


the VIDEOPHILE

\$2.50

NMI

August 1980

26 



- Review of the Kloss Novabeam Projection TV
- The Video Components That We Recommend
- First Look at New Video Equipment at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show



vidicraft presents . . .



The **COMMERCIAL ALERT** warns you with an audible tone when commercials threaten to interrupt the recording of your favorite TV program or movie. Now you can read, study, converse or watch another channel and still cut commercials.

When the **COMMERCIAL ALERT** sounds, hit the pause button on your vcr or remote control unit. Restart your vcr when the commercials are over. Tone has a volume control. **COMMERCIAL ALERT** measures 2½" x 7" x 4⅝". Black case with midnite blue anodized face . . . \$139.

The **COPYGUARD STABILIZER** ... plus RF CONVERTER. Stop annoying picture roll when playing pre-recorded (copyguarded) videocassettes. Adjustment of the lock control will stabilize playback by completely removing copyguard. A built in RF converter provides direct access to any TV set (channel 3 or 4).

Video and audio out are also available to feed a second vcr ... or use it just as an RF converter — feed video and audio in and get RF out. **COPYGUARD STABILIZER** measures 2½" x 7" x 4⅝".

Black case with midnite blue anodized face . . . \$185.

Also available without RF converter in small plain cabinet . . . \$98.

The **DETAILER II VCR IMAGE ENHANCER AND DETAILER** restores sharpness and detail normally lost in VHS, 3/4 inch and Beta recordings. Pasty faces, loss of texture, and multigeneration smear don't have to be tolerated. **DETAILER II** substantially sharpens your picture and restores detail. It's separate **DETAIL** and **SHARPNESS** controls provide flexibility for dealing with a wide variety of material. A **CORE** circuit reduces snow and other high frequency luminance noise brought out by extreme sharpness enhancement. The result is a dramatic increase in picture quality whether used for recording, playback or dubbing.

DETAILER II also features a built-in audio and video switcher as well as a distribution amplifier for interconnecting up to 4 vcr's. All connectors are standard phono pins (no special connectors required). **DETAILER II VCR IMAGE ENHANCER AND DETAILER** measures 2½" x 9¾" x 6½".

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Also available, the original **DETAILER**, an image enhancer to improve recording, playback, and dubbing of VHS, 3/4" or Beta units. 3 outputs to drive 3 vcr's . . . \$140.

All Vidicraft products have a 10-day money back guarantee as well as a one year warranty on parts and labor.



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vidicraft inc.
quality video components

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

—H. D. Thoreau (1817-1861)



Product Reports

17

He was a poor black sharecropper's son who never dreamed he was adopted.



Video Tape Reviews

45

STEVE MARTIN.
The JERK
A BAGE TO BUCKLE TO JAGS STORY.

Editor/Publisher:
Jim Lowe

General Manager:
Joyce Hilliard

Technical Editors:
Marcus F. Wielage
Joe Mazzini
Kirk Leonhardt

Circulation Manager:
Lois Watson

Assistant to the Editor:
Sharon Wright

Office Staff:
Jeanne Porch
Keith Holland

Contributors:
James Camner
Martin Greim
The Big Nate
Larry Nibert
Ted Reinhart
David See
Art Vuolo

Cover Photo/Model:
Steve Leukanach
Gail Foreswindes

the VIDEOPHILE

THE VOICE OF VIDEO FANDOM

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tv wiggles

Welcome once again to the world of videophilia. If everything went according to plan, this issue (the first produced by our new printer) should have a bit of a new look to it. As time goes by, we hope to improve our interior graphics even more, but until our resources permit we will have to continue putting the bulk of our time and effort into the actual content.

While looking over the past couple of years' issues, we've noticed a tendency on our part to become a little top heavy with the technical stuff. We certainly don't ever want to lose the informal touch that has characterized our efforts from the beginning. With that in mind, we intend to redouble our efforts to insure that each issue contains enough insignificant chit-chat to satisfy even the least sophisticated videophile. Some of the features we used to run (eg. how to edit out commercials, time charts, etc.) are more difficult to do now that there are literally dozens of different brands and models of recorders to be had. But we do hope to keep you supplied with a steady stream of hints, tips, guess-whats, and other advice, while at the same time bringing you in-depth product reports a la the past couple of issues. Our Amos 'n Andy index will *definitely* appear in the next issue, along with our interview of Sapphire and Amos. We've also got a few do-it-yourself modifications that we hope to be able to check out and bring to you without further delay. Bear with us, we're still trying to get it all together . . . and we do have *your* best interest in mind.

☆☆☆

We welcome to the ranks of our review panel this issue Mr. James Camner, who will be concentrating on opera, show music and related material on video tape. We have not intentionally concentrated on Westerns, XXX, or any other particular category in our tape review section. We expect to continue broadening our horizon as we go along. The one area that we *do* hope to give disproportionate attention to is the non-mass produced tape market. You can read reviews of Magnetic Video, Warners' and Paramount releases anywhere. But we want you to know about the small firms that are catering to the collector, or perhaps seeking to rip off the collector. This issue we review our first tape from *Shokus Video*, a firm which looks like a winner. In this regard, I notice that we failed to run the address of *Roll Your Own Video* in our list of sources last issue. You may reach them at: 207 W. Mason, Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

While we're on the subject, we would certainly appreciate your letting us know about any small duplicating firms that we may have overlooked, especially those offering exclusive, special interest or hard-to-find (legal) material. While we feel that giving you coverage of esoteric items is of the upmost importance, we will not neglect the current items which are of particular interest. We were especially pleased that our technical editor finally got a chance to see and evaluate a taped copy of *The Jerk*. As a rabid Steve Martin fan, he has really been looking forward to it.

☆☆☆

We jumped the gun a little last issue in announcing that we would be distributing 15,000-20,000 copies of that issue in addition to our 5,000 or so subscription copies. One of our distributors cut back his order just as we were going to press, so the total was more on the order of 10,000. WE do expect to distribute 15,000 or

more this time. Also, we've secured the use of a couple of large mailing lists and are embarking on a direct mail subscription drive as you read these very words. The lists are too large to check for duplication, so don't be too surprised if one of our subscription flyers shows up in *your* mailbox. If it does, please pass it on to someone who might be interested.

☆☆☆

We've run across a few new products that haven't made our product review section, but in which you may be interested:

—Video Components, Inc., 601 S. Main St., Spring Valley, NY 10977 (914-356-3700), has some really snappy heavy plastic video cassette mailing/storage cases, just the thing for mailing tapes across the country. (They *absolutely* won't pop open.) Tell Dick Turchen we sent you and to loosen up his advertising purse strings.

—Video Makers Supply Corp., 217 S. 69th St., Upper Darby, PA 19082 (215-352-5559), is offering a set of 1000 or so "pressure sensitive 3-D title letters," . . . plastic letters that you can stick on most anything. We may have a full report once we get a camera and try 'em out.

—Sea-Cam, Inc., 3338 Devon, Miami, FL 33133 (305-446-5448) has announced a "modular underwater video camera housing adaptable to almost any video camera . . ." Submerged video buffs, especially those with \$425 (glub, blub, blub), may want to inquire.

☆☆☆

On the video magazine front, we understand that there's a new satellite TV guide available and a national PBS guide forthcoming. We'll try to have details next time. Our own little effort here

SHOW AND TELL

There's something for every video enthusiast in *The Videophile* (2003 Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee, Fla. 32301; \$3 per copy, \$14 per year), a lively bimonthly magazine offering product reports, videotape reviews, forecasts, aid in setting up equipment and advice on how to solve any video problems. In addition, its Mini-Ads section facilitates the trading, selling or buying of virtually any item in the realm of video entertainment. Written in a frank, chaty manner, *The Videophile* is easily the most reliable of the current plethora of home-video publications.

got a boost from *Gentleman's Quarterly* which was kind enough to mention us (as shown) in the Summer issue. (Special notice to editors at: *Time*, *TV Guide*, *Newsweek*, *Playboy*, *Stereo Review*, *Penthouse*, and *Swineherd's Confessions*—you have our permission to do likewise.

☆☆☆

Canadian videophiles may want to check out "Video Expo Canada," an industry show to be held September 3-5 at the

Sheraton Centre Hotel in Toronto. Many exhibitors have already reserved space. Among them are: Hitachi, JVC, 3M, Matsushita, RCA and Sony. For further info, contact Anne Stockwell, Video Expo, Knowledge Industry Publications, Inc., 2 Corporate Park Drive, White Plains, NY 10604 (914-694-8686).

☆☆☆

The long wait may be nearly over. It appears that *Devil Girl from Mars* is about to be released on videotape. We will certainly review it as soon as possible. Thanks to David See for the info. He also says that *Cat Women from the Moon* in 3-D (!) is forthcoming. Also many thanks to Maggie Thompson who tipped me off to an alternate source, which will certainly be pursued if necessary. As usual, thanks are due to many among you. We would particu-

larly mention: James Bond, Rick Wood (oink), John Tutt, Peter Ogden, Tom Garcia, Dave Crow, Stan Sieger, Johnny (at Harmon Industries), Brian Gray, Charles Patalive, John Schellkopf and the many others who sent the welcome clippings and other information and suggestions. I have a giant stack of letters that I still intend to answer now that the lazy days of Summer are upon us.

ALL THE BEST
Jim

P.S. For those of you who have wondered how I happened to choose the Beta format . . .



The CES '80
tape available
July 15
First time ever!
See the RCA & JVC
video disc players and JVC 1/2"
portable VCR with slow-motion
and no noise-bar.

Instant Replay®

The World's First Video Magazine
Announces

A "TRY IT, YOU'LL LIKE IT" Offer

As producers of a video magazine we know that sooner or later your video tape player can wind up being a very expensive toy that you have little use for once the novelty has worn off. After all, what can you do with the things besides tape off the air and watch porno at home?

Well, *INSTANT REPLAY* is dedicated to showing you exactly what you can do, and believe us, it's a lot. From creating your own video art to picking up television transmission from around the world, *INSTANT REPLAY* puts home video in focus.

Our regular price is \$59.95 for two hours of video that you will never see on television—about the same price you would pay for a pre-recorded movie. However, to introduce you to the world of *INSTANT REPLAY*, we're offering a five day home trial for only \$10. It works like this: select any issue of *INSTANT REPLAY* from the list below, send in the coupon, and we'll bill your Master Charge or Visa \$10. If you want to keep it, we'll bill the additional amount. Otherwise, just send it on back—and tell your friends about *INSTANT REPLAY*. Try it. You will like it!

INSTANT REPLAY VIDEO MAGAZINE TITLES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

'VIDEO MUSIC' ISSUE
IR Vol. III, #1 (120 mins.)

FIRST ANNIVERSARY ISSUE
IR Vol. II, #1 (120 mins.)

FLIGHT ISSUE
IR Vol. II, #2 (120 mins.)

'FUNKAUSTELLUNG' ISSUE
IR Vol. II, #3 (120 mins.)

**INTERNATIONAL AIR RACE
& SHOW** (75 mins.)

ECOLOGICAL JAZZ BAND I
(45 mins.)

MADNESS TAKES ITS TOLL
(30 mins.)

