for the stylus and 100 plays for the disc. Most of us will admit that there are very, very few tapes in our collections that we've played even 50 times, let alone 100, so it's apparent that this wear factor might not be very important as far as lifespan goes. On the other hand, for video *quality*, there's little doubt that CED discs will tend to look worse and worse over the years, the more they're played. Even when brand-new, their overall quality has been judged by our technical staff to closely resemble that of comparable VHS LP/4-hour recordings—mediocre, at best.

Despite this somewhat mediocre picture quality, we have to agree with a statement found in RCA's excellent software catalogue: "Programs on RCA SelectaVision Videodiscs are electronically processed and enhanced for reproduction through your home television receiver from the best source elements supplied by program licensors. Processing may include color correction, noise reduction, enhanced monaural TV sound, and other steps in conversion to the videodisc medium." Aside from the poor audio quality discussed in our review last issue, I have to agree that RCA's film transfers are among the very best I've ever seen, judging by the demos at trade shows and press conferences. This may be the single greatest feature of the CED system: they've got the best titles and best transfers of any video format currently available, including Beta and VHS.



This view of RCA's "Duralife" cartridge shows how its stylus glides through their disc grooves, picking up tiny electrical signals from the tops of these ridges in the grooves.

As to features, the CED system doesn't have a great deal to offer at present. RCA has made the decision to offer their discs only with mono sound at present, though they've remained silent as to why stereo-compatible discs couldn't be made available now to preclude an eventual mono/stereo inventory battle similar to the audio war of the early 60's. In addition, slow-motion and true freeze-frame is extremely difficult to obtain with the CED system, again requiring the complex frame-storage circuits discussed earlier. It's doubtful that we'll be seeing these features for at least four or five years, though updated deluxe players with variable search speeds and

"pseudo-still-frame" (four endlessly repeated frames) will be available from several Japanese manufacturers later this year, and from RCA in 1982.

The list of CED manufacturers reads almost like a "Who's Who" of the U.S. electronics industry. Although Zenith had originally been involved with Philips and the laser optical system, they abandoned their efforts early in the game, later attempting to come up with their own videodisc format with the French firm Thomson-CSF. After suffering through the dominance of VHS in the consumer video market for four years, Zenith turned to their arch-rival RCA, realizing the importance of the latter firm's keen marketing power. Once they were convinced that the CED format would become the best-selling disc system in our country, Zenith embraced it with open arms in 1979. After RCA and Zenith's startling announcement (roughly akin to Ford and General Motors agreeing to make identical cars), other firms were quick to jump on the CED bandwagon. Thus far, Hitachi, Sanyo and Toshiba have announced plans to manufacture CED-compatible players, which will be sold under their own brand names as well as those of several other smaller firms. Even major department stores are signing up with CED, with Sears, J.C. Penney and Montgomery-Ward joining forces for the first time on their decision to sell the same type of disc system.

Both CBS and RCA are now gearing up their pressing plants for producing CED discs this year, though most of CBS' efforts are still in the formative stages. It's known that RCA is very concerned over the large number of CED players about to be released by the three Japanese licensees because of the relatively small number of discs their pressing plant is capable of manufacturing in 1981—less than 200 titles by the end of the year, and about 2,000,000 total RCA discs scheduled for release. As a result, there will most likely be a steady drought of CED titles throughout 1981 not unlike the current shortage of DiscoVision discs. It's expected that as more pressing plants open up, the situation will improve by this time next year.

Other firms that have become licensed for manufacturing CED players include Clarion, NEC and Sharp in Japan, though for the immediate future they'll most likely be involved primarily in manufacturing these players for sale to other firms on an OEM basis rather than under their own names. In addition, two major British consumer audio companies, BSR and Plessey/Garrard, are CED licensees, though neither has yet announced the date by which their players will be available.

Finally, we have VHD. JVC is widely known as being the most innovative of all Matsushita's companies, coming up with technical triumphs like the CD-4 discrete four-channel audio disc system as well as the VHS 1/2" videocassette system. Their VHD/AHD (video high density/audio high density) system has been under development for the past four or five years, and has been discussed in several of our past issues (#20 & #26). Parent company Matsushita, which had shown its own prototype "VISC" and "VISC-O-PAC" system at

trade shows for several years, agreed to adopt JVC's system a year ago, a fact which points to its high-quality design and excellent overall quality.

Like RCA's player, VHD uses a stylus to "read" differences in capacitance or stored electrical charges in the surface of a conductive disc, a primary distinction being that the VHD stylus glides smoothly *across* the surface of the disc rather than digging *into* a groove, resulting in much less wear and tear. Also, JVC had the exceptional foresight to design their system from the start with 2-hour playing time *and* multiple special effects capability, including still-frame, random-frame access and slow-motion, thus combining the playing time of CED with the features of LaserVision. I should add here that, although most demonstrations of VHD have provided only simulations of still-frame playback, JVC has promised that their system is capable of acceptable still-framing and slow-motion approximately equal in quality to the LaserVision system.

Because of the intensely close camaraderie of Japanese firms in regard to favoring their own efforts over those of other countries, it's generally assumed that VHD is fast becoming the *de facto* disc standard of Japan. So far, all of Matsushita's subsidiaries, including JVC, National/Panasonic, and Quasar, have announced plans to sell VHD players both in Japan and the U.S., with Technics expected to offer an AHD player as well. Akai, Mitsubishi/MGA, NEC, Sanyo, Sharp, Toshiba and Yamaha have also indicated their intent to release VHD players in Japan, though only Yamaha is as confident of the system's potential for success in the U.S. The only other firm that will be offering VHD in America is General Electric, which occupies a small but comparatively important share of the market in TV sales.

While VHD's programming executives are making great progress toward enlarging their small library of titles, their selection currently remains the smallest of any video disc format. So far, they've signed up non-exclusive agreements with Columbia Pictures, Paramount, and Thorn/EMI, which includes EMI's Capitol Records subsidiary—a potentially major source of music programming for videodisc release. Other Hollywood studios seem interested in making similar non-exclusive agreements with as many tape and disc formats as possible, if only to help weigh the odds in their favor on selling as many copies of their movies as possible. So it's expected that VHD's arsenal will increase dramatically in the near future. Still, VHD has the major stumbling block of overcoming the massive publicity campaigns now being generated by the LaserVision and CED camps in the U.S., thus making it the real dark horse in the videodisc race.

Conclusion: Looking over the dozens of magazine articles and press releases presently stuffed in my file cabinets and strewn all over my office, I'm struck by the amazing number of "Odd Couple" partnerships in the videodisc game: Zenith and RCA . . . MCA and Sony (indirectly, anyway) . . . NBC and CBS . . . and Sears, Penny's and Ward's. If you're a little confused after reading the past few pages on this megabuck marketing struggle, just think about the poor video dealer who has to decide just how many of these formats he can afford to stock. And let's not forget the poor record store owners and video software companies who will probably end up carrying dozens of titles in five separate formats—Beta,

VHS, LaserVision CED and VHD! (And *six*, once the stereo CED discs are released.)

Unlike every single other magazine in this country, we're going to do our very best to answer the bottom-line question that has no doubt plagued all of you for the past few months: "Just which videodisc system should I buy?" We've already gone on record in several past issues as having stated that the LaserVision system has demonstrated the greatest potential in terms of one day being able to provide the highest quality video and audio playback source available at a reasonable price for the consumer. However—and this is a BIG however—the technology behind the LaserVision system has yet to be perfected to the degree of reliability that we can live with and accept at the present time, although we have every hope that it can be perfected over the next five years . . . provided they can survive in the market that long.

As a side note, we have to disagree strongly with Magnavox's idiotic and laughable series of extremely expensive multi-page full-color ads now running in many major national magazines touting their disc player as "Gourmet Video . . . for people who know and love video." Well, there ain't nobody who knows and loves video more than *us*, and we'll be damned if we believe all the bugs are worked out of the LaserVision system *yet*. We also take extreme exception to the claim that their player's picture quality is " . . . bound to please even the most discriminating video gourmet," which is enough to cause the bile to rush to our throats. Perhaps if Magnavox were to take some of the millions of dollars they're currently squandering on these Gourmet ads and pour them into a little more research and development, to say nothing of quality control, their players and discs might improve and we'd change our tune.

In the opinion of most marketing experts, RCA's CED system will almost unquestionably be the number one videodisc format for the U.S., due mostly to the unbeatable combined marketing power of RCA, Zenith, CBS, and the other firms, which gives them well over 60% of the market—an incredible coup. Regardless of our own feelings, we're the first to admit that, like it or not, we videophiles have to live in the real world, and there's no doubt in our minds, too, that RCA's CED system will indeed be the #1 best-selling disc format in this country. [Since this article was written, sales reports on the RCA disc player have been so mixed as to give rise to speculation that the CED disc, indeed the video disc concept, may be in trouble.—Ed]


Perhaps the biggest drawback with the CED system is that its concept and design represent the limit of capacitance technology, meaning that what we have today is probably the best the system will ever achieve, at least for the foreseeable future. One experienced video engineer explained it this way: "It's as if RCA started with an inferior system and worked backwards." That may well be the optical system's greatest advantage. Most of its current capabilities only scrape the surface of the performance the laser system is capable of achieving. We hope that this means that the optical system can only improve as the years go on and have every hope for it, despite the severe present-day drawbacks mentioned before.

VHD remains our own personal favorite, despite its present dark horse standing. JVC's engineers have promised that their pressing plants are capable of producing VHD discs with

fewer defects than the LaserVision system, yet still providing roughly equivalent picture quality and features at a lower cost. But again, VHD may be arriving too late to make much of a dent in the U.S. market. Perhaps the most important spot to watch in the VideoDisc Sweepstakes will be the #2 position, to be fought over between VHD and the optical camp. If the latter can't solve their quality problems and line up a lot more manufacturers, VHD may all but destroy them over the next couple of years.

But enough digressing. Our final opinion: if you're looking for the best quality, most reliable video format, with the widest selection of titles available and the most special-effects features, we recommend that you stick with videotape (your choice of Beta or VHS) for the immediate future and wait until the disc market has settled down. We're sorry to have to resort to such a cop-out answer, but for once, we agree with Sony's marketing executives in their belief that the videodisc concept does not currently represent a significantly better or more economical alternative to tape, except in prerecorded programming. Tape's inherent recording capability gives it a hell of an advantage over any of the three disc systems, and believe

it or not, we're convinced that full-speed Beta and VHS recordings are capable of providing superior overall audio and video quality to the average videodisc pressings we've seen. However, this won't stop some of us from owning one of each system, simply because we're (ahem) "video gourmets who know and love video," to coin a phrase. And that may well be the best answer: if you can afford it, buy all three. If you can't, stick with tape for the meantime. Incidentally, this brings up an unusual side-light of the whole software market—the fact that most prerecorded videotapes look better, overall, than comparable videodiscs, which is the exact opposite of the audio market. Hopefully, this will prove to be only a temporary problem. Still, it's very doubtful that prerecorded tape prices will ever drop down to the cost of videodiscs—though off-air taping is still cheaper than both.

Needless to say, we'll be waiting and watching the coming videodisc battle with as much interest and anticipation as the rest of you, and will continue to keep you abreast of any changes and developments as the months go by. But don't be surprised if, in our next videodisc update, we reiterate the same opinions all over again. 

VideoDisc Comparison Chart—March '81

	LaserVision	CED	VHD
Information storage	pits imbedded within transparent plastic layer	grooves embossed on bare surface	pits embossed on bare surface
Pick-Up Method	laser light reflected off pits of varying size	electrode on diamond stylus vibrates in groove, senses differences in capacitance	electrode on diamond stylus moves over pits on flat surface senses difference in capacitance
Rotation Rate	1800 RMP (CAV); 1800-600 (CLV)	450 RPM	900RPM
Frames per Revolution	1 (CAV); variable (CLV)	4	2
Playing Time/Speeds ¹	27:00 (CAV); 55:00 (CLV)	60:00	60:00
Disc Size	12" diameter; 3/32" thick	12" diameter; .076" thick	10.2" diameter; .05" thick
Video Resolution	330 lines (4.0 MHz)	240 lines (3.0 Mhz) ²	250 lines (3.1 MHz)
Video S/N Ratio	42 dB	38 dB ²	42 dB
Audio Frequency Response	40-22,000 Hz (— +3 dB)	50-15,000 Hz (no reference)	40-20,000 Hz (no reference)
Audio S/N Ratio	55 dB (weighted IHF A)	35 dB ³	60 dB (no reference)
Overall Audio/Video Quality	very good to poor, depending on pressing; good potential	fair	good to very good
Stylus/Disc Life	4-5000 hours; nearly infinite	600 hours; 100 plays (max) ⁷	2000 hours; unknown
	Stylus Replacement Cost not yet announced	\$175 (approximate)	\$70 (user replaceable)
Hardware Suppliers	Advent, Fisher ⁴ , Gold Star, Kenwood, Magnavox, Philco, Pioneer, Sony ⁵ , Sylvania, Tatung, (Also Superscope/Marantz, Sony, and Studer/Revox for Compact Audio Disc.)	BSR ⁴ , Clarion ⁴ , Hitachi, NEC ⁶ , Penney's, Plessey/Garrard ⁴ , Radio Shack, RCA, Sanyo, Sears, Toshiba, Wards, Zenith	Akai, GE, JVC, Mitsubishi ⁶ , NEC ⁶ , Panasonic, Quasar, Sansui, Sharp ⁶ , Toshiba ⁶ , Yamaha
Software/Programming	Columbia, Optical Programming, Paramount, Pioneer Artists, Universal, Walt Disney, Warner Bros.	Avco/Embassy, CBS, MGM, NBC, Paramount, 20th Century Fox, UA, Walt Disney	Columbia, Paramount, Thorn/EMI
Digital/PCM Audio Adaptability	incompatible compact disc	no	yes
Cost/Availability	\$750 player, \$15-30 discs; current	\$500 player, \$15-28 discs; current	\$500 player, \$20-25 Discs; January '82

1. Maximum playing time in minutes for one disc side.

2. Estimated.

3. Based on subjective evaluation of manufacturer's samples.

4. Definite marketing details not yet determined.

5. Industrial player only.

6. U.S. marketing plans not yet determined; will probably market VHD in Japan.

7. According to Sanyo spokesmen; may be exceeded by RCA "Duralife" stylus.

STATE OF THE ART

Art Vuolo, Jr.
(Mr. Media)
PO Box 219
Ypsilanti, MI
48197

The Summer of '81 is upon us now and the portable VCR's are blooming. Even the worst color cameras seem to take great pictures outdoors. They keep makin' them smaller, lighter and easier to operate along with their ability to perform well under less and less available light.

The Summer CES was the biggest I have ever seen, but we shall have to wait until the next issue for a report from me, as well as a complete and comprehensive look at the entire show from MFW—The King of Home Video! Seeing lots of old friends, making video air-checks at some of Chicago's biggest and best radio stations, and wearing out a good pair of shoes over the millions of square feet which make up McCormick Place were just a few of the highlights of early June.

Talk shows continue. Mike Miller, who you saw last issue, invited me back for an update on CES discoveries at WXYZ in Detroit and I was on WRIF (FM) in that city once again with Rick Redouty, the ace of Beta repairmen. Again this year the telephone feedback was incredible. While in Chicago, Marc and I were interviewed on Group W's WIND—it went very well. For me, and perhaps a few of you original videophiles, this hobby is "old stuff" by now, but lots of people are just now discovering it with all the enthusiasm we originally had and, wow—do they have questions! Phone lines on these talk programs are constantly jammed with callers who want to know the truth about home video and can't seem to get the straight scoop from salespeople in the stores.

Speaking of stores—prince of segues that I am—price wars in Michigan continue to make the news. Sanyo's as low as \$466, VHS units around \$500, and blank tapes—VHS for \$12 and Beta for \$10. Two issues ago I recommended a mail-order source called Associated Buyers in Fremont, Ohio and Miami, Florida. May I say they are very reliable and reasonable. If you are not fortunate enough to live in a metropolitan area where competition causes great deals to pop up on a regular basis, contact them today.

