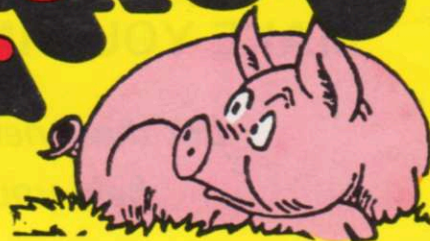


# The Videophile's Newsletter

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Issue 15

SEPT/OCT

1978



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# The Videophile's Newsletter



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## THE VOICE OF VIDEO FANDOM

Editorial and Executive offices, warehouse, and hot tub Jacuzzi bath are located at 2014 S. Magnolia Drive, Tallahassee, Florida 32301. Unsolicited contributions will be published only at the whim of the editor and cannot be returned unless accompanied by return envelope and postage. Hey, even solicited contributions sometimes get the axe. Letters of comment are assumed to be intended for publication unless a contrary intention is clearly stated. All uncredited items herein, having that warm casual tone, were penned by the editor. The Videophile's Newsletter springs from the private sea, and is produced by the Small Potatoes Publishing Company every two months. A six issue subscription is \$10 within the United States, its possessions, Canada and Mexico (US funds). Entire contents (if no one's looking) are Copyright 1978 © 1978, by James R. Lowe. World and subterranean rights are reserved. This is Vol. 1, No. 15, the Sept/Oct issue. Effective October 1, we anticipate moving the editorial offices and warehouse to 2003 Apalachee Parkway, but before signing the lease we are having to wrestle with the landlord over who is going to pay for replacing the carpet (picked out by an apparently demented former tenant). It's really an outrage!



# TV Wiggles

Welcome to the special Anniversary Issue of The Videophile's Newsletter. Imagine, two years of video bewilderment, subpoenas, and postal support! You hold in your hands the fattest ever issue of The Videophile's Newsletter. A package of this size represents the limit of achievement that is possible for a spare time publisher and volunteer staff. Next issue, we will begin our reach for the brass ring under a new banner. (As to that, be sure to read my "bald-faced plea" for funds elsewhere herein.) Not only is it our anniversary, but some say it's the 50th anniversary of the invention of television, as well. Also, TV GUIDE is celebrating its 25th birthday this year. We had hoped to do a feature on the latter, but TV Guide declined to cooperate (see letters pages)...C'est la vie. Home video is starting to be noticed...recent articles in both STEREO REVIEW and NEWSWEEK were of interest. You may want to check out the article on how to turn your TV into a video monitor in the August issue of RADIO ELECTRONICS. Steve Comet will be telling us all about TV monitors the next time we meet.

## Tape Reviews

This issue we feature the debut of yet another regular feature, Ted Reinhart's Tape Reviews. Ted is well known among western film buffs, in addition to his notoriety as the "Singing Cowboy." Henceforth, you may expect reviews of legally available prerecorded tapes to be a primary ingredient of TVN. Your reputedly impartial Editor will be chipping in on this effort from time to time as well. Dealers who wish to send samplings of your catalog to me are welcome to do so. (Hey, I'll return 'em. Also, I'm not easily embarrassed.)

Some of you may have wondered what "TV Wiggles" is supposed to mean. Others will remember that he was a villain in the Dick Tracy comic strip back in the early 50's, so dubbed because his face somewhat resembled the lines on a television set. At least, we thought so at the time. Well, videophile Max Allan Collins, who now writes the Tracy strip, was kind enough to send us a picture of the gentleman, drawn by comic artist supreme, Mr. Terry Beatty. Many thanks, guys, I'd sort of forgotten what ole "TV" looked like myself.



You'll probably want to pick up the Fall issue of VIDEO magazine at your newsstand. In fact, I recommend that you do--it's a rather handsome package. However, my initial concern that it might be serious competition for us has been dispelled. Read the letters, replies thereto, and the restrictions on classified advertising and you will see what I mean. Its reluctance to print the names and addresses of dealers in prerecorded tape, coupled with an outright refusal to accept

advertisements which list discount prices for tapes and equipment (My GOODNESS, even slickies like STEREO REVIEW and MODERN PHOTOGRAPHY do that!) indicates to me that VIDEO magazine is more interested in currying the favor of name brand manufacturers than in serving the serious home video hobbyist. This is not an uncommon phenomenon. Indeed, it is often the distinction between publications directed at the newsstand browser and those which are circulated among hard core enthusiasts, whatever the subject.

In this same view, VIDEOGRAPHY magazine has finally acknowledged our existence, saying that we are "fast becoming a cross between a bootlegger's bible and home video guidebook." The mention admits that TVN is "chock full of info," but does not disclose our price or address. Indeed, of the six publications mentioned in the same write-up, ours is the only one for which the city of publication is omitted. ¶The July issue of EDUCATIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL TELEVISION contains a reprint of ramblin' Marc Wielage's remarks at the Copyright Symposium of the Los Angeles VideoShow, as well as those of the other participants. So far as I know, the sponsor of that show (C.S. Tepfer Publishing) still has not located a suitable guest-of-honor for the upcoming Home VideoShow, but I can report that TVN will have half a booth at the show. Look for Messrs. Mazzini and Wielage, Los Angeles Convention Center, September 30 and October 1.

My whirlwind trip across the great American West was both exhausting and satisfying. My meetings with the west coast staff were very fruitful. After Carlsbad Caverns, Grand Canyon, the San Diego Zoo, and Hollywood Boulevard, I feel as though I must have walked a good portion of the 5000-mile round trip. I recommend each of these attractions to you, though I am compelled to add that a country boy may be a little ill at ease

among the locals on the Boulevard. Still, as you can plainly see, my fame had apparently preceded me to Tinseltown.

We took in all the sights that we could, including the Chinese Theatre and the Billboards on Sunset Strip. There wasn't time to squeeze in the beach at Malibu or get squeezed at a massage parlor, but there will always be a next time, the San Andreas fault willing and the old boy able.



A highlight of the trip occurred rather unexpectedly during the Universal Studios' Tour. Those of you who have been on the tour are aware that one of the presentations is a make-up demonstration, using subjects selected from the audience. Imagine my surprise when a menacing gentleman with vampire teeth roamed through the audience of several hundred, glommed onto yours truly and my TVN staffer companion, made his way down the aisle to our seats, leaned down with his head between ours and whispered, "How would you like to



be the Frankenstein Monster and the New Bride of Frankenstein?" Not the same as being asked, "How would you like to be Queen for a Day?" I grant you, but an intriguing offer just the same. Anyhow, to make a long story short, the make-up men worked us over to the delight of the assemblage, while none among them was aware of the irony and symbolism of the thing: "Universal Studios Turns Publisher of Videophile's Newsletter into Frankenstein Monster." Truth is, indeed, stranger than fiction.



The meeting with Joe Mazzini was my first face-to-face with the intrepid tapester and soon-to-be Master of the Freeway System. Joe has now joined the ranks of those TVN editors who have been subpoenaed to testify in the Universal/Disney/Sony lawsuit. More on that later. In San Diego, I enjoyed a close encounter of the Big Nate kind as, emerging from the car with my TVN tee-shirt on, a looming presence with arms overhead rushed forward hailing, "He lives!" Paul Hill and Larry Charet were also there, but regrettably we passed as ships in the night. Chats in San Diego and Los Angeles with John Ziniewicz, Mike Royer, Larry Prager, Jim Moewe, Dick Pryor (whom I thank for his generosity), Bill Cotter, Bob Madigan and the gang at KNX-FM were all thoroughly enjoyed, as was visiting with spendthrift Marc once again, and dining with the gracious

and extremely knowledgeable Ben Saia, who flew down from Sacramento especially to meet with the staff. And to you, Bob (and the Mrs.), with whom the early morning visit was much too brief...the spirit was willing, but the flesh...well, doggone it, the flesh was willing too, but I had promises to keep, and miles to go before I'd sleep.

**LAST MINUTE NOTES:** If the Betamax L-750 (3-hour) cassette is still eluding you, trot up to Sears. You can order one for \$20.75 from their Fall/Winter catalog. Some dealers also have a few, but they are in short supply. Both the Sears and Sony brands that I have are "Made in Japan." ¶ There were two errors in issue #14 that merit correction. The indication in "Dealers' Doings" that Video Request, of N. Las Vegas, and Video Tape Directory Service International, of Las Vegas are one and the same, is incorrect. They are both advertisers catering to the home video hobbyist, and individually worthy of your attention. Also, in our reviews (p.25) the reference to "GADGET" eleven lines from the bottom of the middle column should be "VIDEO". ¶ As per usual, thanks are due to many. Special mention goes to Ed Fleming for helping out on such short notice, and to Don Jenkins for the dandy VHS time chart. Also a tip of the hat to Bob Scott, Christopher Pearson, Bruce Pates, Tom Garcia, Stanley Sieger, Cindy Brunz, Jay Hunt (whose article on cable converters got bumped to next issue), and once again to Sandy Winoker, who seems to keep us in mind and her scissors at hand at all times. **NEXT ISSUE:** An exclusive in-depth interview with video pioneer Earl "Madman" Muntz, plus our annual prerecorded tape source roundup, and the debut of our new format!!

Don't forget, if your mailing label says "(15)" on it, your subscription just expired.

MY BEST TO ALL *Jim*

## NOTICE!

Effective July 15, 1978, the subscription rate to TVN increased from \$8 to \$10 for 6 issues, as announced last time and in our new ads and subscription flyers. Those who have subscribed since that date, at the old rate, have been credited with a 5 issue subscription..

## CHARLIE CHANNELS



IDEA: JIM CAWE



Alan Hutchinson '78



# VIDEOCASSETTES

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**[ ] SHINE ON HARVEST MOON**

Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Mary Hart. 1938..54 mins

**[ ] THE ARIZONA KID**

Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes. ....1939..... 54 mins

**[ ] CARSON CITY KID**

Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Bob Steele 1940 54 mins.

**[ ] IN OLD CHEYENNE**

Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Joan Woodbury ... 1940.

**[ ] BADMAN OF DEADWOOD**

Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Carol Adams.1940.54 min

**[ ] SUNSET ON THE DESERT**

Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Bob Nolan and the Sons of the Pioneers ..... 1942..... 54minutes.

**[ ] SOUTH OF SANTA FE**

Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Bob Nolan and the Sons of the Pioneers ..... 1942..... 54 minutes.

**[ ] ROBIN HOOD OF THE PECOS**

Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes. .... 1940 ..... 54 mins.

**[ ] YOUNG BILL HICKOCK**

Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Jaqueline Wells.. 54 mins.

**[ ] JESSE JAMES AT BAY**

Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Gale Storm..... 54 mins.

**[ ] BILLY THE KID RETURNS**

Roy Rogers, Smiley Burnette ..... 54 mins.

**[ ] SUNSET SERENADE**

Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes. .... 58 minutes.

**[ ] COME ON RANGERS**

Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Mary Hart. .... 54 mins.

**[ ] IN OLD CALIENTE**

With Roy, Gabby Hayes, Mary Hart . 1939; 54 mins..

**[ ] BORDER FEUD**

With Lash La Rue, Fuzzy St. John. 1947, 55 mins.

**[ ] GHOST TOWN RENEGADES**

With Las La Rue, "Fuzzy St. John" .. 1947, 55 mins.

**[ ] THE LAWLESS FRONTIER**

With John Wayne, Gabby Hayes, Yakima Canutt ..

**[ ] THE LAWLESS FRONTIER**

With John Wayne, Gabby Hayes, Ann Rutherford ... 1936; 54 minutes

**[ ] THE NEW FRONTIER**

With John Wayne, Muriel Evans. .... 1936; 54mins..

**[ ] KING OF THE PECOS**

With John Wayne, Muriel Evans. .... 1936;54mins

**[ ] WINDS OF THE WASTELAND**

John Wayne, Yakima Canutt..... 1936; 54 mins.

**[ ] THUNDER IN THE DESERT**

Bob Steele, Louise Stanley ..... 1937; 60 mins.

**[ ] DURANGO VALLEY RAIDERS**

Bob Steele, Louise Stanley ..... 1937; 60 mins.

**[ ] SILVER CITY KID**

Allan Lane, Peggy Syewart, Harry Woods ... 55 mins

**[ ] TOPEKA TERROR**

Allan Lane, Linda Stirling, Roy Barcroft. .... 54mins.

**[ ] THE RANGE BUSTERS**

Ray "Crash" Corrigan, John King, Max "Alibi" Terhune. .... 1940; 54 minutes.

**[ ] BORDERTOWN TRAIL**

Smiley Burnette, Sunset Carson ..... 54 mins, 1944

**[ ] BEYOND THE LAST FRONTIER**

Eddie Dew, Smiley Burnette, Robert Mitchum.

**[ ] BENEATH WESTERN SKIES**

Smiley Burnette, Bob Livingston. .... 57 mins. 1944.

**[ ] TUMBLEWEED TRAIL**

Eddie Dean, Shirley Patterson. .... 55 mins; 1947.

**[ ] STARS OVER TEXAS**

Eddie Dean, Shirley Patterson. .... 56 mins; 1947.

**[ ] SHADOW VALLEY**

Eddie Dean, Jennifer Holt. .... 59 mins; 1948..

**[ ] GENTLEMEN WITH GUNS**

Buster Crabbe, "Fuzzy" St. John .... 55 mins; 1945

**[ ] OVERLAND RIDERS**

Buster Crabbe, "Fuzzy" St. John. .... 55 mins. 1945

**[ ] SUNSET RANGE**

Hoot Gibson, Mary Doran. .... 1935; 55 minutes.

**[ ] DEAD OR ALIVE**

Tex Ritter, Dave O'Brien. .... 1943; 57 mins.

**[ ] ENEMY OF THE LAW**

Tex Ritter, Dave O'Brien, Charles King ... 59 mins.

**[ ] TROUBLE IN TEXAS**

Tex Ritter, Rita Hayworth ..... 1937 60 mins..

**[ ] BAR Z BADMEN**

Johnny Mack Brown, Dick Curtis .... 1937 56 mins.

**[ ] GUNS IN THE DARK**

Johnny Mack Brown, CLaire Rochelle .... 59 mins.

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# Video News



## standard

Perhaps the biggest news this time is not really "news" at all, but rather a sobering realization. The VCR standards battle is far from over! Leading industry publication TELEVISION DIGEST, in its June 26th issue, says, "...we wouldn't be surprised to see demonstrations of 4 or 5 new (and mutually incompatible) systems within next 2 years." In addition to the development of the "LVR" 8mm system mentioned in these pages before, there is at least one other 8mm (or 1/4") system being tested. There is also reported to be ongoing work on the possibility that development of new tapes, heads, and radically different recording technologies will result in use of standard audio cassette for video recording. TELEVISION DIGEST'S opinion is that odds are against either Beta or VHS becoming the long-term standard. Speculation is that if one appears to be dominating the other, the second place format could decide to leap into new technology (based on metal-alloy tape, digital recording, or whatever) years ahead of when it had otherwise figured to, in an attempt to recapture the market. ¶These facts are presented here neither to excite nor to discourage, but simply to remind that while we are frittering away our time so pleasantly, the electronics firms' research departments are working up a sweat at the prodding of their accounting departments. Manufacturing VCRs is not a service. It is a business, and business decisions will dictate the future course of the industry. Long term goal of many is hand-held video camera with ultra-miniaturized VCR built into the handle. The pain of obsolescence aside, who can disagree with that? ¶On a related front, Texas Instruments has announced that it is beginning mass production of a single-chip bubble memory with 12K-byte capacity. This "chip" and similar ones to come can replace the now common magnetic discs used in your computer, and could easily give us hand-held computers with full computer capability. Advanced versions could be used to make digital TV recorders with no moving parts. (!)

## cameras

The availability of color cameras for the consumer market draws near. Recent announcements include the following: JVC has its "G" series cameras available in two models: The model G-31 (\$850 list) has a fixed 25mm "C" mount lens (F/1.8) and optical viewfinder with three LED indicators; step-up model G-71 (\$1250 list) has auto iris 6:1 zoom lens (F/2.0) and electronic viewfinder. Both operate from either batteries or AC power. ¶Zenith is introducing a Hitachi-built color camera at \$995, step-up model with zoom, etc., at \$1395. ¶Apparent lowest price at the moment is basic Quasar brand unit at \$800, version with zoom lens and electronic viewfinder is \$1200. The Quasar cameras are set for October delivery to dealers and are said to be virtually identical to expected RCA models. ¶Industry talk has it that RCA's CCD color camera may be available by next summer at less than \$500.

## BIG SCREEN

Numerous new large screen projection TV models continue to be announced. Kloss Video, whose president, Henry Kloss, founded Advent, has developed a 6 ft. projection system said to be less expensive (\$2000 or so) and brighter than similar units costing \$3000 or more. Limited production has begun. ¶New fl plastic lens shown at Summer Consumer Electronics Show is said to provide marked increase in brightness. Speculation points to three-tube systems utilizing this lens that could be manufactured (not retailed) for \$750. ¶A four-tube projection set with a 67" screen is planned for limited marketing (at \$1200) in the Fall by Projecta-pix. Claims to be 250 percent brighter than present single-tube systems and has a reversal switch for rear projection. ¶Advent has privately shown a one-piece, three-lens unit, but no production plans have been announced. Advent spokesman has forecast industry sales of projection sets at 30-40 thousand this year, 60-70 thousand next. ¶"Large screen" does not necessarily mean "projection TV." General Telephone and Electronics has plans to manufacture a large (35-50") flat (less than 3" thick) TV screen that will utilize gas-discharge technology and so-called Lucitron panels. Consumer model color screens are probably at least 5 years away, though black and white screens for industrial purposes may be ready as soon as 1981.

## 3-D

Economist magazine, from England, reports that Phillips is working on a flat-screen TV that will project a 3-D picture, hopes to market same by 1981. A mini-computer is said to control the picture and no special glasses are needed to view it.

## DISC

Apparently all systems are still "go" for the marketing of the MCA/Phillips video disc on a regional basis by Christmas. Prices are expected to be in the neighborhood of \$600 for the player and \$15 for the disc. Earlier reports that indicated that the MCA/Phillips player would be available in more than one type seem now to have been in error. All players will have the ability to offer freeze frame, but the individual discs may not all be capable of this feature. ¶Last issue we briefly described the 4 best known incompatible systems under development "not counting the possible JVC system". Word now has it that the JVC system has been demonstrated in both Europe and Japan. The system combines some of the features of both the optical and mechanical type discs. The JVC disc is said to provide 2-hour capability, still frame, fast and reverse motion, and indexing capability, but also requires a "caddy" to protect it from fingerprints and the like. Disc can be pressed on regular audio record equipment but requires optical mastering and electrochemical etching of the master. ¶What it all means is that the long-awaited video disc may be facing a standards mess even worse than the Beta-VHS-



etc. situation. A survey of manufacturers, suppliers and users conducted by Bob Paulson of AVP Communication concludes that "What the prospective manufacturers propose to supply as functional hardware capability is not what the responding potential users are looking for as operational systems capability." In his opinion, setting standards will be a "monumental task." Don't count on the competing interests to agree on a standard anytime soon. In my view MCA/Phillips can hold its own against all comers, if for no other reason than that it controls (through Universal Studios) a vast library of marketable feature films. Indeed, as we go to press I have received word that MCA Disco-Vision has also arranged to distribute feature films from Disney and Warner Brothers Studios, as well as titles from a package of over 700 pre-1948 Paramount films which includes Marx Brothers classics. LATE SQUEEZE IN: (Damn these press deadlines!) There is an indication that Bosch may be marketing a videodisc by 1980. The system is similar to the MCA/Phillips laser version, except that it can record as well as play back!!! Details later.

Look for a good close-out price on the original Quasar 2/4 hour VHS recorder. It is already being replaced by a new model at the same \$1095 list.

## Piracy

FBI agents confiscated some 600 "pirated" videocassettes in July 26 raid of dealer (Theater-Vision) in Trenton, NJ. Said to be one of the biggest raids so far in the East, the raid rounded up such titles as STAR WARS, JAWS II, and ANNIE HALL, as well as duplicating equipment. ¶In Richardson, TX recently, local police raided Home Video Tapes, Inc., and Darr TV. A number of hard-core pornographic tapes were confiscated along with an "extensive customer list." ¶TVN continues to get press releases and other mail-outs from Motion Picture Association of America, from which we learned that on July 17 the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the decision of a federal district court in the famous copyright infringement case of American International (and six other movie studios) vs. Evan H. Foreman, and held that at least under the facts of this case, the burden was on Mr. Foreman to produce evidence that copies of films in his possession had been the subject of "first sales" by the plaintiff studios. The fact that the studios may have made it a practice to sell certain other films did not relieve the defendant of the burden of showing either that he possessed the particular copies in question as a result of authorization from the studios or that he had acquired title to them through a first sale. I'm simplifying it, but the gist is that, according to this most recent federal court decision, the burden is now on the collector/possessor of a film (not the studio/copyright holder) to show that the particular copy of the film he possesses entered the collector's market through legitimate channels, not just that some copy of that film may have. The case is now subject to further proceedings and possible appeal to the Supreme Court, but it has already been cited as precedent by another federal court (in New York) in an August 7 decision requiring that copies of films duplicated by Buffalo Cine Lab be destroyed, and holding that the plaintiffs (i.e. studios) were entitled to damages.

Vistar Programming Services has announced that it will begin (Oct. 1) offering a free, 10 hour per day, satellite programming service to cable TV systems. The service, "VISTAR," will include live sports (e.g., Canadian professional football, American League Soccer and Roller Game World Series), cartoons, documentaries, drama, family specials, syndicated reruns(!), and movies. Financial support will come from national spot advertising and there will be time slots for the local cable company to drop in local commercials or announcements. It is not yet known whether the commercials will interrupt programming or come between programs (as do HBO promo's). The service is free to cable TV outlets as long as they guarantee to run the entire schedule everyday. So, ...if your local cable company has the ability to receive feeds from the satellite, get on the phone and tell them to look into this service. If they don't know anything about it, tell them to contact: Vistar, 54 Princeton-Heights-town Rd., Princeton Junction, NJ 08550, (609) 799-4600.

Viewers in Puerto Rico often receive dual language broadcasts with Spanish sound track on TV and English on FM. Apparently there is a 15 hour per week limit on such, a rule the FCC recently refused to waive, saying that dual language telecast of "Airport" was not in the public interest.

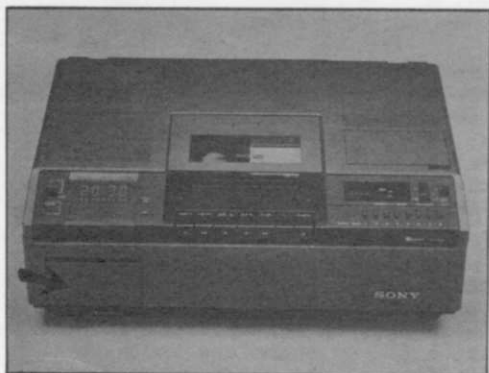
Updating last issue's announcement that Allied Artists is releasing its entire catalog on video cassette ... it is now reported that the initial package will contain some 100 titles, including the titles mentioned last time. Duplication will be handled by Bell & Howell Video Division. Both VHS and Beta formats will be available. Word is that all new features will be released on cassettes a month or two after theatrical release and that prices will be a little steeper than the Fox films--\$60-\$80 depending on the film. In related development Avco Embassy has reached an agreement with Magnetic Video for duplication and distribution of its entire catalog, which includes "Carnal Knowledge" and "The Graduate." Catalog is said to include "a few hundred films," and the initial package released will contain 25. A second package of 25-50 Fox films is expected soon and will include "The Great White Hope," "Little Murders," and "All About Eve." Also, several dealers are now offering a package from RKO which includes such classics as "King Kong" and "Citizen Kane."

Walt Disney Productions has entered into an agreement with Home Box Office, Showtime, and Hollywood Home Theatre for the release to the pay cable systems of 7 feature films. Titles will include such items as "Return to Witch Mountain." No animated classics are in the initial package, but HBO will have an exclusive Disney Christmas Special, an animated half-hour short entitled "The Small One," about a boy and his donkey.

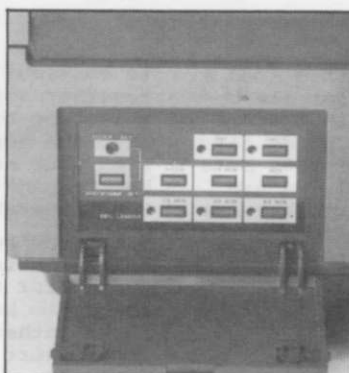
As usual, Japan has it first. Home Video mixing device, for use with camera, which can be used as telecine, titling, slide, or still picture source, is offered in Japan at 50,000 yen (about \$270) by Sansei Koki Co. While in Europe, Grundig Electronics is offering a 5-hour home video machine. It's distinctive 1/4" format won't be sold in U.S.



What we have here are two programmable VCRs!! But, you say, Sony doesn't have such a thing, does it? Not for most of us, no, they don't. I was surprised to learn that such a thing is



European Betamax...



with programmable timer



programmable RCA

on the market in Europe. The only information I have is printed in Dutch, but from the looks of it, you can set it to come on on two separate days and shut off after a preselected length of time. Notice also that the channel selector is push button. Of course, RCA has such an animal that is due on the market any day now (that's the RCA Model VCT 400 on the right). The effect of the yen/dollar situation is beginning to be felt in VCR prices. The programmable RCA was announced earlier at \$1200, but will now set you back \$1275 ... list.

Sony was scheduled in August to open a national parts center adjoining its huge distribution and testing facility in Kansas City. Some 70,000 parts for all Sony products sold in US are stocked.

Big screen projection TV is being tested in ABC chain of small theatres in Britain, with view toward replacing film someday, possibly even distributing signal to theatres by cablevision.