Video Disc Jukebox, "The Men Who Make The Music"—Devo Reviewed, Cathouse's Tribute to Elvis, Stereo Image™ Video\$59.95

Ron Hays' astonishing Star Wars Concert, Magnavox Video Disc, Backyard Satellite Stations Jack Valenti interview\$59.95

Video Stuntrade with Bob Hoover, Evel Knievel video Biography, Anti-Piracy's 'Three Musketeers', Cliff Robertson discusses *The Pilot*\$59.95

World's Largest Audio & Visual Festival, The satellite dishes of Reisting, BMW's New Supercar—The M-1, ALL the New Video Equipment, Video from East Berlin\$59.95

Stunt immortal Bob Hoover, The Amazing Sonic Acrojets, *Cyborg* author Martin Caiden talks flying, History's Richest Air Race\$59.95

Duffy Jackson, Franky Man & Friends play immortal Big Band era favorites in lush tropical setting,\$49.95

Rocky Horror Anniversary Party, Richard O'Brien talks to IR, Costume Disco Roller Skating, "Rocky" segments and live play acting of movie scenes,\$49.95

All tapes available in Beta II and VHS. Beta I owners should call for prices.

☐ At last I can get some tapes that aren't rehashes of what I see on the tube! Please send me the selections I have circled above.

☐ Send me more information on *INSTANT REPLAY*.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

My VTR is ☐ Beta II, ☐ VHS

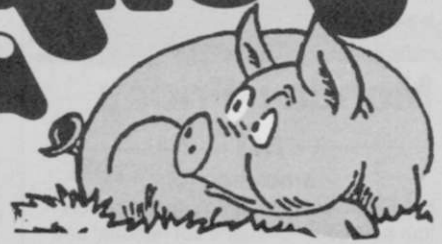
My MC/VISA# is _____ and expires _____
(Interbank #)

Signed _____

Florida residents, please add 4% sales tax. Thank you.

INSTANT REPLAY, Suite 210, 2980 McFarlane Rd., Coconut Grove, FL., 33133 (305) 448-7088

The Videophile's Newsletter



Cable/Pay-TV Notes

A new pay-cable service - "Premiere" - has been announced as a joint venture of Getty Oil Company and 4 movie studios (Columbia, Universal, Paramount and 20th Century-Fox). New boy on the block would be in direct competition with HBO, Showtime and others, who are accustomed to getting much of their product from these very same studios. The established pay-TV services are claiming "foul", especially with respect to announcement by the 4 studios that they intend to give Premiere access to their product for 9 months before it will be made available to competitors.

The U.S. Justice Department has solicited comments from the industry. The plan may very well be illegal if result is to give producers of films such exclusive control over the distribution of their films as to be in violation of federal anti-trust provisions. HBO officials appear confident that legal obstacles will prevent the venture from going forward. On the other hand, an MCA (Universal Studios) spokesman says that before the venture was launched, the partnership had sufficient legal advice to the effect that the legal barriers were surmountable.

If Premiere does get off the ground (around the first of the year) the 53 titles already committed by the 4 studios will certainly be impressive enough to catch your attention. Among them (some not even released to theatres yet) are: Coal Miner's Daughter, Electric Horseman, Smokey & the Bandit II, Somewhere in Time, Kramer vs. Kramer, Mountain Men, Wholly Moses, Chapter Two, All That Jazz, Final Conflict: Omen III, Brubaker, Star Trek - The Motion Picture, Little Darlings, Urban Cowboy, Rough Cut and Popeye.

Meanwhile, HBO has picked up a 14-title package from Walt Disney, plus a number of one-hour animated and live action short segments for after-school-hours airing. "The Black Hole" is included, but probably won't be run until next year, maybe not even before early 1982.

The 24-hour "Cable News Network" debuted, as scheduled, on June 1, and is said to be reaching 2 million or so lucky cable subscribers across the country (Tallahassee cable-TV viewers are not among them *sigh* --Ed.). Interest in CNN is very high, even to the extent of being featured on the cover of *Newsweek* magazine. As with all ambitious large-scale projects, there were a few bugs in the system. Most amusing we've heard concerned report on outcall massage services in which Arlington, Virginia, County Prosecutor was identified by on-screen title as "county prostitute".

Some industry sources are pooh-poohing effort of CNN, pointing to its relatively small budget and other shortcomings. We say: "More power to CNN!" They've got to start somewhere, and this is a worthy effort that deserves our support. For those of you with backyard Earth stations or who are otherwise interested, we've set forth a listing of the complete CNN schedule on the following page.



Monday-Friday

AM

6:00-8:00

The AM Newswatch. Rotating single anchors host four half-hour summaries of national and international news. Plus:

- ☐ Personal Finance with Ron Posluns
- ☐ Staying Fit with Arden Zinn
- ☐ Evans & Novak's Capitol Hill Hotline
- ☐ The Day's Weather
- ☐ Sports Overnight
- ☐ Dan Dorfman's Behind the Money Market
- ☐ The National Farm Report with John Holliman
- ☐ The Home Handyman, Beau Wilhoit
- ☐ Nader's Consumer Report
- ☐ Barry Goldwater's Right Thinking
- ☐ Dr. Halberstam's Today in Medicine
- ☐ Your Astrological Day

8:00-12:00

The CNN Morning Report. Four one hour news and feature programs. Continuous cut-ins from Washington, New York and other bureaus. Sports and weather each half hour. Plus:

- ☐ The Law and You
- ☐ Dr. Joyce Brothers on Psychology Today
- ☐ William Simon's Financial Analysis
- ☐ Your Body and You, CNN Gynecologist
- ☐ Auto Mechanics
- ☐ Richard Reeves on Politics
- ☐ Dr. Elizabeth Whelan—The Other Side of Consumerism

PM

12:00-2:00

Midday USA. A two hour program of news, reviews and interviews. Hosted by Don Farmer and Chris Curle, updates from Washington, New York and international bureaus. Plus:

- ☐ Hollywood Report with Fred Saxon
- ☐ Pets and How to Care for Them
- ☐ Cooking
- ☐ How Does Your Garden Grow?
- ☐ Fashions with Elsa Klensch
- ☐ Bella Abzug
- ☐ Phyllis Schlafly
- ☐ Dr. Michael Ozer's You and Your Health
- ☐ Washington Lifeline with Rudy Maxa

2:00-6:00

CNN Afternoon. Four team-anchored newscasts each, one hour. National, international news, sports, Wall Street Report, weather and light features. Tips on health, gossip, music (from rock to country and western), movie criticism, gossip from Hollywood and New York.

6:00-7:00

Sports And News World. Daily news highlights and 15-minutes of sports. Live satellite cut-ins from bureaus.

7:00-7:30

Business And Wall Street Roundup. Financial, business and consumer news from the New

York bureau, with emphasis on the Wall Street day. Financial editor Myron Kandel and New York financial news staff host. Also, commentary by former Treasury Secretary William Simon and syndicated columnist Dan Dorfman. Special reports with business leaders.

7:30-7:50

Sports Tonight. A 20-minute report on what's happened and what's ahead in sports. Lineups. Inside information. News headlines from the CNN newsroom.

7:50-8:00

Television Tonight. CNN's media critic hosts a 10-minute preview of the best bets for televiewing that night.

8:00-10:00

CNN Prime Time Newscast. Satellite reports from around the nation and around the world. The best of the day plus reports and features from CNN contributing stations.

10:00-11:00

Crosstalk. A one-hour national call-in talk show with a live audience. A variety of issues. Guests live and via satellite. News updates throughout.

11:00-11:30

Sports Spotlight. Sports highlights, interviews, commentary.

11:30-12:00

Business And World News Roundup. West Coast edition.

AM

12:00-1:00

The News Tonight. A one hour mix of features and news with special segments from the Los Angeles and San Francisco bureaus.

1:00-2:00

Night Life. Lee Leonard hosts an hour of personality news, interviews and reviews from the Los Angeles studio. Highlife features from Los Angeles, New York and Washington. News headlines throughout the hour.

2:00-2:30

West Coast Sports Roundup. The latest sports results for the West Coast with action highlights and sports commentary.

2:30-3:00

Viewpoint. A survey of national editorial opinion.

3:00-6:00

Newswatch Hawaii. A three-hour, edited version of the highlights of previous programming. Continuous live news updates.

Saturday

AM

6:00 Agriculture—the Week Ahead

6:30 Weekend Leisure Weather. Includes skiing conditions, flying, boating, fishing, etc.

7:00 Saturday Morning News

8:00 Personalities In Review

9:00 Medical/Science News

9:30 You and Your Money. Consumer tips and information.

10:00 News/Weather/Sports/Upcoming TV

11:00 You Speak To Us. Telephone Call-In Show.

PM

12:00 Midday Weekend News. Oriented to West Coast.

1:00 Sports Week In Review

1:30 As The World Sees The News. Foreign viewpoints of the news produced at CNN's London bureau.

2:00 Travel and Leisure Report

2:20 Real Estate Show. National property review.

2:30 Mr. Fix-It. Repair-expert tips.

3:00 News/Sports/Weather

3:30 Viewpoint. Commentary from CNN columnists.

4:00 Week's News Review

4:30 Real Estate Show*

4:40 Travel and Leisure*

5:00 Personalities In Review*

6:00 Music Reports*. Information about all forms of music, classical, rock and roll, etc.

6:30 This Week in TV. Critique of past week's shows.

7:00 Sports Personalities Talk With The Press

8:00 Prime Time Weekend News

9:00 CNN Press Conference

10:00 Business—The Week To Come

11:00 Sports Roundup

11:30 Music Reports

AM

12:00 Personalities Review*

1:00 This Week in TV*

1:30 This Week in Sports

2:00 You Speak To Us*

3:00 Best News Stories of the Day

Sunday

AM

6:00 News/Sports/Weather

6:30 News Of The Week

7:00 Weekend Morning News

8:00 You Speak To Us*

9:00 Agriculture—The Week Ahead*

9:30 Music Reports

10:00 Personality program including arts and entertainment critiques

11:00 Financial Week In Perspective

11:30 Sports Of The Week

PM

12:00 News At Noon

1:00 Health and Science News

1:30 You and Your Money*

2:00 Features For Women

4:00 Real Estate Show*

4:10 Travel and Leisure*

4:30 Mr. Fix-It*

5:00 CNN Press Conference*

6:00 Financial Week In Perspective*

8:00 Sports Today. A review of the day's sports news.

9:00 The National Debate Line

11:00 Sports Final

11:30 The Week Ahead in TV

AM

12:00 As The World Sees The News. From the London Bureau.

12:30 Editorial Wrap-Ups

1:00 Wall Street Week Ahead

2:00 West Coast Sports Final

2:30 World News Final

3:00 National Debate Line*

5:00 Best of Previous Day

*Repeat segment

Practice of local cable companies offering more than one pay-TV service (so called "multiple tiers") is spreading fast. Showtime is tiered with other pay services (mainly HBO) on over 60 cable systems. By way of example, Teleprompter Cable, in Tampa, is offering a three-tier package in which you can get 22 channels of programming, which includes HBO, Showtime, The Movie Channel, ESPN (24-hour sports), Galavision (Spanish), The BBC in America, two superstations, and more. (I'm shedding multiple tears because our local cable outlet has little interest in expanding its offerings. --Ed.)