It's time to attack Zenith. I have, for five years, been a Beta format fan and always told interested parties that if you can get a better deal on a Zenith than a Sony, buy it because on the inside, they were both basically the same machine. Not anymore. The new Zenith units are not as much like the Sony SL-5400 and 5600 as one might think. The thing that really bothers me the most is the fact that the Zenith will not "BetaScan" in the X2 speed. Only in X3 or "B-3" can you "scan" the tape in playback. So you are encouraged to make all of your tapes at the slowest possible Beta speed—X3, which wears out the heads faster, dirties them more quickly and reproduces a poorer picture! Perhaps worst of all, it

generates incompatibility within the Beta format—tragic! A friend in New York bought a new Zenith. He didn't know about the speed differences—was recording everything at X3 thinking they would play on his other machine—a Sony SL-8200 which has playback only in the original X1 and X2 speeds! They won't. Luckily he only had the machine about three weeks. He sold it and now has a Sony and has no interchangeability problems. VHS units by RCA are also discriminating against certain speeds, which won't permit scanning either. The newer VHS recorders encourage you to use the slower speeds too. You'd think they'd want you to use the faster speeds just so you would use up more tape and have to keep buying more—but Noooo, they'd rather have you wear out a set of heads—more money for the heads than tape any day. Beta folks, please do yourself a favor and use the X3 or B-3 speed ONLY if you absolutely have to because of the length of the program you're recording. VHS folks use LP, or worse yet, SLP speeds ONLY if you must for the same reason(s). In a year or two you'll be glad you did.

New Stuff Dept.

I finally got to try out Memorex Beta tape—not bad. Nice packaging, looks about the same as Sony, not as good as TDK or Fuji, and dropouts were minimal. The Allsop Beta Head Cleaner is out and I tried it. Considering how complicated it was designing this thing for the Beta loading system, I was delighted at how well it worked! If you get one though, make sure you read the instructions very carefully about how it is to be adjusted for whichever Beta unit you own.

The folks at Total Video of San Diego are out with more new things like a device that adapts your TV sound through your stereo for about \$25 and a newer VHS/UHF/FM splitter which is cable-ready for the back of your VCR for about \$4. I've been using their Video-Mate switcher for a few months now and find it works rather well with a minimum of signal loss.

The newest Sony camera, the HVC-2200, is not much different than the 2000. The lens is better, it works in less light, and the lag is still the best I've ever seen. Open flames in dark rooms don't even linger on the tube—really a best on the market. RCA's still smear quite a bit, even their latest models, but price-wise, RCA is really cutting down the pack. I've seen them as low as \$700!

Dupont and Ampex got the worst ratings in the latest tape polls (see last issue), and I will second that. Most real videophiles feel that these brands are like sandpaper across your heads. I've had no major problems with either, but friends

Continued on page 66

SATELLITE TV:

An innocent ventures forth

by: J. M. Edelman, M.D.

I became interested in satellite TV in a circuitous way.

I have always been a movie fan and in recent years it seems that I rarely could get my wife to the movies. With the advent of the consumer VCR's, this seemed the answer.

In the fall of 1978 I bought a Betamax SL 8600. I obtained a few prerecorded tapes but found that viewing them on a 21" TV left a lot to be desired. This triggered my interest in projection TV and I wound up purchasing a Mitsubishi 6 foot projector from my friend Art Colley of Art Colley's Audio Specialties. It is a beautiful set, but it brought with it another problem. With a large screen TV you need an excellent quality TV signal. Prerecorded tapes were extremely poor, commercial TV was somewhat better, cable TV seemed a good answer, but again the quality of the signal was inconsistent and, for the most part, very poor.

By the summer of 1979 my frustrations were at an all time high. About that time I became aware of satellite TV. The most intriguing part of it was the "studio" quality of the pictures and the large variety of movies that were available.

I started trying to gather information about the subject. It wasn't easy! Some of the larger manufacturers did not even want to send literature to someone interested in a private earth station. Legally, an FCC license was required and lower priced equipment was just beginning to reach the market.

After considerable research I decided to limit myself to three suppliers:

- 1) Gardiner Communications of Houston, Texas;
- 2) Microdyne of Ocala, Florida; and
- 3) Scientific Atlanta of Atlanta, Georgia.

It was unbelievably difficult to get those suppliers to talk to me.

I finally got a mailgram one day from Gardiner in Houston apologizing for the delay in answering my inquiry. In a few days I received a telephone call from Sandy Freeman. He offered to come to Baton Rouge to see me and a few days later he arrived and made a survey of my location. He wasn't very well prepared. We had to go to a hardware store to buy a compass so he could tell if I had a suitable spot on my property for the dish.

I was given a very low price on a system for my home by Gardiner. Actually the lowest price I was quoted. I asked for specification sheets on all of the equipment they proposed to supply. To this day I have not received them.

Microdyne was quite a different story. I received a call from a professional engineer who was very knowledgeable. He succinctly outlined to me exactly what needed to be done. His

approach was convincing. His proposal was businesslike. The spec sheets were the kind I expected to see. I learned a great deal about how I should go about getting the earth station from this gentleman. Briefly, these were the salient points:

- 1) A frequency coordination study should be the first step. What exactly was a frequency coordination? Satellite communication uses the same frequency spectrum that the telephone company uses for their point-to-point microwave transmissions. Near most telephone company central offices you will see a tower with some horn-shaped antennas. These microwave transmissions are aimed at a similar horn some 30 or 40 miles away. At the relay point these transmissions are sent out again with another antenna to the next relay point. These microwave paths are extremely important to know about because they will cause severe interference for a satellite earth station. A frequency coordination is done by a handful of companies who have the ability to study your location to see if there is potential interference.
- 2) At the time, FCC licensing of a receive-only earth station was a legal requirement. (This has subsequently changed.) The same firms who do the frequency coordinations also do the paperwork for the FCC licensing.
- 3) Since satellite transmissions are not broadcasts and are considered private transmission, I learned that to be legally looking at the various satellite programs I should obtain permission from the originator of the programs. This permission to watch is broadly described as a "software license." To put it another way, I was told that if I wanted to watch HBO, Showtime or The Movie Channel, I had to pay a fee and get permission to look at the programs.
- 4) A suitable spot to place the dish needed to have an unobstructed view of the satellite. (No trees, bushes, houses between the dish and the satellite.)
- 5) An adequate concrete foundation was needed to provide a resting place for a 500 to 700 lb. dish.
- 6) How far away from the dish did I want to put my receivers? With \$2.50 to \$3.50 per foot cable, plus a need for dual cables, this was an important consideration.
- 7) Most quality receivers have a remote control capability to address this problem. To state it simply, put the receiver close to the dish. Control the receiver remotely. Run the video and audio signals with low priced cable or convert the video and audio to a VHF channel with a modulator and run this to your master antenna system.

Suddenly I began to realize that this was going to be a complex

operation.

The third vendor I considered was Scientific Atlanta. My inquiry to them brought me very little information. Several calls were made to them, but they were not returned because S/A did not seem interested in home installations. Somehow I found out that Scientific Atlanta did have a division that was interested in private earth stations. That division was Homesat. Finally I got someone to talk to. Dick Crawford and John Bacon responded promptly and professionally. They had excellent answers to all of the points I have listed.

Dick Crawford promptly came to Baton Rouge. He brought a compass and an inclinometer. He knew the azimuth and elevation that the dish needed to be set to for my location. He said Homesat could provide the frequency coordination, software licenses for all of the channels on the satellite. Their dish did not need a big concrete slab. They had very professional spec sheets on their equipment. Neiman Marcus was to include their equipment in the 1979 Christmas catalog for \$36,000.00. I knew quite a bit about S/A as a company. I was even more impressed with their price of \$15,900.00 for essentially the same system that Neiman's was selling for \$36,000.00. They could have the system installed within 30 days. They gave me three references that had systems they had installed. All of these gave glowing recommendations! I signed the order and gave them a 10% deposit.

A few days later I was crushed to find out that the frequency coordination gave my location a 1.5% chance of a successful installation. My property was directly in the path of a South Central Bell microwave link.

Not only that, but Homesat suddenly found out that they could not provide the software licenses. They wanted to send me a refund! Now, I was disappointed.

I decided to go to Atlanta to talk to them. By this time Neiman's had a demonstration system in their Atlanta store. After seeing the demo, I was even more disappointed. About this same time the FCC made licensing of receive-only earth stations optional.

Because of my desire to have a system I began to study the interference problem. I learned that trees and foliage provide excellent shielding from microwave interference. I carefully surveyed my property and found that the selected location was surrounded by large trees and massive amounts of foliage. I bought a portable transit, set it up and determined by sighting toward the direction of all of the interference sources, that my location was well shielded from the potential problems.

I also tried to obtain software licenses from HBO, Showtime and The Movie Channel. Not one would accept fees from me. Even worse, I received a very threatening letter from HBO telling me about the dire consequences if I looked at their pictures!

I still was not ready to give up. The people at Homesat told me about a firm in Atlanta who had done a large number of earth stations for cable stations. The principal in that company was Ed Stark (Stark & Associates of Lawrenceville, Georgia).

I talked to Ed. Told him my story. Sent him the frequency

coordination. Described my property to him. Ed agreed with my conclusion about the interference. He felt that I should not worry about the software licensing because he felt that it would get resolved in due time. He proposed to install the S/A system that I had originally ordered. Since no slab was necessary, he would set the system up, and if there was interference, I would pay him for his trouble and he would dismantle the system and haul it off. We made a deal. I sent him a deposit and in less than two weeks, I woke up to find a Winnebago motorhome in my driveway and Ed Stark ringing my front door bell.

Ed is a tall gentleman with a soft Virginia accent. We took a liking to each other there and then. Ed looked around. He agreed with the location that had been chosen and that it was well shielded from interference by the trees. The job was started. By 3:00 p.m. the next day, I had the most beautiful pictures on my big screen that I had ever seen! After doing a very professional job, Ed and his crew took off to Atlanta and I was ecstatic with my new possession.

I could select from eight to ten movies on almost any evening. Slightly fewer during the day. All of my neighbors were curious and they were as impressed as I was.

After a few weeks I began to notice some slim white streaks in three or four channels on my set. I was quite concerned. I called Ed. He seemed baffled. He promptly responded by coming back to Baton Rouge. He brought his spectrum analyzer (a \$15,000.00 instrument) and measured all of the functions of the unit.

All seemed in order. He brought a new receiver. It showed the same problem. The only other active component is the LNA (Low-noise amplifier). He changed that also. No help. Ed was stumped!

To make a long story short, we tried more LNA's, receivers that had been hand checked and tweaked by S/A's engineering staff, hotter LNA's, new feed horns, screens to see if we did in fact have interference. All to no avail.

Ed then brought in another expert, Richard Barnes, head of Field Service for Scientific Atlanta. It took Richard about 20 minutes! There was not enough signal from the satellite in South Louisiana to get a good signal on the channels I was having a problem with!

The satellite receivers are FM. FM has the characteristic of needing a certain minimum amount of signal to work properly. Richard's measurements showed that on the problem channels I was 1 decibel short of signal!

What was the solution? Two possibilities: 1) a larger dish or 2) a "hotter" or more expensive LNA. The first alternative made more sense, so good old Ed tried to make good. He found a Prodelin 15 foot dish with 1 decibel more of gain. It was a big project but Ed did it at his cost. On completion of the new dish installation, the white streaks ("sparkles") were fewer, but still there. What a disappointment.

I felt bad. Ed felt bad. What was the solution? A 5 meter dish. Ed and I worked out the finances and the third time around we got sparkle free pictures.

☆☆☆ Continued on page 66

The Adventures of The HOME VIDEO LOG

BY
CREATIVE
VIDEO
PRODUCTS



At last a complete comprehensive **HOME VIDEO LOG** for your home.

This is a neat, sensible and inexpensive way to log and keep track of your video tapes and/or video discs.

This easy reference **HOME VIDEO LOG** has enough pages for 100 or more selections.

Each page is covered in heavy 4 mil plastic and the 100 pages comes in its own 6" x 10" Vinyl Binder.

Make the difficult job of logging your movie selections easy. Stop wondering what movies you have or how to log them.

This simple one step **HOME VIDEO LOG** puts the movies you have at your fingertips.

ORDER YOURS NOW \$24.95



Mail to:
CREATIVE VIDEO PRODUCTS
7131 Owensmouth, Suite 64A
Canoga Park, CA 91303

TELE-COMMUNICATION

The Videosponding Column

by: Gary Bourgois

Greetings, hardcore video junkies, and welcome to another edition of the column that asks the question, "Can you do something with your video recorder besides playing reruns of *The Dukes of Hazzard*"? The answer is a resounding yes. It's called *videosponding*, and if you were with us in the past couple of installments, you will know by now that this totally insane person in Michigan's upper peninsula (where?) is trying to assemble a gang of misfits and otherwise to venture where no video has gone before . . . the dimension of video-correspondence. That's right—letters on video. I have been slowly answering the cards, letters, and T-120's. The mail has been encouraging, though I'll admit I'd like to see more response if I am going to put together enough folks to make up a meaningful collection of names and addresses for distribution. Come on, if you've considered writing but haven't yet, take the time before you go on to the next article in this issue and send a card or letter with pertinent data (details at the end of this rambling).

Several gentlemen have written stating that they wish to swap tapes with female video correspondents. Well, I'm all for that, but so far, the *female* videospondent is a myth. Video seems to be a man's world. (What ever happened to the Video Vixens, anyway?) Having had magnetic correspondence with several nice ladies on audio, I think the potential for male/female videosponding could provide some interesting exchanges (Hey, you with the dirty mind, watch it! This is a family publication!). Anyway, if there are any females out there interested in *videosponding*, there are sure a lot of eager lads ready to communicate.

Another thing that gets asked in the mail is, "What do you talk about, anyway? After I show my videospondent myself and my house, what do I do to fill the rest of the tape?" Wellllll, that kind of depends on YOU. I think the true videospondent is quite a bit of a ham, and has to be slightly insane. (Your's truly qualifies on both counts.) To be interesting, a good video letter should be personal, as well as entertaining.

Guidelines are not really applicable here, but I am considering the production of a one hour videocassette program on the art of videosponding, which will include some examples of just what can be accomplished using home video equipment as a medium for the exchange of ideas, sights, personal tidbits and information . . . if you'd be interested in seeing what it's all about before you go off the deep end into videosponding, keep glued to these pages, or better yet drop me a line of encouragement. The tape would be something that I could dub

onto your own blank T-60, thereby saving you and me hassle and money . . . I would only ask that you supply the tape, and pay the return postage, and a couple of bucks for headwear (I am one of those people to whom a video recorder is a *consumable* product. I wear them out.)

The aggregate personality of "the video correspondent" is starting to take form. Most of you are science fiction fans. Several of you live with a cat. About half are married. Many, if not most, are true videoholics, strung out on one or another aspect of the video hobby—film collecting, technical aspects, creative production and the like. There are many that don't fit this mold at all, however, there are certain "personality quirks" that seem to keep cropping up. But then, I am of the opinion that only the true hardcore video freak would be interested in the videosponding hobby, and great minds travel in similar circles. By the way, if you haven't noticed by now, this magazine is aptly named, for indeed *The Videophile* caters to the real junkie, who wants the straight poop, and isn't satisfied with the more "commercial" type video publications. (Hint: SUBSCRIBE. I just sent in my bucks for a first class subscription.) I mean who else but hardcore video junkies would write this stuff for free like we all do?

☆☆☆

As I write these words, I am viewing something that amazes me. It's a tape from Wolfgang Schultz in Hamburg West Germany. On the segment now on the screen, he has placed a camera on a tripod on the passenger side of his Audi, and we are riding on the Autobahn . . . through my sound system, the music of Pacobell's cannon is richly filling the room. The amazing thing is that this is a PAL recording (625 lines 50 Hertz).

Now you might ask if I have invested in some PAL equipment, or a new tri-standard machine. No, but here we have a combination of Yankee ingenuity and some West German inventiveness. Wolfgang recently purchased a Panasonic PV-3100 portable VTR, and built a 12 volt power supply for it, so he can run it on the German mains. Since he has a tri-standard monitor, we have been having a one way exchange of video until he can purchase an NTSC camera. Well, one of the blank tapes he sent me was not a blank, but had a recording of a German TV program on it. Although the tape was at the wrong speed (due to a difference in line frequency between our countries) I noticed that the screen contained lines that looked like a misadjusted TV set (horizontal and vertical hold out of

whack).

Just for fun, I hooked the VTR up to my Sinclair Microvision, which receives European channels. Surprisingly, I was able to get a viewable picture, with breakup about twice a second, owing to the difference in speed. Now I figured that if I could get the speed down to 50 Hz I would be able to play the tape. This could be accomplished by building a 50 Hz power supply. But instead of doing this, I asked Wolfgang if he would like to try an experiment. Since he has a machine that already works at the standard USA speed, what would happen if he were to plug a PAL camera into his NTSC machine?