## \*\*\*\*\* Search For Tomorrow \*\*\*\*\*

A CONTINUING LOOK AT WHAT TO WATCH FOR IN THE MONTHS AHEAD, WITH EMPHASIS ON OFF-NETWORK SYNDICATED PRODUCTIONS:

20th Century-Fox and Hill-Eubanks Group Productions announces a new syndicated series, "JIVE TURKEY REVIEW." The series will feature some of the country's outstanding black disco and rock performers. \*\*\* Worldvision Enterprises has released nine 60-minute musical variety specials, eight of which are so-called "SUNSHINE SPECIALS," filmed on location in such places as Walt Disney World and the San Diego Zoo, and featuring guest stars like Mac Davis, The Fifth Dimension, Pat Paulsen, and Rudy Vallee. The ninth show, "THE NEWFANGLED WANDERING MINSTREL SHOW," will star Olivia Newton-John. \*\*\* Home Box Office special feed to local cable affiliates discloses that the following films are upcoming on HBO: JULIA, THE TURNING POINT, SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER, COMA, and THE GOODBYE GIRL. \*\*\* Look for CBS to have a special in late November featuring the cast of STAR WARS, including a 10-minute animated Star Wars story produced especially for the show. \*\*\* Scheduled for showing early in 1979 is the prime time special, "THE JOY OF BACH," billed as a light-hearted-to-sublime look at the continuing popularity of Bach's music. The host will be Brian Blessed who portrayed Augustus in "I CLAUDIUS." Artists already on film are the flamboyant organist, Virgil Fox, concert violinist, Yehudi Menuhin, harmonica virtuoso, Larry Adler, and Rosalyn Tureck, who does a turn on a Poly Moog Synthesizer. \*\*\*

A new "Holiday Network" package of films has been sold in more than 110 markets, to be shown during the weekend preceding prime holidays. Films now scheduled are: THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH (Halloween), LILI (Thanksgiving), and JOURNEY BACK TO OZ (Christmas). \*\*\* As you read this, Metromedia stations in New York, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and Cincinnati are receiving a package of one hundred twenty 5 1/2-minute LAUREL & HARDY LAUGHTOONS, produced from the Hal Roach Studio's silent L & H shorts. Original music and sound effects have been added. \*\*\* ITC has prepared a "Superlative Seven" package of musical-variety specials which have been sold to WPIX (New York), KTTV (Los Angeles), and WAGA (Atlanta), among many others. The seven are: "JULIE & SAMMY," starring Ms. Andrews and Mr. Davis, Jr.; "FROM THIS MOMENT ON...COLE PORTER," a tribute to his music, with Steve & Edyie, among others; "ENTERTAINERS," starring Rita Moreno and Bruce Forsyth with the Norman Maen Dancers; "COME HEAR THE MUSIC PLAY," featuring songs of Broadway rendered by Robert Goulet & Julie Andrews; "THE BEATLES FOREVER," with Host, Tony Randall and guest stars, Diahann Carroll, Bernadette Peters, Ray Charles, Paul Williams, Anthony Newley, and Mel Tillis (Mel Tillis?); "HEART AND SOUL," a songfest of jazz, blues, and pop hits, starring Ray Charles and Cleo Laine; and "MERRY CHRISTMAS...WITH LOVE, JULIE," starring Julie (there's that girl again, but it's OK by me) Andrews & Jimmy Stewart, along with Dan Dailey, Joel Grey, Carl Reiner, and others.

\*\*\*\*\*



# A BALD-FACED PLEA

To: The Readership at Large

The Videophile's Newsletter has reached such a size that it is no longer possible for its beleaguered publisher to continue it as a spare time endeavor. In response to your pleas for more frequent publication, more features, more ads and just plain "more" in general, we are ready now to take the plunge and turn what has been a nonprofit publishing hobby into a serious, and hopefully break-even-at-least publishing enterprise. This will mean opening a regular business office, employing staff, securing second class mailing privileges, promoting the magazine, and the like. All of this will require money. That's where you come in.

Those of you who have been with me from the beginning will recall that the first couple of issues were free. In issue #2, Joe Mazzini made a pitch for \$5 and promised a one year's subscription in return. Quite a few of you responded, even though you had no idea whether you would ever see anything for your \$5. You had faith in me, and you got your money's worth. Now I ask you to have faith in me again.

I will need from \$15,000 to \$20,000 capital to do what should be done in order to get the new "Videophile" magazine off to a flying start. You can help by indicating your support. Here's the deal. For a limited time (until November 4, 1978), I will be offering "charter subscriptions" to The Videophile for \$100. In return for your \$100 you will receive a 5 year subscription by FIRST CLASS MAIL, a 10% discount on every product that we offer during that time, and the satisfaction of knowing that you were instrumental in the development of something that will provide a great deal of enjoyment to us all.

Seriously folks, I am counting on those of you who really relate to what we are doing here to help with this. Yes, \$20 a year is rather steep for a subscription. But when you consider the cost of First Class Mail (what other mag comes to you that way?), the fact that we will be able to publish more often than 6 times a year, and the expected inflation over the next 5 years, there is little doubt that you will be getting a bargain before it is all said and done. This special charter rate is good for 5 full years. You will get every issue we publish during that period, even if we should become a weekly publication. Consider, too, what TVN has done for you to date. How many of you have saved hundreds of dollars by finding out where to buy equipment or tapes at discount, or perhaps how to modify your machine without paying a service man \$75? Can you calculate the value of the lasting friendships that you are making because this magazine exists?

While we recognize the potential of this magazine to grow to many times its present readership, we have absolutely no intention of changing its character. There may come a time when we will seek newsstand distribution, but we will not become slick for slick's sake or tone down our opinions for fear of alienating advertisers. Home video, as an industry, is going to be very big someday. While there will, no doubt, be a number of publications that will speak to you from afar, you can depend on us

to continue the personal we're-all-in-this-together approach. This is why we are not reluctant to seek your support in this manner. What the heck, it's only \$100 after all. Just sign your name on a piece of paper and a few bookkeeping entries will take care of the rest. You'll never know the difference.

O.K., you're convinced, but your particular situation is such that you just plain can't spring for \$100. There is still something you can do to help. I am aware that this magazine has a rather high pass-on readership. In other words there are a lot of shameless moochers among you. If those of you who have been getting a free ride appreciate what we are trying to do, if you would rather see us prosper than wither in the bud, I implore you, nay, I beg you, send me a check for a subscription of your own. TVN has been published for 2 years now pretty much as a public service. Let me know that you want to keep it coming by sending me your checks now.

For the dealers among you I have a separate plan. Until November 4, 1978, you may send me \$200 to become a charter advertiser. In return you will receive the same 5 year package just described, plus the opportunity to advertise in "The Videophile" as often as you like for the next 2 years at a 10% discount off regular rates. When our circulation runs into the tens of thousands, and ad rates advance accordingly, that 10% discount will begin to look pretty good. With your support, this magazine can rapidly grow to where it will be reaching virtually every serious home video enthusiast in the country.

Now, just in case there are a few of you that feel really generous and don't want to ever have to fool with renewing your subscription, you may send me \$500 and be secure in the knowledge that you will be a life-time subscriber, by FIRST CLASS MAIL, and will enjoy a 10% discount on all our products (except advertising) for as long as you live. At the risk of belaboring the thing, there is also a \$1000 plan for those who enjoy the smug satisfaction that only comes with enrollment in a truly exclusive group. For \$1000 your life-time subscription will come to you by AIR MAIL SPECIAL DELIVERY, a treat that not just every kid on the block can look forward to. [Those of you who are 80 years of age or older may deduct 25% from these life-time rates.]

Sincerely,

*Jim*  
Jim Lowe, Editor



P.S. I don't mean to suggest that this is a "sink or swim" situation. We will continue to tread water, at least, regardless of the magnitude of your generosity. Also we will continue to offer regular annual subscription rates, etc., all of which will be revealed next issue. However, I want to make it perfectly clear that your support, in the form of these 5 year subscriptions is absolutely essential to our becoming what you want, when you want.



# Here it is . . .

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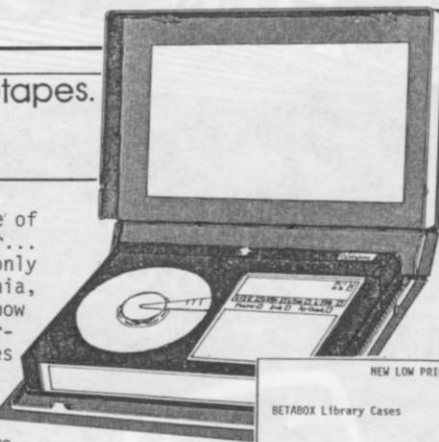
## The BETABOX System.

We'd like to announce the two newest additions to TVN WEST's line of products made to make life easier for the serious video collector... hard-plastic VHS boxes, exactly like a standard 3/4" or Betabox only designed particularly for tapes used in RCA, JVC, Hitachi, Sylvania, Magnavox, and Quasar VHS decks. And any of you VHS collectors know how difficult it is to quickly slide out cassettes from the super-tight cardboard sleeves. With these boxes, it's a snap--yet tapes are still held snugly and are fully-protected from dust and dirt.

The next addition is our new BETA and VHS custom-designed labels, in roll-form for easy typing. They come 100 labels to a roll, two rolls to an order (square and rectangular end labels). We've gone to considerable expense to insure the finest-quality label products available anywhere.

All the other products are still available, too--the Insert Cards for the BETA and VHS Boxes, our Index Cards & Notebooks, and samples available for each type.

SEND ALL ORDERS TO: TVN/WEST, P.O. Box 480315, LA, CA 90048.  
Please allow 4 weeks for delivery.



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	51-100	\$1.00 ea.
	101 & up	\$ .90 ea.
VHS Library Cases	add 10¢ each to above prices	
BETABOX or VHS Insert Cards (for Library Cases)	\$4/each minimum of 50	
Adhesive Labels (Beta or VHS)	\$20.00 per roll of 100	
Index Cards (Beta or VHS)	\$4/each minimum of 50	
2-Ring Notebooks for Cards	\$3.00 each	

Cal. residents add 6% sales tax. Everything's postage-paid, save for the Library Cases, which will be shipped UPS collect (about \$2.50 per 25 boxes). Ask about our custom-designing service, for your personalized video collecting needs.

I'm vaguely impressed. Send me a sample of the ☐ BETA or ☐ VHS boxes, labels and index cards. I enclose \$2.00 (we prefer checks and M/O--you know those P.O. guys...).

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Adhesive BETA-LABELS  | <input type="checkbox"/> Ad. VHS Labels    |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Insert Card Binders   |  |

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# Rambling Outtakes

by Marc Wielage

Greetings, again over your orthicon tubes. We're back again, rambling away as usual. And at long last, this time there's good news to report--Sony's long, long-awaited L-750 has finally begun to make its appearance in video shoppes across the land, and thanks to the kind graces of Mr. Ken Grimwood, local author/screenwriter/videophile extraordinaire, I managed to run several hours of tests on two samples of the tape on a wide variety of Betamax decks.

On the 4 SL-8200's I had access to (3 Sony's and 1 Toshiba), two of them performed miserably with the new tape, much to my chagrin. Ditto with an older SL-7200. Their common symptom: an apparant record problem manifesting itself on the screen in the form of ugly horizontal streaking lines in the brighter areas of the picture, similar to a slight tracking problem...but no simple adjustment of the tracking control clears it up. The other machines performed adequately; on my own SL0-320 and SL-8200 it looked pretty decent though somewhat grainier than a standard L-500. Two friends of mine got good results on their 8200 and Toshiba decks, and the 750 performed equally well on the X-2 Sony 8600, which wasn't surprising since it was specifically designed with the longer tape in mind.

I spoke with Mort Fink, Executive Vice-President of Sony in New York as well as Ted Dickson, a Betamax Marketing Representative with Sony on the West coast, and both confirmed that there will be many Sony-branded decks that will have some trouble with the L-750--possibly as many as 10% of all decks sold so far. They assured me that Sony will bend over backwards to see to it that all their machines will be adjusted or modified if necessary to accept the new tape, at no charge to the customer. This goes for Sony-branded machines only at this time; any of the other units, including those sold by Sears, Sanyo, Toshiba and Zenith will have to be handled by those firms' respective service centers.

As shown in this reprint of the sticker found on all Sony L-750's, they've gone to the trouble of establishing this toll-free number to help any dissatisfied customers locate a nearby service center capable of adapting your Sony deck for using the new tape. Mr. Fink explained that apparently the problem with the machine/tape difficulties involves a video or control track head adjustment that can be made by any competent technician with the right equipment and know-how. He also added that this adjustment will not affect the machine's performance with L-500 or L-250 tapes, either blank or those recorded prior to servicing.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE:

The L-750 videocassette is newly designed to produce extended play. Prior to intended use, a test recording should be made to evaluate picture quality. If playback results show significant picture impairment, please call the following toll free number for instructions:

**800-243-6065**

In Connecticut 1-800-882-6500

I must applaud Sony for going to all of this trouble, though I can see that it's unavoidable from a marketing standpoint. Obviously, they felt that this longer tape is their Ace-in-the-hole in their current War Against VHS, and they had to have the L-750 tape at all costs--even if it meant having to go to the expense of servicing as many as 10,000 Betamaxes in the bargain. In the long run, I'm sure this will help them gain a lot of lost ground in the home video marketplace.

But I'd like to add here that I'm a little disappointed in Sony's current ad campaign (nut together by Doyle Dane and Bernbach, who are also Sony's partners in the Universal lawsuit), touting the SL-8600 as "the three-hour Betamax" and ignoring the point that their 8200 is likewise a three-hour deck as well, with an added 90-minute capacity in X-1, for about the same price. Apparently, the 8600 was their way of developing a less-complex model at a competitive price, made to meet the widely-marketed RCA and Panasonic decks head-on. It's too bad that this was the best they could do--worsening the inter-format incompatibility problem of X-1 vs. X-2. Well, such is life in the exciting world of Home Video. \*sigh\*

Meanwhile, back in the courthouse...the lawsuit continues in Round 94, with (you guessed it) Mr. Kroft, attorney for the "other" side, currently asking me to provide some 40-odd cassettes for their use in the trial about 5 or 6 months from now. Sony would again prepare a set of duplicates for each side, as with the last time they borrowed tapes from my collection, and the originals would be returned to me in a few days. Although this looks on the surface to be comparatively simple, I can't help but feel that Kroft and Ko. are really doing it all to hassle me. They wouldn't tell me in a recent phone conversation exactly why they needed to see these tapes, only that it would help them prepare their case for January. I later learned that, to quote from a letter written by Ed Smith, Kroft's assistant, "...our only purpose in requesting those tapes is to prove the broadcast of copyright notices when those works initially were recorded by Wielage." Well, gee--if that's all they wanted, then it seems obvious to me at least that all they had to do was ask me if the copyright notices are there or not. (They are, in every case I can think of.) But, nooooooooooooo...they had to do things the hard way. Sheesh.

Moving on to happier things... Firstly, I don't know how many of you are aware of it, but Sony makes some dynamite pre-recorded "Video Training Tapes" on servicing tips for all of their video products, including all their consumer Betamax models. Their SL-8200 series goes for \$192.00 for the 6-hour series on all the ins-and-outs of the deck, from what makes it tick to how to fix it when it doesn't. They also have step-by-step information on how to clean and/or replace the deck's audio and video heads, details on trouble-shooting circuits and mechanical problems, and a wealth of stuff that's rather hazily explained in the maintenance manuals but generally comes across as clear as glass in the programs. I should point out that none of these tapes are intended for the novice, but rather for the experienced electronics technician who's got some kind of video-related background. At any rate, it's a highly interesting series of tapes, and they're all available from Sony's Technical Publications Dept. at 47-47 Van Dam Street, Long Island City, NY 11101. (And thanks to Mr. Mazzini, from whom I stole the above info!)

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the tens of folks who responded to my article last issue on my "Ultimate Video Room". Strangely enough, not one of them quarreled with my choice of video equipment, but I'll damned if all of them didn't disagree with the audio units selected! Well, different strokes for different folks, etc. I do acknowledge the few major errors in a couple areas of my article, particularly in



the installation of the two reel audio decks on the lower-right side of the console, where they'd be very difficult to thread and operate. If I had it to do over again (and I do, since this is all in my head, anyway), I'd put the decks on top of the console and let the pre-amps and tuners occupy that lower-right section. I also stand corrected by reader Art Scott in Palo Alto, CA who alerted me to Audio Research's updated SP-6 pre-amps, which would certainly have been my first choice had I known they were available. He also suggests several sub-woofer units available to help out the Magnaplanar speakers in the lower-bass region. Next issue, we'll be starting the first of a "Videophile's Systems" feature in TVN, giving us a tour through readers' home audio/video set-ups. And those will be real systems, as opposed to the ones in my feeble mind's eye.

I'd also like to comment on a letter I recently received from Jeff Glasser, another TVN reader (from Columbus, Ohio), who writes concerning my article in TVN #13 on cable systems and the problems involved in their Pay-TV programming, from a technical standpoint. I stated that often in cable systems "...lots of problems can occur...with the programming being unattended to by operators and originating on 3/4" tape." Jeff tells me that, at least at Columbus' Telecinema and QUBE's Pay-TV set-ups, "...they offer a broadcast-quality service that's treated as an integral part of cablecasting, not an add-on." I'm glad to hear it--now if only Theta Cable's Z Channel in LA will perform likewise, we'll all be better off for it. But as I said in that article, still the weakest link in the whole cable/Pay-TV chain remains the cable itself that brings the programming into your home, and that's still rarely as good as a top-quality antenna on your roof (unless you have a particular reception problem like nearby mountains or tall buildings). Hopefully, with technology marching on in the form of digital video, laser/fiber optics transmissions and satellite/earth station hook-ups, someday we'll have pictures in our homes almost as good as what the broadcasters see in their master control rooms. Someday.

### MISCELLANEOUS TIPS AND TRICKS

I must bow in the direction of nearby Van Nuys, CA to super-Videophiles K.L. and G.G., who let me know several interesting things concerning blank Betamax videocassettes. Aside from the obvious details--like the fact that every Scotch-manufactured cassette has a small yellow "batch number" tag affixed under its hinged plastic lid--they gave me several tips on how to spot cassettes from different manufacturers and/or different tape stocks. First, there's often a stamped ID number found on the underside of cassettes, on one of the black surfaces near the two white reel hubs, with a letter code they've determined as follows: a T or no-letter prefix denotes a K-60 or K-30 type cassette; an L-prefix definitely indicates an L-500 or L-250 type cassette; and a Z-prefix indicates a Sony-manufactured tape made for Zenith. Any other letters also indicate L-series tapes. It's important to use the right kind of tape for X-2 recording; as Mr. D.A. in Iowa and Ray Glasser in Cleveland told me, you can run into considerable difficulty in using some of the older K-60's for X-2 taping, which may result in a kind of "rippling" effect in the picture. It's a good idea to test any tape you're not sure of, to avoid unhappy surprises.

L-750's are also fairly easy to spot, because of their yellowish/off-white hubs as opposed to the solid white plastic hubs found in all other Beta-format cassettes. And Scotch cassettes, at least anything made up to August '78, are easy to ferret out by their tell-tale brown oxide on the tape. I might add here that any of you who've felt burned by Scotch in the past with their sometimes drop-out-filled Beta products might give them another chance with their newest oxide formulations. According to a local audio engineer who's a friend of mine, Scotch has experimented with loading super high-output tape intended for use in VHS machines into plastic Beta cassette shells for even better quality at the slightly-faster-than-VHS speeds used in Beta recordings. You can spot this new-generation Scotch Beta-tape by its polished black appearance, which is rumored not to be the usual black chromium-dioxide stock but a new formulation they've been able to pull out from their Minnesota mines. The few samples I've evaluated so far look like fairly good stuff--at least as good as the American-made Sony tape.

And getting back to our how-to-spot-the-L-500-from-the-K-60-problem, often you'll see an L-500 inked stamp on the plastic spine of a cassette, which is a sure-fire indication it's a bonafide L-500 product suitable for use at both speeds.

How to Avoid the Old Switcheroo Problem: I know a couple of semi-paranoid types here in town who are often wary of loaning out their original cassettes for fear of accidental erasure or damage, or the possibility of the borrower exchanging the original tapes for mere dubs. There's an easy solution to this problem: first, with a little practice, it's comparatively simple to tell an original recording from a dub, though it may require you to practically put your nose on the screen to do so. Another way of telling is to mark the leader of the tape with a ball-point pen for later identification. K.L. in Van Nuys also pointed out that the tiny numbers engraved on the white cassette hubs are sequenced in such a way that you will practically never see the same letter/number combination on the hubs on any two cassettes. Of course, this system wouldn't work if the borrower to actually splice out the recorded tape and splice in the dub, which would then occupy your original cassette shell and hubs. But there's an easy solution to this, too--make sure you know and trust the persons with whom you trade so that this problem will not occur. And don't fail to punch out the record lock-out tabs on the cassettes to avoid accidental erasure--I speak from experience.

In answer to who can dub foreign standard videotapes (like from the European PAL system to our NTSC system): the only firms I know of that can handle this highly-complex operation, on either 3/4" or 2", are Intercontinental Television Network at 10 W. 66th St., NYC 10023; Devlin Productions, 150 W. 55th St., NYC 10019; and Image Transform, 4142 Lankershim Blvd., N. Hollywood, CA 91602. The latter firm is one I know to be one of the top film and tape transfer companies in the world, working in any combination of NTSC (N. America and Japan), PAL (parts of Europe, Australia and England), and SECAM (France and the USSR). Unfortunately, the price for such transfers aren't cheap, generally going for well over \$100 an hour, because of the sophisticated and expensive hardware required.

What is that strange 5-pin jack on the back of the 8200? I'm sure it's a combined audio/video input/output DIN-jack intended for the European market, though I'm unable to verify this since it's not covered in the maintenance manuals or repair tapes, and apparently the one in my own 8200 is not connected since I can't get a signal out of it at all. Perhaps the phono/mini-phone video/audio jacks are eliminated or unused on foreign models, with the connection instead being made to that 5-pin DIN jack alone.



And speaking of things in the realm of fantasy, here's this column's wacky feature, as I go right off the deep end and ramble on about

## WHAT I WOULD DO IF I WERE AKIO MORITA\*

(\*Chairman of the Board, Sony Corporation)

Quite often these days, I've found myself struggling with a U-Matic or Betamax video deck, and I've asked myself: "self, how in the world did these people manage to screw up these machines so much?". I mean, let's face it folks--despite some people's belief to the contrary, Sony is not God, even though their widely-used equipment is sometimes rumored to be of miraculous construction and durability.

What I've prepared here is a list of all the Sony-branded Betamax products available (NTSC only), and then a list of how I'd like to see their existing product line changed and/or updated to include these new models. With a little luck, who knows--some of the marketing and R&D folks in New York, Compton and Tokyo might just consider these ideas and ~~stuff them in the round file cabinet~~ use a few of them in actual production models... someday.

Existing Betamax Units		Features
SL-6200	X-1 only	available as deck in LV-1901 console only; aux. inputs
SL-6300	X-1 only	Japan version of SL-6200; aux. inputs; audio dub
LV-1901	X-1 only	SL-6300 with 19" Trinitron receiver in large console; aux./tuner input switch
SL-7100	X-1 only	low-cost version of SL-6300 & SL-7300; aux./tuner input switch; 1-button recording
SL-7200	X-1 only	standard U.S. consumer model; differently-styled SL-6200; no aux. inputs
SL-7300	X-1 only	Japan version of SL-7200; aux./tuner input switch; audio dub
SL-7200A	X-1 only	improved SL-7200 with aux. inputs (auto select); audio edit sound lag
SL-8100	X-1/X-2	Japan 2-speed unit; auto playback speed select; audio dub; aux. inputs (auto select)
SL-8200	X-1/X-2	U.S. 2-speed unit; auto playback speed select; aux. inputs (auto select)
SL-8500	X-2 only	Japan X-2 only unit; audio dub; built-in timer; remote pause
SL-8600	X-2 only	U.S. X-2 only unit; built-in timer; remote pause
SL-8300	X-1/X-2	improved Japan SL-8100; built-in timer; remote pause; FF/RW visible image
SL-3200	X-1/X-2	U.S. consumer version of SLO-340; X-2 record, X-1/X-2 playback

Existing Industrial Betamax Units		
SLO-260	X-1 only	industrial version of SL-7200; aux./tuner input switch; audio dub; audio level meter with limiter; still-frame/pause (non-locking)
SLP-100	X-1 only	player-only version of SLO-260
D-500	X-1 only	multiple-deck Betamax duplicating system
SLO-320	X-1 only	deluxe industrial unit; solenoid remote control and random-access capability (with RM-300); audio level meter with limiter; audio dub; external input only (no tuner)
SLP-300	X-1 only	player-only version of SLO-320; random access capability (with RM-300)

Existing Betamax Accessories		
DT-32	Timer	latest version of DT-10/20/30 Timers; turns off after 240 minutes
AG-120	Changer	automatically loads and unloads 2 cassettes for continuous recording and playback up to 6 hours (with L-750 at X-2)
AG-1000	Changer	multiple cassette stacker similar to AG-120 but with larger capacity; never marketed due to manufacturing difficulties
AR-700	Winder	rewinds any length Betamax cassette; available in Japan only
RM-300	Remote Control	random-access auto-search control for SLO-300 and SLO-320
RM-420	Remote Control	full-function remote-control for SLO-300 and SLO-320 and 2000 series 3/4" decks

That's what has been released by Sony in the past 3 years. (Probably a lot more than you thought there were, eh?) There are a few minor models missing, mostly Japan or other foreign versions of the industrial models, but that is pretty much the bulk of the Betamax equipment they've released up to September '78. All models were listed, to the best of my admittedly questionable ability, in order by appearance.