Possibility of pay-TV service featuring programming of the type normally found on public TV has been proposed by the Carnegie Commission. The "PACE" (Performing Arts, Culture and Entertainment) network would offer 210 hours of programming monthly consisting of movies, foreign programs, and original material, some of which might be co-produced with commercial sponsors. Carnegie hopes to achieve distribution by getting a spot on Westar satellite.

"The Actresses", a made-for-pay-TV movie about 4 girls who want to be Hollywood stars, will continue as a one-hour bi-monthly series for pay-TV systems. Watch for it early next year. We're told that the series will be too adult and provocative for commercial TV. Watch out J.R., some new kids are coming to town!

WTBS (Super 17) has acquired exclusive rights to a package of 30 20th Century-Fox movies from the 1950s and '60s. Titles include "Call Me Madam" and "Carmen Jones". Exclusive deal means that cable systems won't ever black out any of these 30 in order to protect rights of local TV.

We're looking forward to a show scheduled for Showtime early next year entitled "We'll Be Right Back", a survey of the history of television commercials. We're told that it will include some really great early-days stuff.

The Disc

First there was the "Magnavision", now there's the "Laserdisc", the name chosen by Pioneer for its optical videodisc player. If you would like to purchase one they should be currently available at Pacific Stereo, Sound Climax and Thompson Sound, all in Dallas; American TV in Madison, Wisconsin; Schaak Electronics in Minneapolis-St. Paul, and somewhere (Pioneer dealer) in Syracuse, NY.

JVC's "VHD" capacitance video disc system refuses to roll over and play dead. Instead, they have entered into a consortium with Matsushita (Panasonic, Quasar), Thorn EMI (of Great Britain), and General Electric, to push ahead with a system which would be in competition (and incompatible) with the MCA/Phillips system and the RCA "Selecta-Vision" system. As noted in previous issues, Zenith and CBS are in the RCA camp, while Pioneer, IBM and Sony (at least on the industrial level) are on the MCA/Phillips team. Several U.S. manufacturers, notably GTE (Sylvania), remain uncommitted.

MCA is still running into technical problems with the effort to bring out hour-per-side discs. Only "House Calls" and "Deliverance" have been released as such this year. It may be some time yet before the quality of reproduction problems are ironed out. Last year, MCA sold about 150 copies of "Animal House" on an hour-per-side disc. If you've got one, it's a collector's item.

Meanwhile, in Holland, Phillips is said to have come up with a new system ("photo polymerization") that uses

ultra-violet light in such a way as to vastly improve the ability to duplicate discs that will conform more closely to the pattern on the master.

Magnavision dealers are griping about lack of new releases on disc. Players are now moving slowly in some locations and customers wonder why they can't buy anything new to watch. Demand for music discs (rather than feature films) is also being reported.

Herbert S. Schlosser, RCA Executive Vice President, foresees need for a new art form to match potential of video disc. Says he: "Look at 'Saturday Night Fever,' and 'Grease'. They are the two most successful features in the history of Paramount Pictures. 'Saturday Night Fever' was by far the most successful record album in history, and 'Grease' was also an enormous hit. And if there were millions of video disc players in consumers' hands, they would be enormously successful video discs. Are they movies? Are they records? Are they video discs? They are all three."

MCA, Magnavox and Pioneer have now formed a program development partnership ("Optical Programming Assoc.") for the purpose of creating video discs that will make use of the features found on optical system video disc players, such as still frame, random access, 2-channel sound, variable speed and reverse motion. Primary emphasis will be on "how-to" and educational programs. OPA is expected to come up with 10-12 discs the 1st year.

Latest word on RCA videodisc is that distributors, and possibly some dealers, will have demonstration units available in December. RCA has chosen the designation "CED" (capacitance electronic disc) for its system and still expects to meet target of nationwide rollout in first 3 months of 1981. Catalog of 150 titles is expected "at the beginning of next Fall", with additional monthly releases scheduled to double that total by 1982.

Fotomat has dropped pilot plan to rent video discs in Dallas outlets, ... may try again when there are more players in consumers' hands and demand for service.

Format Fever

Sony Chairman Akio Morita has confidently predicted that the Beta format will ultimately "win this video war." He noted (as have we) that since so few TV households yet have a VCR (no more than 2%), the real battle is still to come. Sony spokesman said that current sales ratio is: 60% VHS to 40% Beta. Could be, but these figures do not jibe with latest survey statistics released by Media Statistics, Inc., which show that VHS is whipping Beta to the tune of 67.4% to 32.6% through the first 3 months of this year. The complete survey breakdown appears in the box at the top of the following page.

We may have a casualty among the anticipated new incompatible VCR formats. The "LVR" format (see back issues), touted by Toshiba & BASF, has been indefinitely postponed (possible translation: "cancelled") so far as any plans to offer it to the consumer market are concerned. Unfavorable economic conditions are cited as the reason. There is also nothing new to report on the other $\frac{1}{2}$ " tape format "Funai" proposed to be distributed in this country by Technicolor. However, we have heard of some demonstrations of the system in Japan that were regarded as very impressive by reporting observers.

VIDEO RECORDER BRAND ESTIMATES

1979 - 1980 Trend Data

	Jan-March 1980	Aug-Dec. 1979	Jan-March 1979
RCA.....	34.9%	32.5%	25.1%
Sony.....	20.0%	29.7%	28.7%
Panasonic.....	9.0%	10.2%	14.1%
Magnavox.....	8.7%	5.8%	6.7%
Zenith.....	7.4%	5.0%	8.9%
Quasar.....	5.5%	4.3%	2.6%
Sanyo.....	2.2%	2.5%	1.7%
Sylvania.....	0.4%	2.5%	0.7%
JVC.....	2.2%	2.0%	2.2%
Sears.....	2.2%	1.8%	2.4%
Toshiba.....	0.8%	1.1%	1.2%
Curtis-Mathes....	1.4%	0.9%	0.7%
Sharp.....	1.1%	-	-
G. E.....	2.1%	0.7%	3.3%
Philco.....	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Hitachi.....	-	0.5%	-
Beta Format.....	32.6%	40.1%	42.8%
VHS Format	67.4%	59.9%	57.2%

Sample Size..... 365 owners 406 owners 418 owners

Markets surveyed (SMSA areas): New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Boston, Cleveland, Dallas-Fort Worth, Denver-Boulder, Detroit, Fresno, Milwaukee, St. Louis, San Francisco, Washington, and Houston.

Survey Dates: January - March, 1980; August 6 - December 7, 1979; and January 1 - March 30, 1979.

CAUTION: All figures on brands subject to normal sampling variation.

III MEDIA STATISTICS INCORPORATED • 8120 Fenton Street • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Program Notes

The Public Broadcasting Service is considering the notion of entering the home video arena by creating its own videocassette club, publishing a PTV cassette and disc catalog and offering programming on a public TV label. Spokesman sees 1/6 of VCR owners as public television members. Plan could be in operation by February 1981.

New DiscoVision catalog should be out any time now, with new titles such as "Coal Miner's Daughter", "The Jerk", "1941", "The Electric Horseman" and "The Last Married Couple in America." Abba concert disc and "FM" are also forthcoming.

RCA disc has acquired right to 6 films from Paramount: "Star Trek - the Motion Picture", "Escape From Alcatraz", "North Dallas Forty", "American Gigolo", "Nijinsky", and "Starting Over". RCA will also have 23 titles licensed by Walt Disney Productions. No classic animation features are in the package, but if you're drooling to get "The Apple Dumpling Gang" or "The Great Locomotive Chase" on RCA disc, your dreams are about to come true. In all fairness, there are some items of interest in the Disney package, eg. "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea", and 7 cartoon collections. Among other RCA disc offerings will be: Super Bowl and other NFL highlights, a package of Terrytoon cartoons, Elvis films, and "The African Queen".

New offerings from Time-Life Video Club include: "Madame Rosa", "The Changeling" (one of the best first 1/2 of a movie I've seen in a while), "Born Free", "The Silent Partner", "Bye, Bye, Birdie", and "Stagecoach". The club

is also releasing "One For the Road", a videocassette live concert by The Kinks which will coincide with the release of the new Kinks album of the same name.

After a short rental experiment through Fotomat, Disney has decided to offer a selection of titles for sale on cassette tape. Titles include: "The Black Hole", "The Love Bug", "Davey Crockett", "Escape to Witch Mountain", "Pete's Dragon", "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea" and the same 3 cartoon packages (Mickey/Donald/Chip & Dale) which have been available on DiscoVison.

BBC Enterprises is hoping to come out with a 100-title catalog of videocassettes which would include music, entertainment and educational items originally produced for broadcast by the British Broadcasting Company.

New titles to be released by Columbia Pictures include: "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" (the original version, we're told), "And Justice For All", "Chapter Two", and a selection of Three Stooges shorts.

Recently released MCA (Universal) titles on tape have been selling like hotcakes. Tops is "The Deer Hunter" at 3500+ copies. "The Jerk", "Battlestar Galactica", and "Jaws" have each sold 2000 or more. Six new releases from MCA include: "Coal Miner's Daughter", "The Birds", "Frenzy", and "Duck Soup". We've been told, privately, that the long unavailable Hitchcock titles (Vertigo, The Trouble With Harry, etc.) may be coming.

World championship tennis is now available on video tape from AstroVideo (90 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco CA 94102). In addition to Davis Cup competition, and such, there's a "Celebrity Tennis" film featuring the supposedly outrageous styles of thirty celebrities, among them: Ted and Ethyl Kennedy, Diana Ross, Cheryl Tiegs, Art Buchwald, and Bill Cosby. (Topless tennis fans should read our review of "800 Fantasy Lane" elsewhere in this issue. --Ed.)

Satellite Notes

Backyard Earth station buffs will be interested to hear that HBO General Counsel, Peter Gross, recently was quoted as saying: "We will scramble our signal as soon as it becomes economically feasible." On the other hand, HBO doesn't want cable operators to have to purchase costly descrambling equipment and admits that unauthorized reception is "insignificant" at the present time. Mr. Gross also opined as how action against such piracy "is a very easy lawsuit to win." Statement is based primarily in reliance on sec. 605 of the Communications Act, relating to unauthorized reception of radio signals, as well as applicable copyright statutes (if any).

In a seemingly related development, Fred Hopengarten, President of Channel One, a dealer in direct reception satellite TV systems, was removed from a panel to be held at the National Cable Television Association's annual convention, after HBO learned that he would be speaking. He proposed to cover the legalities of "backyard" satellite terminals, as well as the problems in making contracts with pay-TV programmers for those who do not have cable TV service, but still wish to have pay-TV programs. Hopengarten, an attorney, is known for his position that "they haven't outlawed short wave listening yet." At the time of submitting his proposed presentation, he advised the NCTA that it was "likely that my views are not universally held."

The Shoe is on the Other Foot Department: Science Fiction writer (and Videophile interviewee - #19), Harlan Ellison, and Ben Bova have been awarded \$337,000 in their copyright infringement suit against ABC and Paramount Pictures. Case involved alleged lifting of story line for use as "Future Cop" TV series.