In theory, a 625 line image would be recorded (in black and white) and the speed would be correct. The tape arrived today, and what do you know, it works! There is some picture breakup that looks like a badly adjusted QUAD VTR, or somewhat like BetaScan (five small bands of picture distortion), but the picture plays otherwise perfectly on my Sinclair. Now I wanted to preserve this moment, so I went to transcode the image by using my NTSC camera pointed at the tiny screen. I dug out my close up lens attachment, and was pointing the camera at the micro screen, attempting to focus on the one inch picture. I flipped my Panasonic monitor onto the circuit, and instead of switching it to VTR (which shows the camera image). I had it on TV, which is the output of the second VTR. To my amazement, the PAL image locked up on the NTSC monitor!

Apparently, Panasonic builds enough range correction into their horizontal and vertical oscillators that one can play a 625 line image and it comes out locked up. I am totally flipped out. Aside from the distortion I mentioned, and a slight bit of overscan (which I corrected with the linearity controls), I now have a (black and white) way to play PAL tapes (provided that they are recorded on an NTSC machine). The next step would be to build that 50 Hz power supply which would slow my NTSC machine down, and voila, it would be able to play any PAL tape (in black and white, since there is no easy way to convert the PAL line sequential system to NTSC).

Now I know that there are some skeptics out there who are saying this is a belated April Fool story, but it works, and if you would like to see it, send a tape. Of course, the image that I transcode from the PAL signal flickers when converted to NTSC, but on the original monitor, there is no flickering . . . just a bit of wobble, and the aforementioned banding. All in all, an amazing experience, since it should not work at all. Hooray for tinkering!

☆☆☆

Talking about international correspondence and world-wide video, I would like to mention the high definition TV system that is now under development by the Japanese. MFW, among others, has mentioned it in previous issues. Well, a recent BME (Broadcast Management & Engineering) Magazine has all the technical details and I can hardly wait to see the 1125 line image. Of course, it will obsolete everything you now

have in your video arsenal, and will also demand more than our present video machines can deliver. The high quality image incorporates the best of all existing television technology. It uses a 60 Hz field rate (same as NTSC), but uses line sequential color encoding (same as PAL). The picture is also wider than our 3x4 aspect ratio; the 3x5 image is closer to wide screen movies, and with such a sharp picture it doesn't even look like television. No scanning lines are viewable, except up very close. Like I said, home VTR's will have to really improve before they can record the higher bandwidth image. The disc might have an easier time of it, but what the Japanese hope is that the system will be used for satellite transmission. They have already transmitted these pictures over satellite, and the results are very encouraging. It's a few years off, so don't throw your present equipment away yet . . .

Well, that's enough blabber from the North Country. The file of videospondents continues to grow, but we are still short (far short) of where we have to be before the list is ready to distribute. If you are overly eager to start, let me know, and I can do some introductions and "matchmaking." To participate, just send your name, address, hobbies, interests and other pertinent data, such as format of your equipment, to:

Gary Bourgois
Studio B
135 Washington Street
Marquette, Michigan 49855

Put *Videosponding* somewhere on the envelope to facilitate its getting into the proper file. If your letter looks like a bill, it may never get opened. (Aside: Don't you hate those collection agencies who send their threats printed on a piece of paper that looks like a check in the window envelope? . . . now, while I have never actually received something like that, . . .)

TAKE A PORTAPAK OUT TO LUNCH . . . AND THEN TO THE BEACH!



How-2:

Building an Audio/Video Patch Bay

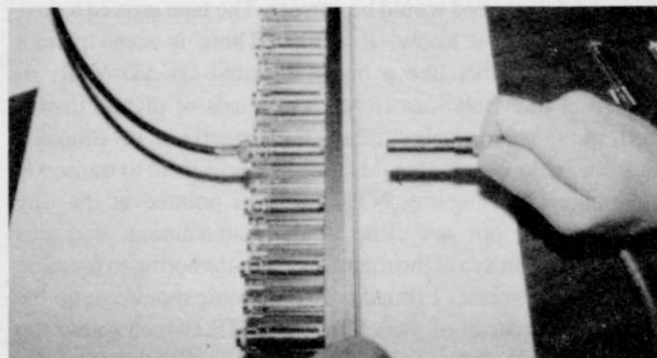
The problem of connecting and hooking up any medium-to-large-size video system has been a considerable one since the age of consumer video began five or six years ago. For any of you who own more than one or two VTR's, plus a TV set or other auxiliary sources, trying to figure out a way of switching between these various audio and video sources is enough to bring on an Excedrin headache.

Standard RF switching systems, like Beta Video's "Distri-vid" (reviewed in #26), are not really suited for high-quality dubbing situations because of their reliance on RF, rather than direct audio/video patching. In addition, several firms have released small audio/video selector boxes that lack sufficient shielding for protection against crosstalk, noise and hum, seriously limiting their usefulness for the hard-core videophile.

The only answer we've found over the past year has been to rely on the same high-quality audio/video patch panel equipment used by all major television stations and post-production firms. Despite their complexity and military-grade construction, Trompeter Electronics' wide selection of audio and video jacks and connectors are ideally suited for use by videophiles at only \$40 or \$50 higher than the cost of similar store-bought systems. In addition, they offer much more flexibility and quality.

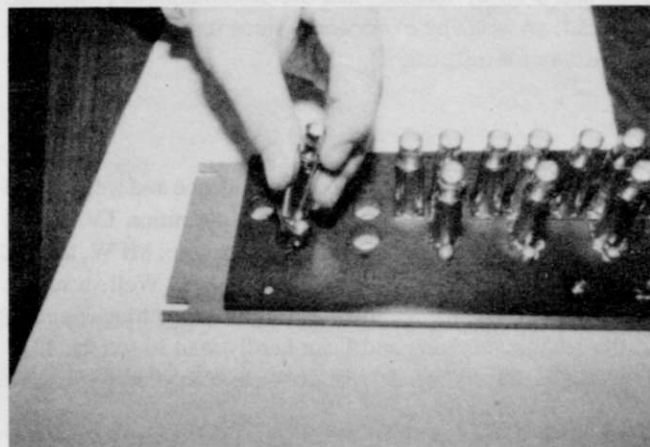
As an example, we'll discuss a standard patching system designed to allow unlimited connection between two VTR's, a video disc player and a TV set. As discussed in many past issues, we advise using only the direct audio/video method for dubbing video tapes, as opposed to running a 75 ohm cable between the RF output of one VTR and the tuner of another, an approach which can lead to interference and slightly lower overall picture quality. As an accessory to this system, we've opted for using a separate video modulator (model RFM-34, available for \$200.00 from Crest Electronics, 2634 La Cienega Ave., LA, CA 90034, or model 470, available for \$199.00 from Showtime Video Ventures, 2715 5th St., Tillamook, OR 97141), designed to allow patching direct audio and video signals to any conventional TV set.

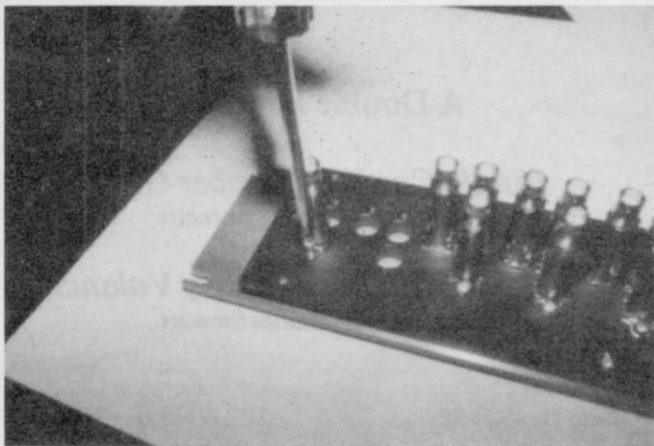
Trompeter's patch panels are designed to take the place of the standard audio and video jacks found on most VTR's and disc players, allowing you to leave your decks permanently hooked up to the patch panel. All your patching and selection takes place on the patch panel, which uses quick-disconnect Western Electric-type video patch jacks and military-grade phone jacks for fast and easy patching, and is made to withstand years of heavy-duty use without breaking down.



The Trompeter video patchjacks have a BNC jack on one side and a quick-disconnect Western Electric video jack on the other, for fast and easy direct video hookups.

We assembled together a standard Trompeter JS-14 patch panel (about \$45.00), which is a durable, lightweight metal board with 14 precision-cut holes to allow fitting up to 14 connecting jacks. The J3W video patch jacks come with industrial BNC jacks on the back for connecting directly with the source (VTR, disc player or modulator), and sell for about \$7.00 each. The JJ-042 audio patch jacks have five solder lug terminals on the back, and sell for about \$3.00 each. Six video jacks and seven audio jacks are needed for our two VTR/videodisc/TV set system, as follows: VTR #1 video in, VTR #1 video out, VTR #2 video in, VTR #2 video out, videodisc video out, RF Modulator video in, VTR #1 audio in, VTR #1 audio out, VTR #2 audio in, VTR #2 audio out, videodisc audio 1 out, videodisc audio 2 out, and RF Modulator audio in. The 14th patch panel hole is left open as a spare.

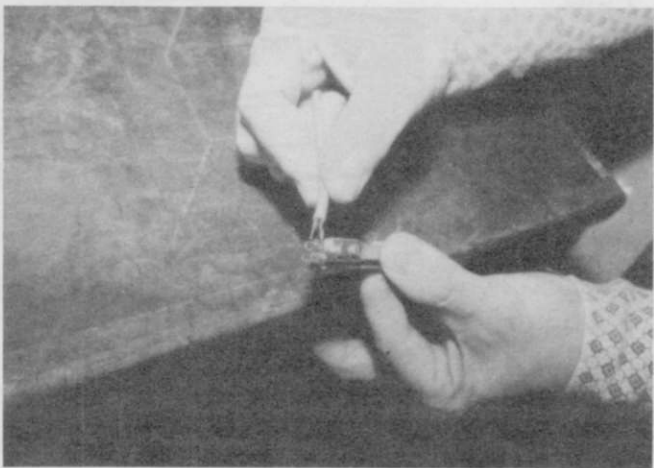




To screw an audio or video jack into the Trompeter, panel, you first place the jack into the hole, patch side down, then screw it in with a Philips head screwdriver into the two small holes on either side of the larger patch hole.

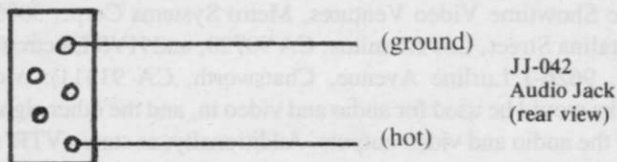
Both types of jacks screw in very quickly and attach easily to the inside of the panel. A Trompeter spokesman explained that their firm can ship their panels and jacks preassembled at the factory at no extra charge, which should make putting together your system a little easier and less confusing. The video cables attach very easily to the patch jacks' BNC connectors, which twist on and lock securely, unlike the standard push-on phono jacks used on most consumer VTR's. You'll need to buy or make up seven BNC/phono adaptor cables to allow using consumer decks with the patch panel described here. (Accessory cables are available for about \$10.00 each from The Cable Works, 4228 Santa Ana St., South Gate, CA 90280, Showtime Video Ventures, and several other suppliers.)

Probably the hardest part of the entire project is wiring up the JJ-042 audio jacks (also known as M641/3-2 military phone jacks), since they require a little soldering. There are



Since the JJ-042 audio jacks have five separate solder lugs, be sure to use only the two end lugs shown here. Once you twist the bare leads of the audio wire on, solder them in place as demonstrated by Bob Bechtold.

five solder lugs on the back of each jack; as shown in this diagram, you'll need to use lug #1 for ground (the outside part of the plug) and lug #2 for hot (the center or tip part of the plug), running the wires directly to the sources via appropriate phono plugs (or mini-phone, in the case of Beta VTR's). Be sure to keep your wiring consistent to avoid



getting the signals crossed or out of phase, making sure that ground is connected to ground and that the hot (signal) side is connected to the main audio line.

Once the cables are in place, the other ends are connected to your video recorders, disc player and the modulator. Be sure to connect the patch jacks labeled "input" with the appropriate audio or video in jacks of your machines, and don't hook up an input cable to an output jack, to avoid confusion and disaster (in that order). As always, keep the length of the cables as short as possible to avoid losses and to help minimize interference.

Once the patch panels, recorders, and the modulator are fully wired with each other, you can identify each jack on your patch panel by affixing adhesive labels above them or by using the slide-out plastic holder supplied by Trompeter. The patch panel is made to fit a standard 19" rack, as used in all radio and television stations. Accessory cabinets are available from most large electronic parts distributors.

Now that your patch panel is soldered and connected, you'll need at least four PCW-24"-75 video patching cables, which sell for about \$10.00 each and come preassembled with special Western Electric-type patch plugs on each end. Four of them should get you through most simple dubbing and viewing situations, although more can be added as your system expands. Also required are a similar number of APC-3-24" audio cables, which are, unfortunately, very expensive at about \$19.00 each. You might be able to make your own for a little less with heavy-duty military-grade phone plugs (available from suppliers like Switchcraft, 5555 N. Elston Ave., Chicago, IL 60630) and good-quality shielded 2-conductor audio cable.

The patch system we've outlined above will cost as little as \$228 (without the RF modulator), though using store-bought audio and video cables could add an additional \$40 or \$50, depending on the supplier. This system makes connecting machines for viewing and dubbing easier than ever before, simply by plugging in a patch cable from the output of one source into the input of another. Monitoring is accomplished by plugging in a patch cable from the output of any VTR or the disc player into the input jacks of the RF modulator.

Alternatively, you could use a small RF switcher, like Beta Video's IC-08 (available for about \$50 from Beta Video, 9626-F Lurline Avenue, Chatsworth, CA 91311 or your local dealer) to switch between the RF outputs of up to 4 sources for monitoring.

By purchasing a larger Trompeter patch panel with a number of additional sockets, you'll have room to expand your video patching system as the number of your VTR's and accessories grows and becomes more complicated. For example, you could add 2 additional video jacks, to hook up a video stabilizer between two VTR's. Or you could add 10 jacks for an audio and video distribution amplifier (sold by companies like Showtime Video Ventures, Metro Systems Corp., 3806 Catalina Street, Los Alamitos, CA 90720, and HVS Electronics, 9626-J Lurline Avenue, Chatsworth, CA 91311); two jacks would be used for audio and video in, and the other eight for the audio and video outputs. Additionally, as stereo VTR's and disc players become more popular, you can add additional audio jacks to provide full-two channel dubbing and monitoring capability. The possibilities are undoubtedly endless.

Although the initial cost of the system we describe may seem somewhat high, no one has come up with anything even remotely approaching the quality of Trompeter's high-isolation and tremendously durable construction, not to mention its ability to provide room for additional sources as your system expands. We would like to bring to your attention a patch bay system offered by Audio Visual Systems, 725 Lorraine Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90005. The PB-289 Patch Bay is available for \$650—and we'll be doing an in-depth **Product Report** on it in our next issue. (All the Trompeter products discussed in this article are available directly from the manufacturer at 8936 Commanche Avenue, Chatsworth, CA 91311.)

Coming up in future installments of HOW-2: How to make your own audio and video cables; adding high-speed search and still-frame to older VTR's; and how to minimize problems caused by copyguarded tapes.



SOURCES

Classic Video Cinema
Collector's Club, Inc.
1720 East Goldwin
Southfield, MI 48075

The Video Service Center
1808-B Tribute Road
Saramento, CA 95815

Barrington Video
Box 954
Evanston, IL 60204

The Video Connection
1920 Sylvania Avenue
Toledo, OH 43613

Blackhawk Films
1235 W. 5th Street
Davenport, IA 52808

Ted Reinhart
Edgewater Acres
Alexandria, PA 16611

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

WESTERN ROUNDUP!

A Double Feature

Public Cowboy Number One

Gene Autry—Smiley Burnette

The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance

John Wayne—James Stewart

Beta II—\$24.95

VHS II—\$29.95

Plus \$2.00 shipping charges

Ted Reinhart

Edgewater Acres Resort

Alexandria, PA 16611

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

NEW RELEASES

CinemaX

1123 OHIO AVENUE
ALAMOGORDO, N.M.
88310

CASHIERS CHECKS or
MONEY ORDERS ONLY.
Plus \$2.00 U.P.S.