Now comes the fun part. Here's a list of my new, probably never-to-be-released products, incorporating all the changes my Wiley Wileage thinking cap came up with, with a little help from several friends (listed at the end of this article):

Suggested Consumer Betamax Decks		
SL-8400	X-1/X-2	improved U.S. version of SL-8300, with audio dub; FF/RW visible image (via switch); still-frame/pause; slow-motion playback (via switch); aux./tuner input switch; mechanical hours/minutes/seconds counter; remote pause; built-in timer; VIRS-controlled tuner capability; and improved editing performance, resolution, and S/N ratio
SL-8450	X-1/X-2	deluxe SL-8400, with integral programmable tuner/timer capable of recording up to 6 programs on any of 13 pre-selected stations over a 7-day period (see TT-1000 below)
SL-8600A	X-2 only	improved SL-8600, with audio dub; aux./tuner input switch; mechanical hours/minutes/seconds counter; VIRS-controlled tuner capability; and improved editing performance, resolution and S/N ratio
SL-8800	X-1/X-2	super-deluxe SL-8400 with solenoid remote-control capability
SL-8850	X-1/X-2	super-deluxe SL-8450 with solenoid remote-control capability
SL-9450	X-1/X-2/X-4	no-holds-barred version of the SL-8450, with Metafine tape capability automatically selected by sensing notch in the cassette shell; X-1, X-2 and X-4 record/playback capability (X-4 with Metafine tape only)
SL-9850	X-1/X-2/X-4	ultra-deluxe version of the SL-9450 with solenoid remote-control capability

### Suggested Industrial Betamax Decks (the "High Performance Series")

SLO-340A	X-1 only	improved SLO-340 with on/off switch for RF modulator; automatic E-to-E circuitry; backspace editor; improved resolution and S/N ratio; Metafine tape capability
SLO-500	X-1 only	improved SLO-320 with slo-motion playback; reverse motion; insert and assemble editing capability; front panel skew control; improved resolution and S/N ratio; Metafine tape capability (auto select via sensing notch); color/B&W switch
SLP-400	X-1 only	player only version of SLO-500; slow- and reverse-motion playback
D-600	X-2 only	multiple-deck Betamax duplicating system

### Suggested Betamax Accessories

AR-700	Rewinder	same as Japan cassette winding unit (and very handy to have)
AG-200	consumer decks	electronic changer for up to 6 cassettes; interfaces with TT-1000, SL-8450 or SL-9450 for programmed cassette changing during record or playback; used with any consumer deck
AG-300	solenoid decks	electronic changer for up to 6 cassettes; interfaces with TT-1000, SL-8850 or SL-9850 for programmed cassette changing during record or playback; used with any industrial or consumer solenoid remote-control decks
RM-300A	solenoid decks	improved random-access auto-search control with switchable hours/minutes/seconds counter or standard 2-units-per-second counter (like RM-300)
RM-500	solenoid decks	combined RM-420 full-function remote control and RM-300A unit in one handy case
TT-1000	all decks	digital tuner/timer; programmable for selecting up to 6 shows on any of 13 pre-selected stations over a 7-day period; automatic VIRS transmitter-controlled tuning capability; updatable to stereo audio; non-mechanical varactor tuning

Before all of you shake your heads sadly, sigh, and mutter "gee, the lawsuit's really getting to this guy," look carefully over the above suggested products. I think most of you will agree that none of them are really all that way-out or impossible to manufacture. Similar machines in other formats already exist, so it's not difficult to put together a similar set of features for a particular model. I can see, however, how Sony might question the marketing potential of some of the consumer machines (particularly the solenoid decks), and rightly so. As Masa Namiki of Sony told me in January (related in TVN #12), they may already have several of these units and more in their experimental R&D labs in Japan, but can the average American consumer handle them? Apparently Sony doesn't think so, as witnessed by their further simplification of the already-uncomplicated SL-7200 to the one-button recording used in the 8200, and the deletion of the audio dub button in all of the U.S. consumer models. It's interesting to note how all of the folks in the VHS camp think our ape-brains are capable of handling the audio dub function, however, and of course JVC's new HR-3060 even has the "far-fetched" still-frame and slow-motion features--in a "consumer" machine. I have no doubt that the vast majority of us die-hard videophile technofreaks will have little trouble operating even the most complex of the models described on the preceding pages. But will that leave over 200,000,000 dummies too stupid to figure out how to turn the units on, let alone operate them?

Further explanations on the suggested equipment: the TT-1000 is merely an improvement over Sony's old TT-100 Tuner/Timer, designed for use with their 3/4" machines over 5 years ago. I thought it'd also be a good idea to offer the same basic unit built into several of the consumer decks, as RCA has already done with their programmable VBT-400 VHS deck. Note that with all the tuners in these decks, VIRS (Vertical Interval Reference Signal)-controlled tuning is available to adjust incoming broadcasts automatically, as with some of the latest Panasonic and GE TV sets.

As mentioned last issue, the new Metafine tape formulations coming out are the newest revolution in both audio and home video recording. According to 2 Scotch spokesmen and several magazine articles, the quality of an X-2 recording made on Metafine tape could look almost as good as X-1, and an X-1 Metafine recording may be almost as good as 3/4". It's for this reason that I decided to call for a new speed, X-4, specifically for use with the Metafine cassettes only. Even though at X-4 the tape will be crawling along at an incredible 15/32" a second, the quality should be reasonably good, almost as good as today's X-2. The estimated retail for a Metafine L-500 should be around \$19-20, and perhaps as high as \$25 for an L-750--not bad, for a 4-hour and 6-hour record capacity, respectively, with the quality and economy better than or equal to present VHS machines. And you know Sony would love to be able to match VHS head on with this all-important feature.

The SL-8800, SL-8850 and the SL-9850 all have solenoid-operated transports similar to the existing SLO-300 series, and have full-function remote control and/or random-access capability with the RM-420, RM-300/RM-300A or RM-500 units. The changers are pretty much production versions of what Sony's had under wraps in their labs for months. Note that both the AG-200 and 300 are able to interface with the tuner/timers for programming the exact time the cassettes will change; otherwise, the change cycle will begin the split-second the cassette-in-use runs out. Total time for the removal of one tape and insertion of a new one should not exceed 10 seconds.

That's it for this installment. Special thanks go to Ralph Eck, Carl Vickery and Bob Bechtold at Audio/Video Craft in LA, Mike Clark and Bill Kirchenbauer at Hoffman Video in LA, and fellow videophiles K.L., G.G., Horace Horsecollar, Ray Glasser, Fred Jones, Pat F. and A.H., plus last-but-of-course-not-least Joe Mazzini. Sony's comments on this article, if any, will be printed next issue. (Don't hold your breath on it, though.)

[Last-minute addition: Jim Lowe just told me that he's recently received a brochure from Germany on a programmable Betamax, not unlike the SL-8450 et al mentioned earlier. Hmmm--we could have a possible patent and/or copyright infringement case here. I better get myself a good attorney soon...let me see if I can find Stephen Kroft's office number...or maybe the Legal Clinic of Jacoby and Meyer...or maybe...] mfw-78

[Feedback, threats and bouquets should be directed to Marc at: PO Box 480315, L.A., CA 90048]



# THE VIDEO COMPOSITE

by BOB BURNS

The response to Bob Burns' outings as our VHS Editor has been most favorable. Bob's remarks this issue are abbreviated due to his vacation, but we look forward to having him back in full swing next time.

The VHS format is again the forerunner of video innovations for the '78-'79 season. RCA leads the industry with the first VCR with a built-in programmable tuner. Designated the Model VCT-400 (see picture under Video News), it allows the operator to program in as many as eight different channel and/or time changes within a seven day period. For example, it's possible to set the unit to come on at, let's say, 7 p.m. and record 30 minutes of "The Dating Game" on channel 5, shut off, then come on again to record "Charlie's Angels" on channel 10 at 9 p.m., shut off again at 10 p.m., then come on at 11 p.m. to record the Late News on channel 2. This will become an even more valuable feature when the 3/6 hour tapes are available. The present RCA model has also been updated to include a more sophisticated transport mechanism and a more elaborate timer.

JVC has introduced their new model 3600, which has two unique features. One is the familiar pause control found on the newer VCR units, but with one addition. The pause provides a very stable still picture. The other is a remote fast-forward and rewind control, also with an unusual innovation. The picture is maintained in both fast-forward and rewind. The two controls used together should make professional edits a breeze.

For all of you who are eagerly awaiting the reply from RCA concerning the drop-out problem, I'm sorry to report I've had no response to date. I'm afraid we'll have to handle this one on our own. I can't imagine RCA recalling all their VBT-200's to correct the problem. I understand from the sales representatives that they are aware of the problem and have corrected it in the latest models. However, I'm confident that one of us will come up with a workable solution.

There have been quite a few requests for instructions in dubbing (copying) from VHS to VHS, Beta to VHS, and VHS to Beta. Although advice from the Betamax experts recommend direct video-to-video connections, I have found the best method to make a copy on a VHS machine is to use the RF connectors. I really have no explanation for this but picture quality is significantly better using this method. This is my recommendation only for making a VHS copy from any other format:

- (1) Connect the machines so that the RF output connector of the machine used to playback the tape (hereafter known as machine #1) is connected to the RF input connector of the machine used to record the duplicate (hereafter known as machine #2). Use standard 75 ohm cable.
- (2) Connect the RF output connector of machine #2 to the VHF inputs of the monitoring television.
- (3) Insert the tape to be duplicated into machine #1 and a blank or reusable tape into machine #2. Begin playing back a sample portion of the tape in machine #1. Set the tuner on machine #2 to channel 3 or 4 (depending on which one #1 is playing back on) and depress the AFT button.
- (4) Turn on the TV, select channel 3 or 4, and you should be able to monitor the tape being played back on machine #1. Be certain the TV/VTR switches of both machines are in the VTR (or on a Betamax "cassette") position. Adjust the tracking control on machine #1 for maximum picture quality.
- (5) Rewind the tape in machine #1. Place machine #2 into "record" and machine #1 into "play". That's all there is to it. Be sure you have selected the proper recording speed on machine #2 and that its

tracking control is in the mid-point position. You will not be able to switch machine #2 to TV to watch regular broadcasting as in normal recording.

[For those who want to compare the video-to-video way of duplicating, see "The VHS Network" on p. 22.--Ed.]

NOW FOR QUESTION AND ANSWER TIME:

Q: Is it alright to store videocassettes in Zip-Loc plastic storage bags?

A: I really would not recommend this. Firstly, videocassettes are not so delicate that they must be completely sealed airtight. Secondly, storage bags tend to trap moisture which could be harmful to the tape. I suggest sticking with the O.E.M. tape boxes or better yet the plastic tape boxes available from Marc at TVN West.

Q: I am having difficulty in recording two programs on one cassette when trying to record a show over the first portion of a tape without erasing part of the remainder. I'm certain that I have stopped the recording short of the index number where the second feature begins, and yet upon replaying I notice that several seconds of the second program are missing or messed up. Why?

A: You must remember that the erase head comes before the video recording head in the tape path. Therefore, erasure is taking place a few seconds in advance of the picture of the new recording you making.

Well, that's about it for this time. I'm withholding my report on the JVC Vidstar until I can get my hands on the newer model. Also, the Video Glossary, promised last time, has grown so large that it's an article within itself. To those who have written recently, I've been on vacation, and intend to start on my correspondence as soon as this article is in the mail.

BOB BURNS

BOX 23-16

WHEELERSBURG, OH 45694

"STAY TUNED"

## \* FOR BEGINNERS ONLY \*\*\*\*\*

This is the third installment of FBO, a column devoted to helping you new guys catch up:

Q: Is there a loss of picture quality when using two recorders to make a second copy of a tape?

A: Yes, there is. The  $\frac{1}{2}$ " recorders that most home hobbyists use are not capable of producing professional quality copies. The loss in picture quality is really not too great if you are working with a good original, however. It is most pronounced when using the slower speeds (X-2 or 4-hour VHS) and when attempting to duplicate color. Black and white material can be duplicated with better results. Most duplicates are more "contrasty" and picture begins to lose definition, especially if a copy of a copy is attempted. The duplicate is known as a "second generation" copy. A copy of that would be "third generation", and so on. For those of you with a lot of \$\$, professional processing equipment is available for duplication purposes. When this sort of thing becomes available for the consumer market, we'll let you know.

Q: If I punch out the little tab on the tape cassette, like the instructions say, to protect against accidentally erasing the tape, does this mean that I can't ever change my mind and record on that cassette again?

A: No. To record again, all you have to do is securely cover the little hole where the tab used to be. I have found that a small piece of adhesive tape or piece cut off a bandage works beautifully. If you make it a habit to punch out these tabs (I don't), you need to be alert to this, lest you see something about to start on TV, hurriedly decide to erase something, pop the cassette in the machine, and then find that the "record" key won't press down.

Beginners will find lots of this sort of thing in our "The Videophile's Annual: 1978" which reprints most of the stuff originally found in TVN #s 1-6. It's yours for \$6.00.



# VCR NEWS & VIEWS

By STEVE COMET

## BETAMAX/HEAD CLEANING TIPS

A video tape recorder is a complex piece of equipment which may periodically require adjustments and calibrations. While major alignments require sophis-

ticated test gear, and are best left to experts - there is one simple preventative maintenance procedure which every videophile can perform himself - head cleaning and demagnetizing.

Oxide deposits will rob your machine of its ability to reproduce clear crisp pictures - and when a head gap becomes partially clogged - snow and annoying interference will be evident on the tape.

Sony recommends that the video head, audio and control track assembly, pinch roller, and the tape guides be cleaned after 500 hours of use. According to Sony's periodic maintenance schedule - head cleaning should further be performed at each subsequent scheduled service interval (1000, 1500, 2000, 2500, 3000, 3500, 4000, and 5000 hours).

The only items required for the procedure are a Phillips screwdriver, a package of Kodak lens cleaning papers, a bottle of isopropyl alcohol, (methanol is preferable - available at your pharmacy) some cleaning swabs (Q-tips are best) and a head demagnetizer, available from any audio dealer.

On the Sony SL-8200, unscrew the seven top plate screws, and remove the tracking control knob. Lift off the top plate. On the SL-8600, remove the six screws, and carefully remove the top plate - noting that it is held captive by a snap action lip. Pry the top plate off gently.

Once inside either machine - the procedure is the same. Moisten a piece of Kodak lens cleaning paper with methanol or alcohol. Place the lens paper against the scanner drum - lightly - and with your other hand - rotate the black plastic motor cover (Fig. 1) in a clockwise direction. Rotating the motor will cause the video head to turn. Press the lens cleaning paper just firmly enough to the scanner so that you can feel the two heads against your finger as they pass. Rotate the heads a dozen times or so.

plastic motor  
cover

scanner drum  
(heads)

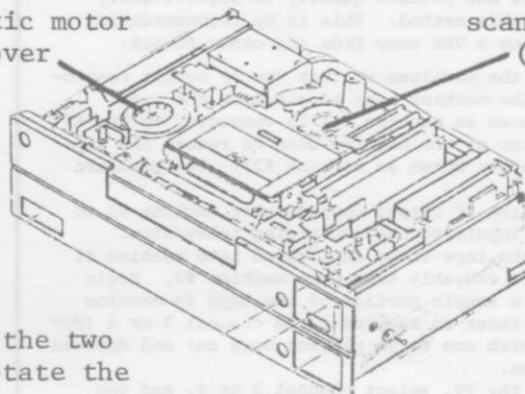


Figure 1

If the heads are dirty - the lens cleaning paper may be noticeably contaminated, but not necessarily.

Using a new piece of lens tissue - wipe down the scanner drum surface - be extremely careful not to nick or abrade the heads when doing so. Wipe only with a horizontal motion.



Next thoroughly clean the rubber pinch roller. (Fig. 2) If you are not familiar with the pinch roller - you can identify it (along with the tape guides which should also be cleaned) by placing a cassette into the machine. Turn the VCR on, and watch the tape thread. Watch the entire threading ring assembly rotate - and note the black rubber pinch roller which is mounted on the ring. Eject the tape, turn off the machine, and proceed. The roller is now located close to the cassette door - and should be cleaned while in this position.

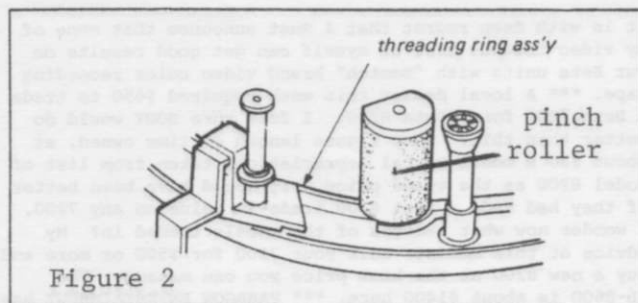


Figure 2

This can best be accomplished with the cassette door up. Using a cotton swab saturated with alcohol or methanol. Press the swab firmly against the roller, and rotate the roller with one finger of your other hand. Use three or four swabs - and

clean until you have removed most of the black residue.

Clean the metal tape guides. These are small steel posts on which the tape passes. Use a saturated swab for these guides.

At this point - if you are familiar with the location of the audio control track and erase heads, clean them with a saturated swab. This however - will probably not be necessary.

Finally - degaussing (demagnetizing) the video head and tape guide areas may be done at this time. If you own a head demagnetizer, you no doubt know how to use it. If you plan to purchase one at this time - see your Sony dealer, as Sony offers a fine unit at a reasonable cost. If you are not familiar with the proper use of a demagnetizer make sure that you read the instructions carefully before using. Never make direct contact with the video heads, and remember to withdraw the demagnetizer slowly and to turn the power off when it is at least 6 feet away from the tape recorder. (Fig. 3) The entire tape guide area may be demagnetized in this way. A well demagnetized tape head and scanner will result in an increased signal to noise ratio and superior video performance.

Before replacing the top deck, thread a tape, and insure that all transport functions are working properly.

Once you become familiar with this simple procedure - continue to perform it periodically. You will find contamination on the pinch roller excessive. This is normal and 100 hour cleaning intervals for the roller might be advisable.

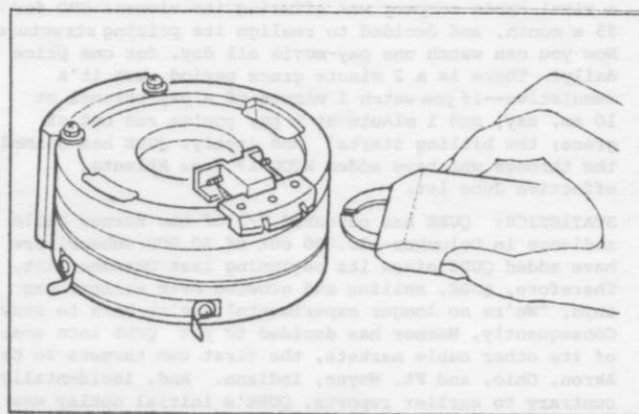


Figure 3

Demagnetizing however, need only be performed every 500 hours or so.

[Steve tells me that next issue he plans to explain to us all about TV monitors. If you have a subject of a technical nature that you think Steve should tackle, let us know, and we'll see if we can get him to give it a whirl. -- Ed.]



## update

This is a short update on my article on the Warner QUBE system in Columbus, Ohio, published in Issue 12 of TVN. Since my original article appeared, QUBE has added and deleted a number of channels, pursuant to polls and requests from its viewers. [See #12 for more on QUBE.]

**CHANGES IN PROGRAMMING:** First off, the 10 "P" (premium or pay) channels have been revamped. QUBE has added two more first-run movie channels, for a total of three. (The \$1 classic movies are still shown.) These first-run flicks are shown off 2" Quad or 3/4" U-Matic tape, incidentally. The games channel has been eliminated, although QUBE plans to run games on another channel of their choosing. The stocks channel has been moved to the "P" column, although it is still a "free" channel. Channel P-6, "Special Events," is now showing one Disney film plus a few shorts each month. And lastly, there is the popular, recently added channel P-4, "Golden Oldies," showing uncut TV shows of the 50's such as Topper, Ozzie and Harriet, Yancy Derringer, Peter Gunn, I Married Joan, and others.

The "C" (community) channels also show some changes. The old P-9 channel, "College at Home," has moved to C-9 and is now "QUBE Campus," still offering pay-by-the-course college courses, complete with homework and testing thru the QUBE console. C-1, "Columbus Alive," now has a few different features, including: "Celebration!" --a live program done from QUBE's remote studios at the Westland Mall; "Columbus: Then and Now"--featuring local events of the past; "Talent Search"--with competition in singing, dancing, skateboarding, etc., by local Columbus yokels (with viewers voting from home with the two-way system); and of course "Flippo's Magic Circus" and "Columbus Goes Bananaz" are still shown. The "Sports Scores and News" channel now features out-of-town and local sporting events (high school games, Columbus Clippers' baseball, etc.) in addition to scores & news.

**OTHER TIDBITS:** Looking across Columbus, QUBE saw that a rival cable company was offering its viewers HBO for \$5 a month, and decided to realign its pricing structure. Now you can watch one pay-movie all day, for one price daily! There is a 2 minute grace period, but it's cumulative--if you watch 1 minute of a pay-channel at 10 am, say, and 1 minute at 6 pm, you've run out of grace; the billing starts! And lastly, QUBE has joined the throngs who have added WTCG-17 from Atlanta, effective June 1st.

**STATISTICS:** QUBE has captured 2/3 of the Warner Cable audience in Columbus--20,000 out of 30,000 subscribers have added QUBE since its beginning last December 1st. Therefore, QUBE, smiling and growing ever richer, has said, "We're no longer experimental; we're here to stay!" Consequently, Warner has decided to put QUBE into some of its other cable markets, the first two targets to be Akron, Ohio, and Ft. Wayne, Indiana. And, incidentally, contrary to earlier reports, QUBE's initial outlay was \$21,000,000!

Well, all this notwithstanding, I am still offering my now outdated (ouch!) QUBE SAMPLER TAPE to anyone requesting it. (At least you can see how QUBE was originally set up!) I can still offer it on only U-Matic or Beta XI only; Just send me a blank cassette and \$1.25 to cover first class return postage, and you'll get to see yours truly in living color, plus a sampling of each of the 30 QUBE channels. (I do NOT have ready access to QUBE, as many of you may think; the sampler tape was compiled from a one-shot opportunity.) Hope to hear from you. RAY D. GLASSER, 27621 CHAGRIN BLVD., APT. 215, CLEVELAND, OH 44122

## VIDEO VOICE OF CANADA

It is with deep regret that I must announce that none of my video friends here or myself can get good results on our Beta units with "Scotch" brand video color recording tape. \*\*\* A local dealer this week required \$650 to trade a Beta 7200 for a Beta 8200. I felt sure SONY would do better than this. They figure length of time owned, at about \$30 a month rental depreciation, taken from list of model 8200 as the trade price. It would have been better if they had made a flat \$300 trade-in value on any 7200. I wonder now what becomes of the models traded in? My advice at this moment: sell your 7200 for \$500 or more and buy a new 8200 at the best price you can manage. The SL-8600 is about \$1400 here. \*\*\* PARAGON ENTERTAINMENT has been appointed outlet for MAGNETIC VIDEO in Canada (same catalogue with color cartoons, Elvis movies and the Chaplin films included. Canadian readers may write me for a copy and Canadian prices. All titles now available in Beta 2 and VHS only, no Beta 1. We can now save on postage, customs duty and avoid very slow delivery. They have not announced a trade-in club here as yet, but members of the HATB club seem to have taken over that job free anyway. The thought occurred to me: why do we pay \$69.95 to Magnetic Video for a Fox color film, when we can wait and record it for \$30 or less, in the X-2 mode for \$15? The figures on their sales volume make me shudder. Is the quality that much better, or is it for the impatient? I must agree that the selections are excellent, and the quality unsurpassed. \*\*\* The Holland video package tape was less than great, and although they claim that \$1.50 postage will break them, with their very small margin of profit, I must be bad in math. The tape costs \$12 or less and they charge \$40 per preview reel. I would say that's a very good margin. Who is kidding who? Did they realize they were dealing with someone who has been in the trade for more than 30 years? \*\*\* Tell James I should be listed as a Contributor, not a Correspondent. \*\*\* I will not eat my heart out re the Hot Tub and Video Room [See TVN #14. --Ed.] A person could get fried by the power touching the Beta with a wet finger. Has anyone heard of the fault safe device for pools and tubs? Besides, two years ago I had the color video monitor installed in my health spa so I could watch video tape from the ceiling while in the Jacuzzi whirlpool bath, a much better body therapy. Oh well, to each his own. \*\*\* My sincere thanks to Marc (at last) for his IDEAL room and the sample cassette box. READERS: You will NEVER be satisfied until all your tapes are in these Hollywood cases, dust free and super pro looking. I am converting my entire library to these. Canadian readers can get them from me. I am working this out with Canadian customs now. It looks like a plastic products entry. \*\*\* One reader in London, Ontario has sent me a list of over 300 tapes to trade, and another over 200 titles on a wide variety of subjects. I am receiving about 4 to 5 applications a month to our TAPE TRADE CLUB, and will issue a monthly bulletin and newsletter starting in September. Also a catalogue of Beta 1 and 2 tapes (no VHS), who has what and where. \*\*\* Phase one is now completed in my new Video House (on the ranch). Two floors, the bottom for model trains (my partner's hobby), the top floor for video recording, dubbing and screen projection and film chain work, and a lounge. The structure has been built in the Swiss chalet format with balconies up and down slanting out over the water, sliding glass doors, windows 6 x 8 feet in gold tint sloping outward, spiral staircase to the upper level, plug-ins for outside video on lower and upper balconies, fireplace, and custom wall cabinets in teak for the units and tape library. \*\*\* My favorite letter of the month comes from Dan Lewis of Cambridge Springs, who writes: "Interesting, informative, personal, fan oriented, it's so personal, I hope it won't lose this touch" ... I sure hope not Dan, I will try to keep the force. I still answer every letter

[Cont. on p.30]



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# The VHS Network

Greetings once again, fellow videophiles! I have lots of info this month, as well as some feedback for the letters I've been receiving.

First of all, as you may have noticed, the heading of this humble column has changed. Yes, I know you all immediately turn to this column as soon as you rip your TVN out of the envelope, and you couldn't find it this time, but bear with me--I'm trying to broaden the scope of my writing.