Raids on video pirates continue. Canadian mounted police have busted 6 alleged pirates, one of which (Telegent Canada, Inc. of Quebec City) was transmitting feature films (including "X"-rated titles) to some 4 dozen hotels and motels on a close circuit basis. Others raided included: Leisure Times Sales Agencies of Montreal, Mooney's Bay TV & Stereo of Ottawa (Hello, Ralph!), and Glemser Groove Flake Productions near Toronto. Titles seized by the mounties included "Kramer vs. Kramer" and other first-run feature films. It is not clear what part, if any, Sgt. Preston (of the Yukon branch) played in the busts.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, Hollis Lester, an appliance store owner in Richardson, Texas, has reportedly been hit with a 6-month jail term and a \$5000 fine for selling illegal videocassette copies of "Star Wars" and "Animal House". The sentence is an unusually severe one for copyright infringement, something that Mr. Lester can reflect upon during his 9½ years on probation.

We've said it before and we'll say it again: "It's just not worth the risk, folks." If your appetite is such that you just can't resist getting involved with bootleg tapes, well, as the old saying goes: "If you can't be good -- be careful." Know who you are buying from and don't sell illegal copies to anyone (ie. ANYONE!).

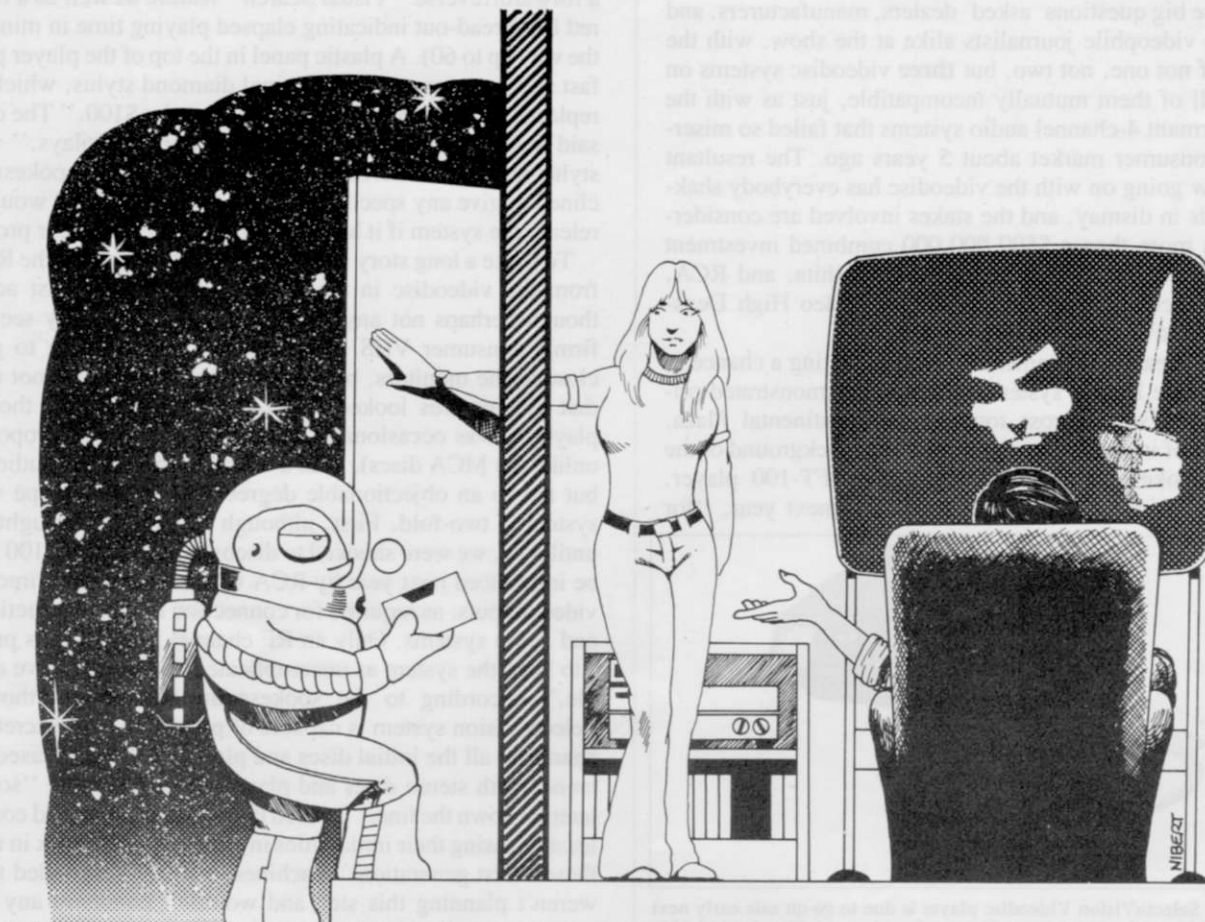
NBC was insured against possible cancellation of the Moscow Olympics broadcast. However, their loss has reportedly exceeded the insurance by \$25 million.

Laboratory work at RCA is continuing on a futuristic "flat panel" large screen TV. A 50" cathodoluminescent model is under development; is said to be about 4" thick. It can be placed on the wall like a large painting. However, RCA Labs spokesman says that "It probably will be close to 1990 before such a flat panel display can be manufactured at a price the home consumer will be willing to pay." (Yes, but when could it be available at a price that the incurable video nut would be willing to pay? --Ed.)

An Australian firm, Interscope Inc., has come up with a new "no copy" system that is now being offered to video cassette duplicators in the U.S. and Europe. As demonstrated recently, it is apparently impossible to get a recognizable signal from a tape that has been dubbed from an encoded original. This new system can also be added to the broadcast signal as a means of preventing off-the-air recording. The signal is interrupted in such a way that the circuitry now being built into many Beta and VHS systems would not be capable of providing a stable enough image to copy.

By early Fall, the American Bar Association expects to submit to the U.S. Registry of Copyrights an "outline" of legislation involving a tax levy on both audio and video blank tape and recorders. Purpose of tax, of course, would be to remunerate copyright holders whose income is siphoned off by home taping. Elizabeth

(Continued on p.53)



TELL HIM, I DON'T TRADE WITH ANYONE I DON'T KNOW...

THE VIDEOPHILE GOES TO THE SUMMER CES (Part I)

By: Marc Wielage

As many of you will remember from past issues, we've devoted a considerable amount of space covering several past CES gatherings (from 1977 to the present), featuring news of all the new electronic gadgets and most importantly, the best of the new video products unveiled by the manufacturers. We're doing our best to keep all of you up-to-date on the latest developments in consumer video--not necessarily to bring you the unhappy news that the NEW VTR you just "wasted" \$1,000 on is obsolete, but just to let you know how technology is marching on.

What makes this report different from our earlier ones is that it's actually being written right here in Chicago at the show in mid-June, mere days before *The Videophile's* presses roll, in an attempt to cover the latest-breaking news before everybody else does. Because of this time factor, we apologize in advance for the hurried, tentative nature of this report; the full story, featuring everything we didn't have time to include here, will be in our next issue.

Will the videodisc suffer the same fate as quad sound? This was one of the big questions asked dealers, manufacturers, and crazed gonzo videophile journalists alike at the show, with the appearance of not one, not two, but **three** videodisc systems on display. . . all of them mutually incompatible, just as with the three now dormant 4-channel audio systems that failed so miserably in the consumer market about 5 years ago. The resultant confusion now going on with the videodisc has everybody shaking their heads in dismay, and the stakes involved are considerable--perhaps more than a \$500,000,000 combined investment by the Big Three: MCA/Phillips, JVC/Matsushita, and RCA, with their respective DiscoVision, VHD ("Video High Density"), and SelectaVision videodisc systems.

Perhaps the greatest excitement for us was getting a chance to view and evaluate RCA's system, which was demonstrated privately at a posh suite across town at the Continental Plaza. Following a brief introduction on the technical background of the system, the spokesman unveiled their new SFT-100 player, which will be going on sale nationwide early next year, "for



RCA's SFT-100 SelectaVision Videodisc player is due to go on sale early next year for under \$500, with most feature films and programs selling for \$15-\$25.



under \$500." It's an attractive ultra modern styled unit about 17" x 15½" x 5¾", with a mahogany colored plastic top and a slanted smoked plastic and metal front panel, which contains a hinged slot into which the SelectaVision videodisc "caddy" is inserted. Note that unlike the Magnavox/MCA system reviewed in #18, the RCA discs *cannot* be touched due to their delicate lubricant coating and lack of resistance to contamination. The disc itself is made of plastic, 12" in diameter, and has some 10,000 grooves to the inch. To give you an idea of just how narrow these grooves are, RCA claims that 38 of them will fit in the space of *one* conventional audio record groove. The caddy is inserted into the player's slot and then removed, automatically leaving the disc inside. The slot closes tight to keep out any potentially harmful elements like cigarette smoke, dust and dirt.

Unlike MCA's DiscoVision, RCA's SelectaVision disc system was designed from the start to provide 60 minutes of playing time on each side, though it lacks many of the laser disc's features like still-frame and slow-motion. The prototype unit shown does have a forward/reverse "Visual Search" feature as well as a two digit red LED read-out indicating elapsed playing time in minutes (all the way up to 60). A plastic panel in the top of the player provides fast and easy access to its internal diamond stylus, which can be replaced by a non-technical user for "under \$100." The discs are said to be capable of providing "thousands of plays," with the stylus lasting "hundreds of hours," though the spokesman declined to give any specifics, except to say that RCA would never release the system if it had any really significant wear problems.

To make a long story short, the images we saw on the RCA sets from the videodisc in the demo suite were at least adequate, though perhaps not any better than those currently seen in the firm's consumer VHS recorders. We weren't able to get very close to the monitors, but we'd be less than honest not to admit that the pictures looked better than we expected, though the playback was occasionally marred by one or two dropouts (not unlike the MCA discs), with a resultant increase in audio noise--but not to an objectionable degree. Our biggest gripe with the system is two-fold. First, although no one has brought this up until now, we were shocked to discover that the SFT-100 that will be introduced next year by RCA will not have any direct audio/video outputs, as required for connection to most projection TV's and audio systems. Only an RF channel 3/4 output is provided, "to keep the system as uncomplicated and inexpensive as possible," according to the spokesman. Secondly, although the SelectaVision system is capable of providing two discrete stereo channels, all the initial discs and players will be released only in *mono*, with stereo discs and players to be available "somewhat later on down the line." I asked if perhaps RCA would consider at least releasing their initial titles in stereo, for playback in mono on these "first generation" machines, but they responded that they weren't planning this step and wouldn't comment any further.

Both of these drawbacks are truly regrettable, but considering RCA's recent agreement with Zenith and CBS, who've allied themselves with this format, many industry experts believe that RCA's system will all but devastate the others if only because of their superior marketing strategy and blockbuster programming library.