★NEW RELEASE★

U.S. ARMY AIR FORCE
Presents
CLARK GABLE
and the 851st BOMBARDMENT GROUP
"COMBAT AMERICA"

Plus.. BONUS!! on the same program
"DON'T BE A SUCKER - "DIARY OF A SERGEANT"
* Frank Sinatra - "THE HOUSE I LIVE IN"

\$49.95

Thanks...Jim Lowe
for the review in #28...

UNUSUAL combination of news-
reel footage, events and
recreated segments based
on fact.

WELCOME addition to any
World War 2 collection.
SELDON seen trailers of
the "30's fill out tape.
QUALITY, not bad, consid-
ering it's age.

FASCINATING to students
of the period.

ADDED bonus of the trail-
ers was a treat.

★NEW RELEASE★

EXCLUSIVE WORLD WAR - 2
"THE NEWSREEL
ERA"
1937 thru
1947

THE THRILLS OF A LIFETIME!!

SEE AND HEAR
THE MOST IMPORTANT
EVENTS OF THE
WAR

NEVER BEFORE
SHOWN TRUTH

**AFTER
MEIN
KAMPE**

ABOUT HITLER'S
RISE AND RUIN!

WRITTEN WITH
THE HEART'S
BLOOD OF
INNOCENT
PEOPLE
UNCENSORED!

**Now
YOU CAN
SEE
THE
ORIGINAL
VERSION**

BONUS!! on the same program
NUREMBERG 1946 Brutal

NUREMBERG UND SANK LEHRER (1946) Made for G.I.'s but
later BANNED & DESTROYED *** MOST HIDEOUS ATROCITY
FOOTAGE EVER ASSEMBLED *** RECENTLY FOUND FILMS.

The Videophile PROGRAM REVIEWS

Before swallowing these evaluations hook, line and sinker, please consider these few remarks and admonitions:

1. Lest there be any doubt, and in case your expectations are unrealistically high, the editor of this magazine would like to say that he has seen few, if any, prerecorded tapes of *color* feature films that have a picture quality as good as everyday network broadcast television.
2. Most of the tapes reviewed herein were specifically requested from the mentioned dealer. It is unlikely that they would consciously send us a defective copy to be used for this purpose.
3. Any *reputable* dealer will exchange or otherwise make adjustments for any tape that is defective or fails in some way to be what it is represented to be. Please advise us of any disreputable dealers with whom you may have experience.
4. Unlike audio cassettes, most prerecorded video cassettes are currently being sold on standard length tapes. Often this means that there will be a substantial amount of blank tape left at the end, maybe even enough to use for a 1/2 hour recording, thereby perhaps offsetting the otherwise unjustifiable expense of purchase. If a tape contains a film that runs, oh, say 90 minutes, you can be pretty sure of getting usable blank space along with it (at least in VHS or Beta formats).
5. The source from which we obtain each tape is indicated at the end of each review. Their full addresses are set forth at the end of this entire column.

Reviewers this issue, identified by their initials, are: GC—Graham Carlton, MAC—Michael A. Coffey, JL—Jim Lowe, DS—David See. Their views are not necessarily those of *The Videophile*.

TAPES

The Blues Brothers (MCA, 1980)

Credits: Cast—John Belushi, Don Aykroyd, Henry Gibson, Carrie Fisher, Cab Calloway, Arthur Franklin, James Brown, Ray Charles, Steve Lawrence, John Lee Hooker, Frank Oz, and Steven Spielberg. Director—John Landis.

Length/Format: 133 minutes/Beta X-2



Story: Jack and Elwood Blues are on a "mission from God" to raise \$5,000 and pay the taxes on a Catholic orphanage which otherwise will succumb to an uncertain fate. Jack, who is fresh from prison at Joliet, decides to raise the funds by putting "the band" back together and selling tickets to a large concert. Along the way the boys encounter and/or elude an incredible array of cowboys, law enforcement officers, and American Nazi party members, not to mention a single-minded assassin, a floating nun, and what looks to be a major portion of the Illinois State National Guard. A series of slightly unbelievable events are punctuated by musical production numbers featuring some of the biggest names in rhythm and blues and soul music.

Evaluation: If there is not already an entire book on the making of *The Blues Brothers*, there should be one. There's no way that the film can be fairly evaluated in this brief space.

When this much-anticipated movie was released last June, Marc Wielage called me from Chicago (where he was attend-

ing the Summer CES) to report that he had seen the film and was quite disappointed. A number of critics have echoed his remarks that *The Blues Brothers* is "excessive." Often it is compared to the unsuccessful *1941* in that regard. Some critics, however, have found it to be a delightful film—one which contains numerous clever moments, excellent production values, and stand-out musical numbers and choreography. You may count me as a member of the latter group.

Yes, there *is* excess. Too many cars are totalled, too many officers converge in the final pursuit of our lovable misde-meanants (this was true of *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, too), and for my money the whole thing could have been tightened up by total elimination of the American Nazi party angle. But, if you are a fan of Belushi and Aykroyd from *NBC's Saturday Night Live* and if you can suspend your disbelief for a couple of hours, these flaws should not stand in the way of your having a totally enjoyable experience.

The Blues Brothers is comparable to *Butch Cassidy*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, and *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*, in that each of these films is "episodic." The overall plot is relatively simple, no special mental capacity is required to follow or understand it. In such a film, the entertainment value lies primarily in either characterization or the enjoyment of the individual segments or "episodes"—the type of movie about which you find yourself saying (upon repeated viewings): "Oh, this next part is real good." So many segments of this film are so well done that they more than make up for the flaws. The school desks scene, the church scene with the black congregation, the restaurant scene ('How much for the little girl?'), the scene in the drainage pipe where Jake begs for his life and the fabulous musical numbers on Maxwell Street, at the hotel and elsewhere (yes, even at Bob's Country Bunker)

are all gems in their own rights. The more highly publicized scenes of mass destruction in the shopping mall and on the freeway, while featuring some truly exceptional stunt work, tend to detract from, rather than add to, the overall luster of this remarkable movie.

To those who lump it together with *1941* and dismiss them both, I say thee "Nay." *The Blues Brothers* is one of the most enjoyable musical comedies I have ever seen, in spite of its sometimes fatuous mixing of the impossible with the serious business of clever comedy styling and straight-out, foot-tapping rhythm and blues.

The movie is of such a length that a Beta format L-750 cassette is required to contain it. To my eye, the transfer of film to tape is quite a good one. Most of *The Blues Brothers* is such that it really should be seen on a large movie theater screen. Also some scenes are shot at night or otherwise in partial darkness; always a problem with consumer video tape and TV sets. But the color, sharpness, and cropping for the small screen format, are all very acceptable. There may have been a dropout or two, but frankly I didn't notice them. The sound is as good as it ever is. Overall a commendable job by MCA in making this over-blown production available for viewing in the home. I've seen it twice in a theater and, now, once at home. There will be more times in the future.—JL

Source: The Video Service Center

★★★

Siegfried (UFA, Germany, 1924)

Credits: Cast—Paul Richter, Margareta Schoen. Director—Fritz Lang.

Story: Siegfried sets out to the castle of Gunther, King of Burgundy, to ask for the hand of Krimhild, Gunther's sister, in marriage. He travels through a dense forest and comes across the dreaded dragon, which he fights and slays. He is touched by a single drop of the dragon's blood, which gives him the ability to understand the language of the birds. He is told by the birds that to bathe in the dragon's blood will make him invulnerable. This he does, but a falling leaf shields a patch of his skin, thus making him vulnerable in one spot. He travels on to Burgundy, gaining along the way a magical web of invisibility and a sword of the famed Nibelungs.

When Siegfried arrives at Burgundy, Gunther welcomes him openly but will only give Krimhild's hand if he helps Gunther overcome and win the hand of the fiery Brunhild.

They set out on their long journey to the domain of Brunhild, who agrees to wed Gunther—but only if he can defeat her in three contests: throwing a stone, jumping a great distance, and tossing a javelin. Using the web of invisibility, Siegfried helps Gunther defeat Brunhild.

Back at Burgundy, Brunhild is upset in her role as Gunther's wife and confront Krimhild, now wife of Siegfried. As they argue, Krimhild tells Brunhild that Gunther defeated her with Siegfried's invisible trickery. Greatly upset by this revelation, Brunhild demands that Gunther restore her honor since she was made his wife by trickery and states that she will neither eat nor sleep as long as Siegfried lives.

Gunther has no choice, and a great hunt is planned with

Siegfried leading Gunther's men. It is on this hunt that Siegfried is killed by a spear through his vulnerable spot.

Upon the party's return with the body of Siegfried, Krimhild is naturally distraught and Brunhild is beside herself with glee, telling Gunther, "Glory to you! The trickery of a woman has cost you your dearest friend."

Krimhild demands justice from Gunther for Siegfried's murder, but it's no use. No one will do anything about it and Krimhild swears her revenge upon those involved.

Evaluation: *Siegfried* is based in part on the Norse legends of the Nibelungs, as well as the operas of Wagner, but differs by concentrating on the human characters, with little of the gods. The reasons behind the magic in the story is never explained, nor is the origin of the Nibelungs or their treasures.

The film is very complicated, and requires the full attention of the viewer to fully appreciate and understand it. This version appears to have been heavily cut, thus making it even harder to follow.

Lang shot the entire production on the UFA lot, with no location filming, giving him complete control over all aspects of the film's look. The story of Krimhild following Siegfried's death is recounted in the sequel, *Krimhild's Revenge*, also available in this series.

If this tape is representative of Classic Video Cinema Collector's Club releases, they are well worth the price. The career of Fritz Lang is covered in a series of eight tapes.

Prior to the feature on this tape, there is a short discussion of Lang's career in general, as well as how it led up to the filming of *Siegfried*. This introduction, consisting of stills and historical footage, is narrated by Norman Paul. Mr. Paul has done quite a bit of research and the talk is most informative.

Quality of the tape is good, with film print quality being only fair, but since this is the only version of *Siegfried* on cassette, it is acceptable. My only complaint with this tape concerns the subtitles within the film. Most of them are very hard to read. Many of them have been retyped using a character generator, but all of them should have been. This would have made them more uniform and the story would have been easier to follow. The audio on this tape comes from a German soundtrack, and there is some German narration at the beginning, which is translated by on-screen graphics. The music features theme from Wagner and is most appropriate. Also, the credits are all in German, even though the other graphics are in English.

Finally, the tape concludes with a brief description of the various aspects of the film, illustrated with clips from the film.

I'll give this tape a very favorable rating, even with the few drawbacks mentioned above, and will recommend it to any lover of vintage films or student of film history.—DS

Source: Classic Video Cinema Collector's Club, Inc.

★★★

Swedish Erotica Volume 20

Length/Format: 60 minutes/VHS

Content: *Three's Company* (15 minutes)—Pam calls Candy to tell her about her date with a new boyfriend, a

professional stripper, and to set a date for a threesome. The one flaw in the plot occurs as the three characters get together. However, it wasn't until the third viewing that I noticed it—my mind must have been on other things.

Goodbye Judy (13 minutes)—Mike arrives to visit his girlfriend. However, she has left town with a good portion of the belongings of her roommate, Kelly. Both are depressed, and must resort to consoling each other.

Nice 'N Hot! (15 minutes)—New in the area, Michael and Bob take a walk on the beach. They see a beautiful girl who beckons them into her hot tub, as well as other things.

Previews from other volumes (17 minutes).

Evaluation: At last count, there were 26 volumes of Swedish Erotica. The first 9 or 10 are ½-hour flicks with three segments. The rest are an hour with three or four segments and previews of varying lengths. As you can tell by the short descriptions, the plots are quite thin and each segment is ¾ "action." Make no mistake about it, this is true hard core pornography of the type that will make it seem quite warm in the room. Different volumes have different themes, so if you have some preferences, you probably would favor one volume over another.

Overall picture quality is very good. There were no dropouts. The tape comes in a black case that looks like the ones made by Mid-America and is packaged in a colorful box (mine advertised a color brochure which was not included). There are, however, plenty of warnings that you should buy only original Swedish Erotica tapes and that it is illegal to make copies. In short, if you want to have fantastic looking people and sets and don't particularly care about the absence of plot line, or if you just want something different, take a look at the Swedish Erotica series.—MAC

Source: The Video Connection.

★★★

Alice in Wonderland (An X-rated musical fantasy)

Length/Format: 74 minutes/VHS

Story: Most of us have read Lewis Carroll's book, and you will find that this movie follows the original plot while presenting new interpretations of well known characters and situations. We have the Mad Hatter's Tea Party, Humpty Dumpty (who is just a shell of a man since he can't get his ding-a-ling up), Tweedledum and Tweedledee (brother and sister twins), and a queen who wants head instead of beheading. In spite of such unusual events, she marries and raises a family in a home with a white picket fence filled with kids and a little Arf! Art! The film was produced by William Osco, who also did *Flesh Gordon* (reviewed in #16).

Evaluation: Out of over 50 films in my collection, this ties for my favorite. True to its billing, it has good music from start to finish. Playboy covergirl Kristine DeBell plays Alice, and several other names and faces will be recognized by you soft core fans. Indeed, it will be a challenge to try to figure out who is playing more than one role before the end credits tell you.

Not the cheapie you would expect, it is as well done as any typical movie today. It mixes the original themes: "People

grow up too fast and lose their imagination" and "The real world is what you want it to be" with those expected from an X-rated film: "There is not just one part of you that is nice and another not nice" and "If it feels good"

None of the more than 10 acquaintances who have seen this tape were embarrassed by the sensuous scenes. But I must caution you that there is also a XXX rated version of this movie from another company. Those who want the soft X should get this version by Meda. The overall picture quality was very good. There were no dropouts and audio was as good as could be expected without stereo. In conclusion, this is a good choice for those of you who like nudie musicals or want a well made erotic movie that is not so explicit as to offend.—MAC

Source: The Video Service Center

★★★

Kinkorama (Barrington Video, 1981)

Credits: Cast—Arthur Larya, Shanda Furdanabors, other stars of tomorrow with fake names. Producer/Director—Martin Cane.

Length/Format: 60 minutes/Beta

Content: C'mon, ya born yesterday or something? You know what's on these tapes. Lots of s/f, and that doesn't mean science fiction or San Francisco. What makes this porny any different from any other porny? It's something like what the long-awaited meeting of the old cast of *Saturday Night Live* and the Mitchell Bros. would be! Yippee, lots of sex and drugs. All that's missing is the musical guest to inject the rock and roll.

Background: Here I was, leafing through the latest issue of *Videophile* at the newsstand when some bozo next to me leafing through an issue of *Videophile* utters the super-intelligent, "You into video, huh?" Rather than call the vice squad, I put a chip on my shoulder and say, "Yeah, what of it?" So we start talking and he tells me that he's an indy producer. So is every other asshole with a camera.

Anyway, in the name of journalistic curiosity and the desire to kill an afternoon without spending any money, I traipse off to his crib with him to see his epic, *Kinkorama*. Jeez, I thought some of the loonies you meet through the mini-ads were bad.

Evaluation: *Kinkorama* is a ground-breaking bit of vid-porn. Part of my aversion to most porn is that it isn't that interesting (which is why I decided to become the world authority on Marilyn Chambers—but that in itself could fill a whole issue of TV).

The tape is split into nonrelated segments which range from funny to silly, but all are enjoyable to watch. Hopefully, this kind of tape is an indication of the future of porn now that video is changing its methodology. Aw geez, I'll come out and admit it: *Kinkorama* was a lot of fun and Marty Cane ain't such a bad guy.

Source/Price: Barrington Video/\$40. (As a special offer to *Videophile* readers, he'll sell it to you for \$30 if you mention this review.)—GC



Ted Reinhart's Western Roundup

He's a hypocrite! An exclamation which appropriately could be directed my way by you who follow this column with some regularity. *Videophile* Issue #29, page 47 . . . evaluation of *Cheyenne Takes Over* prints out this writer's words concerning B-western star, Lash LaRue: "I just can't hack the 'poor man's Bogart' in western clothing". Now, scan these pages, and behold! Can that be Ted Reinhart standing with smile on face beside Lash LaRue, and even permitting the old cowboy to put an arm around his Mrs.? Even worse, wait till your eyes fall upon Reinhart's video cassette special for this issue . . . a Lash LaRue movie! Turn on the oven, Grandmaw, I got some crow to eat.



Can that be Lash LaRue (center) flanked by Ted and Ruth Reinhart? Sure is. The Reinharts and LaRue were three of the featured performers appearing at the Western Film Roundup recently in Tifton, Georgia.