Secondly, to answer some of the more frequent questions I've been receiving in the mail:

*Q: Where do I get the 3-year RCA full warranty?*

*A: You don't. It's a 2-year warranty. RCA first claimed to me that they had a 3-year, but instead it is a 2-year warranty (21 months plus 3 months free when you buy the machine.)*

*Q: How do I hook up 2 RCA VCR's to dub out commercials, etc., from other tapes I have made?*

*A: It is incredibly easy. See the section which follows for extensive (overkill) instructions on how to do it (Beta VCR's too).*

*Q: Where can I get prerecorded cassettes?*

[We interrupt this answer to announce that issue #16 will feature our 2nd annual roundup of prerecorded tape sources. These will include the contributions collected by Jim Swan and intended for publication here. In the meantime, check out the dealer's ads in this and the previous couple issues. We now return you to your regularly scheduled columnist....Editor]

*Q: How should I organize and label my collection of video recordings?*

*A: By way of this question, I would like to introduce my partner Jim Swan, whose comments I have included below. Swan is very qualified when it comes to critiquing fandom and doesn't pull any punches on his content. As to how you should organize your collection, I couldn't care less how you do it--you can write fancy numbers on them, use six levels of cross-indexing and condition coding, go buy a computer to code them, etc. However, I endorse Swan's "P.S. note" at the end of his section.*

*Q: How regularly should I clean my heads?*

*A: Once again: Avoid cleaning heads. I don't have the guts to go inside my machine and do it, especially when I can get the RCA warranty to cover it for \$5.*

[If you do have the guts to do it, we suggest you carefully follow Steve Comet's illustrated instructions provided elsewhere in this ish....Editor]

Thirdly, the time chart mock-up goes on. I am happy to report that we (Big Nate & Swan) have finally got a timechart on 4 hr VHS tapes that we feel is accurate and complete to within 20 seconds or one count on the built-in counter. It should appear in my column in the next issue. For those of you who can't wait till mid-November, send me a stamped self-addressed envelope (your first born, library lists, money, and blood) and I will personally send you a copy, along with any info you request that I can provide. Now for that dubbing section I promised.

## HOOKING UP--PART I: 2 RCA VHS Recorders

1. First, decide which VCR will record and which will play (transmit). For purposes of this text, let's designate the recorder which records as VCR-IN and the recorder which plays as VCR-OUT.

### 2. Required Equipment:

- A. 2 VHS recorders and a television set.
- B. One video (coaxial) cable with standard stereo plugs.
- C. One normal stereo audio cable with standard stereo plugs (all plugs are "male").

D. The usual 75 ohm coaxial cable that comes with the recorder.

3. On VCR-IN, attach the video cable to "video in" socket. Attach audio plug to "audio in" socket.

4. On VCR-OUT, attach the video cable to "video out" socket and attach the audio plug to "audio out" socket.

5. Attach 75-ohm coaxial cable from "VHF out" socket on VCR-IN to 75-ohm socket on TV.

6. Set "select" switches on both video recorders to "VCR."

7. Turn "Tuner/Camera" switch on VCR-IN to "Camera."

8. Advance tape in VCR-IN with play key until desired starting location is reached and stop machine depressing "stop" key.

9. Advance tape in VCR-OUT to vicinity of material to be transferred, and depress "stop" key.

10. If VCR-IN is at the beginning of a tape, set "play/record" and "pause" keys (or use the remote pause--it is very handy) on VCR-IN.

11. If VCR-IN is in the middle of a tape (in other words, if dubbing one tape onto another tape to follow material which is already on it):

A. Play VCR-IN tape until desired start point is reached and push pause key (NOT remote pause, because when it is used, the record key is frozen).

B. Push down record key.

C. Set remote pause to "pause."

D. Release pause key on VCR only.

12. Push "play" on VCR-OUT. You will immediately see the picture on the TV, but you will hear no sound. Don't panic. (I dunno why this happens, perhaps something to do with the "audio-dub" key, but I doubt it. Bob Burns, what do you think?) Watch for the VCR-OUT picture to come up and release "pause" control on VCR-IN (whether key or remote) to allow play when appropriate on VCR-IN. Everything flows beautifully and it will record everything that is displayed on the TV.

13. NOTE: Turn off VCR-OUT first.

### 14. Additional information:

A. The TV may also be attached to VCR-OUT, however, it's always nice to be 100% sure that VCR-IN is getting what it's supposed to.

B. It's also nice to have an extension cord (electrical) since I've been told that, depending on the house wiring, the power drain might hurt the resolution.

C. When you dub for the first time, after about 5 minutes, stop both VCR's and rewind. Play VCR-IN and see what you are actually getting. This is cheap insurance against wasting your time.

## HOOKING UP--PART II: Beta/VHS Connection

### 1. Equipment notes:

A. Beta machine used is Sanyo Beta-cord X2 as VCR-IN.

B. VHS is RCA Selectavision as VCR-OUT.

C. Use same cable! Yes, video fans, the plugs are the same in this case.

D. Though Sanyo and RCA Beta/VHS machines have identical plug jacks, I have it on "good authority" that all Betas are not the same. Is this true? At any rate, some info on plugs is in order. There are two kinds of plugs used: 1. The standard audio (now audio/video) plug--the type of plug that fits the jacks in the back of most stereo receivers/tape decks/turntables, etc. 2. The miniplug (Yes, I know the name is strange, but that's what it's called at component shops) type used by headphones/TV earphone jacks. I have been told that this is the type used on early Betamaxes. (Sony sells--and I bought one--An audio cable with a miniplug/standard plug cable (1 meter) for \$2.)



2. Procedures are remarkably similar in nature. Since they are nearly identical, let's abbreviate and use steps 3 thru 10 of Part I.

3. Since the Beta recorder is VCR-IN and does not have remote pause ignore instructions in step 11 with respect thereto.

4. Follow step 12 of Part I and everything will be the same but sound will also heard when pause switch is released.

5. NOTE: Again, turn off VCR-OUT first.

6. If you desire to use the VHS recorder as VCR-IN and the Beta recorder as VCR-OUT, all steps in Part I are applicable.

[For an alternative method of hooking up for dubbing purposes (steps 1-7), using the RF connectors instead of individual audio and video jacks, see Bob Burns' column elsewhere herein.]

## Swan's Song...

The following comments are penned by my friend, Jim Swan. They are intended to be thought provoking, etc. Swan and I invite you to add your comments and send them to our fearless editor, Jim Lowe, so he can continue to mold the direction of this magazine (we're not a newsletter anymore, Jim, they only have one staple) to suit the mass readership and at the same time not alienate the readers with minority views who also have their needs. And so, Jim Swan on TVN #14:

Love the cover. Best yet, by far. Keep up the style and pretty soon it'll be selling in Safeway. Kidding aside, overall the magazine seems to be taking on a more professional look, which I endorse. Organization is much improved, with less duplication of material by different contributors. Suggestion: Perhaps you (Jim Lowe) could assign? suggest? demand? that your individual writers tackle specific sets of questions, problems, issues, etc., prior to each issue, so that the duplication would be minimized further.

Comment--Have generally found Mr. Weilage's columns to be informative, if somewhat longwinded. However, "The Ultimate Video Room" was a complete waste--3 pages that could have been devoted to something of real interest to the readers.

Comment--Completely agree with the idea of using the power of numbers to try to effect some response from major film companies. Let's make ourselves heard.

Comment--On subject of syndication of shows, and the disappearance of certain older programs: Does anybody really believe that people today want to watch "The Millionaire" or "Captain Midnight," etc., in significant numbers? Come on, man. The only older programs that really hold on and continue their popularity are ones that have entered the folklore (so to speak) because of their originality, stars, content, etc.; examples--Superman, I Love Lucy, Sea Hunt, Peter Gunn. Can you imagine watching "Three's Company" or "Happy Days" 20 years from now? No way, right? It's the same thing with 95% of the old programs--they existed for their time but don't transcend it.

Suggestions for future articles: (1) Consumer-type survey of various film/tape outlets for service, quality, etc. Similar to what Film Collector's World does for 8mm/16mm. (2) Survey of various cable TV Systems (Z Channel, QUBE, Showtime, HBO, etc.) comparing programs, cost, service, picture quality, and prospects of such cable systems for areas not yet serviced, plus info on future programming and like topics. (3) Survey of readership for info on most desired films and possible subsequent pressure brought to bear (as stated previously) on the companies owning rights to these flicks. As a brave soul, herewith my top 3 for concurrence, ridicule, or?--Dirty Harry, Deliverance, Wild Bunch. How's that for some of your old ultra-violence?

Final comment--Hope nobody takes any of these comments as derogatory or unduly critical--we can't spend all of our time patting each other on the back and expect to generate any real response or useful discussion.

P.S.--Just read Marc Weilage's column in Issue #13 and am moved to comment on the section entitled "On organizing a Collection." Christ Almighty, it sounded like the training manual for new employees at the Library of Congress. Maybe it sounds too simple, but why not just write the titles of movies, shows, etc., on the tape labels, instead of this super index crap. Take a look at "The Anal Retentives," a cartoon strip by Bill Griffith in Rip-Off Comix #1. It says it all. [It's copyrighted, gang, or maybe I could have reprinted the page that Nate sent me....Ed.]

Well, that about concludes the column for this month (the BIGGEST yet). It was good to meet so many of you at the San Diego Comic Con. Our fearless Publisher/Editor was there, along with part of his staff. Special thanx to Sharon, who I think gets the thankless dirty job of typing this up. Also, to Jim and Steve in S.F. (Where's your letter?) And why hasn't that wonderful person out there with an uncut copy of Dirty Harry written to me? So, until next time, you can write to me, the Big Nate, or to Jim Swan at 2617 Deerford St., Lakewood, CA 90712 c/o R & D Fernandez.

## DEALER'S\*DOINGS\*



A continuing feature in which we generously hand out free plugs to those you may want to know about:

SOUNDTRACK COLLECTOR'S NEWSLETTER, P.O. Box 3895, Springfield, MA 01101, provides the same sort of personal and comprehensive coverage for collectors of movie soundtracks that we do for videophiles. Published in Belgium, but available by AIR MAIL subscription for \$6 from the above address, this mag is a must for those of the soundtrack persuasion. It even reviews such things as the Japanese bootleg album of the soundtrack from "Walkabout". Great newsletter.

FOTOMAT, (3400 locations nationwide), has begun offering a film (8mm or Super 8; sound or silent) and slide (35mm or 126mm) to videocassette transfer service. All work will be done on "Scotch" tape for Beta transfers and on Panasonic for VHS. The price schedule is remarkably reasonable. You can get their brochure "All About Transferring Film and Slides to Video Tape" at your local outlet, or phone toll free: 800-325-4089.

VIDEO LOGS, 24049 Lyman Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44122, is offering a collection organizer which is strictly for those of you who prefer a less complex system and are too lazy to whip up one of your own. A set of 25 "log" sheets printed on card stock and punched for a 3 ring binder goes for \$3.95 and comes with an instruction sheet. See ad on p.34 issue #13.

Several dealer's catalogs are beginning to offer items of interest. We expect to have our 2nd annual roundup of pre-recorded tape sources next issue. In the meantime, you might be interested to know that CR SALES, Box 41325, Indianapolis, IN 46241, has a new list available which includes special prices on used and overstocked titles, and that SYNDICATE FILMS, 7411 Hines Place, Suite 117, Dallas, TX 75235, has acquired exclusive rental rights to videotapes of many westerns and some serials from Columbia Pictures.

PLEASE!! Mention good ole TVN when you write to 'em.

Don Jenkins, of PACIFICA LABS in Tarzana CA, came through for you VHS types with a computer produced VHS counter index chart. Adjustments may be necessary for individual machines. Let us know how accurate it works out to be. Don also advises: The cassette nomenclature is for the minimum tape load in meters. That is, the VK250 contains at least 250 meters of tape. The length varies slightly with each cassette and among various makers. The nominal tape velocity is 2 meters per minute in SP mode and 1 meter per minute in LP mode. The actual velocity setting for the RCA machine is slightly different, 0.033346 meters per second in SP mode and 0.016673 in LP. The counter is belt driven and cannot be relied on to be truly precise. The digits turn at a rate of 3.333 per meter or 8.996 seconds per digit in the SP mode. For the 250 meter cassette, this works out to be a minimum end count of 834 or 2 hours 4 minutes and 57 seconds. // Many, many thanks Don!! Set forth below are your two computer print outs.

RCA VHS VCR MODEL VBI 200 / VCI 200  
TAPE COUNTER VS. TIME  
SP MODE TAPE VELOCITY 0.033346 METERS/SECOND  
CASSETTE LENGTH ASSUMED 250 METERS

RCA VHS VCR MODEL VBI 200 / VCI 200  
TAPE COUNTER VS. TIME  
LP MODE TAPE VELOCITY 0.016673 METERS/SEC  
CASSETTE LENGTH ASSUMED 250 METERS

COUNTER	TIME USED SECONDS	HR	MIN	SEC	TIME REMAINING SECONDS	HR	MIN	SEC
0	0	0	0	0	7497.15	2	4	57
10	99.9658	0	1	29	7407.19	2	3	27
20	179.932	0	2	59	7317.22	2	1	57
30	269.897	0	4	29	7227.25	2	0	27
40	359.863	0	5	59	7137.29	1	57	57
50	449.829	0	7	29	7047.32	1	57	27
60	539.795	0	8	59	6957.36	1	55	57
70	629.761	0	10	29	6867.39	1	54	27
80	719.727	0	11	59	6777.42	1	52	57
90	809.692	0	13	29	6687.46	1	51	27
100	899.658	0	14	59	6597.49	1	49	57
110	989.624	0	16	29	6507.53	1	48	27
120	1079.59	0	17	59	6417.56	1	46	57
130	1169.56	0	19	29	6327.6	1	45	27
140	1259.52	0	20	59	6237.63	1	43	57
150	1349.49	0	22	29	6147.66	1	42	27
160	1439.45	0	23	59	6057.7	1	40	57
170	1529.42	0	25	29	5967.73	1	39	27
180	1619.38	0	26	59	5877.77	1	37	57
190	1709.35	0	28	29	5787.8	1	36	27
200	1799.32	0	29	59	5697.83	1	34	57
210	1889.28	0	31	29	5607.87	1	33	27
220	1979.25	0	32	59	5517.9	1	31	57
230	2069.21	0	34	29	5427.94	1	30	27
240	2159.18	0	35	59	5337.97	1	28	57
250	2249.15	0	37	29	5248.01	1	27	27
260	2339.11	0	38	59	5158.04	1	25	57
270	2429.08	0	40	29	5068.07	1	24	27
280	2519.04	0	41	59	4978.11	1	22	57
290	2609.01	0	43	29	4888.14	1	21	27
300	2698.97	0	44	58	4798.18	1	19	57
310	2788.94	0	46	28	4708.21	1	18	27
320	2878.91	0	47	58	4618.24	1	16	57
330	2968.87	0	49	28	4528.28	1	15	27
340	3058.84	0	50	58	4438.31	1	13	57
350	3148.8	0	52	28	4348.35	1	12	27
360	3238.77	0	53	58	4258.38	1	10	57
370	3328.74	0	55	28	4168.42	1	9	27
380	3418.7	0	56	58	4078.45	1	7	57
390	3508.67	0	58	28	3988.48	1	6	27
400	3598.63	0	59	58	3898.52	1	4	57
410	3688.6	1	1	28	3808.55	1	3	27
420	3778.56	1	2	58	3718.59	1	1	57
430	3868.53	1	4	28	3628.62	1	0	27
440	3958.5	1	5	58	3538.66	0	58	57
450	4048.46	1	7	28	3448.69	0	57	27
460	4138.43	1	8	58	3358.72	0	55	57
470	4228.39	1	10	28	3268.76	0	54	27
480	4318.36	1	11	58	3178.79	0	52	57
490	4408.32	1	13	28	3088.83	0	51	27
500	4498.29	1	14	58	2998.86	0	49	57
510	4588.26	1	16	28	2908.89	0	48	27
520	4678.22	1	17	58	2818.93	0	46	57
530	4768.19	1	19	28	2728.96	0	45	27
540	4858.15	1	20	58	2639	0	43	57
550	4948.12	1	22	28	2549.03	0	42	27
560	5038.09	1	23	58	2459.07	0	40	57
570	5128.05	1	25	28	2369.1	0	39	27
580	5218.02	1	26	58	2279.13	0	37	57
590	5307.98	1	28	27	2189.17	0	36	27
600	5397.95	1	29	57	2099.2	0	34	57
610	5487.91	1	31	27	2009.24	0	33	27
620	5577.88	1	32	57	1919.27	0	31	57
630	5667.85	1	34	27	1829.3	0	30	27
640	5757.81	1	35	57	1739.34	0	28	57
650	5847.78	1	37	27	1649.37	0	27	27
660	5937.74	1	38	57	1559.41	0	25	57
670	6027.71	1	40	27	1469.44	0	24	27
680	6117.68	1	41	57	1379.48	0	22	57
690	6207.64	1	43	27	1289.51	0	21	27
700	6297.61	1	44	57	1199.54	0	19	57
710	6387.57	1	46	27	1109.58	0	18	27
720	6477.54	1	47	57	1019.61	0	16	57
730	6567.51	1	49	27	929.647	0	15	27
740	6657.47	1	50	57	839.681	0	13	57
750	6747.44	1	52	27	749.715	0	12	27
760	6837.4	1	53	57	659.749	0	10	57
770	6927.37	1	55	27	569.783	0	9	27
780	7017.33	1	56	57	479.817	0	7	57
790	7107.3	1	58	27	389.852	0	6	27
800	7197.27	1	59	57	299.886	0	4	57
810	7287.23	2	1	27	209.92	0	3	27
820	7377.2	2	2	57	119.954	0	1	57
830	7467.16	2	4	27	29.9883	0	0	27
840	7557.13	2	5	57				
READY								

COUNTER	TIME USED				TIME REMAINING			
	SECONDS	HR	MIN	SEC	SECONDS	HR	MIN	SEC
0	0	0	0	0	14994.3	4	9	54
10	179.932	0	2	59	14814.4	4	6	54
20	359.863	0	5	59	14634.4	4	3	54
30	539.795	0	8	59	14454.5	4	0	54
40	719.727	0	11	59	14274.6	3	57	54
50	899.658	0	14	59	14094.6	3	54	54
60	1079.59	0	17	59	13914.7	3	51	54
70	1259.52	0	20	59	13734.8	3	48	54
80	1439.45	0	23	59	13554.8	3	45	54
90	1619.38	0	26	59	13374.9	3	42	54
100	1799.32	0	29	59	13195	3	39	54
110	1979.25	0	32	59	13015.1	3	36	55
120	2159.18	0	35	59	12835.1	3	33	55
130	2339.11	0	38	59	12655.2	3	30	55
140	2519.04	0	41	59	12475.3	3	27	55
150	2698.97	0	44	58	12295.3	3	24	55
160	2878.91	0	47	58	12115.4	3	21	55
170	3058.84	0	50	58	11935.5	3	18	55
180	3238.77	0	53	58	11755.5	3	15	55
190	3418.7	0	56	58	11575.6	3	12	55
200	3598.63	0	59	58	11395.7	3	9	55
210	3778.56	1	2	58	11215.7	3	6	55
220	3958.5	1	5	58	11035.8	3	3	55
230	4138.43	1	8	58	10855.9	3	0	55
240	4318.36	1	11	58	10675.9	2	57	55
250	4498.29	1	14	58	10496	2	54	56
260	4678.22	1	17	58	10316.1	2	51	56
270	4858.15	1	20	58	10136.1	2	48	56
280	5038.09	1	23	58	9956.22	2	45	56
290	5218.02	1	26	58	9776.29	2	42	56
300	5397.95	1	29	57	9596.35	2	39	56
310	5577.88	1	32	57	9416.42	2	36	56
320	5757.81	1	35	57	9236.49	2	33	56
330	5937.74	1	38	57	9056.56	2	30	56
340	6117.68	1	41	57	8876.63	2	27	56
350	6297.61	1	44	57	8696.7	2	24	56
360	6477.54	1	47	57	8516.76	2	21	56
370	6657.47	1	50	57	8336.83	2	18	56
380	6837.4	1	53	57	8156.9	2	15	56
390	7017.33	1	56	57	7976.97	2	12	56
400	7197.27	1	59	57	7797.04	2	9	57
410	7377.2	2	2	57	7617.11	2	6	57
420	7557.13	2	5	57	7437.17	2	3	57
430	7737.06	2	8	57	7257.24	2	0	57
440	7916.99	2	11	56	7077.31	1	57	57
450	8096.92	2	14	56	6897.38	1	54	57
460	8276.86	2	17	56	6717.45	1	51	57
470	8456.79	2	20	56	6537.52	1	48	57
480	8636.72	2	23	56	6357.58	1	45	57
490	8816.65	2	26	56	6177.65	1	42	57
500	8996.58	2	29	56	5997.72	1	39	57
510	9176.51	2	32	56	5817.79	1	36	57
520	9356.44	2	35	56	5637.86	1	33	57
530	9536.38	2	38	56	5457.93	1	30	57
540	9716.31	2	41	56	5277.99	1	27	57
550	9896.24	2	44	56	5098.06	1	24	58
560	10076.2	2	47	56	4918.13	1	21	58
570	10256.1	2	50	56	4738.2	1	18	58
580	10436	2	53	56	4558.27	1	15	58
590	10616	2	56	55	4378.34	1	12	58
600	10795.9	2	59	55	4198.4	1	9	58
610	10975.8	3	2	55	4018.47	1	6	58
620	11155.8	3	5	55	3838.54	1	3	58
630	11335.7	3	8	55	3658.61	1	0	58
640	11515.6	3	11	55	3478.68	0	57	58
650	11695.6	3	14	55	3298.75	0	54	58
660	11875.5	3	17	55	3118.81	0	51	58
670	12055.4	3	20	55	2938.88	0	48	58
680	12235.4	3	23	55	2758.95	0	45	58
690	12415.3	3	26	55	2579.02	0	42	59
700	12595.2	3	29	55	2399.09	0	39	59
710	12775.1	3	32	55	2219.16	0	36	59
720	12955.1	3	35	55	2039.22	0	33	59
730	13135	3	38	55	1859.29	0	30	59
740	13314.9	3	41	54	1679.36	0	27	59
750	13494.9	3	44	54	1499.43	0	24	59
760	13674.8	3	47	54	1319.5	0	21	59
770	13854.7	3	50	54	1139.57	0	18	59
780	14034.7	3	53	54	959.635	0	15	59
790	14214.6	3	56	54	779.703	0	12	59
800	14394.5	3	59	54	599.772	0	9	59
810	14574.5	4	2	54	419.84	0	6	59
820	14754.4	4	5	54	239.908	0	3	59
830	14934.3	4	8	54	59.9766	0	0	59
840	15114.3	4	11	54				



# TED REINHART Tape Reviews

(A COLUMN DEVOTED TO THE EVALUATION OF VIDEO TAPES AVAILABLE FOR THE HOME MARKET)

First, some personal words to express my appreciation for the opportunity to become your video tape reviewer for The Videophile's Newsletter, and bossman, Jim Lowe. Some of you readers may know me from my articles on the western film for other publications. The western has been my staple (or should I say "stable") since childhood. I've met many of the great cowboy actors, continue to communicate with some, and own a healthy collection of films and tapes from this genre. ¶ My review work for TVN will not exclusively cover the western film. I am very much aware that there are other subjects on video tape, and will attempt to give equal space to a variety of titles. ¶ A year ago, I was one of many who scoffed at the entire video tape concept. A "flash in the pan," so I thought. Never would I consider going tape. Today, I am one of video tape's greatest champions. In fact, I'll go so far as to say that the celluloid gang will be taking a back seat to tape in a matter of 5 years, especially if progress continues toward the expected good quality, large-screen TV projectors. ¶ So much for me...let's review. ¶ All tapes reviewed were Beta II format, but are also available in VHS format.

## THE FLYING DEUCES (RKO Radio--1939)

Credits: Cast--Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Jean Parker, Reginald Gardiner, James Finlayson. Producer--Boris Morros. Director--Edward Sutherland.

Story: Oliver Hardy, jilted by the girl he loves, becomes despondent and wants to commit suicide. Stan is willing to help him leave this world, but is reluctant to accompany him. Fortunately, tragedy is averted when a Foreign Legionnaire persuades them to enlist in the Legion to forget. The pair make somewhat inefficient soldiers and, as a climax to their misdeeds, are sentenced to be shot at dawn. They escape in an airplane, but after a wild ride it crashes. Laurel escapes unhurt, but Hardy is killed, only to reappear almost instantly, reincarnated as a horse.

Evaluation: This is one of the better quality tapes I have viewed from Tom Dunnahoo's Thunderbird Films. This tape is packaged in the standard manufacturer's box and identified with the accompanying "peel" label, with a typewritten title placed on the edge and top of the cassette. The Flying Deuces is one of the most underrated of all Laurel and Hardy titles. It's not the best, but far, far from the worst. The movie features numerous new gags and routines, along with the "stock" L & H comedy capers, all interwoven into a delightful plot. It's a good buy for anyone.

Source: Thunderbird Films, Box 65157, Los Angeles, CA 90065

## HELLFIRE (Republic Pictures--1948)

Credits: Cast--William Elliott, Marie Windsor, Forest Tucker, Jim Davis. Producer--William O'Sullivan. Director--R.G. Springsteen.

Story: William Elliott, while playing poker in a rowdy saloon, is caught at cheating. As the group of victimized card players are about to hang Elliott, a minister intervenes and is accidentally shot. Elliott escapes with the critically injured man, who with his dying words tells him that he was committed to building a church in this wild frontier community. Elliott promises that he will carry on with the minister's project. At this point, Elliott proceeds to attempt to locate funds for the project using honest means, but he has little success with such a dishonest population. Then, Elliott has a chance meeting with a woman outlaw, Doll Brown (played by Marie Windsor), who has a \$5,000 price tag on her head and is being trailed by U.S. Marshal Forest Tucker and some badmen under the leadership of Jim Davis. Elliott decides that this is the source of his church money. Rather than force Doll to surrender, or actually capture her, he attempts to "convince" her that she should surrender. An exciting series of events set the stage for an outstanding climax which results in Doll "seeing the light" and saving the Marshal, and we assume Elliott gets the reward money to build the promised church.