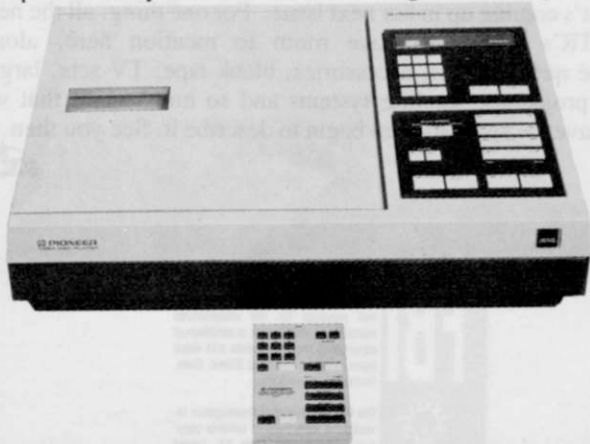
It's the latter two reasons that incline the same "experts" to predict a swift defeat for JVC's "VHD" system, which was showcased at two almost identical presentations by JVC and Matsushita/Panasonic at their exhibits. Like the SelectaVision disc, the VHD system is a mechanical contact design that uses a capacitance stylus to pick up the information on the discs. Unlike the RCA, it uses "micro-pits" (similar to those in MCA's optical discs), rather than grooves, to provide the audio, video and tracking signals. We'll have a complete comparison, providing



Panasonic's and JVC's VHD players are almost identical, featuring a front-loading slot and numerous playback function controls.

in-depth technical explanations on all three systems, as soon as possible. But for now we can tell you that the VHD prototypes performed slightly better than the RCA unit, as well as providing complete still-frame, slow-motion and fast-motion playback. Like the RCA player, the standard VHD units should sell for "under \$500," with a digital PCM audio adaptor selling for an additional \$500 and a programmable random-access unit accessory for only \$150, with the latter giving the system even more "whistles and bells" than Pioneer's laser-disc unit. The only problem with the VHD system, as we see it, is that the newly announced JVC/Panasonic/Quasar/General Electric/EMI-Thorn coop cannot possibly compete with the marketing power of the RCA/Zenith/CBS group, despite VHD's obvious technical superiority. With the first VHD players not due to arrive until the end of 1981, both the RCA and MCA systems will surely have captured the market by then. But you never know.

Meanwhile, we have the MCA/Magnavox/Pioneer group, with Sanyo rumored to join them by the time you read this issue. Pioneer brought out their VP-1000H player with even more hoopla than they did in its initial showing earlier this year, and



Pioneer's VP-1000H provides many more features than other consumer optical disc players and sells for under \$850 with wireless infrared remote control.

provided continuous demonstrations featuring a pre-recorded presentation by Don Herbert, better known as TV's "Mister Wizard," easily the most interesting and well done explanation we've ever seen on the subject. Pioneer's demos were extremely well attended, which may account for the slightly lessened crowds around partner/competitor Magnavox's videodisc display, seen at the past two or three conventions. We hope to have a review on the Pioneer player at least by #28, and--dare we hope--possibly even in our next issue.

All three videodisc demos considerably piqued the interest of the dealers and reporters who flocked to the exhibits, though several dealers were overheard voicing some uncertainty as to "disc revolution's" importance in their day-to-day sales, particularly if they provide as few profits as the often discounted videotape recorders. Despite their doubts, it seems for certain that at least most of us will very likely have a disc player of one format or another--maybe even (horrors) all three--by next year, whether they're a big success or not.

Finally, the SL-J7--sort of: Perhaps the biggest surprise we had at the show was the unexpected introduction of Panasonic's PV-1750, the *ultimate*, most complex and feature-laden VTR in the world, at least to my knowledge. Like Sony's J7 (reviewed last issue), this new VHS deck provides complete remote control of all functions including record, slow-motion, and pseudo "BetaScan," which Panasonic calls "Omni-Search." As one Panasonic salesman explained, the PV-1750's 4-head design permits every function found on the earlier 1650 (identical to RCA's VDT-625). These special effect modes are now known as "Omni-fex." Apparently, the preliminary literature on the 1750 incorrectly states that the deck has only 2 heads, but this may not be the case. We'll have the whole story before the new machine goes on sale in "mid-October or November for under \$1,500," according to a spokesman.



The "ultimate" consumer VHS recorder has to be Panasonic's PV-1750, offering full-function remote control and a 14-day/8-event programmable tuner.

The rest of the new Panasonic OmniVision VI line includes the stripped down PV-1250, which is a straight 2/4/6-hour deck; the PV-1300, which adds Omni-Search; and the PV-1400, which provides an internal 14-day/8-event microprocessor controlled tuner, similar to the PV-A35E available for Panasonic's PV-3200 portapak. We noted that neither of these three VHS decks provides very good picture quality in the 2-hour mode, due to their narrow 19-micron heads which enable the machines to record at the 6-hour/SLP mode. This also renders the Omni-Search feature inoperable with fast-speed recordings. I was surprised to find that although all three of these new machines have solenoid controls, none of them have a jack for connecting a full function remote unit, though most likely one could be added with a little difficulty. Also, none of them have freeze-frame capability (unlike the PV-1750 and 1650), which is most unfortunate. The prices on

all these new decks are still being set, but a sales representative estimated that the 1250, 1300 and 1400 would sell for roughly \$1,099, \$1,199 and \$1,299, respectively, though he wouldn't comment on my prodding question concerning whether the PV-1750 would sell for \$1,399, though he agreed that it'd be a bargain in that general area.

JVC was also crowing about their own new video innovation, the new HR-2200 portapak. This VTR, designed to replace the earlier HR-4100 (reviewed in #22), is an extremely lightweight (11½ pound) recorder boasting full function solenoid remote control, as well as variable speed slow-motion, fast-motion "Shuttle Search," and frame-by-frame advance, plus an electronic LCD tape counter. Best of all, the HR-2200 is built with



JVC's HR-2200U remote control consumer VHS portable features high-speed "Shuttle Search" cueing, frame-by-frame advance, and variable slow-motion.

industrial type 59-micron heads for the ultimate in high quality 2-hour recording, though some mass-market consumers may not find its lack of any slower speeds very appealing. The 2200 should go on sale sometime in October, for "in the neighborhood of \$1,300-\$1,350," according to a JVC spokesman.

Akai's Jerry Astor demonstrated their new VP-7350 portable VHS recorder, which up-grades their earlier VO-7300 deck introduced last year. The 7350 is the first U.S. consumer VHS deck to boast 2-channel stereo audio, complete with internal Dolby B noise-reduction circuits to minimize tape hiss, and it weighs under 15 lbs. Unlike the earlier deck, however, the new Akai unit has both the 2-hour/SP and 6-hour/SLP modes. We were disappointed to learn that it has only two 19-micron heads like most new consumer VHS portables. Astor admitted that the performance of the new deck was compromised somewhat at the 2-hour mode, but pointed out that for those looking exclusively for best picture quality, their 7300 would definitely be preferable. Also available is Akai's new VU-7350 tuner/timer, which provides 7-day/6-event programming capability. Both the new deck and tuner will be available later this year for about \$1,200 and \$395, respectively.



Sony's SL-5800 is the firm's most deluxe U.S. Beta deck to date, featuring "Time-Command" of all playback functions.

New Beta decks, too: Sony took the wraps off their new SL-5800, which upgrades the earlier 5600 (reviewed last issue) and adds a new remote control with "Variable BetaScan," providing high-speed search anywhere between 5 and 20 times normal speed, as well as faster non-visible rewind and fast-forward shuttling. The 5800's new "Double-Azimuth" video heads enable it to have virtually noiseless still-frame and variable slow-motion playback, considerably improved over earlier models. Like the 5600, the SL-5800 has a 14-day/4-event micro-processor controlled tuner, and will be available in the Fall for "under \$1,500"—hopefully not for much more than the \$1,350 SL-5600.

Also unveiled at Sony's booth was their revolutionary "VideoScope" projection system, which is a ceiling mounted industrial type unit designed to show feature films on a Panavision/CinemaScope screen with a standard 2.33 aspect ratio. No one was willing to provide an estimate as to the system's expected cost or availability, but we got the impression that it'll be at least \$5-10,000 and that they won't have a consumer version for at least a year or so. The VideoScope system uses a special film-to-tape process that takes standard wide-screen anamorphic 35mm prints and transfers them to tape without adjusting the horizontally squeezed images. Although the resultant picture will appear to be excessively long and skinny on a normal set, the special VideoScope projector electronically widens out the image to fill every inch of its standard size Panavision screen. We noted that, unlike an experimental wide-screen high-resolution prototype shown by Panasonic a year or so ago, Sony's VideoScope system works with all conventional U.S. NTSC standard VTR's and can show smaller sized TV format programs as well.

Elsewhere, new Beta VTR's from Sanyo and Toshiba were shown, including the new VCR-5050 and V-8000, respectively. The \$1,195 Sanyo deck features high speed BetaScan at 15 times normal speed but lacks any extensive programming capability with only a standard 1-day/1-event memory. Toshiba's \$1,245 V-8000 is only slightly better, providing 7-day/1-event programming, but does have a solenoid-operated transport featuring "SuperScan" picture search at up to 40 times normal speed and a remote control with Play/Stop/Record/Scan-Forward/Scan-Reverse and Pause functions—a first for U.S. Beta VTR's (except for Sanyo's unreleased VCR-5500 shown last year). Both decks record and play back at X-2 and X-3 and neither provides X-1 playback capability.

In light of the continued advances made by VHS manufacturers like Panasonic, JVC and Akai, it's no wonder that the Beta format continues to take a beating, with these disappointingly lackluster recorders. Hopefully, the Beta manufacturers will keep up with their VHS rivals and avoid ending up like the quadraphonic casualties of yesteryear.

What's coming up in our next issue: For one thing, all the new VTR's we didn't have room to mention here, along with the new cameras, accessories, blank tape, TV sets, large-screen projectors, satellite systems and so much more that we don't have the space to even begin to describe it. See you then.



WARNING

Federal law provides severe civil and criminal penalties for the unauthorized reproduction, distribution, or exhibition of copyrighted motion pictures and video tapes. (Title 17, United States Code, Sections 501 and 506.)

The Federal Bureau of Investigation investigates allegations of criminal copyright infringement. (Title 17, United States Code, Section 506.)

The Videophile PRODUCT REPORT

PANASONIC NV-8200 VHS VIDEOCASSETTE RECORDER



- Manufacturer:** Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd., 1006 Kadoma, Osaka, Japan (Distributed by Panasonic Video Systems Division, 1 Panasonic Way, Secaucus, NJ 07094)
- Source:** Dealer loan (Audio/Video Craft, 7710 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90048)
- Cost:** \$1550 (includes dust-cover, miscellaneous antenna cables and adaptors, and sample T-60 videocassette; optional accessories include \$135 PC-810 carrying case, \$125 NV-A810 Remote Controller, \$350 NV-A800 Auto Search Controller, and \$550 NV-A820 Editing Interface Adaptor)

Ever since VHS first arrived in early 1977, videophiles have waited patiently for the arrival of a full-function heavy-duty deck capable of truly high-quality recording, as well as one having semi-professional features and capabilities unmatched by most currently available consumer decks. With the NV-8200, VHS has finally hit "the big time," providing both features and performance unmatched by any other VHS deck currently available.