The Western Film Roundup, staged in Tifton, Georgia, February 26, 27 and 28 was an occasion we will long remember. The "we" includes my wife, Ruth, and myself, booked as the musical entertainers for this event. What a time we had, and what nice people we met (yes, Jim, Lash included). Besides becoming acquainted with some former film stars and devoted western movie buffs, I finally shook the hands of the gent and lady who make this magazine a reality . . . Jim Lowe and Joyce Hilliard. Yessir, Jim and Joyce took the Tallahassee Stage to Tifton (hey, that would

make a good movie title) just to meet this saddle sore singer of the sagebrush (Joyce, I like to think you came all that distance to see me). These two are mighty nice people. I only wish there had been more free time to spend with them.

The Roundup provided two viewing rooms which constantly were grinding out 16mm cowboy pictures featuring most everyone who ever sat in a B-western saddle. A panel of western writers (present) answered assorted questions relating to this motion picture genre. A panel of stars, which I had the pleasure of moderating, followed the question-answer format posed to the former movie cowhands. A very active dealer's room, where one could purchase any form of paper memorabilia, films, and video cassettes was well patronized each day.



Ted and Ruth Reinhart holding the Western Roundup Trophy, presented them for their efforts to revive the music of the movie west.

Ruth and I were slated to do performances the final two evenings, and to our great pleasure both shows won overwhelming approval. A surprise climax found us being awarded the Western Film Roundup Trophy, for our efforts to revive the musical sounds of the western film. We were deeply touched by this gesture.

Now I must devote some words to Mr. Alfred "Lash" LaRue. As I've written on a number of occasions before,

never was I a fan of LaRue. His brand of cowboy did not conform to my standards. And I always contended that he WAS doing a cheap imitation of Bogart. He did admit to me that he was influenced by Bogie, "somewhat". Anyway, being in Lash's company for these three days altered my feelings. He's a likable chap with a fine sense of humor. He's a bit "extreme" with some of his convictions, but all this can be tolerated when you really get to know the guy in depth. Lash had (and still does have) many followers. He was a major B-western star in the waning years of this film form.



Gunfight at the "Pancake Corral." Your columnist (left foreground) is about ready to be done in during the first of the simulated gunfights staged at the Western Film Roundup.

I never realized that dying could be fun, but once each day I strapped on a blank cartridge six-gun and engaged in a "play" shoot-out with a couple of professional gunslingers who stage these events across the country. I could never figure why I was always given the bad guy role, and ended up (down) biting the dust. Perhaps some of the video dealers I have offended arranged for this.

Another "booking" has just come my way, this one to work at the largest Western film convention in the country July 9, 10, and 11. It's the Western Film Fair in Charlotte, North Carolina. Hope to see you there.

An unusually busy schedule, including my producing and performing on a two-day Easter Seals Telethon, has cut short the opportunities to review any number of videocassettes this time. My cassette special for this issue includes a double feature with LaRue and Buster Crabbe (see reviews and my ad elsewhere in this issue).

☆☆☆

Videocassette Reviews

Public Cowboy Number One (Republic, 1937) B&W

Credits: Cast—Gene Autry, Smiley Burnette, Ann Rutherford, William Farnum, James C. Norton, Maston

Williams, Jack Ingram. Director—Joe Kane.

Story: Sheriff William Farnum is having difficulty with his efforts to solve a local cattle mystery. Herd after herd is rustled, then they vanish into thin air. The sheriff is blamed for his inability to cope with the modern rustlers, who, we find are using an airplane to direct the cattle raids by radio, then transport the animals away in trucks. Gene Autry, friend of the sheriff, and his sidekick, Smiley Burnette, soon discover the crook's methods through Smiley's own short wave radio. The boys help the sheriff bring down the outlaws with good "old-fashioned" methods, preventing Farnum from losing his job as lawman.

Evaluation: Most of the Gene Autry movies were considered "streamlined" pictures . . . that is, contemporary in setting and plot structure, using modern day gimmicks and situations integrated with the attire and horseflesh of the old west. *Public Cowboy Number One* is a perfect example of this. To keep the integrity of a western movie, the story line establishes that the ways of the old west are still superior to those of modern day. At times this approach reaches the level of being absurd. As a purist, I've always maintained that western plots should be based on their periods. But, these Autry's were always big box office, so who am I to complain? This is one of the better Gene Autry titles released of late by Blackhawk . . . not to be considered a "best," but all in all an enjoyable picture to spend an hour watching. Audio and video quality are pretty good.

Source: Blackhawk Films.

☆☆☆

The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance

(Paramount, 1962) B&W

Credits: Cast—John Wayne, James Stewart, Vera Miles, Lee Marvin, Edmond O'Brien, Andy Devine, Lee Van Cleef. Director—John Ford.

Story: Senator and Mrs. Ranse Stoddard (Stewart & Miles) return to their old hometown of Shinbone to attend the funeral of their friend Tom Doniphon (Wayne). A reporter wants to know the reason for the senator's return clear from Washington to attend the funeral of a "nobody." Stewart tells the complete story dating back to the day when he first arrived in Shinbone when it was just a territorial town. In the early days a group of powerful cattlemen who opposed statehood hired a brutal gunman named Liberty Valance (Marvin) to break all laws and prevent the formation of a state. Stewart, an attorney, is determined to stop Valance and bring law and order to the area. Meanwhile, a "triangle" blooms involving Miles, who is loved by both Wayne and Stewart. Wayne is a respected rancher, and the only person with whom Liberty is afraid to tangle. Later, Stewart faces the outlaw in a gun fight and, even though he is not adept in the use of a firearm, Liberty Valance is killed. It then becomes obvious that Miles is in love with Stewart. Wayne, bitterly

disappointed, burns down an addition to his ranch house which he was building for her. On the strength of being the man who shot Liberty Valance, a reputation he detests, Stewart becomes a Congressman for the Territory. Later statehood is won and Stewart is elected Senator. Stewart confesses to the reporter that it was Wayne who had really killed Valance, an act which he performed just for Miles, his lost love. At the story's conclusion, the reporter destroys his notes by saying, "It ain't news. This is the west. When the legend becomes fact, print the legend."

Evaluation: This western is considered "classic" by most historians. It's really not John Wayne's movie, but belongs to Jimmy Stewart. It seems to me Duke is just around to look after the physically inferior attorney, and in the course loses his gal to him. It is a depressing motion picture, one that I would not wish to view a second time. For the John Wayne gang, you may wish to add it to your collection. Picture and sound quality are excellent.

Source: Blackhawk Films.



A double feature

Mark of the Lash (Screen Guild, 1948) B&W

Credits: Cast—Lash LaRue, Al St. John, Suzi Crandall, Jimmie Martin, Marshall Reed, John Cason, Tom London. Director—Ray Taylor.

Story: Marshall Reed, playing the part of Lance Taggart, has dammed Stone Canyon Springs, preventing the ranchers from having access to water for their cattle. One by one, the cattlemen leave their ranches which are then taken over by Reed and his gang. Lash LaRue and his pal Fuzzy have been requested to come to Red Rock to help the victims of this crime. The outlaws are wise to Lash's arrival and set out to bushwhack him. Instead, they kill Bill Gunnerson, a land investigator. Lash finds Gunnerson's body, and then assumes his identity. This ruse permits Lash to work "undercover" and eventually bring Reed and the baddies to justice.

Evaluation: Here's a good little western for fans of "The Lash. Controlling water rights was an oft-used plot in the old "B's," and Lash uses his bull whip as he did in all his pictures. But there's action aplenty, and I really was impressed with the musical score. Sight and sound are both good.

Lightning Raiders (PRC, 1946) B&W

Credits: Buster Crabbe, Al St. John, Mady Lawrence, Ray Brent, Henry Hall, Steve Darrell, Stan Jolley, Karl Hackett. Director—Sam Newfield.

Story: A series of mysterious stage robberies where bandits are stealing only mail and not gold, has Buster Crabbe and pardner Al St. John in a state of perplexity. The

twosome finds an old mining shack where the outlaws are hiding, and drive them out. Inside, Crabbe and St. John find the recent stolen pouch of mail being burned. They save most of it and after sifting through the letters begin to realize that the reason for theft centers around assay reports on gold ore found by local miners. The outlaws steal the authentic report which indicates good quality samples, and a low grade document is then substituted in its place and sent to the mine owner. This results in the owner selling his mine to Ray Brent, who is masterminding this whole scheme. Buster and Fuzzy expose the crooks and thus ends the tampering with the mail.

Evaluation: I like the story line of this oater. And Crabbe and St. John, as always, make a superior team. This will probably be the favorite of the two features. Overall quality is quite acceptable.

Source: Ted Reinhart.



Ridin' on a Rainbow (Republic, 1941) B&W

Credits: Cast—Gene Autry, Smiley Burnette, Mary Lee, Carol Adams, Ferris Taylor, Georgia Caine, Byron Foulger, Ralf Harolde. Director—Lew Landers.

Story: Gene Autry, leader of the Cattlemen's Association, returns from a very profitable cattle drive. He advises his members to place their earnings in the local bank for safe keeping. Shortly after depositing the money, the bank is robbed. Autry and his sidekick, Smiley Burnette, are determined to recover the cash (must have been before the days of Federal Deposit Insurance), and begin an investigation. The boys end up looking for work instead of the stolen greenbacks. They meet Mary Lee, a teenage performer, and her father (played by Byron Foulger), a man figured by Autry to be involved in the bank crime. Foulger, being guilty, realizes Gene's suspicions and jumps the boat, leaving his daughter behind. He makes his way to the mob's hideout. Mary Lee follows, so do Gene and Smiley, with the law close on the trail. Next comes a big shootout. The father is killed and the rest of the gang captured. I assume the cattlemen's money is recovered, too. Gene Autry promises to help the now orphaned Mary Lee, and all ends well.

Evaluation: I can't understand why Autry didn't warble "Old Man River" in this movie. But seriously, folks . . . this feature is more of a "western musical" than a musical western. The accent on song and dance, chorus lines, and magic acts, with most of the shootin', ridin', and fightin' interrupting these doings at the tail end. Mary Lee dominates most of the footage, "upstaging" Autry throughout. The kid does have talent, but overdoes the cuteness in some segments. If you are an avid Gene Autry fan and collect everything he filmed, then go ahead and purchase *Ridin' on a Rainbow*. Video and audio quality are fairly good.

Source: Blackhawk Films.



—NOTICE—

It is neither the intention of *The Videophile* to serve as a conduit through which the illegal duplication or sale of material which is protected by copyright may be accomplished, nor to encourage such activity. We will not knowingly accept advertising for the sale of such material. In addition, we reserve the right to alter or reject submitted ads which offer "cash" for illegally duplicated tapes, or otherwise indicate that the advertiser stands ready to traffic in stolen property. However, until such time as a federal court or the United States Congress clearly declares otherwise, we will adhere to the position that tapes which contain material transmitted through, and recorded from, the public airways may be exchanged between hobbyists not-for-profit where no rights to public exhibition are represented to be present, and we maintain that the same is not an illegal activity. Ads seeking material not yet broadcast over the public airways are presumed to mean "if and when such material is broadcast." Ads seeking to "buy" specific titles are presumed to refer to the purchase from those having the right to sell.



MINI-ADS

FOR SALE

Commercially recorded VHS copy of the great XXX classic *Waterpower*. And video distribution amp for lightening up dark copies. Either item, \$40 each, postpaid. Also would like to trade for VHS copies of more recent Sci Fi movies (good quality only!) Mark Mitches, 209 Sutters Mill Lane, Knoxville, TN 37919.

50 ea 1 hr 1/2" video tapes on 7" reels
6 ea 30 min 1/2" video tapes on 7" reels
8 ea 15-20 min 1/2" video tapes on 7" reels
12 ea empty boxes w/plastic bags

All above tapes are 1st copies and contain old TV programs and movies. Included are comedy, mystery and westerns. All video tapes come with boxes and plastic bags. Keep for your library or erase and reuse. Price \$325.00. Stan Falk, 345 Linda Way, Mill Valley, CA 94941 (415) 388-7307.

RCA VBT 200 in good working condition \$500 including shipping. Don Bayer, RD 1, Box 240, Sheffield, MA 01257 (413) 229-8926.

TC 200B KSN Time Base Corrector - inserts new horizontal, vertical sync and color burst. Corrects jitter, skew, flagging, weaving. Excellent, like new condition. Original cost \$3250. Complete with all documentation, \$985. Call (201) 939-0439 after 5 pm EST.

BETA

Wanted X-2/X-3. Any *Three Stooges* shorts movies, top quality only uncut. *Oliver and Beattles* movie. *Time Machine* 1960. Old TV shows *Leave It to Beaver*, *Alvin Show*, *Good Guys*, *Car 54*, *Monkeys*, *Rowen & Martin Laugh In*, *Soupy Sales*, *Time Tunnel*, *Top Cat*, *Amos N' Andy*, *Flying Nun*, *Superman*, *Mr. Ed*, *Topper*. Have HBO will tape off air or other arrangements. Phone NI8-7263, Mark Dishotsky, 2190 Brigham St., Brooklyn, NY 11229.

Wanted Beta: KBDI—Broomfield, Colo.: old TV, sci fi, Qube, horror, cult, On TV, Private Screenings, R & R, XXX. I have on cable: Escapade hard R-rated sexploitation, cult, adventure), Cinemax (24-hr movie channel, like HBO but totally different), ESPN (24-hr sports), HBO, old TV, etc. I will send program guides. Randy Jewett, 3810 Woodglenn Place, Casper, WY (307) 266-5937.

Wanted in Beta II—First two Steve Martin specials on NBC. Final competition in the men's and women's figure skating at the 1980 Winter Olympics. Especially the one with the Linda Fratianne segment at the beginning. Will buy or trade. TV Guide sent upon request. Dennis Siems, 9727 E. Peakview Ave., Englewood, CO 80111. (303) 779-3074.

Wanted: Boston Celtics vs. LA Lakers aired 2-11-81 for Beta system. Write or call Bill Ambery, 3833 Pacific Ave., Long Beach, CA 90807. (213) 424-2511.

Would like to trade my XXX Beta II tapes for other similar fare. Send your list and I'll send mine. Gary Cohen, 15-17 North Ave. E., Cranford, NJ 07016.

"SPORTS FANS!! Where are you???" Needed: Any/all NBA championship series Philly vs. Portland (1977), NBA-ABA All-Star game, ABA Championship Denver vs. New York, Foreman-Lyle, Ali-Lyle, 1977 WS with Reggie's 3 hrs., any ABA games. Movies wanted: *Five Easy Pieces*, *Fearless Vampire Killers*, Jimi Hendrix concerts, *Joe Kidd*, *Drum* (uncut only). J. Coleman, 112 Erickson Ct. #6, Cheyenne, WY 82001.

LADYMAN wants SUPERMAN serials.

VHS

Wanted: *The Harder They Come*, *Rockers* and other Jamaican films in the VHS format. I have many rock, comedy, avant-garde and adult films to swap. I can provide reliable taping of Escapade-Montage programming. All letters answered. Steve Freeman, 430 E. State St., Long

Important Instructions Re: Advertising

In order to keep it simple, fair to everyone and, above all, *inexpensive* to the individual videophile, the following is our policy with respect to mini-ads. **ONLY SUBSCRIBERS** are eligible to place a mini-ad, and ads may be placed for **ONLY ONE** issue at a time. These are available for the extremely cheap rate of 50 words for \$2.00. However, after the first 50 words, each word will cost you an additional 10¢, and we must impose a limit of 200 words (\$17.00) per advertiser per issue. It is permissible to place more than one mini-ad in the same issue. However, the rate charged is to be calculated on the combined total number of words in your ads. For example, two ads with 50 words each will be \$7.00 (not \$4.00)--50 words for \$2.00 and 50 words at the rate of 10¢ each. Your name and address (within reason) equals 6 words. Telephone number equals 1 word. You may request that your ad be placed under any of the following classifications: For Sale, Beta, VHS, Just Plain Wanted, Personals, Video Discs, or Rubber Novelties. All ads *must* be related to video. Also, no mini-ads will be accepted for the sale of hardware or blank or prerecorded tapes and related items from those offering these items in quantities of more than one. Collectors may, however, place ads seeking to unload all their old tape. **NO** ads for copyrighted material **FOR SALE** will be accepted unless you have the rights to it.