Evaluation: Hellfire has to be the most "different" western movie I have ever seen. At times, you would almost believe this film to be the product of a religious organization (which is not the case). There are numerous direct quotes or readings from the Good Book, and a demonstration of inspiring faith exhibited by William Elliott. All is done in good taste and should not offend anyone of any conviction. In fact, if anything, the motion picture should be an inspiration to anyone who sees it. Elliott, who graduated from good medium-budget B westerns to high-budget B+ westerns, has oftentimes been compared with William S. Hart. Hellfire is definitely a Hart-type vehicle, with Elliott turning in a Hart-type performance...intense, sober, determined. This Trucolor videocassette is of superb quality and is packaged in a custom box with a special label. Any Bill Elliott fan would prize this tape. Those who desire a movie with a moral will particularly approve.

Source: The Nostalgia Merchant, 6255 Sunset Blvd., Suite 1019, Hollywood, CA 90028

## HELL'S ANGELS (United Artists--1930)

Credits: Cast--Ben Lyon, James Hall, Jean Harlowe, John Darrow, Lucien Prival, Frank Clarke. Producer--Caddo Company. Director--Howard Hughes.

Background: The drama and realism of Hell's Angels, as unfolded on the screen, was obtained not only at unparalleled expense, but after 3 years of the most spectacular filming on record. In the fall of 1926, Howard Hughes decided to produce a super motion picture that would glorify and perpetuate the exploits of Allied and German airmen during World War I. A story distinguished by its originality and historic fidelity was completed and plans were made to film it on an epic scale.

Hughes obtained the services of more than 100 expert pilots, including some of America's foremost stunt fliers. Time and again there were forced landings, accidental crack-ups, and mid-air collisions. The front pages of newspapers throughout the country blazed with news of miraculous escapes of the daredevil pilots who risked their lives to provide thrills for movie fans. Two fliers did lose their lives in the production--Al Johnston and Phil Jones.

Hell's Angels began as a silent film in 1926, but Hughes decided to add sound with the arrival of the "talkies" a year later. All the nonflying portions of the picture were refilmed and the dramatic sequences were all retaken with sound. Miss Greta Nissen, because of her foreign accent, was replaced with Miss Jean Harlowe, who makes her screen debut in this picture. When the film was finally completed, it had cost over \$4 million, more than 20,000 persons had taken part in its making, and more than 3 million feet of film had run through the cameras.

**Evaluation:** This is the aviation film/tape to end all aviation films/tapes. And, considering its vintage, that's saying a lot. No question about it, *Hell's Angels* is the best "flying" movie I have ever seen. The story is good, but the action is super superlative. No wonder Jean Harlowe became a star with this, her first film. She steals the show from the acting standpoint. Plus, Thunderbird does a nifty prologue-type thing at the outset of this tape: You see footage of the premiere ceremonies of the film, with Miss Harlowe, making comments on the movie. The quality of the tape is very good, much better than many more recent releases I've seen on tape. The cassette is packaged and labeled with the manufacturer's box and label. Anybody who likes movies should own *Hell's Angels*.

**Source:** Thunderbird Films, Box 65157, Los Angeles, CA 90065

#### IN OLD CALIENTE (Republic Pictures--1939)

**Credits:** Cast--Roy Rogers, George Hayes, Mary Hart, Jack LaRue, Harry Woods. **Producer/Director**--Joe Kane.

**Story:** Roy Rogers is sent by Don Miguel Vargas, wealthy 1853 California landowner, to Sacramento to sell the Don's cattle. On the way back, bandits steal the cattle money. In order to divert suspicion from himself, Manuel Delgado, foreman of the ranch and secret head of the bandits, convinces Don Miguel that the members of an American wagon train camped nearby, led by Roy's old friend Gabby, are guilty. Roy proceeds to help them prove their innocence. Roy and Gabby discover the hideout, recover the gold, and start to return it, but Delgado captures Roy and takes him to the Don as prisoner. While Don Miguel is questioning Roy, Delgado kills the Don and blames Roy. Roy escapes and finally proves that Delgado is the murderer and bandit leader. The gang is captured and all ends well.

**Evaluation:** A vast number of the very early Rogers titles are now being offered by Mark Lamberti and his Syndicate Films. I've seen many and, to this point, *In Old Caliente* emerges as my favorite. I am especially impressed by the Pacific shore setting, a location not used in too many B westerns. The climactic Rogers-LaRue fight in the salt water is a super sequence. The entire story line and performances are on an adult level. Picture and sound quality are of the typical high Syndicate Films' standards. This is a must-have tape for all fans of the movie west.

**Source:** Syndicate Films, Inc., 7411 Hines Pl., Suite 117, Dallas, TX 75235

#### NIGHTMARE FESTIVAL (trailer collection)

**Evaluation:** This almost 2-hour collection of horror and science fiction trailers is strictly for people who enjoy "previews of coming attractions." Furthermore, you had better have a strong stomach, since included are some of the goriest scenes ever recorded on film (or video tape). Just to drop a few titles on you: *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *Dr. Phibes*, *Count Yorga*, *The House that Dripped Blood*. A few "classics" are included, such as *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Spenser Tracy), *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, and *The Incredible Shrinking Man*. This videocassette is done by "Mr. Trailer" himself, Tom Dunnahoo, of Thunderbird. Tom has built a big business with super 8mm sound trailers, and it looks like he's off and running with tape. The overall quality of the tape was quite good. The color trailers look good and bloody.

**Source:** Thunderbird Films, Box 65157, Los Angeles, CA 90065

#### SUNSET SERENADE (Republic Pictures--1942)

**Credits:** Cast--Roy Rogers, George Hayes, Helen Parrish, Onslow Stevens, Joan Woodbury, Sons of the Pioneers. **Producer/Director**--Joseph Kane.

**Story:** A scheming housekeeper named Vera Martin is ordered to vacate the Bagley Ranch, over which she has

held sway since Bagley's death. Bagley has left the ranch to his nephew instead of to Vera as she had expected. Adjoining ranch owner, Greg Jackson, arrives to offer his sympathy to her, and a possible way out. He plans to divert the river above the Bagley ranch to his property, to rustle all the Bagley cattle, and to fake a mortgage on the ranch. The new owner will be beaten before he arrives. Roy, Gabby, and the Sons of the Pioneers, a roving band of troubadours, pass through the country just as Sylvia Clark arrives with her ward, Bagley's 1 year old nephew. They all arrive at the ranch just as Vera and Jackson are completing the frame-up. Roy is suspicious, and he and his friends decide to remain and help Miss Clark. As expected, all wrongs are righted--the cattle returned, the dam destroyed, the mortgage proven spurious, and Jackson and Vera apprehended.

**Evaluation:** This is another of Syndicate Films' fine quality, early Roy Rogers titles. I'm thoroughly sold on this tape for one reason alone--the Sons of the Pioneers. But you get more than enjoyable cowboy songs. There's plenty of action, a reasonably good story, and a few laughs thrown in. I should report that Syndicate uses custom labels on their wares, which are placed on the tape manufacturers cassette containers. Titles are typed on standard labels. Any fan of Roy and Gabby will like *Sunset Serenade*.

**Source:** Syndicate Films, Inc., 7411 Hines Pl., Suite 117, Dallas, TX 75235

#### THE THING (RKO Pictures--1951)

**Credits:** Cast--James Arness, Margaret Sheridan, Kenneth Tobey, Robert Cornthwaite, Dewey Martin, Douglas Spencer. **Producer**--Howard Hawks. **Director**--Christian Nyby.

**Story:** A crew of Air Force men stationed in Anchorage, Alaska, are ordered to fly to an area at the North Pole where a group of scientists, working in the sub-zero climate, have detected an unusual radiation reading near their station. The group goes to the radiated area. A "flying saucer" is detected in the frozen surface underfoot and a body is discovered frozen within the ice nearby. The body is removed, still in the large cake of ice, and returned to the research station. By accident, the ice thaws and "the thing" escapes its frozen confines to begin inflicting death and destruction on the persons and animals at this isolated spot in the frozen North. The "thing" is finally destroyed with an extreme concentration of electricity, and all ends well.

**Evaluation:** I first remember seeing *The Thing* at a theater during my college days in the early 50's. I liked the movie then, and it still holds up now. This film was a sort of "leader" for numerous science fiction dramas which would follow, but never match, the film in quality of production. Here is a motion picture which casted all little known actors (and an actress), including the upstart, James Arness, who only had to growl and look terrifying in his title role. But with excellent production techniques, perfect musical score by Dimitri Tiomkin, and fine acting efforts by the unknown cast, a good movie was the result. The tape I reviewed was of good quality in every respect.

**Source:** The Nostalgia Merchant, 6255 Sunset Blvd., Suite 1019, Hollywood, CA 90028

#### TRAIL OF ROBIN HOOD (Republic Pictures--1950)

**Credits:** Cast--Roy Rogers, Penny Edwards, Gordon Jones, Jack Holt, Foy Willing and the Riders of the Purple Sage, and guest stars Rex Allen, Allan Lane, Monte Hale, William Farnum, Tom Tyler, Ray Corrigan, Kermit Maynard, Tom Keene, and George Chesebro. **Producer**--Edward J. White. **Director**--William Whitney.

**Story:** From his big city offices, J. Corwin Alldridge, Christmas tree tycoon, sends word to his contract agent, Mitch McCall, to sign up all the tree growers in his area. Mitch signs up all but Jack Holt,



oldtime western movie star and owner of the most acreage in the area, who intends to sell his trees at much lower prices than the Aldridge group so that everyone can afford them. When Mitch fails to line up Holt, Aldridge sends his attractive daughter, Toby, to see him, but Roy Rogers, district chief of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, foils Toby's pitch. Mitch then sets in motion a plot to prevent Jack from getting his trees to market and to double cross Aldridge, sell the cuttings he's contracted for, and disappear with the proceeds. Mitch scares off all Jack's helpers except Roy and a few friends so Jack won't have drivers to get his trees to market, but Jack's cowboy friends show up to take over the driving chores. Mitch makes a final attempt to stop the shipment by setting fire to a bridge, but Roy subdues him. In the end, Aldridge is convinced that it's better to do business with a man like Jack Holt than the racketeers who wanted lotsa \$\$\$.

**Evaluation:** *Trail of Robin Hood* is the first color "dealer" video tape I have viewed. I can heap nothing but praise on Snuff Garrett's Nostalgia Merchant product. What quality! This Trucolor tape feature offers something for everyone--action, comedy, music, entertaining plot, scenic beauty, and a cast that includes some pretty impressive names in B western circles. Near the climax of the movie, as all the past and present western stars are arriving to help Jack Holt, George Chesebro, a perpetual "heavy" in hundreds of westerns, makes the scene to offer his services--one of the most

delightful comedy bits in the picture. The tape comes packaged in a custom box, with special label, and is a video tape that everyone should enjoy having.

Source: The Nostalgia Merchant, 6255 Sunset Blvd., Suite 1019, Hollywood, CA 90028



**AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY PERSONAL:** The following is a list of titles I am looking for on Beta II or VHS (for a JVC) formats. If you have any of these titles, I will be happy to trade, tape for tape, from my large, recorded-from-excellent-cable-TV collection: *SON OF LASSIE*, *SEQUOIA*, *THE GUNFIGHTER* (Peck), *WAGON-MASTER*, *BROKEN ARROW*, *KIT CARSON*, *HANG 'EM HIGH*, the early Weismuller Tarzan titles, any of the Jon Hall/Maria Montez series, *SADDLETRAMP*, *NAKED SPUR*, *THE PLAINSMAN* (Cooper), *UNION PACIFIC*, *VIRGINIA CITY*, *ROBIN HOOD* (Flynn), *SEA HAWK*, and any Tom Mix sound features.

**MY SPECIAL FOR THIS ISSUE...** The full length, uncut version of *MY PAL TRIGGER*, with Roy Rogers, Dale Evans, George Hayes, and the Sons of the Pioneers. The quality of this legal tape is excellent, professionally chained on professional equipment. Beta X2--\$30 VHS--\$35 (Please add \$2 for shipping.) TED REINHART, Edgewater Acres, Alexandria, PA 16611

## J. Lowe Chips In



### INSTANT REPLAY (#1)

**Content:** Entitled "Magical Tour of Television", this one-hour tape represents the debut of a very ambitious project, that of mass producing for sale to subscribers a video cassette in magazine-style format. Twenty segments covering a wide variety of subject matter are included. They range from Czechoslovakian animation to Bishop Fulton J. Sheen. Even a clip from the '30s of TV pioneer, Philo T. Farnsworth, taken from a recent CBS News feature.

**Evaluation:** Like everything else in life, the tape, as a whole, is a little uneven, so you would probably cheer for a segment that I may have yawned through. The best segments, in my view, were those which featured competitive hotdog skiing, the human light show juggler, the trained apes (very funny) and a classic Betty Furness live refrigerator commercial in which the door to the darn thing simply refuses to open. Overall, this first issue is most interesting, if a bit expensive (\$80 last time I heard, but you may want to check with 'em). The copy I reviewed was on Zenith Betamax tape, and the picture quality is uniformly quite good, especially considering the diverse sources from which the tape was assembled. The experience is a visual one, there is no narrative, and the edits between segments are sharp. I would have liked fading between features, but you may prefer the quick cuts utilized here. The package includes printed notes which explain the source and content of each segment, as well as brief instructions on performing various video techniques yourself. A publication such as "INSTANT REPLAY" is a logical extension of home video as a serious endeavor. President Charles Azar assures me that he has cleared all the contents so far as copyright is concerned. The potential of this sort of thing is boundless. I'd like to see it get the kind of support that it needs.

Source: Instant Replay, 4149 Bonita Ave., Coconut Grove, Florida 33133

### VANISHING POINT (20th Century-Fox--1971)

**Credits:** Cast--Barry Newman, Cleavon Little, Dean Jagger, Gilda Texter (!). [The tape says "Charlotte Rampling", but shouldn't] Director--Richard Sarafian.

**Story:** For those who would want it, the uncomplex plot of this minor B "classic" is rather well known. It's the free-spirited individual asserting himself once again against the hostile establishment--this time in the person of an auto driver (Newman) who is determined to drive from Denver to San Francisco in record time, the speed limit, et al, notwithstanding. Encouragement comes from the likes of a blind supersoul disc jockey (Little) at station KOW and various other counter culture types. The film includes fantasy fulfillment au jus for those who are interested in beautiful nude motorcyclists, and the ending is sobering to say the least.

**Evaluation:** This is one of the original fifty 20th Century-Fox films duplicated by Magnetic Video Corporation and sold through many dealers. The tape is packaged in a rather unsubstantial slip case which has a picture and text printed on it, in much the same manner as 8-track audio cassettes. Biggest drawback, for my money, is that the tape is Scotch brand and the recorded image suffers from the considerable number of dropouts that are not uncommonly expected with this brand. If you deliberately buy Scotch tape (I have 3 cases myself) you can save a little money and live with the dropouts, but it seems to me that if you pay \$40 to \$50 for a prerecorded cassette, you have the right to expect that it will be tape of the highest possible quality. Not a very smart way for Magnetic Video to cut corners, in my view. Aside from this, I thought the X2 picture quality was quite good. Also, since standard L-500 cassettes are used, there is blank tape on the end that you can use for whatever you like. In this case, the film runs 99 minutes, so 26 remains. It does come with the little tab punched out, so you have to put a piece of adhesive tape over the hold before you can record on that blank section. [If the previous sentence is confusing, see the treatment of the subject in the "For Beginners Only" column.] Incidentally, the film is the complete theatrical release, uncut, uncensored, and uninterrupted.

Source: Available from many dealers in Beta X2 and VHS formats.

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# Robert C. Kyle's "VTR ISOLATOR"

We are always pleased to receive well prepared articles which offer practical technical instructions in terms that your editor can understand. This issue we present a welcome addition to the "Hooking Up" suggestions in TVN #12. Robert C. Kyle, of ROBKYE CINE ASSOCIATES, speaking of his VTR isolator writes:

"Though I am prone to boast at times, I can truthfully say that all accolades of this device come from those who have seen it in action and not from me. I have built four of these little devils so far for those who are too lazy or afraid...to do it themselves. \*...I have included...a diagram which any idiot can take to his/her friendly electronic shop and receive the necessary parts. But there are going to be those out there in video land who are willing to let "Bob do it" so to keep your already overloaded mailbox less overloaded you can put my address at the end of the article and have your readers direct all questions and inquiries to me personally. I give you my word as a small businessman and writer (I do a weekly column for a newspaper here in the twin cities) that I will answer all letters - even those that do not enclose a stamped self addressed envelope. \*...It only takes about an hour of casual labor to put one of those things together - once you have all the parts you need."

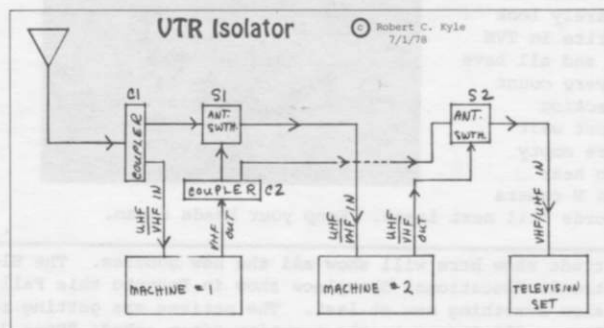
Up until now, the only way I have seen to connect two video tape recorders together is by connecting the output of one machine to the input of the second machine. Such a setup, while adequate, is very limited since machine #2 is dependent upon the output of machine #1, and the television set is dependent upon the output of machine #2. This means that, if machines #1 and #2 are in the record mode, only machine #2 can be monitored since, if we try to monitor machine #1, machine #2 receives a sloppy signal--ergo sloppy recording.

The VTR ISOLATOR makes it possible for two machines to be connected to one antenna or cable source and to be played through one television set independently of each other. With this device you can monitor either machine #1 or #2 without disturbing the signal of the other. And, by turning machine #2 to channel 3, you can dub tapes off machine #1 while monitoring either machine #1 or #2.

big in your area, just connect the UHF and VHF outputs of machines #1 and #2 to UHF/VHF signal splitters and add a signal splitter to the television input.

The antenna input is from a Colorcraft antenna and both machines play through a Sanyo 19" color TV set. Both machine inputs are by UHF/VHF signal splitters. If UHF is not a big thing in your area, you can forget the splitters until it is. They can be added at any time with no difficulty.

To make it easier to describe how well the isolator works, let me "label" the poles of S1 and S2. I will call the two poles of S1 "Fr. C1" (from C1) and "Fr. C2" (from C2). The two poles of S2 are called "Fr. C2" (from C2) and "Mach. 2" (machine #2 output). We can now set up a table showing the possibilities of operation.



Referring to the diagram: The antenna output is connected to one of the "two set" couplers (C1). One of the terminals of C1 is connected to the input of machine #1. The other terminal is connected to one of the poles of S1, a double-pole-double-throw switch. The output of machine #1 is connected to the "antenna" terminal of the other two set coupler (C2). One of the terminals of C2 is connected to the other pole of S1 and the other is connected to one of the poles of S2, the second double-pole-double-throw switch. The switch lead (the connection made to the switch handle) of S1 is connected to the input of machine #2. The output of machine #2 is connected to the remaining pole of S2. The switch lead of S2 is connected to the input of the television set. Not shown in the diagram (but appearing on my setup) is the UHF output of machine #2 connected to the UHF input of the television set. If UHF is

Machine #1	Switch #1	Machine #2	Switch #2	Television
A. Record mode monitor TV	"Fr. C1"	OFF	"Fr. C2"	Channel 3
B. OFF	"Fr. C1"	Record mode monitor TV	"Mach. 2"	Channel 3
C. Record mode monitor TV	"Fr. C1"	Record mode	"Fr. C2"	Channel 3
D. Record mode	"Fr. C1"	Record mode monitor TV	"Mach. 2"	Channel 3
E. Playback mode monitor TV	"Fr. C2"	Record mode tune Ch. 3	"Fr. C2"	Channel 3
F. Playback mode monitor TV	"Fr. C1"	Record mode off-the-air	"Fr. C2"	Channel 3
G. Record mode off-the-air	"Fr. C1"	Playback mode monitor TV	"Mach. 2"	Channel 3
H. Record mode off-the-air	"Fr. C1"	Record mode off-the-air	"Mach. 2"	View any channel

I hope this gives you some idea of the possibilities made available with the isolator. Setups A and B are for using either machine by itself. Setup C is for when you want to record two different programs--at different times on the same channel, at the same time on different channels, or at different times on different channels. Setup D is the same as C, except you monitor machine #2 instead of machine #1 as you do in setup C. Setup E

is for dubbing from machine #1 to machine #2 while monitoring machine #1. I don't know why, but with this setup you get a much better picture by monitoring machine #1 while dubbing tapes. Setups F and G are for recording on one machine while playing a tape on the other, and setup H is for recording two different programs while watching a third--all at the same time.

The isolator is built from simple television parts and a couple of double-pole-double-throw switches. I used the inexpensive knife switches so that all connections could be made with a screwdriver. 300 ohm twin-lead wire is the only wire used in connecting the two couplers, switches, machine inputs and outputs and the television set.

The two RCA Selectavision recorders I used came with the necessary 75 ohm-300 ohm match-

ing transformers. If your machines are not so equipped, you will have to purchase two of them. I should add that if you use the more expensive toggle switches you will need to solder the connections as well as drill holes in the "black box" that holds all this mess together. I used Duco Cement for the switches and had all connections terminate at a 10 pole barrier strip. This helps a lot in keeping order among the jumble of wires.

Assembly of the isolator is not difficult, but the leads should be kept as short as possible, while at the same time the two switches should be placed as far apart from each other as possible. Total cost of the parts is about \$20. If you care to have one assembled, write me at Robkye Cine Associates, 3940 Oakland Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55407, and we can figure out a price which will be amenable to both of us.

## Michigan Update

I've talked a lot about how terrific video people are, and with each issue of TVN I hear from more interesting folks all over the country and Canada! Jim Lowe has really created a monster, a friendly monster, mind you, that links hundreds of us together. Ray Glasser, the chief of the "VCO" (Video Collectors of Ohio) paid me a visit in early August. What with visits to MAGNETIC VIDEO, GENERAL TELEVISION, countless radio and TV stations, and introductions to other videophiles, he shall not forget his stop in MICHIGAN, even though to us "die hard" football fans OHIO is a four-letter word. The picture is Ray (left) and yours truly. Who says there are no female videophiles? I know several -- and one, in particular, in San Francisco, is really nice. [What have we here, Art? C'mon 'fess up lad. -- Ed.] Video is for everyone, regardless of sexual preference.

I'd like to wrap this up with my definition of a videophile: Usually male, 21 to 39 years old, often single (because they spend so much time with their MACHINES they have little time to be sociable), rarely look the way they sound on the phone, rarely sound the way they write in TVN or letters, are hospitable, trustworthy, generally reliable, and all have enormous telephone bills! [Art, you've pegged me right on every count except spending time with the machine (too much time spent hacking this darn thing out) and having a big phone bill. Heck, I just wait for you guys to call me. --Ed.] In closing, I am getting more empty Betamax boxes. If you need some let me know. Always good to hear from you. Phone is (313) 434-2712. I have the Sony 3210 B & W camera (in photo) up for sale -- very reasonable. That's my wise words 'til next issue. Keep your heads clean.

### ... Canada, cont'd

personally, so please write to my new box. \*\*\* Salute of the Month: to Joe Mazzini, who really cares about video people, and who takes time to write in detail. The great part of his work is the research he does to make names and places available to readers. Joe, you are too much. Keep up the fine work, we really appreciate it. \*\*\* I shall report on Video Tape Directory International next time. I do hope they are not connected to Universal or Disney. Because of price, many are abandoning the 16mm projector, film and screen for the VIDEO format, in order to get the films they could NEVER buy legally in 16mm or 8mm. The trade-in market and the used market are not even open yet in Canada. Trade-ins have just begun here. \*\*\* Nostalgia Merchant and other smart ones are releasing their wares or video tape. Smart move, more will follow. \*\*\* The Jiffy "O" mail bag is still the best for shipping, but do not try to reuse, they cannot take the pace. \*\*\* If I get enough requests for it, I shall print and publish a complete list of my text book library on films. There are over 300 and it will be quite a job. Also, where to buy them at discount prices. \*\*\* I am still looking for early SCREEN WORLD issues. I have just received word that the first 10 volumes were printed only in paperback. \*\*\* LOOKING THRU THE KEYHOLE" -- Stop sending letters offering money for services rendered. I, nor any of my friends are interested. We trade tapes of yours we want and you get tapes of ours you want and that's it. \*\*\* In August, Panasonic

trade show here will show all the new goodies. The Electronic Educational Showplace show in Toronto this Fall may show something new at last. The natives are getting restless. \*\*\* Answer to the question often asked: "Does Jim Lowe edit your stuff?" ... No, he never has, and every word I write is printed in toto. [You are too generous with me, Ralph. Your contributions, as those of everyone else, have been the subject of light editing, and even occasional surgery. Every word may be printed in "toto" (I am unfamiliar with the title), but not in TVN. I do, however, resist putting words in anyone's mouth. --Ed.] Of course, all opinions are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the publisher of this foremost video publication. \*\*\* Letters still average 10 to 12 a day, so keep them coming. I find now I will have to send out an information sheet on all the most popular questions asked me each month. \*\*\* A closing thought: Film has its place, it will NEVER be replaced (there are too many 16mm projectors and films) but it is an asset to video, a companion of the future (not so for Super and regular 8mm, except porno films) and the Video Disc will be an asset to the video tape recorder for transfer and editing. The only problem, as I see it, is a video projector at \$900, that will look as good as 16mm in size and quality. Until next time, Keep the force.

RALPH GORDON

P.O. Box 5037, Ottawa, Ontario Station F CANADA





# Skew Error

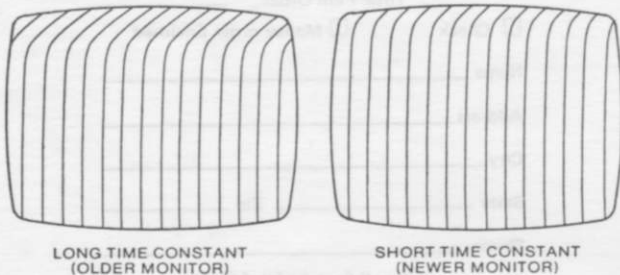
Helical video recording systems, by their very nature, are dependent upon the length of the video track for correct reproduction of the video signal. Any change in the length of the track between the time it is recorded and the time it is played back is "skew error."