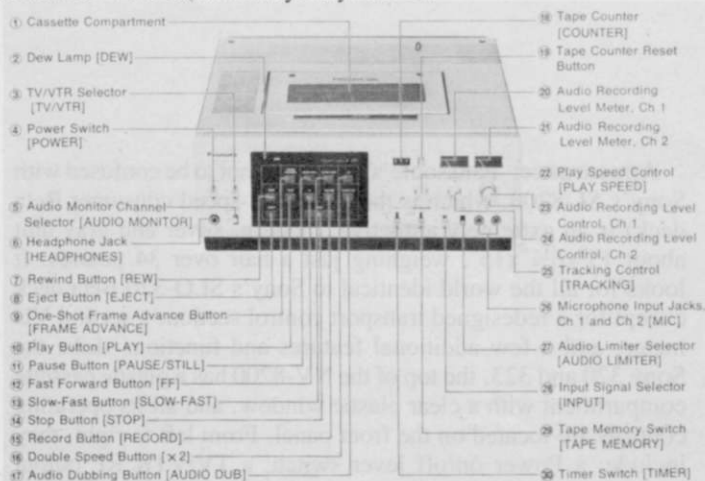
Appearance: Panasonic's NV-8200 (not to be confused with Sony's SL-8200, which is the original 2-speed consumer Beta deck) is an extremely attractive, modern, silver and gray unit about 15"x6 1/4"x15", weighing just a hair over 34 pounds. It looks for all the world identical to Sony's SLO-320 Beta deck except for a redesigned transport control section, a second VU meter, and a few additional features and functions. Like the Sony 320 and 323, the top of the NV-8200 has a plastic cassette compartment with a clear plastic window, and all its operating controls are located on the front panel. From left to right, they include: a Power on/off lever switch; a TV/VTR RF output selector; an Audio Monitor selector for listening to channel 1 or 2, or both; and a stereo phone jack for a standard set of headphones. The transport section is very logically laid out, with the top four buttons used for special playback functions like Frame Advance, Pause/Still, Slow/Fast (variable speed), and X2 (double speed, not to be confused with Beta's "X-2" mode). The second row of pushbuttons contains the usual Rewind/Play/Fast-Forward/Record/Audio Dub functions, and the bottom row has a button for Eject and a large pushbutton for Stop. All of these light-touch buttons except the latter two have red LED's to indicate when they're in use. The right front side of the deck contains all of the auxiliary controls, including a 3-digit Index Counter, two VU meters (for channels 1 and 2), a variable Play Speed control (from 1/5 to 1.5 times normal speed), a Tracking control, two Record Level controls, and at the bottom right side, a Timer switch (for automatic recording or playback when the unit is turned on), a Tape Memory switch (for rewinding to, or repeating from, a segment at 000 on the counter), a TV/VTR Input Selector, an Audio Limiter switch (to help prevent excessive peaks from distorting), and two phone jacks for connecting external microphones.

The back of the 8200 contains BNC jacks for Video In and Video Out, 4 phono jacks for Audio In (1 and 2) and Audio Out (1 and 2), another phono jack for the mono audio output (selectable from the front panel Audio Monitor Switch), and a 34-pin Remote jack for use with external controllers or editors. The right rear of the deck has F jacks for VHF In/RF Out (the latter controlled by the front panel TV/VTR selector) and a 300-watt AC outlet. The middle of this section contains two controls for adjusting the deck's Vertical Lock during still-framing, which we didn't need to tinker with during our tests.

Finally, the bottom of the unit has a hinged handle that swings out from the left side, and also a small recessed hole that contains the internal RF unit's channel 3/4 selector switch. Note that most previous industrial Panasonic VTR's have used chan-

PRODUCT REPORT

nels 5 and 6 for their RF outputs, although they seem to be changing this in light of the channels 3 and 4 used with their consumer VTR's (and everybody else's).



Features/Operation: Panasonic's 8200 was certainly the most well-built and enjoyable VHS deck I've used up to this time, and I found its features to be most convenient and well thought out. Like the earlier NV-8300 and 8310 (discussed in



TV #19), this industrial VTR is designed for use only at the faster SP speed, and cannot record or play back any 4-hour LP or 6-hour SLP programs. While this limits its recording capability to only 2 hours (or 3 hours with the soon-to-arrive T-180), it also provides the best possible picture quality by virtue of its 58-micron head and semiprofessional video signal processing circuitry, not unlike Sony's 300 series.

The full-function solenoid transport was a breeze to use, even with the usual 1-2 second delay between the play and wind functions (due to VHS's M-loading transport design), and was much more convenient to use than the mechanical transports found in almost every other VHS deck. I did, however, have a bit of trouble getting used to the very tiny ($\frac{1}{2}$ " square) plastic

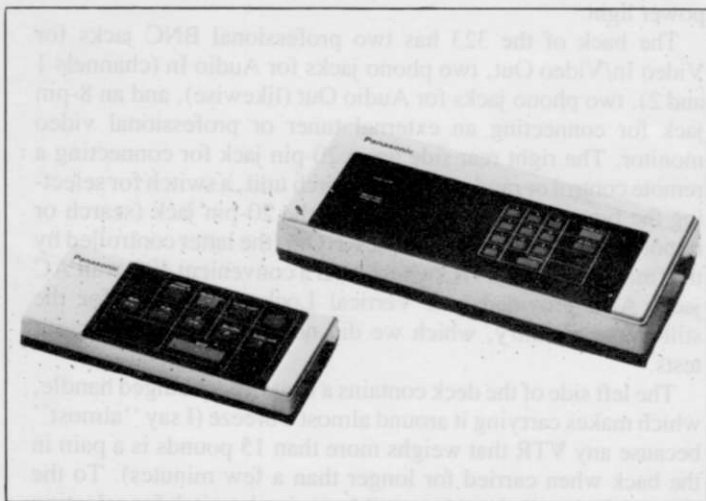
mode buttons on the front of the machine; the slightly larger ones used in Panasonic's and Sony's other industrial recorders are much easier to work with, though it's not that hard to get used to them after a few hours' practice. Likewise, the 8200's tiny Audio Monitor switch is fairly difficult to use because of its size. Panasonic would do well to make this considerably larger, perhaps replacing it with a standard toggle-switch like those used for the TV/VTR selector and Power on/off switches.

The 8200's still-framing and slow-motion performance was generally outstanding, and I particularly enjoyed the circuits that automatically got rid of the still-frame's noise-bar, which we first saw in Panasonic's excellent 8310 and which is now standard equipment in RCA's VDT-625 (reviewed last issue) and several other machines. The slow-motion had some slight interference, but was still very watchable and clear, with an unmuted audio output; the "X2" double-speed mode was even better, with virtually no visible image impairment, though I wish Panasonic had added a digital audio compressor (as in JVC's HR-6700) to help make the speeded-up "Donald Duck" soundtrack a little more intelligible.

The Audio Dub control affects only audio Channel 2; like the SLO-323, the 8200 leaves audio Channel 1 intact and doesn't provide any method of recording over it except when also recording video, which is most unfortunate. Also, like the 323 (and SLO-320), the Panasonic lacks true editing capability, omitting flying erase heads from the video head assembly, which results in the inevitable and annoying "video moire" pattern following most edits. Most of the "crash" editing I tried on the NV-8200, though, was fairly decent—at least as good as the SLO-320 and better than the 323, though not as good as the latter's "punch-in" edits (see the following review for more details), and was as good as or better than any of Panasonic's other VHS units released to date. I was very much annoyed, however, to find that in order to use the NV-8200 with an editing system (like Panasonic's NV-A950 Edit Controller) you have to buy their \$550 NV-A820 Editing Interface Adaptor, apparently needed to roll the tape backwards for re-cueing purposes, which certainly diminishes the 8200's attractiveness as an inexpensive pseudo-editing machine. Neither Sony's 320 or 323 requires external interface adaptors, and yet each sells for roughly the same price as the NV-8200.

Panasonic also makes available the NV-A810 Remote Controller and NV-A800 Auto Search Controller, which compare almost identically to Sony's RM-420 remote control and earlier RM-300 Random Access Controller. The latter provides a 4-digit red LED display used to index videocassettes with much more accuracy than the deck's simple 3-digit mechanical counter, as well as allowing you to automatically dial up pre-selected segments in a few seconds. The remote control duplicates all the 8200's transport controls, allowing you to shuttle, play, or record the tape from over a dozen feet away. While the NV-A800 doesn't provide nearly the same flexibility as Sony's new RX-series random-access controllers, without an hours/minutes/seconds display, we expect similar units will be available later on this year for about the same price (between \$350 and \$400).

Performance: As mentioned previously, the 8200 provides, without a doubt, the best video quality we've ever seen in a VHS recorder (except for the NV-8310, which is approximately equivalent to the 8200 except for the stereo audio and remote-control transport), and sets the standard as the state-of-the-art VHS deck as far as we're concerned. Dedicated videophiles will find it difficult, however, to pair the 8200 with a comparable Panasonic Tuner/Timer, mainly because they don't presently have one in their industrial line. It's possible that you could adapt



their excellent PV-A32E 14-day/8-event programmable consumer tuner (previewed in TV #24) for use with the 8200, or if you don't mind "mixed marriages," Sony's TT-300 would probably also work fine with some adaptors.

We subjected the NV-8200 to a wide variety of recording and playback material, including prerecorded tapes, test signals and off-air programs, and the deck performed almost flawlessly with all but the most demanding test signals, which are difficult to reproduce on *any* VTR, including professional broadcast machines costing many times more. Its picture quality was visibly much better than most consumer recorders and was even a hair better than the 4-headed VHS decks like RCA's VDT-625 and Panasonic's PV-1650, possibly due to its heavy-duty transport and improved low-noise electronics. Although the NV-8200 costs only a couple of hundred dollars more than these consumer recorders, keep in mind that the extra money saved by omitting its tuner has gone towards improving the deck itself, which has, in this case, resulted in a machine considerably better than any other I've yet seen for the VHS format.

The manufacturer's quoted specifications include:

Horizontal Resolution: 240 lines (color); 300 lines (B&W)

Video S/N Ratio: 45 db (B&W; none supplied for color, though we'd rate it as not lower than 43 db or so)

Audio Frequency Response: 50-10,000 Hz (no reference given)

Audio A/N Ratio: 40 dB

Although the NV-8200's audio specs look somewhat worse on paper than the 323's, I'd subjectively rate them as being almost identical to *my* ears. The deciding factor here may be the slightly faster speed of the Beta deck—4 cm. (1.6") per second vs. 3.3 cm. (1.3") per second, giving the edge to the latter machine. But since both the stereo VHS and Beta tracks are only half as wide as comparable mono tracks from standard machines, I'd rate the 8200 and SLO-323 as being almost equal in terms of overall audio signal-to-noise ratio—somewhat hissy and possibly in need of external noise-reduction devices like Dolby B or DBX. We're hoping that Panasonic will eventually come out with an updated NV-8200 that contains internal Dolby circuitry, like the firm's new stereo consumer decks in Japan.

Conclusion: While the overall picture quality and performance of the NV-8200 vs. Sony's 323 is open to debate, there's one point on which we think even the most dedicated proponents of either format will agree on: Panasonic's NV-8200 is, without

a doubt, the most advanced and best quality VHS deck money can buy (as of press time, we timidly point out). While it won't win any awards for recording time, its 2-hour capacity (2½ hours with the T-150) should be enough for most people, and suitable for use with just about all prerecorded VHS tapes as well.