DEALERS AND WEALTHY INDIVIDUALS: Please send for our rate card. Dealers are not eligible to place mini-ads. We do offer full page, half, quarter, one-third and one-sixth page display rates, special placement, and color.

DEADLINES: Ads absolutely **MUST** reach us by the deadline. Please, no more phone calls and speedy express deliveries after the deadline. The deadlines for the next two issues are: Issue #32-July 1 and #33-September 1.

Beach, NY 11561. (516) 432-7240.

Can give excellent copies of VHS XXX for your XXX, X, hard R's or blank tape. Send have list plus daytime (Mon.-Fri.) phone #. Caits, 183-11 Hillside Ave., Jamaica, NY 11432. (212) 657-2938 7 p.m.-11 p.m. EST. No collect calls.

Wanted: *Too Many Girls* (Amaz), *Robinson Crusoe* ('53 version), *Forbidden Rules*, *El Super* for starters. Also episodes of *My Little Margie*, *Dobie Gillis*, *Topper*, *Father Knows Best*, *Lucy-Desi Comedy Hour*, *Ozzie & Harriet* (pre-'63) and *My Three Sons* (pre-'64); *I Love Lucy* Dec. 24 '56 (the "Christmas Tree" episode). Am seriously interested in these and will buy/trade or offer rare rock records (all periods). C. Cape, Box 836 MSS, New York, NY 10010.

Wanted: *You Can't Take It With You*. Please call or write to Mark Small, 300 E. 54, New York, NY 10022 (212) 935-7297.

Wanted in VHS uncut only and no higher than 2nd generation: *I Drink Your Blood*, *Invasion of the Blood Farmers*, *Country Cousins*, *Demon Witch Child* and other off-the-wall titles. Have many good titles to offer. Bob De Francisco, 5927 S.E. 22nd Ave., Portland, OR 97202. (503) 760-7735.

Video nut wants *Red Garters* and *This Island Earth*, older Sci Fi and horror and "B" westerns. Much to trade in other categories. No XXX. Will exchange lists. Ray Munson, 700 Walker, Des Moines, IA 50316.

Would like to trade my VHS XXX tapes with other videophiles. Have both masters and first generation dubs. Your list gets mine. John Devine, Box 487, Humphrey Rd., Greenwood Lake, NY 10925.

1971 Burt Bacharach Special wanted in VHS format with Barbra Streisand as guest star. Also need 1969 Oscar and Grammy Awards shows with Streisand appearing. Also need good quality copy of Hitchcock's *Vertigo*. Randy Emerian, 5824 E. Hamilton Ave., Fresno, CA 93727. (209) 255-3200.

Can anyone tell me the titles of all the color *Superman* episodes made back in the '50's? I can give a description of the episodes as where the titles were not shown. And, I'm still seeking these wants on VHS: *Highway Patrol*, *Whirlybirds*, and *Ripcord*. For trade I've got over 70 old TV series. Whatcha got that won't take the wind out of my sails? Paul Bernstein, P.O. Box 33, Butler, WI 53007.

The Avengers with Diana Rigg (2 or 6 hours). I'd like any episodes except those run by CBS on their late night movie series in 1980. (Exception: want episode where Steed and Emma switch bodies with foreign agents.) Let me know what you have. I'll trade or make virtually any arrangements for copies. Andrew Teton, 2916 Pasco del Rofugio, Santa Barbara CA 93105.

Wanted VHS—Will trade new tapes for World Pro Skiing races from ESPN, HBO, Wide World of Sports or Sportsworld. Or may I borrow your tapes to make a copy? Call after 6:00 (609) 561-

7859.

VHS wanted: old sporting events, *Father of the Bride*, many 1940's and 1950's movies. I have the 1976 Phoenix-Boston three-overtime game and NCAA Basketball finals 1976-1981 (except 1977). Also have *Car 54's*. Will trade lists and/or TV Guide. David Andrews, 131 Page Rd., Nashville, TN 37205. (615) 356-8822.

VHS—Adult XXX tapes—high quality. I am converting my VHS tape collection over to the Beta format. Will trade for Beta tapes or will sell. Do not send trade lists! All letters answered. (212) 291-3178 8-10 p.m. weekdays. Gary Rabinowitz, 1381 Chandler St., Far Rockaway, NY 11691.

Wanted SUPERMAN serials. Paul Ladyman.

Wanted: Cable (or excellent reception) masters or one dub down (LP), full-length uncut: *Brewster McCloud*; *Wrong Box*; *Ernie Kovacs Show: Road to Freedom* (PBS); *Avengers* (Honor Blackman); *Five Easy Pieces*; obscure Peter Sellers. Have cable and list. Harry J. Patrick, 905 54 Ave. N., Nashville, TN 37209.

Wanted: Good quality uncut copies: *Last House on the Left*, *They Came From Within*, *Kiss and Tell*, *Fearless Vampire Killers*, *Mustang*, *Dawn of the Dead*, *Games Women Play*, *Downstairs-Upstairs*, *American Pie*, etc. VHS only. Send your list for mine. P. Gordon, P.O. Box 825, Framingham, MA 01701.

Wanted: The following Katharine Hepburn movies on VHS: *Alice Adams*, *Little Women*, *Morning Glory* and *Holiday*. Will send blank tapes in exchange. John Rigsby, 2819 Foster Lane, Apt. 214, Austin, TX 78757.

Help! Someone with Showtime/HBO/ON who might tape programs, especially concerts, occasionally. Also wanted video tapes Linda Ronstadt—ads, interviews, awards, early TV appearances, etc. Please write. L. Sixsmith, Box 646, Lone Pine, CA 93545.

Want to borrow or buy in VHS SP format: *Monty Python & The Holy Grail*, *Phantom of the Paradise*, *Get to Know Your Rabbit* and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Also want TV episodes from *The Prisoner*, *When Things Were Rotten* and *Ripping Yarns*. Can loan or trade commercially recorded movies (from *A Clockwork Orange* to the Marx Brothers) and several Monty Python episodes. Terry L. Quinn, 1101 S. 19th St., Rocky Ford CO 81067. (303) 254-3514.

JUST PLAIN WANTED

Help! Did anyone tape the segment of ABC's news documentary *20/20* (aired sometime in March) dealing with movie mogul Joseph E. Levine? Specifically looking for the interview with actor Steve Reeves. Also looking for any movies with actor Reeves. Beta or VHS format acceptable. Trade or buy. (614) 574-2932. Leave number on answering machine.

Wanted: Beta or VHS—British comedy, esp. Alastair Sim, Alec Guinness—*Folly to be Wise*,

Green for Danger, *Hue and Cry*, *School for Scoundrels*, *The Promoter*, *The Card*, *Private's Progress*, *The Ruling Class*, *The Detective*, *All at Sea*. Your list for mine. N. Brown, P.O. Box 1112, El Cerrito, CA 94530.

Adventure, adult, beauty contests. Beta/VHS. Your list gets mine. (412) titles: *Wild Geese*, *Caliquila*, *Emmanuelle*, *Electric Blue*, *Ugly George*, *Miss Florida/World Pageant*, *Roselawn*, Russ Meyer (*Immoral Mr. Teas*, *Mondo Topless*, etc.). Access to Escapade Network. Quality only. (301) 256-5885. Avis, 10018 Gunridge, Kingsville, MD 21087.

Beta format: Complete series of *Connections* as shown on Public Broadcasting. F.L. Zambetti, 710 W. 246 St., Bronx, NY 10471.

Opera and Shakespeare trade and exchange club forming. We are collecting names for mailing lists, so if you have written you are still on the list. The mailing list is increasing slowly. Also looking for *War & Peace* (USSR version). I also will have on a 2-for-1 basis the Academy Awards nominees when they are shown in the early part of 1981. George D. Blair, 13711 Doty Ave. Hawthorne, CA 90250.

Wanted: *The Mutations*, *The Ape Women*, *Devil Doll* (1964), *Chained for Life*, *She Freak*, *A Taste of Blood*, *Something Weird*, *Gruesome Twosome*, *Eaten Alive*, *The Incredible Torture Show*, *Terror Circus*, *The Love Butcher*, *Three on a Meathook*. Beta X-2 preferred. Bruce Roach, 1013 Warden Ave., Scarborough, Ontario, Canada M1R 2N9. (416) 755-8198.

Wanted in Beta or VHS: *Hellstrom Chronicles*, *All the Loving Couples*, *Mondo Cane*, *Chocolate Soldier*, Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, home or amateur adult movies, nature documentaries, Amos-Andy, old black and white adult movies and cartoons, Smith and Dale, Ed Sullivan, XXX, R, or any prerecorded tapes, bloopers (all kinds). Have hundreds of titles XXX, old movies—Chaplin, Keaton, Keystone Cops, Laurel and Hardy, Amos-Andy, serials, Gilbert/Sullivan, nature programs and documentaries. Will also accept in trade 8mm or Super 8 b&w or color films, used cassettes. H. Wallace, 8633 N. Springfield, Skokie, IL 60076. (312) 676-1771.

Wanted desperately: Liza Minnelli concert from New Orleans broadcast on HBO March '80. VHS SP, Beta II or even a first generation dub. Dr. J. Myszkowski, 2937 S. 6th St., Milwaukee, WI. Write! We'll work something out.

Any!!! Alice Cooper on VHS. Concerts, TV, movies, etc.—Alice hosting the Rock Awards, Alice on the Tony Orlando and Dawn Show, on Dinah Shore, on the Smothers Brothers, Don Kirshner, Tonight Show, Snoop Sisters, Phil Donahue, Merv Griffin, Midnight Special, Hollywood Squares. Whatever I am interested!!! Ricky Mastro, 221 M-13 P.O. Box 478, Pinconning, MI 48650. (517) 879-2231.

Wanted: Currently looking for any and all titles listed in the Science Fictionary A to Z. Other titles include: *Champagne for Caesar*, *Norliss Tapes*, *Zotz*, *Guns of Navarone*, *Head*, Dr. Mabuse films, *Easy Rider*, *Unknown Island*,

Weekend, M-Squad, What-No Beer, and at least 1,000 others. Everybody has something. Send list—get mine. Beta or VHS. Joe Wladas, 1638 W. Nelson St., Chicago, IL 60657. (312) 281-1021.

Have earth station, 37 channels plus HBO, Cinemax, Showtime & Movie Channel. Need monthly program schedule for Movie Channel. In return will tape you anything that's legal that I can receive. Also want Dobie Gillis and Invaders. R.R.H., Box 1496, Fargo, ND 58107. (701) 293-6801.

Paul Ladyman, 3109 Explorer Dr., Sacramento, CA 95821. Want . . . Gang that Couldn't Shoot Straight, Bluebeard, Mutations, Pelvis, Superman serials, Torso, Scandalous John, Idiot's Delight and more.

Movie contacts in Los Angeles area with SelecTV, ON TV and Z Channel to tape all movies presented. Also want an HBO contact to do the same. Also any Movie Channel contact. VHS or Beta. Will pay any interested parties for their trouble. Looking for someone to do this on a regular basis. Al Lauraitis, Box 780, Champlain, NY 12919.

PERSONAL

Son of popular video magazine editor desires to view concert tapes featuring Lynyrd Skynyrd. Father of said son still seeks Space Thing (late '60's "softie"). Contact J. Lowe, c/o The Videophile, 2003 Apalachee Pkwy, Tallahassee, FL 32301. (Please, no more inquiries re: Crisco birthday party tapes.)

LADYMAN requests Superman serials.

RUBBER NOVELTIES

I'll take SUPERMAN serials, LADYMAN

DISC

LADYMAN still wants SUPERMAN serials.

CANADIANS!

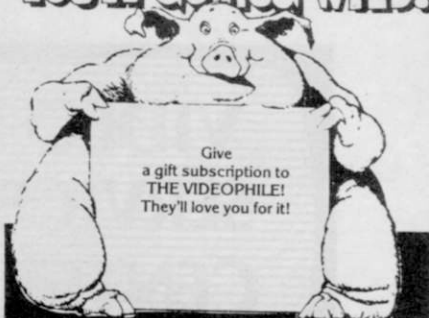
YOUR VIDEO HEADQUARTERS IN CANADA!
FREE GIANT CATALOGUE

Americans! We have titles currently not available in the U.S.—Send \$1 bill for lists!

WIDCANADA

HOME ENTERTAINMENT (Dept. B)
Box 6161, Stn. C, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5B4K6

You'll Go Hog Wild!



VIDEO ACCESSORIES

Stabilizers, Enhancers, Switchers, Amplifiers, Connectors, Adaptors, Custom Carrying Cases Cabinets, Lighting, Electronic Games, Recorders, Cameras, Hundreds of Items. Send \$2.00 - refundable on first order.

Video Merchant

Box 5381
2725 Abington Rd.
Dept. 102
Akron, Ohio 44313

VIDEO GUARD-OFF®

Pat. Pend.



Do you have a video recorder, but can't make legal copies from some tapes because of that troublesome "copy guard"? GUARD-OFF guarantees to let you have your way!

\$60.00

POST PAID

From
GUARD-OFF
100 W. MAIN ST.
GLENWOOD, IL 60425

BOSOMANIA.

KITTEN NATIVIDAD
Beneath
UltraVIXENS

•Louisa May
Alcott gave
you "Little
Women"...

ANN MARIE
Beneath
UltraVIXENS

Russ Meyer
gives you
BIG WOMEN!



RAVEN DE
LA CROIX
UP!

There's always somethin' big about a Russ Meyer movie!

Please send the following cassette(s):

- ☐ Beneath UltraVIXENS
☐ UPI featuring Mary Gavin aka Candy Samples
☐ MONDO TOPLESS - Darlene Grey (43EE)
☐ LORNA - Legendary Lorna Maitland
☐ MUDHONEY - Buxotic Rena Horten

FILMS ALBION
1626 N. Wilcox #395
Hollywood, CA 90028

•(Number) Cassettes @ \$79.50 ea. \$

☐ VHS ☐ BETA Calif. Res. add 6% \$
☐ Check; ☐ M.O.; ☐ VISA; ☐ M/C...Total \$
(Card # _____; Expires _____)
Name _____ Age _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____

Limited to 18 years or older.

PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT!

DUST COVERS FOR:

- VIDEO GAMES - \$5.95 EA. DEL.
- VCR'S - \$8.95 EA. DEL.
- VIDEODISCS - \$8.95 EA. DEL.

CLEAR HEAVY VINYL

SPECIFY ATARI/SEARS, ODYSSEY²,
MATTTEL INTELLIVISION, VCR, OR
VIDEODISC. SEND CHECK OR M.O.

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED

MLF SALES, DEPT. 6V
3 BRUCE CIRCLE NORTH
HAWTHORN WOODS, IL 60047

DEALER INQUIRIES INVITED

We're Bullish on Video!

And our prices unbeatable.
1-800-824-7875
 In California 916-920-2642

- Blank Tape -

beta

SONY OR ZENITH L830 PER DZ	\$180.00
SONY OR ZENITH L750 PER DZ	\$150.00
MAXELL OR TDK L750 10 LOT	\$125.00
FUJI L500 10 LOT	\$105.00
SONY OR ZENITH L500 PER DZ	\$120.00

vhs

FUJI T120 10 LOT	\$140.00
RCA VK250 PER DZ	\$162.00
TDK T120 10 LOT	\$140.00

TAPES SOLD IN DOZEN OR LOT ONLY. ADD \$4.00 PER DOZEN OR LOT FOR SHIPPING

Home Recorders

*HITACHI VT8500A	\$ 925.00	2/4/6	HR.
JVC HR6700	\$ 795.00	2/6	HR.
PANASONIC PV1210	\$ 639.00	2/4/6	HR.
PANASONIC PV1300	\$ 775.00	2/4/6	HR.
PANASONIC PV1400	\$ 895.00	2/4/6	HR.
PANASONIC PV1750	\$1075.00	2/4/6	HR.
PANASONIC NV8200	\$1175.00	2	HR.
RCA VET450	\$ 859.00	2/4/6	HR.
RCA VET650	\$1095.00	2/4/6	HR.
SANYO VTC9100A	\$ 529.00	3	HR.
SONY SL5400	\$ 825.00	5	HR.
SONY SL5800	\$1095.00	5	HR.
ZENITH VR9000W	\$ 695.00	5	HR.

ADD \$20.00 TO ALL RECORDERS FOR SHIPPING, INSURANCE, AND HANDLING.