With the advent of the 3/4" U-Matic and the 1/2" home recording systems, increasing demands are being placed on the video tape media for better dimensional stability to assure proper video track length. The lower machine tensions have greatly decreased the amount of playback correction available, for example, the 3/4" format has a correction range of only  $\pm 2.5$  microseconds, while many of the Beta and VHS format machines have no adjustable playback tension control and, hence, no correction range.

Dimensional errors caused by uncorrected playback of video track are called skew errors. Skew refers to what is seen on the monitor when the picture at the video head switching point is not matched up vertically, but offset to the left or right. This is caused by the playback track length of the machine being different from the video track previously recorded on the tape. Skew error may also be called tension error.

Electronically, skew error produces a timing error or time displacement of the horizontal sync pulses at the video head switching point. Visually on a monitor, this offsets the picture image to the left or right at the same point. If the picture is displaced to the left, the video track on the tape is longer than the playback length of the machine. If the picture is offset to the right, the video track of the tape is shorter than the playback length of the machine.

The degree of noticeable occurrence of skew error is also dependent upon the type of television receiver used. Older monitors and receivers have longtime constants in their horizontal scanning circuits and this will cause the video to be displaced by as many as 100 lines. This amount of noticeable distortion is quite visible. Newer monitors or receivers, with shorter time constants, can correctly place the video with only a slight distortion.



Skew error can be caused by tape or machine. Machine-induced skew error can be caused by incorrect tension or by dimensional changes related to machine temperature. Tape-induced skew error can be caused by reversible dimensional changes (temporary), as in thermal expansion or contraction, or nonreversible dimensional changes (permanent) as in polyester backing shrinkage. These differences in dimension are quite small, but a skew error of only 7 microseconds can show excessive picture distortion and timing errors in older monitors and receivers.

Machine-induced skew errors can be caused by "incorrect tensions." Incorrect tape tension around the drum will stretch or relax the tape, which in turn will lengthen or shorten the video track. The type of tension that

is critical depends upon the particular machine format: 3/4" videocassette format, EIAJ type 1, and home-type Beta and VHS format machines are examples of machines in which the supply reel tension determines the track length. The 1" IVC format is an example where take-up reel tension determines track length.

Thermal expansion/contraction may be considered a source of skew error since the tape and machine do not have the same coefficient of expansion. It is to be noted that machine tension control mechanisms can usually accommodate the differences that result in normal temperature ranges.

Tape-induced skew error can be caused by the dimensions of the tape changing over a period of time. The dimensional change is due to thermal and hygroscopic properties of the tape, mainly related to the polyester backing material. When backing is manufactured, it is processed under controlled temperatures and tensions to provide the desired strength properties. These properties are stable in a certain temperature, time, and tension range. But, if any one of these variables exceeds the acceptable range, the backing takes on a new shape, usually longer if tension is exceeded and shorter if temperature is exceeded. These dimensional changes are considered nonreversible because the tension conditions encountered in normal use do not reverse the change and bring the tape back to its original length. Experience has shown that the shrinkage-type of skew error is most troublesome--second only to incorrect record/playback tensions of the machines.

Shrinkage error is a function of time and temperature. Experimental data have shown that any of the following combinations of time and temperature will cause approximately the same amount of skew error due to shrinkage of the backing.

TEMPERATURE	TIME
27°C or 80°F	10 yrs.
32°C or 90°F	1 yr.
40°C or 105°F	6 months
52°C or 125°F	24 hours
66°C or 150°F	1 hour

These climatic conditions may seem unlikely, but it is not unusual for tapes in library storage to be subjected to constant temperatures in the 25-30°C range. It is also not unusual for a tape to encounter 65°C for a short time in the trunk of a car on a hot day.

The "writing speed" of the video tracks is so great that it leaves very little margin for error in the track length. Even a very small difference in the track will make one machine's tape incompatible with another machine of the same manufacture. The Beta format machines seem to suffer less with this problem than other formats because of the faster tape speed and drum/head configuration differences, as explained in TVN Issue #13. Many of the problems encountered by the SelectaVision machines and other VHS formats can be avoided, however, by taking proper care of your tapes. The solutions are as follows:

- (1) Don't store your tape in the sun (quite simple).
- (2) Try to keep the area where you are recording cool and at a constant humidity.
- (3) Don't let your machine sit in the sun for long periods before recording or playing tapes.
- (4) Storing tapes in the glove compartment or trunk of a car is suicide.

By Christopher T. Pearson  
Data Provided by Scotch/3M Co.

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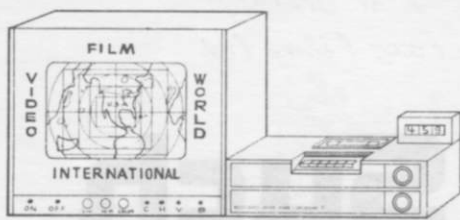
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- ☐ In Old Santa Fe (1934) Ken Maynard, George (Gabby) Hayes, Gene Autry
- ☐ West of the Divide—John Wayne
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#### EARLY ANIMATION

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- ☐ Felix The Cat And The Goose That Laid The Gold
- ☐ Gertie The Dinosaur (1930)
- ☐ Alice's Egg Plant (1920's) Walt Disney
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- ☐ Gulliver's Travels (1939) cartoon classic
- ☐ His Girl Friday (1940) Cary Grant
- ☐ I Married a Witch (1942) Veronica Lake
- ☐ The Laurel & Hardy Murder Case (1930)
- ☐ My Favorite Brunette (1947) Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour
- ☐ My Man Godfrey (1936) William Powell, Carole Lombard
- ☐ Nothing Sacred (1937) Carole Lombard, Fredric March
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- ☐ Partners, Promises (1935) Jayne Mansfield
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- ☐ Swing High, Swing Low (1936) Carole Lombard, Fred McMurray
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- ☐ Three Nuts in Search of a Bolt (1955) Mamie Van Doren
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- ☐ Mars Attacks the World—Buster Crabbe, Jean Rogers
- ☐ Metropolis (1926) directed by Fritz Lang—silent
- ☐ The Monster Walks (1932)
- ☐ Nosferatu (1922) Max Schreck—silent
- ☐ Phantom of the Opera (1925) Lon Chaney, Mary Philbin
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# Letters & Such



I pass my copy of your fantastic mag to about 8 other people where I work - Bell Labs. They are all a bunch of overpaid cheapskates, like me. I'm the only one to get a machine so far. They're waiting for prices to get down to the \$500-\$600 range. "Good luck to 'em", I say. They'll have a nice wait. Possibly they might get the bug if you run a blurb in the mag shaming all the people who read other people's mags instead of springing for 10 bucks themselves. -- Mark Bloom, Penn.

As to prices, Mark, all indications are that they will rise soon, the yen/dollar situation being what it is. Yes, shameless moochers are a continuing thorn in my side. See the "Bald Faced Plea" elsewhere herein.

You need to adopt a uniform grammatical and punctuation style. I know, it detracts from the informality, but you can't allow TVN to develop into another TBG [The Buyer's Guide to Comic Fandom -- Ed.], where everyone invents his/her own spelling, etc. I don't know how many ads there I've neglected to answer because the person offered special "handeling" or was selling Gene "Autery" comics. ... Another problem, this one out of your hands, I'm sure. Have you noticed how the good old personal check has become rejected by most small-time mail order people? I notice in TVN 14 that quite a number of folks don't want my business unless they put me to the inconvenience of going out and buying a money order. -- Guy MacMillin, Chesterfield, NH

I do hope to move toward a more respectable and uniform style of presentation. Jus' hasn't been possible, what with all contributions being volunteer and often camera ready for printing when they arrive. As to the personal check situation, I'm afraid it is a sign of the times, like dead bolt door and window locks. We at TVN accept, and prefer, personal checks. I've only been burned a very few times, and the satisfaction of giving folks as speedy service as possible is worth it.

I was very impressed with the VIDEOPHILE'S Magazine (the word 'Newsletter' is inaccurate and you should drop it). Your coverage of the video field is comprehensive, entertaining and diverting. -- Al Goldstein, Publisher, Milky Way Productions, NY, NY

Effective next issue, the title of this rag will be changed to "THE VIDEOPHILE". The Videophile's Newsletter will continue as an inside feature containing the sort of thing now found in our Video News column. Thanks for the encouragement Al. We enjoy your GADGET magazine (reviewed in #14) and your other publications have caught our attention on occasion as well. By the way, if any of you artistic types would like to submit a proposed design for the VIDEOPHILE logo, we would be more than happy to consider them. Column logos too.

You're unfortunately wrong on p. 27 [Issue #14] in your discussion of the copyright law. Thanks to a stalling Congress which didn't want to upset anyone because it was taking so long to amend the original copyright bill, copyright expiration was put on "hold" in --unmm--the '50's. ... We think 1906 is the watershed, but I'm not going to check my reference books to be sure right now. We'll let you do it. %% So NO sound movies which had copyrights registered and renewed are in public domain -- and mighty few silent ones either. %% Mind you, a lot of companies didn't bother to copyright movies in the first place -- and some of those which did didn't renew them.

But it takes careful research to find out. %% One area, though, in which collectors probably don't have to worry about copyrights are in the sleazy unrated pornography films coming out. With creators working on the fringes of the law in many cases, copyrights were never sought in the first place. -- Magye Thompson, Mentor, OH  
I'll bet you're right, pending our double-checking. Somewhere in this issue is an ad for a book which sets forth all titles in the public domain. We expect to have a review of that publication next time. Incidentally, some of the ~~pldldldld~~ bigger budget porno films are, I believe, protected by copyright.

The reports in TVN #14 about the new Sony SL-8600 were interesting, but left a lot unsaid, like the central question: is the video quality an improvement over the 8200? ... The 8600 offers improved picture quality at X2 speed, at least when viewed over an Advent 750. The old 8200, at either speed, suffered from a kind of video distortion resembling diagonal lines around the fringes of colored objects; though hardly visible on standard-sized tubes, it was very bothersome on projection-sized screens. These are hardly noticeable at all with the 8600 ... Audio reproduction seems marginally better, too. %% As to the editing "difficulties" alleged in TVN #14 -- it just ain't so. Smooth edits are possible, but it is necessary to change the technique used, to accomodate the new machine:

- (1) As soon as the commercial break begins, hit stop. Then rewind for two or three turns on the index counter and hit stop again.
- (2) Hit play and play back the tail end of what you just recorded, watching for the approach of the commercial break. Just before the break appears, hit pause and then stop.
- (3) As the real-time commercial break continues, depress and HOLD DOWN the pause button on the machine (not the remote) for several seconds. The machine is still in "stop" mode.
- (4) After several seconds of holding the pause down, keep holding it-down while pressing the record button too. Now both pause and record are depressed.
- (5) Release the pause button -- the machine is in the record mode, but still paused-- as soon as the program begins, hit the pause button again (it's OK to use the remote this time) and recording begins.

The end result is an edit that will not black-out or cause the muting circuits to take over. There is sometimes a "pop" in the audio at the edit point, but there is no audio black-out of about a second or so as in the 8200. The key is step (3): when the pause button is held down during the stop mode, the motors start up; if record and pause are pressed simultaneously, the tape will move before heads may get fully up to speed, and the resultant problems will cause a greater degree of video instability. Holding down the pause allows the mechanical processes to stabilize, thereby minimizing instability. The result may not be as "perfect" as the edits on the 8200, but it certainly is satisfactory and a reasonable price to pay for the improved reproductive quality. -- Mark Koldys, Dearborn MI

Thanks, Mark. We're always looking for a better way.

Thank you for the copy of the Videophile's Newsletter. And while we all enjoyed reading it, I'm afraid I must nonetheless say no to your request to use several TV GUIDE covers in an upcoming story. As a matter of





long-standing policy, we rarely allow our covers to be reprinted or republished. But we do want to wish you well with your publication. -- John Hayes, Editor, Local Editions, TV GUIDE, Radnor PA

The policy you refer to will be changed when Small Potatoes Publishing Company achieves majority ownership of Triangle Publications. Readers who miss the was-to-have-been article may want to pick up a copy of the new hardcover book which traces the history of TV GUIDE replete with illustrations. (Even covers.)

I rather enjoyed your writing style -- relaxed & witty. And we both know that CLASS is way beyond PROFESSIONALISM. Humble people start dry cleaning establishments, not magazines. -- Allen Sirken, Costa Mesa CA  
Aw, ... shucks.

One day I hope to exchange video cassettes with other collectors, in the same way that I'm trading now for film soundtracks. Still, several problems appear to loom on the horizon. One of them might be censorship, another the incompatibility between TV programs taped in the States and European TV sets. A Texan correspondent says that U.S. TVs have 525 scan lines across the screen, while European ones have 625 lines. You mentioned the existence of converters, but didn't state the cost of this toy. An interesting problem TVN ought to tackle someday. -- Luc Van de Ven, Astridlaan 165, 2800 Mechelen, Belgium

We're still working on this one. Industrial services which can make transfers are not within the means of video hobbyists. We will definitely have something definitive on this in a future issue.

It may be of interest that our experience here is that movies as shown on Canadian channels are much less apt to be cut than the same item on U.S. stations. That goes for violence, nudity, and the coarsest of language. We have 14 channels on our cable TV here in London, about half Canadian and half American, so that gives some basis for comparison. At times, when a movie is simulcast on Canadian and American channels, the Canadian channel may have a running time of 10-15 minutes longer as a result. -- Don Fowler, London, Ontario

V-e-r-y int-er-esting. Don, be sure to let me know when your cable is going to run "The Cheerleaders".

Loved the cover on 14! I've enclosed a flyer for Hudson Audio Video Enterprises. They have the lowest prices on used 3/4" tape I've ever found. ... Your mag is fantastic, however, I do wish there were more information on 3/4" -- I know, I know, there are more 1/2"ers out there than 3/4". \*SIGH\* -- Vicki James, Arlington VA

Thanks, Vicki, and to those who expressed concern that that one might get electrocuted while fiddling with a phone or Betamax while in the hot tub, be assured that the set-up latest only long enough to shoot the pictures (illusion deflation time). By golly, Hudson is cheap, as little as \$11 - \$14 for used 60 minute cassettes, depending on how many you buy. Write 'em at: P.O. Box 209, Livingston, NY 12541. Vicki, you might sweet talk more info on 3/4" out of Joe Mazzini, but you are right, there are more of us newcomers. Heck, there's even a "1/2" on the typewriter.

If you desire X-1 quality, but can only afford to record on X-2, as a rule, and you have a Sony SL-8200,

it is sometimes possible to have the best of both worlds. Using the speed selector switch, you can record your favorite scenes on X-1, the rest on X-2, and fit more on to a cassette. The following table tells you how much of each will fit on an L-500 tape:

Length of Recording	Length that CAN be X-1	Length that MUST be X-2
60	60	0
65	55	10
70	50	20
75	45	30
80	40	40
85	35	50
90	30	60

etc., with total of columns two and three equalling one. I realize that there will be momentary break-up where the speed changes occurred, but the trade-off is worth it in cases where you are primarily concerned with certain scenes, and need to conserve tape. -- Lee Skinner, Albuquerque NM

I can see where this method might come in handy. Especially if you foresee copying certain scenes in the future. ¶ Lee also called to tell me that Scarecrow Press has now published its long-awaited (by me anyway) "Television Drama Series Programming". For about \$27 you get a massive compilation of episode titles, cast and all else concerning an impressive number of dramatic series that have been on the tube. Details next time.

Did you see the article in the May-June issue of HI-FI/Stereo Buyers Guide? It tested a Beta and VHS recorder for sound quality; there are probably quite a few people who record operas, rock concerts other musical shows that want especially good audio. Both the RCA and Sony units had what must be termed fair response, and the sound was especially disappointing at the slower speeds. ... Was that cartoon of Donald Duck actually published??!! I wonder if the artist or writer was aware of the Disney/Sony situation? ... P.S. What the hell do the pigs mean?! -- Robert A. Yorke, Simi Valley, CA

Your lengthy letter arrived too late for extensive inclusion in this issue, but I did want the readers to enjoy your artwork. ... The pigs? Gosh are those darn things still there? I promise to look into it and see what I can find. Yours was not the only inquiry.



With regard to the item on National Video Marketing in "Dealer's Doings" last issue, comes the following:

"... It must be made clear that my company is only interested in servicing the requests of the consumers, and since we are a new company there are bound to be certain delays, but not neglect. ¶ It is obvious that Mr. [deleted] has tried to make a mountain out of a molehill. This is the first crank letter we have received and we thought we'd let it go on record that we have contacted him and sent him his money back." -- Mark Slade, President, National Video Marketing, Inc.

Please send me information on how I can get your newsletter by special delivery or air mail. -- H.W., Memphis



We expect to announce a variety of special rates in the next issue. Of course, I'd be happy to sign you up for the \$1000 life-time special delivery subscription.

With regard to cables for dubbing, the only commercially available cables with male phono plugs that I've run across have been of the audio variety - which when kept short - may do the job fine. However, here is a way to make your own "professional looking" cable for video use. ¶ Take a section of RG 59/U coaxial cable and put an F-59 connector (male) on each end, as usual, with the exception that instead of exposing about ¼" of the center conductor, expose about 7/8". Next, get a pair of shielded male phono plugs, and remove the "shells" or "caps", they are not needed. Break off the ground lugs on the phono plugs. Then insert the center conductor coming out of the F-59 connector in the phono plug and fasten by screwing the connector to the plug. Fasten the center conductors of the cable and the phono plug with solder, and trim the excess with a pair of diagonal cutting pliers. VIOLA -- you have a real cool cable. It even works! -- Lenny Bobrow, Shutesbury MA

O.K., Now for some questions and answers. Unfinished business first. I have received several letters with regard to the mysterious 5-pin jack on the Sony 8200. Rick Redoubtley even sent me a diagram of where all the connectors to it go. Seems that the 7200 console Betamax has it, and Jim Dorsman tells me that it is connected at all times, although his has to disconnect it to avoid signal problems when dubbing to a second recorder. As to whether there is some practical use to which we videophiles can put this jack, the answer is still unclear. Rick also writes:

In Michigan Update last issue (#14) Art stated that the machine will eat a tape if the drive belt breaks. Not true. If the belt breaks, the machine goes to the Stop mode. It will eat the tape if the eject button is then pushed. I suggest that if the buttons pop up when attempting to play back or record, check to see if fast forward or rewind works. If it does, then it is probably safe to eject the tape. If FF or Rewind does not move the tape, DO NOT push Eject. Have the machine repaired and instruct the technician NOT TO PUSH EJECT, and recommend that he check the drive belt. The machine cannot be unthreaded (without possible damage to the tape and machine) with a broken drive belt. -- Rick Redoubtley, Novi, Michigan

Q: If a film is not copyrighted, can a copy of it be sold by anyone? -- Len Bobrow, Shutesbury, MA

A: In a word, yes. Just like you can publish your own edition of the Bible if you want to. Sometimes producers add their own title cards and other formatting to public domain tapes. These additions are protected by copyright and cannot be duplicated and sold. Blackhawk films commonly packages their product this way.

Q: With regard to services which offer to put your collection on file and match your wants with other collectors, what is to prevent the Federal government from stepping in and using the computerized bank to locate people who have copies of films which are illegal to own? -- T.L., San Francisco, CA

A: I'm afraid I can't really answer this to your total satisfaction. It is not possible for the government, or anyone else to commandeer someone's files just because they feel like it. Court proceedings and the issuance of a warrant would be necessary. Still, it is easy to understand why not everyone would be comfortable with the idea of having their library listing in a file over which they exercise no direct control. See below.

Q: I neither sell nor buy anything, nor do any of the folks I trade with. But the spectre of a "bust" by the feds or a studio goon squad is everpresent. My question is this: Have any of us "new wave" Beta-collectors actually been busted? The numerous references I've read always allude to "some guy on the West Coast with thousands of tapes which he was selling." Conversations with my collector friends always include the fact that they've "heard of a guy who heard of a guy who was busted" but I've yet to know of a specific case in which a working stiff with a small, private collection has been approached. If the little guys are, in fact, getting burned, what happens? Is equipment confiscated? Tapes? How much sleep should I be losing if I'm not selling? -- D.S., Springfield OH

A: I know of only one case where a "collector" has gotten himself criminally prosecuted. This resulted from a mistake in judgement by the gentleman in question who could not resist arranging to buy an illegally duplicated tape at an inflated price, on behalf of another collector. The interstate phone call was tapped, because the "dealer" was actually an agent who had been planted in place of the previously busted dealer. Read "Rambling Outtakes in #14. We are not the subject of widespread harassment, although some of us have been questioned about our sources. There is ABSOLUTELY NO DOUBT but that these very pages are carefully read by the Film Security Office of the MPAA. If your collection consists of off-the-air recordings, legally obtained prerecorded tapes, or such material that you have traded for with others, where no cash is involved, there is little likelihood that any judge would have cause to issue a search warrant against your premises. My best advice is: Don't get mixed up with shady deals. This includes your local dealer who may have a "club" offering copies of Star Wars and such. He'll probably get busted some day, and even though you won't, it's best not even to have your name on his list. It just ain't worth it!

Q: Are there any above-board companies or individuals who will, for a fee, dub one tape from one format onto a different format? The problem is simple, I'd like to purchase some legal prerecorded cassettes, however few if any dealers are selling prerecorded tapes in the V-Cord II format? -- Bill Hyde, St. Louis

A: Bill, you may want to inquire with some of the dealers advertising in this ish. Also, if anyone offering this service will let us know, I'll print it.

Q: When are you going to come out with index cards for us VHS users? -- Phillip Majewski, Mountaintop PA.

A: It probably won't be real soon. Funny thing about those index cards. They are on such good quality card stock, and weigh so much, that the printing and postage costs add up to just about the same \$1 per pad that I am charging for them. I'm still learning.

Q: HBO has just arrived in town. Cost is \$195 for the black box, and then \$13.50 per month. [Both figures are much steeper than in Tallahassee --Ed.] Feed to the TV set will be on channel 3 or 5, HBO's option. If on channel 3, how will this effect my VTR playback on channel 3? -- Tom Garcia, Tucson AZ

A: As I understand it, Tom, HBO is being transmitted through the air in Tuscon. If they choose to use channel 3 and your recorder has a non-switchable Ch. 3 RF unit, you may need to replace it with one for Ch. 4. Wait and see if the HBO signal is strong enough to cause interference with your playback.

Hey, we're out of room. Feedback on the "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" article will have to wait until #16.



# PACIFICA LABS

BOX 813 • TARZANA, CALIFORNIA 91356 • (213) 343-0588

RCA SELECTAVISION NO ONE IS BEATING OUR PRICE ON THE VBT 200 2HR/4HR SELECTAVISION. THE NEW VCT 200 SERIES IS ON ITS WAY AND WE EXPECT TO HOLD THE LINE ON THIS MODEL TOO. THE VCT 200 WILL BE LIKE THE VBT 200 WITH CIRCUIT IMPROVEMENTS, AND THE VCT 201 WILL HAVE THE ADDED FEATURE OF A TIMED STOP.

IN THE FALL, THE PROGRAMMABLE MEMORY MODEL WILL BE OUT. THIS UNIT WILL HAVE A MICROCOMPUTER CONTROLLED MEMORY THAT WILL ALLOW PROGRAMMING OF FOUR INDEPENDENT TIMERS THAT CAN BE SET FOR 7 DAYS IN ADVANCE, EACH ONE ON A 24 HOUR CLOCK, STOP AND START COMMANDS, AND CHANNEL SELECTION INCLUDING UHF. THIS UNIT IS EXPECTED TO LIST FOR ABOUT \$1200.

TWO COLOR CAMERAS ARE ALSO SCHEDULED FOR THE FALL, PROBABLY LISTING IN THE 800 TO 1100 DOLLAR RANGE. THE DIFFERENCE BEING A ZOOM LENS AND AN ELECTRONIC (CRT) VIEWER.

PACIFICA WILL HAVE ALL OF THESE ITEMS AS SOON AS THEY ARE AVAILABLE.

VIDEOCASSETTES MAGNETIC VIDEO HAS ADDED 17 NEW CHAPLIN TITLES\* ON 11 CASSETTES. CLASSIC FILMS SUCH AS LIMELIGHT, THE GREAT DICTATOR, MODERN TIMES, THE GOLD RUSH, AND CITY LIGHTS WILL BE AVAILABLE. THESE ARE ALL PRODUCED FROM NEWLY STRUCK PRINTS, SOME WITH NEW SCORES. REMEMBER, WE ALSO HAVE ALL 50 FOX TITLES. AS WITH EVERYTHING WE LIST IN THESE ADS, EVERY ITEM IS IN STOCK AND READY FOR NEXT DAY SHIPMENT. AGAIN, NO ONE IS BEATING OUR PRICE ON THESE CASSETTES.

BLANK TAPE WE MUST BE NEAR THE BEST PRICE TOO ON BLANK CASSETTES, ESPECIALLY ON CASE LOTS (12 CASSETTES). IF YOU CAN SWING IT, THIS IS THE WAY TO BUY THEM. GET WITH A FRIEND AND ORDER A DOZEN.

WHY DON'T WE QUOTE PRICES IN THIS AD? BECAUSE THE VIDEO MARKET IS STILL TOO DYNAMIC. WE WANT TO OFFER YOU THE BEST CURRENT PRICE EACH AND EVERY DAY. THE LEAD TIME ON ADS SIMPLY DOESN'T ALLOW FOR THIS. WHEN YOU GET A QUOTE FROM PACIFICA, YOU WILL ALWAYS BE BELOW THE ALREADY LOW LOS ANGELES MARKET.