Incidentally, in this Sony vs. Panasonic battle, now that the ball is in Panasonic's court (re: the SLO-383, mentioned elsewhere), it remains to be seen what changes will be made with the 8200 in the future—most likely the addition of some kind of picture search capability and possibly easier-to-use buttons, the Dolby circuitry mentioned before, and (dare we hope?) honest-and-for-true editing capability, not to be confused with the poor man's crash-editing we've been stuck with so many times in the past. This competition will most likely force Panasonic to continue equalling and/or bettering Sony's units for many years to come (and vice-versa); which should assure us of continued progress with ½" cassette equipment, unfortunately at the expense of obsoleting everything each year or two, much to the detriment of our wallet . . . to say nothing of our sanity. We promise to keep all of you posted as things progress.—MFW & KL

[Special thanks to Audio/Video Craft's Mark Phillips for providing the NV-8200 used in our review, as well as local videophile R.C. for assisting with our SLO-323 and NV-8200 comparisons.]

[Editor's Note: A Panasonic spokesman at the LA Video Show told us at press time that they would indeed have an "editing" version of the NV-8200, possibly for introduction in the Fall or Winter, but declined to provide an estimated price or model number. He did express some surprise that Sony came out with their SLO-383 Beta editor with so little warning. We agreed that it was a complete surprise.]

SONY SLO-323 BETAMAX VIDEOCASSETTE RECORDER (with RX-353 Programmable Search Control)



Manufacturer: Sony Corporation, 7-35 Kitashinagawa 6-chome, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo 141, Japan (distributed by Sony Video Products Co., 9 West 57th Street, New York, NY 10019)

Source: Dealer loan (Hoffman Video Systems, 800 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90015)

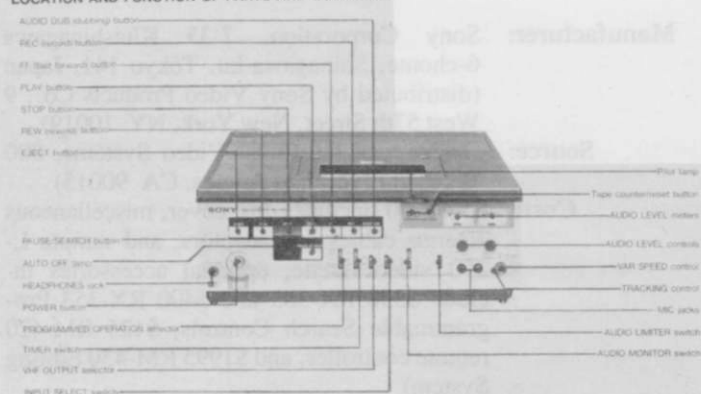
Cost: \$1595.00 (includes dust cover, miscellaneous antenna cables and adaptors, and sample L-250 videocassette; optional accessories include \$350 RX-303 and \$400 RX-353 Programmable Search Controls, \$125 RM-420 remote controller, and \$1995 RM-430 Editing System)

PRODUCT REPORT

As detailed in our *Recommended Components* section, we've been spending a considerable amount of time testing and evaluating a wide variety of professional and semi-professional VTR's that have applications to videophiles who are looking for the best possible performance without regard to price. Sony's deluxe industrial Beta decks, the 300 series, have been fairly successful with educational and professional users, rivaling the performance of $\frac{3}{4}$ " machines at twice the price; their latest model, the SLO-323 is the subject of this **Product Report**.

Appearance: The SLO-323 looks unlike any consumer VTR ever made, though it bears a faint resemblance to the SL-J7 (reviewed last issue) because of its heavy duty all-solenoid transport and gleaming silver and gray exterior. This $15\frac{1}{2}" \times 5\frac{3}{4}" \times 14"$ unit is also smaller than most consumer VTR's, mainly because it lacks an internal tuner for off-air recording, and weighs under 28 pounds—the lightest nonbattery-operated VTR we've tested. Virtually all of the 323's controls are located on its front panel, consisting of a row of light-touch silver solenoid buttons for Eject/Rewind/Stop/Play/Fast-Forward/Record/Audio Dub, and another button below for Pause/Search. To the left of the Pause Control is an indicator that lights up when the deck automatically shuts down due to excessive moisture on the video head ("Auto Off"), and red LED's above each button to indicate which mode has been selected. A 2-channel phone jack on the lower left side of the machine can be used for connecting a standard set of stereo headphones. Next to it is a mechanical locking pushbutton for Power on/off. The right hand side of the machine contains additional toggle switches for Programmed Operation (Repeat/Off/Rewind), Timer recording or Playback (Record/Off/Play), a TV/VTR RF output selector, a Line/TV Input selector, an Audio Monitor jack (for channel 1 or 2, or both), and an Audio Limiter switch to minimize distortion due to excessive peaks in audio recording. Next to these switches are two mini-phone jacks for external microphones (channels 1 and 2—left and right, respectively), two knurled knobs for setting audio levels, and two concentric knobs for Tracking and Variable Speed. Above all of these is a

LOCATION AND FUNCTION OF PARTS AND CONTROLS



3-digit index counter, two illuminated VU meters, and a green power light.

The back of the 323 has two professional BNC jacks for Video In/Video Out, two phono jacks for Audio In (channels 1 and 2), two phono jacks for Audio Out (likewise), and an 8-pin jack for connecting an external tuner or professional video monitor. The right rear side has a 20-pin jack for connecting a remote control or random-access search unit, a switch for selecting the type of unit to be used with the 20-pin jack (search or remote), two F jacks for VHF In/RF Out (the latter controlled by the front panel TV/VTR switch), and a convenient 400-watt AC jack. Also provided is a Vertical Lock Adjustment for the still-frame circuitry, which we did not have to adjust for our tests.

The left side of the deck contains a neat flip-up hinged handle, which makes carrying it around almost a breeze (I say "almost" because any VTR that weighs more than 15 pounds is a pain in the back when carried for longer than a few minutes). To the right of the handle is an impossible-to-reach switch for selecting channel 3 or 4 RF playback (which can be switched with a small screwdriver or an extremely long, yoda-sized finger).

Features/Operation: The SLO-323 recorder (and the companion SLP-303 player) is designed for use *only* at the fastest Beta speed, called "Beta-1" by the manufacturer and "X-1" by everybody else. While using X-1 will limit recording to only 100 minutes (with an L-830 videocassette), it nonetheless provides the best picture quality of any $\frac{1}{2}"$ cassette VTR we've tested thus far, due to its wide-gap video heads and improved signal-processing circuitry.

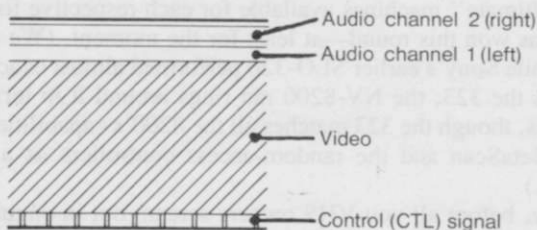
All the light-touch solenoid controls on the 323's front panel were remarkably easy to use, requiring only a slight amount of pressure to go from mode to mode. When the Pause/Search button is activated with the machine in the Rewind or Fast-Forward mode, the transport slows down a little bit and a BetaScan image is displayed on the screen, up to 15 times normal speed in forward and 10 times normal in reverse, with a half-dozen horizontal noise-bars marring the otherwise clear and easily discernable image. When the Pause button is activated during playback, the picture immediately freezes, moving ahead half a frame or so to remove the noise-bar found in most VTR's (such as Sony's SL-5400, 5600 and their earlier SLO-320), by virtue of the two 60-micron and 40-micron video heads, which automatically omit scanning the tapes noisy adjacent tracks. For frame-by-frame analysis, the 323 can be placed in the Play mode with the Variable Speed knob depressed once and turned all the way to the left, which will result in a series of still-frames changing once every two seconds. When the knob is rotated clockwise, the playback will slowly speed up all the way to twice normal speed at the knob's extreme right hand position. The slow-motion pictures are slightly noisy, but still useful for most purposes. The double-speed image is nearly perfect, with practically no noise-bars or image impairments (though some adjustment of the Tracking control may be needed for playing tapes made on other machines). Like all industrial Beta decks, the 323 doesn't play tapes made on 30-micron decks (eg. Sony's 8200) as well, with occasionally severe noise-bars being experienced during still-framing and slow-motion playback.

The additional controls also need some explanation: the Programmed Operation selector is simply a fancy memory switch for the Index Counter, allowing you to rewind to or repeat from the 000 point on the tape. The Timer switch automatically

places the 323 into record or playback when the power is turned on, depending on the setting of the switch. The VHF output selector is a simple TV/VTR switch just like the ones found in consumer VTR's. Since the SLO-323 has no tuner, the antenna's VHF signal is merely funneled right through the machine to the TV set for convenience only, not for recording. The Input Selector switches between the 8-pin audio/video input/output jack on the back of the machine (normally used for connecting a monitor or a tuner like the TT-300) and the BNC/phono inputs (normally used for dubbing or for recording with a camera). As mentioned, the Audio Monitor switch allows you to choose between listening to channel 1, channel 2, or both on your mono TV set or headphones; it doesn't affect the rear phono jacks' output. I wish that Sony had offered an additional mini-phone mono audio output for monitoring purposes (like the separate mono output used in all of Sony's 3/4" equipment and Panasonic's NV-8200, reviewed elsewhere), but such is life in the big city.

An Audio Limiter is provided to allow some compression of loud peaks when recording. It affects both channels at once, something like the effect of the automatic gain circuits in Sony's consumer decks, though without the "breathing" effect during low passages. We went ahead and left the limiters off for most of our test recording (knowing that most TV stations already have limiters and compressors on their signals before they reach the transmitters) except when using the front panel microphone jacks, to compensate for unexpected loud outbursts and distortion.

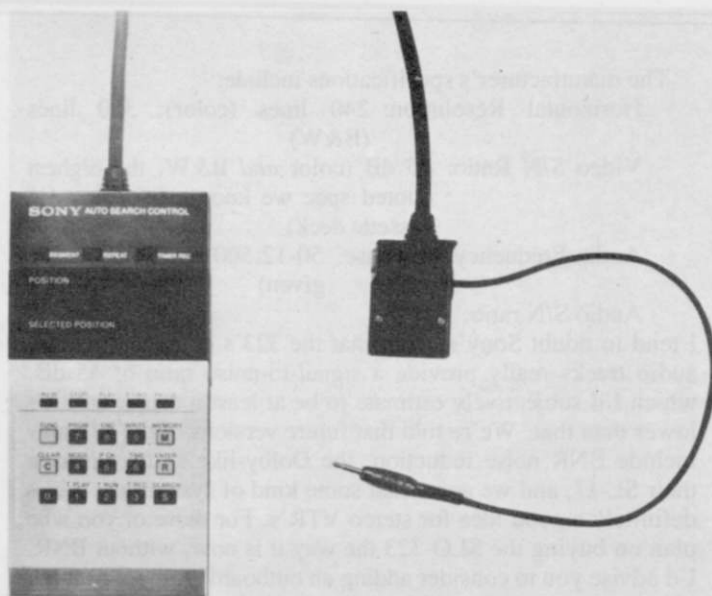
The 323 is a *stereo* Beta deck, with the standard mono audio track cut in half to provide 2-channel recording and playback.