Portable Recorders

JVC HR2200	\$ 795.00	2	HR.
PANASONIC PV3100	\$ 725.00	2/4/6	HR.
PANASONIC PV3200	\$ 895.00	2/4/6	HR.
PANASONIC PV4500	\$1050.00	2/4/6	HR.
PANASONIC NV8410	\$ 895.00	2	HR.
QUASAR VH5300	\$ 675.00	2/4/6	HR.
RCA VFP170	\$1095.00	2/4/6	HR.

Tuners

14 DAY/8 CHANNEL TUNERS \$250.00
 PANASONIC PVA35P OR QUASAR VA520SE

Disc

RCA VIDEO DISC PLAYER

SUPER SPECIAL \$399.00

WE STOCK VIDEO DISCS

Used Special

SANYO VTC9100A

\$295.00

HURRY LIMITED SUPPLIES

 PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME.

*AS AVAILABLE

ALL ITEMS LIMITED TO STOCK ON HAND.

Cameras

JVC - WITH V/F	GX66	\$ 725.00
JVC	GX88	\$ 795.00
PANASONIC	PK700/PK750	\$ 695.00
*PANASONIC	PK751	\$ 825.00
*PANASONIC	PK800	\$ 895.00
PANASONIC	WV3100	\$ 725.00
RCA	CC010	\$ 850.00
SONY- F 1.8	HVC2000	\$ 939.00
SONY- F 1.4	HVC2200	\$1025.00
ZENITH	VC1600	\$ 895.00

ADD \$10.00 TO ALL CAMERA ORDERS FOR SHIPPING AND INSURANCE.

Accessories

CASES-

AMARAY- BLACK VINYL GRAIN

BETA 20 FOR \$22.00

VHS 20 FOR \$23.00

MID-AMERICA - BROWN SMOOTH VINYL

BETA OR VHS 20 FOR \$36.00

HEAD CLEANERS-

TDK AND ALSOP BETA OR VHS

\$20.00 EACH

ADD \$4.00 FOR SHIPPING EACH LOT OF 20 CASES.

ADD \$2.00 FOR SHIPPING ON HEAD CLEANERS.

**VIDEO
SERVICE
CENTER**

Panasonic Portable package

PV3100- 2/4/6 HOUR PORTABLE WITH AC ADAPTER. STILL FRAME AND FRAME ADVANCE.
PVA35P- RECORD 8 CHANNELS OVER A PERIOD OF 14 DAYS.
PK750- AUTO IRIS, 6 TO 1 MOTORIZED ZOOM AND DETACHABLE ELECTRONIC VIEWFINDER.

ALL FOUR PIECES ON SALE NOW! \$1595.00
ADD \$34.00 FOR SHIPPING.

Sony

SONY AG300- FITS ALL BETA III MACHINES. THIS BETA STACKER HAS AUTOMATIC LOADING AND
EJECTION AND RECORDS UP TO 20 HOURS ON (4) CASSETTES.

\$99.00

Sony TV's

KV1543R	KV1923	KV2647R
\$479.00	\$489.00	\$975.00

SHIPPED FREIGHT COLLECT

Zenith Top of the Line

VR9750J- TOP OF THE LINE ZENITH RECORDER. RECORD 4 PROGRAMS OVER A PERIOD OF 14 DAYS.
FEATURES LIKE THE NEW CRYSTAL CLEAR FREEZE FRAME, FRAME BY FRAME ADVANCE AND VARIABLE
SPEED SLOW MOTION, PLUS MUCH MORE. FULL FUNCTION REMOTE CONTROL. ALL THIS FOR ONLY
\$929.00

Pro Video

WE CARRY A FULL LINE OF JVC, PANASONIC, AND
SONY INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS-CALL FOR QUOTES!!
MAXELL T120 \$13.50 MAXELL KCA60 \$21.00
10 LOT DOZEN LOT

More tape specials

PANASONIC T120 \$13.00 EACH DOZEN LOT
TDK L500 \$9.00 EACH 10 LOT

VIDEO COMMANDER- PUTS YOU IN TOTAL COMMAND OF YOUR VIDEO SYSTEM. ACCEPTS SIX SOURCES OF
VIDEO SIGNAL. (INPUTS)

\$69.95

Blockbusters

BABY FACE XXX	\$55.00	FLEETWOOD MAC	\$32.00
BEDTIME FOR BONZO	\$44.00	THE FORMULA	\$48.00
BLUES BROTHERS	\$71.00	INSATIABLE XXX	\$55.00
CABARET	\$72.00	THE ISLAND	\$52.00
CADDYSHACK	\$44.00	NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD	\$36.00
CLOCKWORK ORANGE	\$60.00	NINE TO FIVE	\$56.00
CLOSE ENCOUNTERS	\$56.00	ONE TRICK PONY	\$44.00
COAL MINERS DAUGHTER	\$52.00	OWL AND THE PUSSYCAT	\$48.00
EMMANUELLE X	\$55.00	SGT. PEPPERS LONELY HEARTS CLUB BAND	\$44.00
FANTASY XXX	\$55.00	SOMEWHERE IN TIME	\$52.00
FLASH GORDON	\$32.00	TOM HORN	\$52.00

ADD \$1.00 SHIPPING TO ALL PRE-RECORDED MOVIE ORDERS.

APO, FPO, ALASKA AND HAWAII, ADD SUFFICIENT POSTAGE FOR U.S. MAIL CHARGES.

VISA AND MASTER CHARGE ACCEPTED-PERSONAL CHECKS TOO !

PLEASE ALLOW 2 WEEKS FOR ALL CHECKS TO CLEAR.

ALL PORTABLES ARE AC/DC. WE HAVE ALL ACCESSORIES IN STOCK-CALL FOR QUOTES

3/4" TAPES SHIPPED FREIGHT COLLECT.

No Bull!

Radio Wholesale

2012 Auburn Avenue
Columbus, Georgia 31906
John Cunningham—WB4JUN

Visa
Mastercharge

American Express

C.O.D.
Diners' Club

**WE SHIP VIDEO ALL OVER THE WORLD
AND WE DO IT FASTER THAN ANYONE!
TRADES ACCEPTED!**

EQUIPMENT

RCA CC-0010 color video camera
VHS—RCA VET-650—\$1095
SHARP VC-7400 videocassette recorder—\$689
SONY SL-5800 videocassette recorder—\$1095

VIDEO TAPE

Ampex T-120 video tape—\$13.95
Ampex industrial K-60 video tape—\$25

Custom-made Patch Cables \$24 a set delivered

*We service and warranty
Sony and RCA VCR units in our own lab!*

Phone collect to place an order
Days: 404-561-7000
Nights/Holidays: 404-322-7893

Introducing commercial quality Satellite Television for your home.



Now Satellite Technology Services offers you the commercial expertise to engineer the precise satellite television system for your home.

STS stocks a complete line of top quality components at competitive prices with full warranties.

And STS insures you fast delivery with its "ready ship" inventory program.

For more information and our free brochure, call our toll free number.

1-800-325-4058

Satellite Technology Services, Inc.
11684 Lilburn
St. Louis, Missouri 63141

Dealerships may be available in your area.



NEW



FEATURING —

- * MISS NUDE GALAXY
- * MISS NUDE GO-GO
- * MISS NUDE ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR
- * FEMALE NUDE MUD WRESTLING

VIDEO TAPED
AT THE
PONDEROSA
SUN CLUB
ROSELAWN, INDIANA

\$74.95

Plus \$1.50
Postage & Handling.
Mich. res. add 4% tax.

AVAILABLE ON
VHS OR BETA

STILL AVAILABLE.

ADULTS ONLY

NUDES A POPPIN'
2 HRS. '79' \$74.95

O.S.S. & S.S. Inc.

**SUPER SOUND &
SIGHT SYSTEMS**

28853 ORCHARD LAKE RD
FARMINGTON HILLS, MICH. 48018
313-553-8076

CLASSIC TV
PROGRAMS AND
OUTTAKES
ON TAPE



SHOKUS VIDEO

P. O. BOX 8434
VAN NUYS, CA 91409

Welcome to the Golden Age of television! Dealers and Distributors: Please inquire about quantity pricing and information.

BETA II \$39.95
VHS \$39.95
ALL ORDERS SHIPPED BY 4TH CLASS MAIL INSURED
BETA & VHS \$1.45 first tape, 50¢ per each tape additional

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO STUART SHOSTAK

ALL TAPES SOLD THROUGH SHOKUS VIDEO ARE IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN
IF YOU WISH ORDER VERIFICATION, PLEASE ENCLOSE A SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE.

305 THE AMOS 'N' ANDY SHOW

Four complete episodes from the popular TV series of the 1950s!

1951: "The Rare Coin." This is the pilot episode to the series, and includes a special kinescoped opening in which the creators of the series introduce the TV cast for the first time. The story deals with Andy's possession of a nickel worth \$250, and the Kingfish's attempts to get it away from him.
1950: "The Kingfish Gets Drafted." There's a mix-up at the draft board, and the Kingfish is summoned to serve his country.
1953: "The Broken Cuck." Andy and the Kingfish try to exchange a defective duck, given to the Kingfish as a gift.
1955: "The Invisible Glass." The Kingfish learns that a stock certificate he sold to Andy for \$10 is now worth \$500!

105 MINUTES

BLACK AND WHITE

303 YOU BET YOUR LIFE

For Groucho add-ons, here are four top episodes from the hit quiz show of the 1950s! Two contain original live solo commercials and two feature guest stars Harry Belafonte and William Peter Blatty.

110 MINUTES

BLACK AND WHITE

102 CARTOON COLLECTION, II: WARNER BROS. CARTOONS

Bugs Bunny in "Fresh Hare," "The Whacky Wallop," "Rabbit Hare," "Case of the Missing Hare," "Haredevil Hare," "Daffy Duck in 'To Duck or Not to Duck,'" "Daffy Duck and the Dinosaur," "The Daffy Compendium," "The Henpecked Duck," "Daffy's Southern Exposure," "Porky Pig in 'Honey to You,'" "Porky's swooping Hatbox," "Porky's Feisty Fables," "Porky's Railroad," and "Porky's Preview."

1 HOUR, 55 MINUTES

B&W/COLOR

501 OUTTAKES, I

Featuring Abbott and Costello, Rowan and Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., Don Knotts, Goldie Hawn, Judy Carne, Ann Johnson, Gary Owens, Henry Gibson, Jo Anne Worley, Gary Moore, James Arness, Rod Taylor, Don Adams, Dick Van Dyke, William Conrad, William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, and many more.

NOTE: Preprint material on portions of this program have varying quality.

105 MINUTES

B&W/COLOR

502 OUTTAKES, II

See Soupy Sales, Richard Thomas, Jon Walmsley, Will Geer, Sonny and Cher, Richard Pryor, Frankie Avalon, Clark Gableman, John Ritter, Suzanne Somers, Joyce DeKint, Ronald Reagan, Mickey Rooney, Jayne Mansfield, Paul Michael Glaser, David Soul, Ernest Borgnine, Tim Conway, Joe Flynn, and many more!

NOTE: Portions of this program contain glitches and tracking problems. However, material has been obtained from the best masters we could find.

100 MINUTES

B&W/COLOR

401 LIVE TELEVISION

Two classic examples of what early TV was all about!

THIS IS YOUR LIFE, LAUREL AND HARDY (DECEMBER 1, 1954). Ralph Edwards' attempt to surprise the famed duo backfires. Laurel refuses to go on. Watch a nervous Edwards add up until Laurel is coaxed to appear.

PLAYHOUSE 90: "Bombers' moon." This 1958 teleplay was written by Rod Serling, and comes to you direct from the history of live TV. A patriotic Air Force colonel (Bob Cummings) is becoming unbearable to cope with. Also stars Warren Beatty, Rip Torn, Hazel Court, and J. Pat O'Malley. Complete with commercials and CBS ID.

115 MINUTES

BLACK AND WHITE

PLEASE SEND THREE 18¢ STAMPS FOR OUR COMPLETE CATALOG

home VIDEO Only

UNTIL NOW YOUR VIDEO CAMERA HAS BEEN
USED WITH BLANK TAPE!

Is that expensive camera collecting dust? Was your first tape a WOW, and the next one a real SNOOZE? Feel inadequate next to the networks with all their slick computer animation? Are your Home-Tapes no better than Home-movies? Are your friends (or worse, your OWN family) hiding from your camera? Are you still paying for that expensive toy that nobody wants to play with anymore?

Create PROGRAMS, not just tapes. Present your family and friends with rousing music, swirling credits that spin into infinity, roll, crawl and even dissolve and fade! You CAN create exciting and slick programming. Your tapes will have a beginning, a middle and an ending.

We at HVO will be bringing out a complete line of How-To tapes. We're not at all similar to our competition.

Our first tape is aimed at the video camera owner. Professional cameramen said that we couldn't take a home camera to the limits we show in TWO SOLIDLY-PACKED HOURS of simple instruction. We prove it right before your eyes, because EVERYTHING was done on 1/2-inch home equipment. Our tape was made entirely by one HOME VIDEO HOBBYIST! Tom O'Brien shot it at home, used household items to create special effects that seem to defy gravity, and when he shows an optical toy to employ, he'll tell you the name and address of the manufacturer!

Here's one tape so tightly packed with ideas, you'll watch it more often than your favorite movie.

Learn polished graphics that appear to be computerized. Put an end to unflattering lighting that intrudes on your family event. Have the knack of taking two generations of people and put them into action in front of the camera and make them perform WILLINGLY.

If your tapes are GREAT, you'll be in demand and enjoy using that camera more than you ever dreamed.

Don't erase that "useless" footage you already have. Turn those tapes into something great. You CAN re-mold tapes you're now ashamed to show.

Simple step-by-step graphics, editing, "subtle" directing, choosing the perfect music for dubbing, lighting - it's all condensed into these TWO HOURS.

Here's the perfect gift for the camera owner. It's also the definitive research for the individual who might be contemplating the purchase of a home video camera.

Our Special INTRODUCTORY Price: \$69.95 (includes UPS delivery) (No C.O.D.'s, California residents, add tax.)



Send to: HVO - HOME VIDEO ONLY
8217 Beverly Blvd., Suite 8
Los Angeles, CA 90048

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

VISA NO.: _____ MASTER CHARGE: _____ EXPIRES: _____

CIRCLE ONE: VHS BETA II SIGNATURE: _____

Questions are welcome from home video enthusiasts. This tape not available to dealers.

SONY® is our specialty...

- ★ SL-3000 WORKHORSE BETA PORTABLE, WITH AC-300 POWER UNIT \$ 879
- ★ HVC-2200 SHARPEST 1-TUBE CAM. (300 LINE) AT CONSUMER \$\$ \$1139
- ★ HVC-2000 SAME AS 2200 BUT WITH F1.8 LENS (F1.4 ON 2200) \$ 999
- ★ CMA-1010A CAMERA ADAPTER, SONY TO RCA, JVC, ETC. PORTABLES \$ 97
- ★ HVS-2000 SUPER VALUE SONY ELECTRONIC TITLER/SEG UNIT \$ 199
- ★ HVM-100 B&W MINI CAMERA FOR USE WITH HVS-2000 OR ?? \$ 273
- ★ KV-4000 ** KV-5200 ** KV-8100 TAKE YOUR PICK -- EACH \$ 499

TO ORDER SEND M.O., CASHIER'S OR PERSONAL/COMPANY CHECK (ALLOW TIME FOR CLEARANCE). SHIPPING AND INSURANCE: ADD \$18.00 FOR EACH VCR OR TV OVER 5" SCREEN; ADD \$10.00 EACH FOR ALL OTHER ITEMS. CALIF. RES. ADD 6% SALES TAX. IN ADDITION TO THE COMPLETE SONY TV/VIDEO LINE WE CARRY JUST ABOUT EVERY ACCESSORY SONY MAKES, INCLUDING SOME THAT ARE AVAILABLE ONLY IN JAPAN. WRITE FOR OUR LATEST SONY PRICE LIST.

QUANTITIES LIMITED & PRICES
SUBJECT TO CHANGE. MAKE ALL
CHECKS PAYABLE TO UDS CO.



505 NORTH SEPULVEDA BLVD.
MANHATTAN BEACH, CA 90266
TELEPHONE 213 379-5497

Satellite TV

Continued from page 46

I hope that this information will help anyone considering an earth satellite installation. It's complicated. Get yourself a reliable and experienced company to work with. There are no bargains. If you want to do it yourself be prepared for disappointments and problems. In low signal areas, don't be deluded by promises of a great picture with a small dish. The two are incompatible.