THE MAGNERASER THIS LITTLE UNIT SEEMS TO HAVE BECOME A "MUST HAVE" FOR THE VIDEOPHILE. WE HAVE SHIPPED THESE FROM KOREA TO THE SOUTH POLE. THIS UNIT IS HAND HELD AND IS GUARANTEED TO REMOVE ALL RECORDED SIGNAL AND TO LOWER BACKGROUND NOISE BY 3 TO 6 DB BELOW THAT OF VIRGIN, UNUSED TAPE. THIS UNIT HAS A 2 YEAR GUARANTEE. 5LBS FOB TARZANA--\$32.50

ALL ITEMS SOLD BY PACIFICA LABS ARE BRAND NEW, IN STOCK, AND READY FOR SHIPMENT TO YOU IN FACTORY SEALED CARTONS. ALL ITEMS FOB TARZANA. RCA EQUIPMENT CARRIES THE FULL RCA WARRANTY.

3 \*\*\*\*CHECK PACIFICA BEFORE YOU BUY--WE WILL SAVE YOU TIME AND MONEY\*\*\*\*

\*Chaplin titles expected in mid to late August.

# VHS

## SPECIALIST



It is neither the intention of The Videophile's Newsletter 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 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."



Beta-2 trade lists wanted--especially Philadelphia Story, old King Kong, most Crosby's. Joe Onorato 46 So. Main St., Northfield, Vermont 05663

STILL LOOKING FOR TV SERIES ON BETAMAX X1 or X2: Man From U.N.C.L.E., Amos Burke, Avengers, Dr. Who, Champions, Invaders, Danger Man. Have many spy, sci-fi adventure TV shows to trade. Send TV GUIDES. LARRY CHARET, 1219A Devon Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60660 Phone: 312-274-1832

WANTED FOR TRADE IN BETA FORMAT:

Movies--A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, Love Among the Ruins, The Wind and the Lion, The Bliss of Mrs. Blossum, The Taming of the Shrew (Taylor & Burton), My Fair Lady, Romeo and Juliet (Hussey), A Man for All Seasons, Beckett, The Lion in Winter, The African Queen, 2001: A Space Odyssey, The Pink Panther.

PBS Features--The Seven Wives of Henry VIII, Elizabeth R, The Miracle of Brother Hubert, Civilization, The Ascent of Man, The Royal Family, Bernhardt, Betsy Bobs Her Hair, I'm a Fool, Royal Heritage.

WANT 1ST GENERATION, HIGH QUALITY, UNMAY COPIES ONLY! TRADE ONLY! Ray Cooper 3553 Luke Cr. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107

WISH TO TRADE QUALITY STEREO STUFF FOR SECOND VHS OR, PREFERABLY, 2-SPEED BETA TYPE VERSATILITY. HAROLD GREENE, 1904 Alexander Rd., Raleigh, NC 27608 919-834-6502/733-6022 (work)

Have RCA Selectavision. WANT TO TRADE adult and nonadult films in the VHS format. Please send trade lists. Also seeking someone who receives Midnight Blue and can provide VHS copies of same. Additionally seeking local videophiles for dubbing etc. Please write: P. Gordon, P.O. Box 825, Framingham, MA 01701

WANT TO TRADE once used Sony 205 and 305 video tapes with mailing boxes for blank RCA 1 hour or 2 hour tapes. Will also consider some old movies. Robert, 12822 Queens Forest, San Antonio, TX 78230

FOR SALE: Zenith JR9000W--Factory sealed with full warranty--shipped UPS--\$789. Charles E. Bush, Rt. 16 Rogers Lane, Knoxville, TN 37920 615-577-9845

WANTED: VHS or some Beta 1950's to 60's TV shows. Horror, B western movies, My Three Sons (w/ Tim Considine), Amos 'n Andy, Petticoat Junction (1st yr.), Mr. Ed. Can dub or edit VHS. Charles E. Bush, Rt. 16 Rogers Lane, Knoxville, TN 37920 615-577-9845.

I have Beta II format (limited VHS access). Looking for videophiles to trade with! WANTED: (All HBO-type uncut) The Swashbuckler (Robert Shaw), James Bond movies, Dirty Harry, Lifeguard, Midnight Cowboy, quality X-rated movies, and others. Currently have access to over 100 GOOD movies. Send lists or write to: David Geffner, 2608 S. Beverly Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90034 (1-213-870-8411)

WANTED on Betamax X2: Any films starring Paul Robeson. Also horror movies. Will trade. Contact: James Nelson, Jr., 4613 Hunter's Creek Lane, Raleigh, NC 27606

WILL SWAP Adult cassettes. Send your list. Also want boxing, old time silent movies and serials on Betamax X1 or X2. Or will buy films. Ray Wencil, 2904 N. Keating Ave., Chicago, IL 60641 (312-685-0398)

JAPAN: Sumo wrestling, commercials, baseball--all Japanese style. Also Rock concerts: Fleetwood Mac, Rod Stewart, E.L.O.--Live in Japan. All on VHS. WILL EXCHANGE! Want Forbidden Planet, The Graduate, Cuckoo's Nest, etc. Write: Don Green, CNFU N3, F.P.O. Seattle, WA 98762

I own a KODAK SUPERMATIC VP-1 film-to-tape transfer machine and will transfer any SUPER 8mm onto any 1/2" tape format, even the old Quasar. Price is very reasonable. Also, have many X-rated titles for trade. Can dub in any 1/2" format. Also looking for fellow Buckeye QUBE subscriber, as I do have a very good trading library. Looking for Happy Hooker Goes to Washington. Would like to hear from all you old Quasar machine owners. Lonnie Fisher, 7016 New Horizon, Enon, OH 45323 PH: (513) 864-1522

MOVIE POSTERS--25 different 1, 3, & 6 sheets, mixed. From 1950's to date. \$25 per lot postpaid, or will trade for most any legal beta format prerecorded video cassette. L-250 or L-500 (X1 or X2) o.k. No selection of titles or subjects. 30 lots available. Easily worth \$100 on collector's market. Will sell or trade individual posters. Write for lists. Bob Stepleton, P.O. Box 55266, Los Angeles, CA 90055

VHS VIDEO RECORDER OWNERS! Are your tapes cluttered with unwanted commercials, station breaks, promos? We can repack your tape into new VHS cassettes. Send stamped, self addressed envelope for free details. ROBKYE CINE ASSOC., 3940 OAKLAND AVE. SO., MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55407 (RCA, JVC, Magnavox, Panasonic owners only!)

WANTED: Looking for VHS format owner with access to HBO of QUBE. I want copies of recent films, especially Rocky, St\*\* W\*\*\*, and American Graffiti. I have access to local public television station broadcasting uncut comedy, drama, musical, and science fiction classics (and some not-so-classics). Let's exchange program guides. All letters answered. WRITE: Phillip MAJEWSKI, R.D. #4 Box 252, Mountaintop, PA 18707 No XXX please!

WANTED: Canadian or USA video traders. Any format, but prefer Beta X2 or U-Matic. Have list to exchange. Kim Frandsen, 12432 St. Albert Trail, Edmonton, Alberta CANADA T5L 4H1

A VIVID VIDEO VARMIN'T Collector of Video Movies would like to hear from other VVV's. Have list will send if any of you VVV's have list to exchange. Have been with 3/4" and Beta X1 and X2. A.J. Kalbin, 4454 Hanalei Pl., San Jose, CA 95118

WANTED--Others interested in trading on VHS format. Have movies, Elvis, and other pop artist concerts to swap. Write: Gordon Culp, 3321 Strolling Hills Rd., Shingle Springs, CA 95682

WANTED: videotapes of "Forever Fernwood" with Martin Mull and Fred Willard--also "Fernwood 2Nite" and "America 2Nite." WANTED: videotapes and films of 60's rock groups, 60's British groups, SHAZAM TV show. P. Foote, 5316 Drexel, Detroit, MI 48213

WANT LISTS WANTED--Send me your lists and I'll send you mine. I have access to many cable channels and HBO. Alan Light, 1800 7th St. Apt. 9A, East Moline, IL 61244



**HKA Cinema Service**  
43 East 10th Street  
New York, NY 10003

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New York, NY 10003



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS

(See page 50 for rates outside the United States, Canada and Mexico)

**VIDEOPHILES**  
**Newsletter**  
**2014 South Magnolia**  
**Tallahassee, Fla**  
**32301**

# WANTED

I want to thank Jim Lowe and the TVN staff for putting out this magazine. By looking at the postage on the mailing envelope, you know he can't be making that much on us. I've met people for the first time and have become close friends. Also, people are offering to record things without asking anything in return.

So, thanks Jim, thanks TVN, and thanks Fellow Collectors. Paid commercial by the John Conte Insane Fund.

HELP! The local CBS affiliate will not carry *The New Avengers*. I need someone to tape this series to trade for other tapes. Many other shows wanted. Beta-2 format. BOB SELIG 7518 Middlewood, Houston, TX 77063

FOR SALE: 1/2" reel to reel video tape equipment (EIAJ format)--Ampex 420R color/B&W video tape recorder--has edit and slow motion--\$400...Sony AVC-3200 video camera--has tripod, carrying case, microphone, standard lens--\$200...Used 1/2" one hour lengths on 7" reel (reel to reel) video tape--in case lots of 10 for \$50 or Sony brand 10 for \$100...Sony 12" color monitor/receiver--almost 3 yrs. old--\$200...WANT TO HEAR FROM ALL BETAMAX OWNERS. WANTED ON BETAMAX: serials, serial features, B westerns, horror, science fiction and adult features. WANT TO BUY 16mm film chain (TV projector, camera, mounting board, brackets, etc.) such as the one that Kalart/Victor makes.

WRITE: Wayne Lackey, 1545 Finley, Memphis, TN 38116 901-346-2056

MOVIE BUFF WITH SONY U-MATIC VCR WISHES TO CONTACT OTHER VIDEOPHILES IN USA. CAN PLAY NTSC AND PAL. URGENTLY WANTS 50's and 60's FRANK SINATRA TV SHOWS. ALSO JACK BENNY TV SPECIALS AND ANY JERRY LEWIS TV APPEARANCES. Clive Roberts, "White Lodge", 47, Baldwin Avenue, Eastbourne, Sussex BN21 1UL, ENGLAND. Ph: Eastbourne (0323) 639588

FINALLY! Rare full-length movie trailers available on Betamax X1 or X2! Remember those great theater previews advertising "coming attractions"? We have three different compilations: *THE JAMES BOND DYNASTY* (including all the exciting 007's)... *THE HORROR COLLECTION* (offering *Jaws*, *Frankenstein*, *The Exorcist*, etc.)... and *THE SCIENCE-FICTION CLASSICS* (with blockbusters like *Forbidden Planet*, *Time Machine*, *2001*, and many others). ONLY \$39.95 postpaid. And each tape includes incredible free bonuses! Excellent quality. HOLLAND VIDEO, 1056 East Cheltenham Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19124

WANTED: Evel Kneivel's *Death Defiers* telecast Jan. 31, 1977. Was on the show, but unable to get a good copy. Also C.B. DeMille's *The Greatest Show on Earth*--uncut! Prefer VHS. Thanks. Dave Merrifield, P.O. Box 3632, Sarasota, Florida 33578 (or on tour until Oct. 24 at 615-453-6795).

WANT Betatape of Eastwood, Fields, Woody Allen, Eisenstein, Marx Brothers, Chaplin, Bogart, *Secret Agent and Danger Man* (McGoohan), *Mostel*, *Across the Bridge*, *Z*, *State of Siege*, *Tenth Victim*, *Producers*, *Lies Father Told*, *Small Change*, *Dimka*, *Fantastic Planet*, *Dr. Sardonicus*, *Vault of Horror*, *Tales from the Crypt*, *House that Dripped Blood*, *Asylum*, *Clockwork Orange*, *Godspell*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Also: *Suddenly Last Summer*, *Investigation of Citizen Above Suspicion*, *Outrageous*, *Conformist*, *Fellini's Satyricon*, *Boys in the Band*, *Saturday Night at the Baths*, *Ritz*, *Killing of Sister George*, *Leather Boys*, *Lonesome Cowboys*, *My Hustler*, *Myra Breckinridge*, *Oscar Wilde*, *Damned*, *Tea and Sympathy*, *Death in Venice*, *Flesh*, *Servant*, *Sergeant*, *Victim*, *Gay Deceivers*, *Fortune and Men's Eyes*, *Women in Love*, *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Sunday Bloody Sunday*, *Dog Day Afternoon*, *Wakefield Poole* films, similar adult films.

WILL TRADE from my Betatape collection: TV series--*Goodies*, *Rutland Weekend*, *Are You Being Served* (original British versions), *Kovacks*, *Monty Python*, *Second City*, *New Avengers*, *Upstairs Downstairs*, *Prisoner* (McGoohan), *All You Need is Love*, *Camera and Song*, *Neil Diamond*, *Witness to Yesterday*, *Final Solution*, *Stationary Ark* (Gerald Durrell). Movies--300 titles, including films with Chaplin, Eastwood, Fields, Marx Bros., Judy Holiday, and *Graduate*, *Taxi Driver*, *Gauntlet*, *Smokey and Bandit*, *Slapshot*, *One Night Stand*, *Catsplay*, *Cabaret*, *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice*, *Loved One*, *Everything You Wanted to know about Sex*, *Something Completely Different*, *Mary Queen of Scots*, *Blow Up*, *Third Man*, *Bonnie and Clyde*. Also *Detective*, *Edward II*, *Teoroma* (Pasolini), *Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*, *Staircase*, *Two Gentlemen Sharing*, *Summer Wishes Winter Dreams*, *Certain Summer*, *Junie Moon*, *Triple Echo*, *Lion in Winter*, *Midnight Cowboy*, *Deliverance*, *Reflections in Golden Eye*, *Fearless Vampire Killers*, *Secret of Dorian Gray*, *Wild in Streets*, & others. WRITE: Tapes, P.O. Box 823, Station B, London, Ontario, N6A 4Z3, CANADA. Let's exchange lists.

WILL TRADE my 16mm/sound film collection, 1959 b/w cliffhanger series of *Felix the Cat* cartoons for Beta-2 features. Each chapter runs 4 minutes and two matched episodes complete one story. I have 52 matched chapters and 46 odd reels, in individual cans. Will trade 6 matched reels (3 stories) for one tape. All 98 chapters for 10 tapes. All trading lists welcomed. Joe Onorato, 46 South Main, Northfield, VT 05663 (802-485-9732)

SAVE A MARRIAGE!! My wife threatens to leave unless I come up with a good copy of *SWASHBUCKLER* (Robert Shaw & Genevieve Bujo). After purchasing a new Betamax, and 100 tapes, I can't afford a divorce. HELP! Will trade. David Geffner, 2608 S. Beverly Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90034

WANTED: Betamax X2, crisp and clear, first generation copies of: *An American Guerrilla in the Philippines* w/ Tyrone Power, *Africa Addio*, *Mondo Cane*, and any other of the *Cane* series of movies that followed *Mondo Cane*. Robert Dorser, P.O. Box 11275, 2201 N. Grand, Santa Ana, CA 92711

WANTED: Videotapes or films of: 1) '60's rock groups--Who, Byrds, Animals, Doors, Zombies, etc. 2) Old TV shows--*Smothers Brothers*, *Shindig*, *Hullabaloo*, Ed Sullivan, *American Bandstand* (State what guests are on shows); *Shazam* (Saturday morning CBS children's show), *Little People* (or Brian Keith Show), *The Doctors* (soap opera...episodes from '77 on back). 3) Movies--*Steambath* (with Bill Bixby) or any Bixby movies, *Run, Simon, Run* (Burt Reynolds). 4) New TV shows--*America 2Night* (appearance by Lenny & Squiggy from *Laverne and Shirley* on *America 2Night* with Jerry Hubbard's Elvis imitation) and Patti Smith Group singing "Because the Night" on *Midnight Special*. I own Sanyo VCR, but if you have cassettes in another format I can transfer to my format or Super 8 film. Write: P. Foote, 5316 Drexel, Detroit, MI 48213 State what you have.

WANTED--Betamax-2: Bing Crosby movies and TV appearances--for personal use only--Pat Sullivan, 1301 Sheridan, Apt. 96, Chico, CA 95926

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WANTED on Betamax X1 or X2: Bing Crosby Benefit Concert for Montreal 1976 Olympics, Vitaphone film shorts made by Giovanni Martinelli, Guiseppe, DeLuca, Benjamino Gigli, John Charles Thomas, etc. Also want *La Boheme* as broadcast on *Live from the Met* over PBS. Bob Scott, P.O. Box 1694, Wayne, NJ 07470 (201-696-1278)

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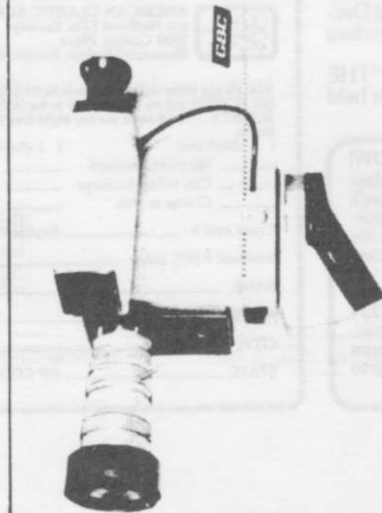


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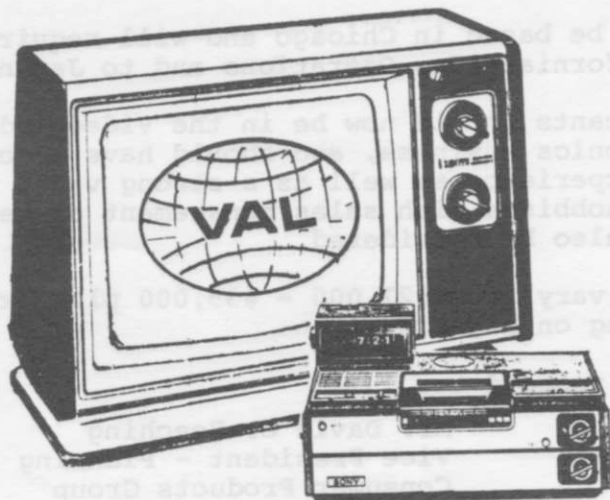
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1 V	.....	VHS MASTER	{ 1st GENERATION }
1 Q	.....	GTM MASTER	{ 1st GENERATION }
1 S	.....	V-CORD II MASTER	{ 1st GENERATION }
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2 B	.....	BETA DUB	{ 2nd GENERATION }
2 V	.....	VHS DUB	{ 2nd GENERATION }
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1. The first part of the document is a letter from the President of the United States to the Congress, dated January 3, 1862. It is a copy of the original letter, which is in the possession of the Library of Congress. The letter is addressed to the Senate and the House of Representatives, and is signed by Abraham Lincoln. It discusses the state of the Union and the progress of the war against the Confederacy.

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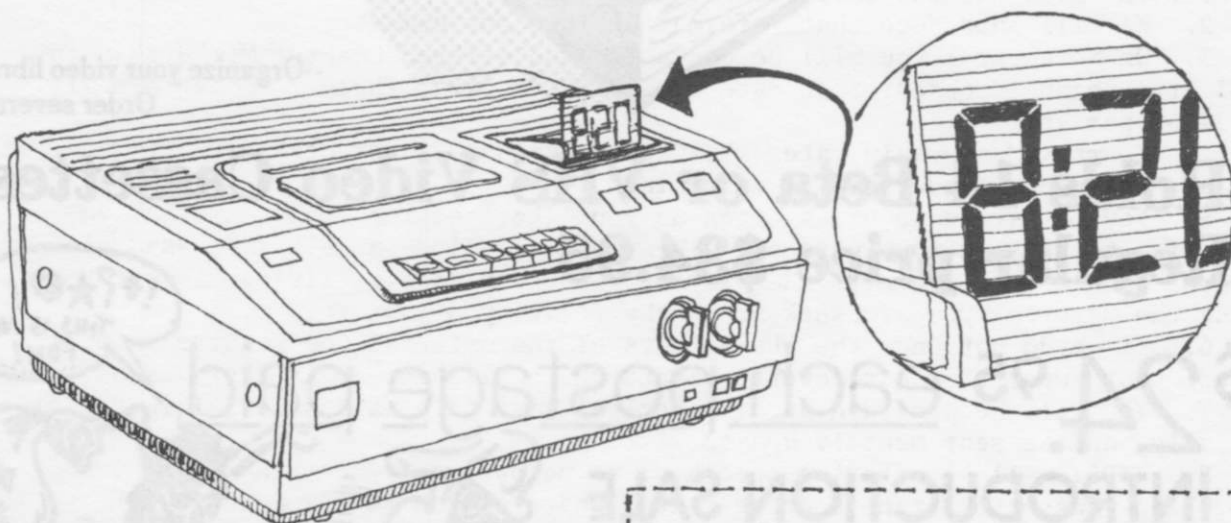
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10. The tenth part of the document is a report from the Secretary of the War Department, dated January 10, 1862. It is a copy of the original report, which is in the possession of the War Department. The report is addressed to the President and the Congress, and is signed by Edwin M. Stanton. It discusses the military operations of the Union Army and the progress of the war against the Confederacy.

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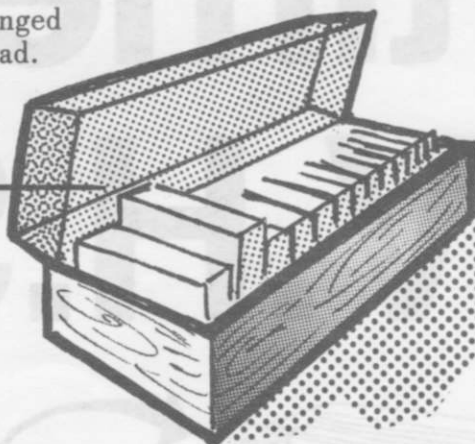
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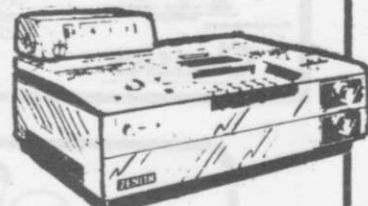
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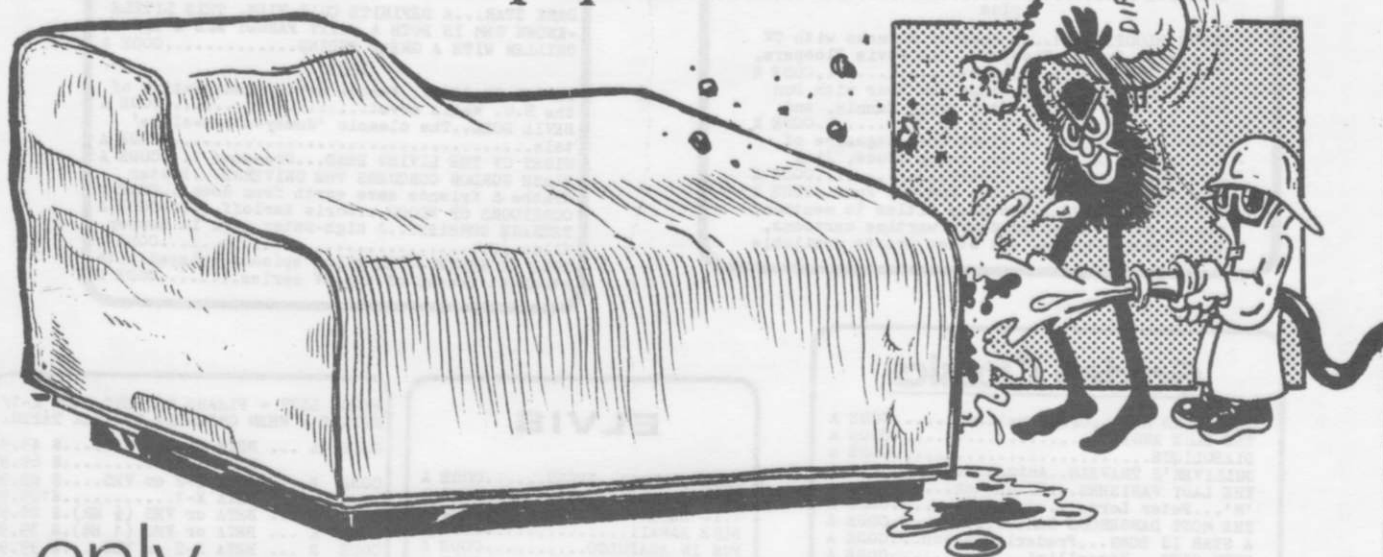
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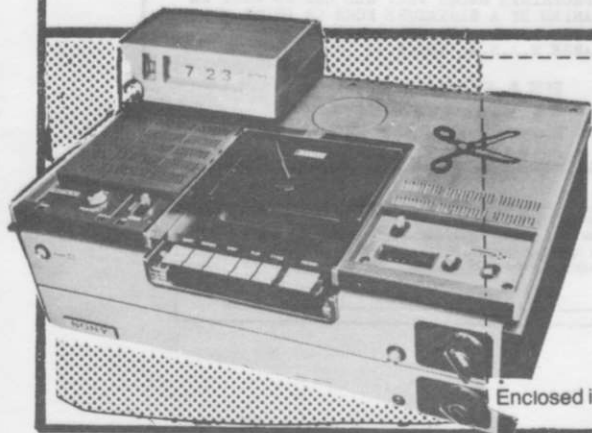
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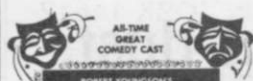
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Rochester

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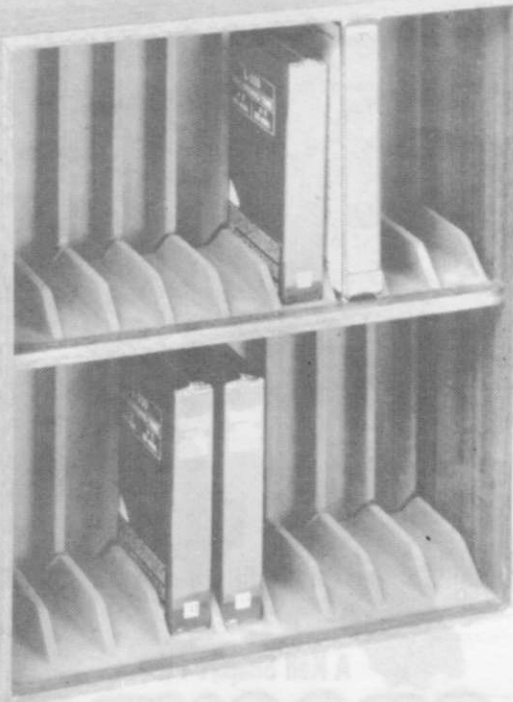
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# JOE MAZZINI'S U-MATIC & BETA NOTES

This issue I thought I'd tell you about my testing of ten video tape recorders over the past month.