I see articles about systems for less than \$1,000.00! Don't believe it! For less than \$3,000. Still don't believe it. For \$9,000.00 to \$11,000.00, maybe, if you are in the central part of the U.S. In the southern part of the U.S., probably \$13,000.00 to \$14,000.00 or more for a good system.

My conclusions are based on the RCA Satcom F1 satellite. This one has all the cable system feeds. The other programming available in Westar III and Comstar D2 is quite limited. These satellites can be received with smaller less expensive dishes. My personal opinion is that you will be missing the best that the satellite technology has to offer if you don't go for F1 at this time.

About the Author:

J.M. Edelman practiced neurosurgery from 1951 to 1977. His interest in electronics dates back many years. It has included Medical Electronics in the form of applications in neurophysiology, high fidelity sound, computers, and most recently, video and satellite video.

Dr. Edelman was one of the founder of Edelman Systems, Inc. (ESI), of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. This company provides turnkey computer systems to large and small physician groups. Over 160 systems have been delivered in the years since ESI was started in 1970. Dr. Edelman gave up his medical practice in 1978 to devote full-time to this company.



STATE OF THE ART

Continued from page 44

have witnessed bad "jam ups" from them. Same goes for BASF. I only had one bad BASF, but other people have had them stick in the machine, almost wiping out their heads. Unfortunately, these are often the brands that are on sale and whey they are (L-500's for \$8.75), it's very tempting even if the quality is not up to snuff.

Home video buffs with cameras and portable VCR's, let me remind you of two important facts about making home video so it doesn't look like home movies. some of what I've seen is really sad. Most of you have no background at all in being a camera operator, nor have very many of you taken classes in television production. Yet, here you are with all this very sophisticated equipment—color cameras, lights, video recorders, etc.—and no idea of what to do with it all. ALWAYS frame a picture properly. The person you are taping should be in the *upper* third of the picture, *not* in the middle. A person's head should be almost touching the top of the screen. You can sometimes even get away with cropping the very top of the head slightly off the upper edge of the picture. Also, edit a lot. If you've got a trigger on the camera which lets you start and stop it, *do it*. Staying on one shot and holding it forever is very boring. After 10 seconds just about anything is dull, so move on to something more exciting. Cut to more action. Keep more movement in your pictures. This is video, not slides. The quality of the equipment is rather good these days. Now all you have to do is make the production look like it was shot by the network. At least try! —ARV



A Video Tape Offer You Can't Refuse!!

Here is the most astounding offer ever made to the general public. CVO is now offering first run, uncut films at incredibly low, low prices. Prices you simply can't match **ANYWHERE!**

We are one of the leading wholesalers of video cassettes in the entire Northeast region. We buy direct from the distributors...direct from the moviemakers...and we buy **VOLUME!** Thousands upon thousands of video tapes at rock bottom prices. And, we pass these savings along to you. You pay just **\$1.00 OVER OUR COST!** That's right...just \$1.00 over our already low, low cost.

Here's how it works:

JOIN OUR VIDEO CASSETTE CLUB. The annual fee is just \$25.00. This automatically entitles you to purchase any movie in our vast collection (see partial list below) for just \$1.00 over our cost. You can purchase a dozen tapes a year, six tapes, one tape or **NONE! THERE IS NEVER AN OBLIGATION ON YOUR PART!**

CVO has one of the most extensive selections of movie tapes to be found anywhere...by some of the greatest moviemakers in the world...**WARNER BROS., PARAMOUNT, MGM, UNIVERSAL, COLUMBIA, WALT DISNEY, MAGNETIC VIDEO AND OTHERS.** Why wait? Don't get shut out! This colossal offer is good on any pre-recorded movie from our huge collection.

Just fill out the coupon below, and mail to:

CONSUMER VIDEO OUTLET, P.O. BOX 143, LAWRENCE N.Y. 11559



In N.Y. Area
(516) 569-5667

CALL TOLL FREE 1-800-645-2264

Paramount / Your Cost

Airplane.....	\$58.97
American Gigolo.....	\$58.97
Coast to Coast.....	\$49.87
Friday the 13th.....	\$58.97
Godfather I.....	\$62.47
Godfather II.....	\$62.47
Hunter.....	\$54.07
Phrophecy.....	\$47.07
Rough Cut.....	\$54.07
Saturday Night Fever.....	\$49.87
Star Trek.....	\$62.47
Starting Over.....	\$58.97
Up in Smoke.....	\$58.97
Urban Cowboy.....	\$58.97
Warriors.....	\$49.87
Grease.....	\$49.87
Ordinary People.....	\$59.97
Popeye.....	\$59.97
Elephant Man.....	\$59.97
Serial.....	\$49.87
My Bloody Valentine.....	\$49.87
Goodbye Columbus.....	\$47.07
Rosemary's Baby.....	\$47.07
Hearts & Minds.....	\$47.07

Magnetic Video

Allen.....	\$44.14
Brubaker.....	\$50.97
Eagle Has Landed.....	\$44.14
Fog.....	\$44.14
Kotch.....	\$44.14
Muppet Movie.....	\$44.14
Myra Breckenridge.....	\$44.14
Norma Rae.....	\$44.14
Stuntman.....	\$50.97
World's Greatest Lover.....	\$44.14
9 to 5.....	\$50.97
Madam Sin.....	\$44.14
Rose.....	\$57.97

Your Cost

My Bodyguard.....	\$51.17
Baltimore Bullet.....	\$44.14
Night Stalker.....	\$44.14
Change of Seasons.....	\$44.14
Inside Moves.....	\$44.14

Media

Halloween.....	\$40.47
----------------	---------

Walt Disney

Black Hole.....	\$43.97
Mary Poppins.....	\$54.47
Pete's Dragon.....	\$43.97

Warner Bros.

Caddy Shack.....	\$51.00
Enter the Dragon.....	\$47.00
Life of Brian.....	\$43.25
Alice Doesn't Live Here any More.....	\$43.25

Your Cost

Oh God Book 2.....	\$51.00
Star is Born.....	\$58.25
Superman.....	\$50.75
Tom Horn.....	\$51.00
"10".....	\$50.75
Prisoner on 2nd Ave.....	\$43.25
Billy Jack.....	\$48.00

Columbia

Man Who Fell To Earth.....	\$40.97
Close Encounters.....	\$49.47
Bridge Over River Kwai.....	\$59.97
California Suite.....	\$40.97

Golden Video

Chinese Connection.....	\$45.00
Fists of Fury.....	\$45.00

Universal MCA

Animal House.....	\$47.50
Blues Brothers.....	\$65.00
Cheeh & Chongs.....	\$47.50
Next Movie.....	\$47.50
Coal Miners Daughter.....	\$47.50
Deerhunter.....	\$65.00
Flash Gordon 1980.....	\$47.50
Island.....	\$47.50
Jerk.....	\$47.50
Prom Night.....	\$47.50
Slap Shot.....	\$47.50
Smokey & The Bandit.....	\$47.50
Smokey & The Bandit 2.....	\$47.50
1941.....	\$47.50
Somewhere in Time.....	\$47.50
Xanadu.....	\$47.50

MGM

Carny.....	\$45.20
Dirty Dozen.....	\$52.40
Fame.....	\$52.40
Wizard of Oz.....	\$45.20
Being There.....	\$52.40
2001 Space Odyssey.....	\$52.40
Crusin.....	\$45.20
THE CHAMP.....	\$45.20
The Formula.....	\$45.20
Cabaret.....	\$45.20



CONSUMER VIDEO OUTLET

P.O. Box 143 Lawrence, N.Y. 11559

Name _____ Age _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Bus. Phone _____

☐ VHS ☐ Beta ☐ FAMILY ☐ ADULT ☐ BOTH
☐ \$3.00 ☐ \$3.00 ☐ \$5.00

☐ Please send me a catalog for
☐ Enclosed is my \$25.00 Annual Membership Fee. I have also enclosed check (or money order) for the following videocassettes (please indicate prices and titles): _____

Total Purchase: \$ _____ for cassettes plus \$3.00 for shipping and handling each, or charge my order to ☐ Master Charge ☐ VISA
 Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____

I certify that I am at least 21 years old and will not permit CVO cassettes to be copied or to be shown for other than private home use. I understand that unauthorized use may result in legal prosecution. N.Y. State residents add applicable sales tax. This offer is void where prohibited by law. Prices and availabilities of video cassettes are subject to change without notice.

VP7811

For a Fistful of Dollars

Back Issues \$3.00 Each



- #14: First color cover. Report on new products at Summer Consumer Electronics Show. L-500/Sony SL-8200 counter/index time chart. Lots of info re: VHS format including Q's & A's. Report on the Sony SL-8600. TVN goes to two conventions. The Ultimate Video Room. much more!!
- #15: How to clean the heads on a Betamax. QUBE update. How to dub from/to a VHS recorder. First installment of Ted Reinhart's reviews. "Skew Error" explained. We dream of the Betamax future. VHS and Beta formats bravely compared. letters. Q's & A's. etc.
- #16: First issue of THE VIDEOPHILE. featuring our annual roundup of over 80 sources for prerecorded videocassettes. An exclusive interview with video pioneer "Madman" Muntz. Reports on our visits to two video shows. news. letters. much more in 88 pages.
- #17: VHS and Beta Counter/Index time charts. "Time Base Correctors" and dropouts explained. How to defeat the muting circuit in the Betamax SL-8600. lots of tips. advice. letters. questions and answers. book reviews and tape reviews too. 80 pages.
- #18: Our 1st Annual Video Disc Issue. featuring reviews of the Magnavox disc players. The MCA DiscoVision discs. and an interview with John Findlater. president of MCA's DiscoVision division. Also news of the "Betamax" copyright trial. backyard earth stations. and new products galore.
- #22: Featuring our reviews of the new longer-playing VHS and Beta recorders. News about the happy conclusion of the "Betamax" copyright lawsuit. and an unbiased ("hee-hee") evaluation of the other available video publications. Also reviews of home video accessories. and much more.
- #23: Our 3rd annual roundup of over 150 sources for prerecorded videocassettes. Where the video disc went wrong. Exclusive product reports on the 26" Sony console and video editing systems. lots of questions and answers. and much more.
- #24: Features our exclusive 11-page report on the new products at the Winter Consumer Electronics Show. How to properly handle and store video tape. book reviews. tape reviews. and our regular columns round out an issue that may very well be our least substantial of the year.
- #25: We tell you which brands of blank tape are best and which to avoid. Exclusive reviews of the new VHS and Beta VCR's from Sony. RCA. and Toshiba and the Betamax AG-200 Changer. Install your own "home cable" distribution system.
- #27: Exclusive interview with Ernestine Wade (Sapphire) and Alvin Chilress (Amos) of "The Amos 'n' Andy Show." "Glossary of terms For Beginners Only. and how to set up your own film chain. Questions. answers. book reviews. tape reviews (but no product reviews this time) round out our 4th Anniversary Issue.
- #28: Exclusive test reports of the 1981 VCR's from Sony and RCA. our editor tells you whether VHS or Beta is best for your particular needs. Part II of our report on the Summer 1980 CES Show. plus more than six full pages of questions and answers.
- #29: This is our special "We wheedled a free trip to Japan out of the JVC Corporation" issue. Follow Marc Wielage as he takes you along to all the places that you wish you could go. Tips on porta-packing. and maintaining a collector-to-collector relationship. the first installment of our Videosponding column. and our usual news. and reviews round it out.
- #30: Ten product reports. including the RCA and Pioneer Disc Players. the 1/4" format Technicolor VCR. the SLO-383 "editing" Betamax and three image enhancers headline this issue. Also: updates of our blank tape survey and the recommended components list. lots of book reviews. the Winter CES. and much more.

For a Few Dollars More

Limited Supply—\$4.00

- #13: How to defeat the muting circuit in the Betamax SL-8200 (or Zenith). Bob Burns' first column for "VHS" folks. Rambling Marc battles Universal attorneys, and reports on pay cable systems. lotsa questions and answers. great America 2Night cover.
- #19: Featuring our interview with Harlan Ellison, "The Man Who Hates Television." Reviews of the Betamax Changer & Winegard indoor antennas, more on the copyright lawsuit, Winter Consumer Electronics Show, and an in-depth look at international TV standards. Fat 104 page issue!
- #26: First installment of our subjective "recommended components", 7 product reviews, including the KLOSS Novabeam, "Distrivid," Sony and Panasonic industrial 1/2" VCR's, and the Sony CVM-1750 Monitor/Receiver. News from the Summer CES, the Cable News Network 24-hour schedule, our usual tape reviews, and more.

Collectibles—\$6.00

- #20: Our "What's Legal?" issue, including an interview with the Chief of the film industry's antipiracy program. Part 1 of our extensive Summer Consumer Electronics Show report, 5 portable recorders reviewed and compared, and lots more in 88 pages.
- #21: Another big one! Third Anniversary issue, contains our 1980 directory to over 100 models of 1/2" VTR's, product reports on several portable color cameras, Part 2 of the Summer Consumer Electronics Show report, lots of Q's & A's, and (of course) much, much more.

Remarkably few copies of issue #11 and #12 available to completists for \$10.00 each.

The Videophile's Annual 1979

The Videophile's Annual 1979 is still available. Within its portfolio we have for you facsimile reprints of The Videophile's Newsletter #7 and #8, an index to the first 19 issues, a complete reprint of the 100-page decision in the famous Universal/Disney/Sony "Betamax" copyright lawsuit and an exclusive interview with our founder, publisher and editor, which he hopes will put all that talk to rest once and for all. This is a limited edition of only 1,000 copies and will not be reprinted. At \$10.00, it's no bargain, but collector's items never are.



Yes, I want the real thing!

Please send the next six issues of The Videophile to:

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____

I know a good thing even before I see it. Send me _____ (up to 14) back issues at \$3 each.

Charge to my Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Account # _____ Bank No. _____ Exp. Date: _____

I enclose:

- \$20 ☐ First Class Subscription
- \$14 ☐ Regular Subscription
- \$24 ☐ Foreign (Air Printed Matter)

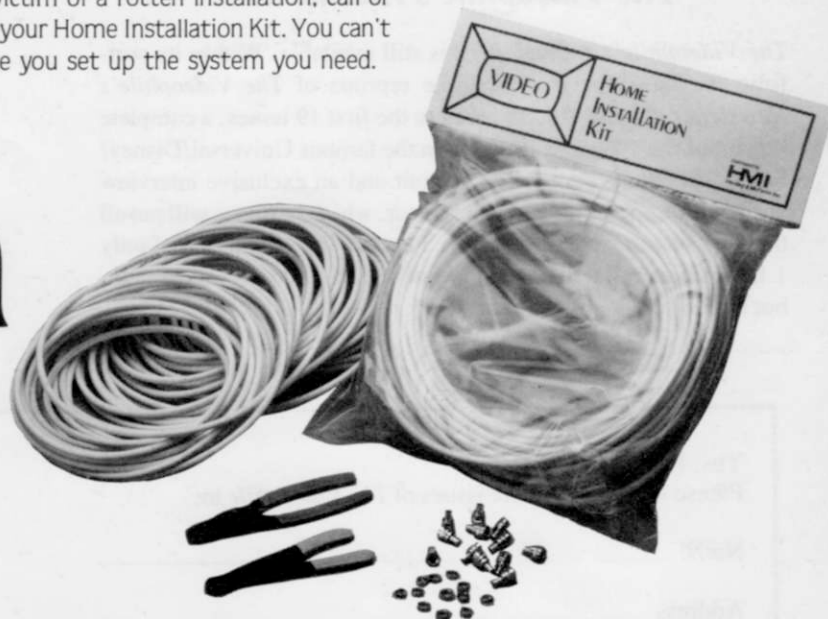
the
VIDEOPHILE

2003 Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee, FL 32301

A Custom Installation

Are you a victim of your video installation? A good installation makes the best use of your separate components and joins them, forming an easily operated multi-function system. It is the installation itself which differentiates between owning a VCR and enjoying a video system. Up until now, the real problem with a personalized installation was cost. That was up until now. Finally you have an alternative to expensive professional installations, the Home Installation Kit from HMI. The Home Installation Kit gives you 100 ft. of coaxial cable, cable strippers, F-59 connectors, crimpers, wire ties and fully illustrated instruction, for only \$29.95. You won't find these items separately for less. Don't be a victim of a rotten installation, call or write us to order your Home Installation Kit. You can't go wrong because you set up the system you need.

you can
Afford.



KAPPA VIDEO

Your Connection to the Future

Dealer inquiries welcome.

9626 #J Lurline Avenue; Chatsworth, Calif. 91311;
213-709-6590.