Some I had as long as a month and others as short as a weekend.

I live in an area of Los Angeles that has excellent antenna reception, but no cable. I used my 75 ohm antenna lead-in to record off-air programs and make dubs to see how well one machine would transfer to another.

The 3/4" U-Matic machines tested were

SONY VO-2600  
SONY VO-1800  
SONY VO-1200  
JVC CR-6300U

The Beta format machines were

SONY SLO-260  
SONY SLO-320  
SONY SL-8200  
SONY SL-8600

The VHS machines were

JVC VIDSTAR  
RCA 200

Of all the machines, the Sony SL-8200 offered the best value for the money. It had two speeds that were switchable and excellent video signal to noise ratio. If you don't need a two speed machine, then the Sony SL-8600 is the best buy with its built-in LED timer and remote pause. Neither machine, though, had a switchable input selector, which is essential if you use a camera and/or another video tape recorder. At the present time these machines are switched into the "line" input through insertion of male plugs into the video in and out connectors.

The JVC VIDSTAR and RCA 200 both offered input switches. The best switch was on the RCA because the Vidstar's was too close to the VCR/TV switch and often I would mistakenly switch the input ruining the dub I was making.

Of the 3/4" U-Matic machines, the Sony 2600 was the best with its professional-feeling solenoids. However, for all around use, the old VO-1800 (still available as a used machine for as low as \$750) was the best because it had switchable RF output, color/B&W switch and a skew control,

which was forgotten on the 2600.

The JVC 6300 had many problems. The worst was its threading procedure. The tape is removed from the cassette and then pulled by an arm until a switch activates the threading ring further. It was complicated and failed twice. To make matters worse, the input switch was on the back and there was no color/B&W switch. This switch makes dubbing B&W material from one machine to another easier because many machines have a tendency to "seek" color if it isn't there and, in multi-generation dubs, the color noise becomes quite objectionable.

If you've the money to afford the tape, then the Sony SLO-320 is the machine to consider. With its fine remote control "calculator" switching system and its flawless performance, it is a winner. However, you'll have to buy a separate tuner/timer which runs around \$350 from Sony. I use the Sony TT-100 for my 1800 and it works fine. Marc's column will tell you more about the new generation of tuner/timers on the market. Basically, a tuner/timer is nothing more than a TV set without a picture tube.

To be sure that the test situations were consistent, I used a line of tape we handle here made by a major equipment/tape manufacturer. We at STUDIO FILM & TAPE are selling this 3/4" KCA-60 tape for only \$18.50 to TVN subscribers. I used Sony tape in the Beta machines, JVC tape in the Vidstar and RCA tape in the RCA.

In the 1/2" format, only the 320 had automatic rewind, which is a nice feature. All had memory. All machines were reliable. I ran the RCA and the SL-8200 36 hours non-stop once just to see how they would work and they worked fine.

The machine doesn't appear to be too heavy duty to me, but I do know a cable company that uses them exclusively to rewind tapes and they have had no problem in that area.

Only the VHS machines offered you a UHF output. This is important because on the Sony machines if you feed a UHF signal into the tape recorder, you never see it again, except on tape. With the RCA you don't need a UHF splitter, which can weaken your UHF input.

The tracking control was never

needed on the Sony machines, but in playing tapes recorded on another VHS machine, it was. Fortunately, the JVC VHS only recorded in the fast speed, so its picture quality would be rated excellent. It's not as good, I feel, as the Beta 320, but then the 320 is a machine that is special and not intended for the home market, though Ray, Art and Marc all have one.

Tuner sensitivity and quality is important. The best tuners were to be found in the Sony 8200, 8600 and SLO-260 machines. The next best was the TT-100 separate tuner/timer. I found the JVC VHS and RCA VHS tuners to be about equal to the TT-100. The worst tuner was found in the JVC 6300 U-Matic. To be fair, it should be pointed out that the JVC 6300 has not been in production for some time now, but it was around when the TT-100 was around.

Only the older JVC 3/4" machine had a feature that I would like to see incorporated into all machines: a battery in the timer. When the JVC 6300 was unplugged, its timer still continued to operate. This meant that you didn't have to reset the timer should the power fail or if you transported it to another house. The worst timer was the one that came with the 8200 and SLO-260. It was hard to set and read. The best timer was on the JVC Vidstar, but it was a 24 hour clock and more than once I would set it for 8:00 thinking it would turn itself on at 8:00 at night only to find out that 20:00 was really 8:00 at night. The RCA's and 8600's timers were attractive and easy to set.

Remote controls are available for the JVC 3/4" and the Sony 2600 machines. However, the audio outputs and inputs of the JVC 6300 were of the DIN variety which means you have to have a special connector to tap those connections. Also, there was no standard 8 pin input/output jack as with the VO-1800, VO-2600 or SLO-320. The 8 pin jack makes connection to another machine easy as well as connection to a tuner/timer.

There are many JVC 6300 machines available in used condition for as low as \$90. I don't recommend purchasing one, however, because I've worked with three of them and all have developed an odd problem after several hours of use: the pinch roller becomes deformed creating tracking problems in both record and playback.

The color-lock control, which is never found on 1/2" machines, has come in handy once or twice for me. It lets you manually control the color locking signal and I sure prefer JVC's 3/4" control which is on the top front of the machine as opposed to Sony's which is on the back.

The JVC 6300, however, had a tracking control that made it the worst to deal with. Sony's 3/4" V0-1800 allowed you to pull the tracking knob up to take it out of the auto mode. With the JVC you turned the knob clockwise which didn't allow you to make delicate "tweaking" during dubbing as with the 1800.

Though the SLO-260 is no longer available, you might find some used. It's a good machine. It resembles the 7200A a great deal. It is one hour only, but has still frame, audio dub and a VU meter for audio with a limiter. Of course these features are also incorporated into the newer SLO-320.

There is no audio level control on the VHS or consumer Beta machines. You can, however, audio dub on the VHS machines. I have never used this feature because I prefer using my 3/4" machine which offers two audio tracks.

By the way, you 3/4" users should always use Channel 2 for audio because it is better protected on the tape than Channel 1. Channel 1 is stored right near the edge and for rock music it can prove frustrating because many U-Matic tapes have slight ripples along the edge which causes fluttering in the playback of audio.

If anyone out there is wondering if they should go U-Matic or Beta I hope I can convince you that Beta is the only way to go. I honestly think that, all things considered, the X-2 Betamax is the best all around value for the money. Several papers have been published pointing out that the SL-8200 has 2Db better video signal to noise ratio in the X-2 mode. This is because automatic correcting circuitry enters into the system in the slower speed. Of course, the best quality will be achieved on an X-1 only machine because it is adjusted specifically for X-1.

The only tape-related problem I had was when I inserted a JVC 60 tape into an RCA machine. It recorded fine, but when it came time to take the tape out, it jammed in the machine. I learned since then that this was a shared fault between JVC and RCA. JVC's cassette design is not a good one. Pry the front flap up sometime on a VHS and try to do the same with a Beta tape. You'll

see that the flap can easily get caught inside the machine when it is being released to cover the tape. This happened and it took a screwdriver and 15 minutes to get the tape away from the machine. I took the JVC tape back to the dealer I bought it from and he said I had to send it directly to JVC in New Jersey, so I did. As far as I know, Sony replaces its tape on the spot, but I've never had to return one.

All formats can be protected from accidental erasure of tape. The U-Matic's system is the best because all you have to do is remove a red tab at the bottom of the cassette. This makes erasure easier later on. The most difficult to use was the Betamax tape because it required you to punch in a tab on the left side and you had to tape over the hole to record again. The VHS had a nice touch with its tab at the back. It, however, required a visible piece of tape to allow recording.

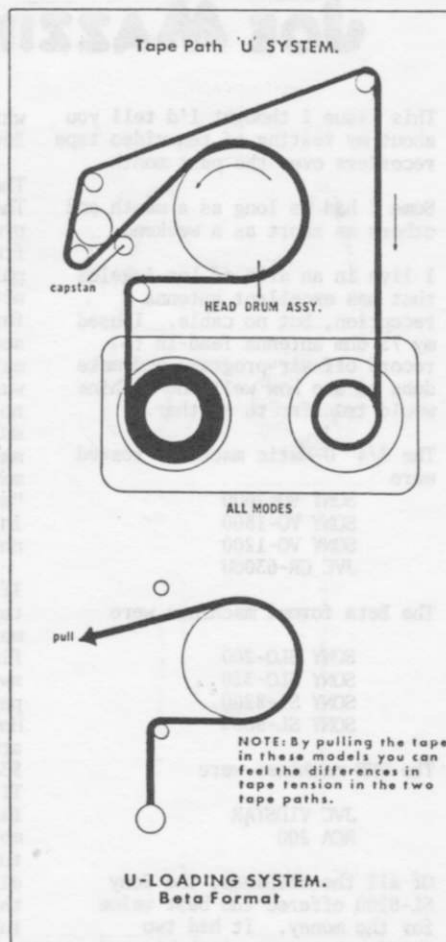
It was enjoyable using the four hour VHS tape, but transfers of good quality was difficult to achieve and it took forever to find selections on a tape that length.

The Beta X-2 quality was far better than VHS's X-4. I did think the sound with VHS machines was very good. The 3/4" machines all, of course, had better sound because the tape is moving many times faster by the audio head.

If you're recording rock music stuff off the air, then you should use the X-1 speed in the 8200. The sound in X-2 by the 8600 did not sound improved like Sony promised a few months ago, but in general, the ease of operation and the value of a built-in timer along with front as well as top operating lights made the 8600 a fine machine.

I'd like to close this comparison by giving you the rundown on the two types of loading systems available for 1/2" machines.

One of the biggest problems with the older U-Matics (the 1200 & 1800) was that the tape was brought back into the cassette when rewind or fast forward modes were required. The Beta system does away with this by keeping the tape near the heads. The Beta uses a loading system very similar to the 2000 series U-Matic machines, which we will refer to as the "U" system. Sony originated the "M" system which is presently being used by the VHS people.

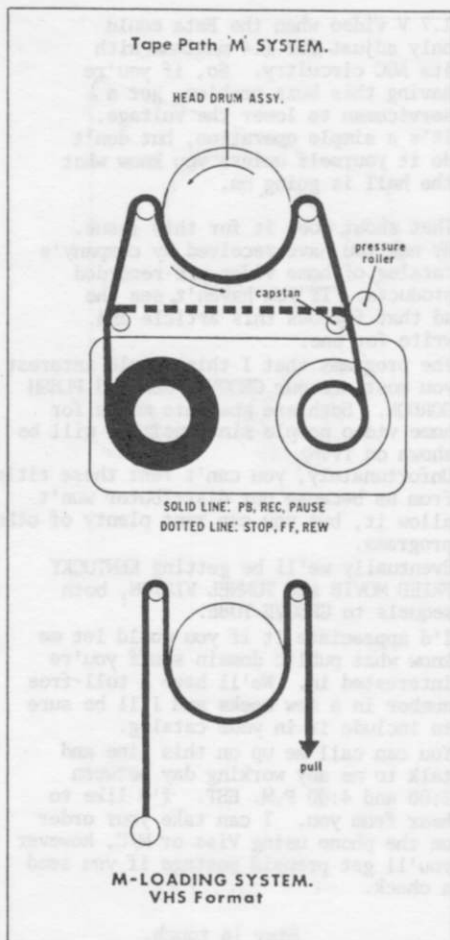


I know the U system diagram above looks kind of Rube Goldberg, but it really is better. For one thing, we have proof of its quality with years of successful use.

Thanks to Ted Dickson of Sony, I have the following comparison. I welcome rebuttals from VHS people. I certainly don't plan to berate the VHS system, but our publication goes to many people who are considering either purchase of a machine for the first time or who want to buy a second machine for dubbing purposes.

1. Tape tension is much less in the "U" system. Excessive tension causes tape to stretch.
2. Interchange is lost when tape is stretched. Interchange is the ability to play a tape on another machine.
3. Rewind and F.F. is easy in the "U" system. Because of the excessive tension in the "M" system, the tape must be returned to the cassette for rewind and F.F., hence the "M" system mechanism is subject to more wear.





4. When the 'M' loading system is used, the tape is exposed to 1 1/2 times the tension as the 'U' loading system. It is easy to see that on a 2 hour recording the 'M' loading systems would be exposing the tape to 2 hours of this excess tension in recording. Then an additional 2 hours when it is played back, for a total of 4 hours.

The Sony 'U' format stays loaded during fast forward and rewind. The tape is exposed to only 3 to 4 minutes of slight tension on a maximum of 8 minutes to rewind after record and playback of a 2 hour program.

It's in clear view that 8 minutes of exposure to a slight tension is far less damaging than 4 hours of excess tension to the tape over the same viewing time.

5. The 'M' loading system has to load and unload the tape too often, causing the operator to have to wait between loading modes. The recorded can be forced into a jam-up condition very easily. This is not a problem with the 'U' Beta format.

6. Since the 'M' loading systems loads and unloads 8 to 20 seconds of tape back into the cassette it makes it very difficult to edit or find a exact point on the tape even with the counter. The 'U' Beta format stays loaded and is very easy to find an exact place on the tape.

Warranty is important, too. Maybe my dealer was atypical by not giving me another JVC tape on the spot when mine proved defective, but take a look sometime at the warranty labels that accompany your tape. RCA's video tape warranty reads as follows:

"RCA Corporation warrants only that for the first time it is used."

Sony, however, says:

"Sony has a 90 day warranty on materials and workmanship."

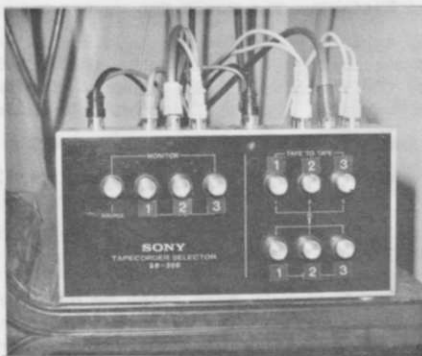
Well, that about does the comparison. Again, the best buy, if you're just beginning this wonderful new field of interest, is the SL-8600 X-2 only machine by Sony. It runs between \$850-\$1095 depending upon where you buy one. The Zenith and Toshiba are identical and made by Sony.

If you have friends or have tapes yourself that are X-1, then consider the Sony SL-8200. There are still a few crated Zenith and Toshiba equivalent models around going for as low as \$695.

If you have money, buy the SLO-320 solenoid remote controlled X-1 Beta.

If you have lots and lots of money and want the very best quality (no matter what Beta people say, the 3/4" is definitely clearer) go Sony 2600 U-Matic. But be prepared to mortgage your home and wife because you have to buy an RF output and tuner/timer for any Sony 3/4" machine, and that will run you an additional \$450 making your tab over \$2000.

Don't forget tape cost. Even with the line of tape I am handling for sale in 3/4", it's still \$13 for two hours of Betamax as opposed to \$37 for two hours of KCA-60 stuff.



The above photo is of my Sony SB-300 Tape Recorder Selector. This \$50 jewel

really makes audio switching a dream. I run my FM/AM receiver into it along with two video tape recorders and I can switch anything into anything. I can, for example, have one audio tape recorder feeding another, while I am listening to a third (or even source!)

It is invaluable for transferring audio to the U-Matic or taking the video tape recorder sound and transferring it to audio tape for one reason or another.

The switching is firm and positive and with two years of wear on it hasn't created any problems or noise.



## FX-310

Printed above is a nifty new toy from Sony. I just bought one and consider it a true bargain. The list, I believe, is around \$290. I paid \$210 here in L.A. for this combo FM/AM Audio Cassette TV. The screen is only 3", but its quality is exceptional. It fits nicely on top of my Sony 1741R TV and makes a great monitor for videotaping. When it is detuned, it becomes just sloppy enough to help you adjust the skew on a 3/4" machine. It doesn't have decent tuning, but the continuous tuner works fine because there are three bands to choose from so you aren't forever turning the knob to get a station. The input in the back is 75 ohm mini. The machine is very portable (at 8 lbs. I would think so!) and can be run on just about any voltage supply. The audio cassette and FM quality is excellent. The only thing I didn't care for was the carrying strap that attaches to chrome bolts on the top. I prefer JVC's horizontal approach with a handle for carrying around.

When I moved to L.A., I just couldn't haul my large JBL speakers with me. I needed speakers that were small and cheap so I settled on the AURATONE monitor speakers that are used extensively in studios to give the engineers a sense of the "real world" audio.

These speakers are cubes 6 1/2" in size that cost only \$59.95 per pair. They have a 26 ounce magnet and are fully guaranteed for one year. You can get them from

KENNETH A. BACON ASSOCIATES  
216 MONTEGO KEY,  
NOVATO, CA 94947

I certainly recommend them. They come in a very attractive walnut cabinet and can take 20 watts RMS easily. They're small enough to fit well in a large car or van with great sonic results.

As you know by now, Marc Wielage appeared on a panel discussing the rights of home video users. This "meeting of the minds" was duly reported in a recent EDUCATIONAL & INDUSTRIAL TELEVISION issue.

Tapes of the 1978 Videoshow are now available. Though the advertisement says "Complete Show," I believe it is around 4-6 hours of condensed lectures. I purchased AMVID's condensation of last year's show and have just ordered this year's.

So, if you're interested in hearing Marc (I'm sure he's on the tape) send a check for \$23.50 which includes postage to

AMVID COMMUNICATIONS  
2100 SEPULVEDA BLVD.,  
MANHATTAN BEACH, CA 90266

You've probably written away for Comprehensive's new catalog. It is marvelous and lists for \$5. I'm sure, however, that a call to their toll free number (800/526-0242) will get you one without cost.

But, MARSHALL ELECTRONICS  
P.O. Box 2027,  
CULVER CITY, CA 90230

offers the same connectors at a more reasonable cost. I would recommend that you stay with Comprehensive for such things as cable ties and markers.

Marshall isn't cheap, but they are lower in cost than Comprehensive. In the near future Marc and I will be offering you connectors through TVN/West, but in the meantime write these people to get an idea of what they offer.

They have a complete line of video connectors. They have 75 ohm connecting cables and the nifty new "F" push-on connectors. Their AB switch is essential if you are using two video tape recorders and have only one monitor. The list is \$14.95 and they have one for \$8.95. The hassle of unscrewing and screwing in your F connectors at the back of your set or VTR can be avoided by buying the push-on version (A-2120) for only \$1.90.

By the way, if you will remember, some of us U-Matic people were having problems transferring material from U-Matic to Beta during bright sequences. A 60Hz buzz would occur which was very irritating. I found that my VO-1800 was putting out

1.7 V video when the Beta could only adjust for 1.4 maximum with its AGC circuitry. So, if you're having this buzz problem, get a serviceman to lower the voltage. It's a simple operation, but don't do it yourself unless you know what the hell is going on.

That about does it for this issue. By now you have received my company's catalog of home video pre-recorded products. If you haven't, see the ad that follows this article and write for one.

The programs that I think would interest you most are our GROOVE TUBE and FLESH GORDON. Both are absolute musts for home video people since neither will be shown on TV.

Unfortunately, you can't rent these titles from us because our distributor won't allow it, but you can rent plenty of other programs.

Eventually we'll be getting KENTUCKY FRIED MOVIE and TUNNEL VISION, both sequels to GROOVE TUBE.

I'd appreciate it if you would let me know what public domain stuff you're interested in. We'll have a toll-free number in a few weeks and I'll be sure to include it in your catalog.

You can call me up on this line and talk to me any working day between 2:00 and 4:00 P.M. EST. I'd like to hear from you. I can take your order on the phone using Visa or M/C, however you'll get prepaid postage if you send a check.

Stay in touch,

  
Joe Mazzini  
VIDEO PROGRAMS DIVISION  
STUDIO FILM & TAPE  
6424 Santa Monica Blvd.,  
Hollywood, CA 90038

## AD RATES & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Two types of ads are available: (1) Those printed from Camera Ready Copy, and (2) MINI-ADS. "Camera Ready" means that I take whatever you send in and give it directly to the printer, without retyping, or anything. It is critical that these be prepared in dark black or red ink and, if they are typed, that the ribbon be nice and dark. If it isn't, the reproduction will be very poor and we will both be disappointed. It is also essential that you leave at least a 1/4" margin on all four sides (more would be better). The rates for camera ready copy ads are as follows:

Full page .....	\$50	Yes, they've gone up again. Rates for display ads are good only for issue #16. They will
Half page .....	\$27	continue to rise as our circulation increases. We've held the line for two issues, but reader-
Quarter page ..	\$15	ship is up 30% since the rates were last changed. The camera ready ads may contain artwork or
		black and white photographs. Submit in any of the following sizes:

Full page: 8 1/2" x 11" or 11" x 14" Half page: 8 1/2" x 5 1/2" or 11" x 7" Quarter page: 8" x 2 1/2" or 4" x 5 1/2"

MINI-ADS: These are still available for the very cheap rate of 25 words for \$1. From 26-50 words is \$2, etc. HOWEVER, after 150 words each group of 25 more is \$2. Name & address (within reason) = 6 words. Telephone # = 1.

NO ads for copyrighted material FOR SALE will be accepted unless you have the rights to them. Also see disclaimer on Mini-Ads page in this issue. Limit of 2 full pages per advertiser. Inquire re: color back cover and special placement.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Deadline** Ads and contributions absolutely must reach me by October 23. Please, no more phone calls and Speedy Express Mail deliveries after the deadline. Our readership is (conservatively): 5000+

**sub rates!** Six issues for \$10 in the US, Canada & Mexico (US funds). AIR MAIL to Central America, Colombia, Venezuela, Caribbean, & Bermuda is \$17. All others is \$20, also by AIR. If a little (15) appears in the upper right hand corner of your mailing label: RENEW NOW. Schedule of special rates will appear in #16.



## ★ TVN: "Cash-In" Products Division ★

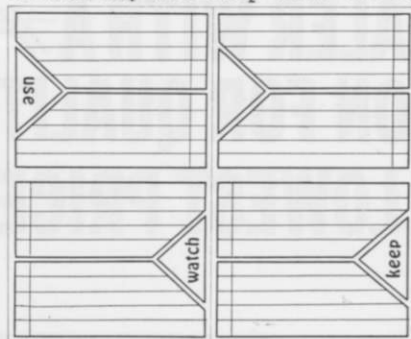
**THE VIDEOPHILE'S ANNUAL: 1978** This is the snappy portfolio which contains most of the material originally published in #s 1-6, reprinted in 6 individual facsimil copies of those now long out-of-print issues. Total page count of the annual exceeds the 70-80 foreseen when we first announced this item. This is a limited edition of 500 portfolios, being offered at the bargain price of only \$6. Lots of fascinating stuff in these early issues. Close to 200 of these are already gone. Suffice it to say that it covers everything from how to edit out commercials (#4) to the somber excerpt from the editor's first deposition with Universal and Sony attorneys (#6), lots of video chit chat, tips for beginners (as we all were back then) and much more.

As for the tee-shirts, they come in your choice of color and men's sizes S to XL, for the familiar price of \$6, which includes postage. These are custom screened shirts that are available only from The Videophile's Newsletter. They come in beige or light blue, the letters are open, shaded in black, and the cute little porker is in "piggie pink", as you would naturally demand. Not too many of these remain. Better act now!

!!!



In a more practical vein, we present The Videophile's video cassette index cards. If you're like me, you never seem to have a 3x5 card or appropriate slip of paper at hand to write down titles on, and slip into the box.



The collector's cassette cards (shown here in both front and back views, reduced) measure 6' x 3 and 3/4", and are custom designed to fit into Beta format cassette boxes. They are deliberately designed without column headings, so that you can adapt them to your own purposes, whether for temporarily or permanently indicating the contents of each cassette. When inserted in the box, the words "Watch", "Keep", "Use" or another of your choice will be visible through the notch in the box. Best of all, these stiff cards come to you in pads of 50. Just peel one off when you need it, ... the rest of the pad remains obediently available right next to your machine. The price? A true giveaway at a buck a pad, with a 2 pad minimum order. Want some testimonials? Read:

"Thanks for the pads. Fantastic design job!" -- J.G., of Miss.  
 "Got my tape index cards a couple weeks ago. Every tape has a card in it now. They're just great." -- M.R., of Nebraska

### BACK ISSUES

Only 5 issues are available

#9 & #11 are each \$3.00

#12 13 & 14 are each \$2.00

### SHORT SUPPLY



**Issue 9:** First issue in semi-professional format. Contains first installment of "Rambling Outtakes", review of Time-Life Betamax offerings, first annual roundup of prerecorded tape sources, etc. [Compleatists take note: This is a full size reprint of the original #9]

**Issue 11:** First 40 page issue. Packed with info re: comparison of consumer 1/2" recorders, projection TV sets, excerpts from lawsuit depositions, Art Vuolo's first "Michigan Update", results of readers' poll, reviews of TV gift-type books, first Voice of Canada, lots more.

**Issue 12:** First slick cover issue. Includes reports on "QUBE" two-way cable system, Video in Australia, Rambling Marc at the Las Vegas Consumer Electronics Show, How to make the most of two recorders, Dealer's Doings, a bunch of letters, ... and the usual typos, etc.

**Issue 13:** How to defeat the muting circuit in the Betamax SL-8200 (or Zenith), Bob Burn's first column for "VHS" folks, Rambling Marc battles Universal attorneys, and reports on pay cable systems, lotsa questions and answers, great America 2Night cover. Biggest ish to date.

**Issue 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 & A's, report on the Sony SL-8600, TVN goes to two conventions, The Ultimate Video Room, much more!!

Each issue also contains Joe Mazzini's notes for 3/4" folks, as well as many advertisements.





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