Since channel 2 is right on the edge of the tape, and is therefore more susceptible to dropouts due to edge damage and wrinkles, Sony recommends that channel 1 be used when only one channel is required. When connecting an external tuner, channel 2 is left off and channel 1 is active. However, when dubbing audio, the new audio will be recorded only on channel 2, which I feel is a mistake. I would much prefer to be able to dub or erase *either* channel 1 or 2 as needed, for maximum flexibility.

Perhaps the most amazing feature of the SLO-323 is provided by its optional RX-series Programmable Auto-Search Controllers. To attempt a complete discussion of all the RX-353's and 303's features and capabilities is beyond the scope of this and most magazines, but suffice it to say that they allow you to program up to 63 program segment locations by means of an audible cue tone recorded on channel 1 of the audio track, and then dial up any 8 of these segments *in random order, automatically*. You can also use the controller to make the 323 automatically record at specific times of day, for recording or playback. Best of all, the 353 displays the deck's elapsed time in *hours, minutes, and seconds*, which is nothing short of fantastic for indexing and searching through videotapes. For those of you who have large collections of tapes with many different program segments, using the RX-353 would appear to be the ideal way of

getting all the material organized for the fastest possible access. In addition, both remote units include additional buttons for Rewind/Stop/Play/Fast-Forward/and Pause as a bonus. I'm extremely disappointed that the Record and BetaScan functions were omitted from these controls, as this would have added greatly to their usefulness in recording and editing. I believe that with some difficulty the RX-353 and 303 could be modified to include these functions, however, and we intend to work on such modifications in the near future.



I was also disappointed to find that the lower-cost RX-303 unit doesn't have a continuous hours/minutes/seconds LED display for tape time, which diminishes its usefulness considerably. (I complained loudly about this to a local Sony executive, pointing out that nowhere in the 303's product literature is this glaring omission mentioned.) Considering that I think few people really need all of the 353's programmable functions, surely a low cost real-time controller would be much preferred. I have to admit, however, that for certain specialized educational applications, the 353 can't be beat by anything currently available.

Before any of you get too excited about the RX units, I should warn you first that they're designed for use only with full-function solenoid machines like the SLO-323, the SLP-300 player, the earlier SLO-320/SLP-300 decks, and a few of Sony's 3/4" decks (like the VO-2611 reviewed elsewhere)—not with any of their consumer decks. It's possible that the SL-J7 could be modified to accept the control with some difficulty (if only Sony had used the same 20-pin jack on the latter deck instead of the odd 8-pin one, we'd know for sure).

Performance: We recorded a wide variety of program material on the SLO-323, and like the former SLO-320 (our earlier reference machine), it did a great job with even the most stringent sources like color bars and other test signals. In particular, the dropout compensator used in the 323 seems somewhat improved over earlier units and is certainly better than those used in most consumer machines, greatly reducing dropouts from all but the poorest recordings. In addition, the improved servo-controlled transport and processing circuits provide very detailed, practically noise-free pictures, unmatched by any VTR in its class (except for 3/4" decks costing hundreds of dollars more).

PRODUCT REPORT

The manufacturer's specifications include:

Horizontal Resolution: 240 lines (color); 300 lines (B&W)

Video S/N Ratio: 45 dB (color and B&W, the highest quoted spec we know of for any 1/2" cassette deck)

Audio Frequency Response: 50-12,500 Hz (no reference given)

Audio S/N ratio: 45 dB

I tend to doubt Sony's claim that the 323's extremely narrow audio tracks really provide a signal-to-noise ratio of 45 dB, which I'd subjectively estimate to be at least a couple of dB's lower than that. We're told that future versions of the 323 may include BNR noise reduction, the Dolby-like system used in their SL-J7, and we agree that some kind of system like this is definitely a good idea for stereo VTR's. For those of you who plan on buying the SLO-323 the way it is now, without BNR, I'd advise you to consider adding an outboard Dolby B or DBX unit to get the best possible audio out of the deck, particularly for exacting music requirements.

Although Sony doesn't supply a specification for the SLO-323's stereo separation, I'd estimate it to be not much better than most inexpensive audio cassette decks—around 25-30 dB—which should still suffice for most dual-channel broadcasts or recordings. I found, much to my surprise, that although channel 1 hardly leaked back into channel 2, on our sample unit, channel 2 leaked back to channel 1 quite audibly (and annoyingly), despite Sony's claim that channel 1 should be the main track used for recording. I also found some slight incompatibility in playing back stereo Beta tapes on mono Beta decks, mainly because of the loss of certain signals due to stereo phase cancellations. This effect can be minimized by carefully checking all the 323's audio cables to be sure they're wired and grounded properly. On the other side of the coin, I think you're better off playing mono tapes on the 323 in *either* channel 1 or channel 2, but not in the "mix" position, for the same reason.

I was disappointed to find that, like it's older brother, the SLO-320, the 323 is not a true editing deck, although it can be used with small editing systems like Sony's own RM-430 (reviewed in TV #23). I was also dismayed to find that it didn't even make simple pause "crash" edits as well as the 320 or most consumer decks. After an hour of experimenting, KL and I finally hit upon a method of editing with the 323 that resulted in nearly-perfect assemble edits every time, though it required some jockeying around with the controls and using an additional monitor to preview what we were about to record (in our case, an additional TV set tuned to the off-air channel we were taping). To "edit" on the 323, we first re-cued the tape to the point right before the program segment ended. Next, we paused the machine and kept a close eye on our "preview" monitor. The split-second before the program resumed, we released the

pause button and simultaneously depressed the *play and record* buttons, to perform what audio engineers call a "punch-in" recording. Granted, this is a slightly unwieldy and uncomfortable method of performing edits (at least without a remote control or editing system), but for off-air recording it would seem to be the only acceptable solution, and one we got used to after less than an hour or so of practice.

One positive point about the 323 is that I found its record sync electronics to be substantially improved over those used in the 320, which was plagued by an irritating sensitivity to even the slightest video problems, often leading to a number of unwanted glitches and sync "rolls." The 323 can handle a much wider range of incoming video problems without a hitch, and, in fact, I had a hard time making the machine break-up at all during recording, so great was its stability.

Conclusion: On a direct A/B comparison with Panasonic's top-of-the-line NV-8200, all of us were hard pressed to see much difference between the SLO-323 and the former machine, but after a 2-3 hour test conducted "blind" with a three-man testing panel, we chose the 323's picture 8 times out of 10 on the basis of both prerecorded color bars and miscellaneous off-air recordings, with the Beta deck performing just a micro-hair better in terms of overall image definition (resolution, clarity, and video noise) as well as dropouts, which were most likely more a function of the tapes than anything else. To be as fair as possible, we even tried using *new* tape in the 8200 and *used* tape in the 323 to see if it made any difference, but the results were the same. So, for those of you who continue to argue the "Great Beta/VHS Debate," it would seem that, in this comparison of the "ultimate" machines available for each respective format, Beta has won this round—at least for the moment. (We noted that while Sony's earlier SLO-320 performed almost exactly as well as the 323, the NV-8200 ran rings around it in terms of features, though the 323 matches all the 8200's capabilities and adds BetaScan and the random-access controllers as a final topper.)

Now, before all you VHS owners scream out in anguish or subject your poor and lowly technical editors to sackfuls of haranguing letters, please keep in mind that we did our best to make these tests as stringent, fair and difficult as possible. Also, both machines performed significantly better than any other consumer VTR's on the market for both Beta and VHS. For most industrial users, choosing between the 323 and the 8200 on a basis of picture quality alone would be fairly difficult, ultimately requiring weighing in the different features (100 vs. 120 minutes' recording time, the Beta's BetaScan and programmable search controllers, etc.) to help tip the scales. Because the world of home video is at such great odds on the subject of Beta vs. VHS, our final "solution" (if you can call it that) would be simply to rely on whichever format you've already invested in and buy the best machine for that format—in this case, the SLO-323 or the NV-8200. And for you rich folks, the ultimate answer would be to buy one of each. Sure, it totals to \$3,000, but hey—it's only money. (*choke*)

We can well understand anyone's reluctance to plunk down \$1595 on the SLO-323, then display it proudly to a non-videophile friend only to have them ask, "Oh, is this the one that records 6 hours?" However, for those who've been crazy enough to stick with the "archaic" X-1 mode, first found in Sony's original LV-1901 console and their SL-7200, SLO-260 and SLO-320 decks, the 323 is without a doubt the ultimate Beta

recorder and, for that matter, the highest quality 1/2" cassette VTR we know of today.

(Special thanks to local videophile R.C. and LA's Hoffman Video Systems for supplying the SLO-323's evaluated in this report.)

[Editor's Note: Just a few weeks after this review was written, Sony finally unveiled their new SLO-383, the first true Beta *editing* deck, complete with flying erase heads and insert/assemble editing capability. This \$3,000+ recorder is due to be released some time this fall, and we will have a review on it as soon as possible. Technology marches on . . . and it's about time.

SONY KV-1943R TRINITRON COLOR TV RECEIVER



Manufacturer: Sony Corporation of America, 16450 W. Bernardo Drive, San Diego, CA 92127 (Distributed by Sony Consumer Products Company, 9 West 57th Street, New York, NY 10019)

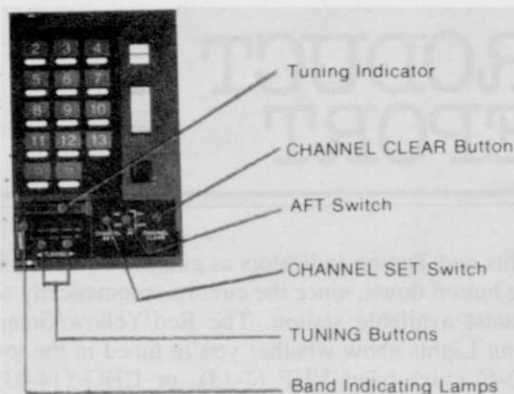
Source: TV reader loan (purchased from Muntz Electronics, 7700 Densmore Avenue, Van Nuys, CA 91406)

Cost: \$749.95 (includes RM-503 Remote Commander, earphone and antenna connectors)

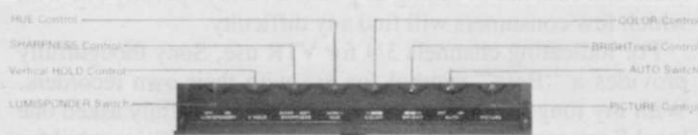
Sony's Trinitron TV sets have long been renowned for their excellent picture quality and reliability over the years, since the first Trinitron set was introduced way back in 1968. Now that the manufacturer has discontinued all of their 21" sets due to declining sales, their 19" sets are the largest non-console receivers available. The 1943R is a medium-priced receiver, right between the non-remote KV-1923 and 1912 and the deluxe KV-1945R, and is the subject of this **Product Report**.

Appearance: Sony's KV-1943R is identically styled to the other sets in the 43R series, including 15" and 17" models, and comes in an attractive 25 1/2" x 19 1/2" x 18 1/2" simulated-walnut cabinet. It's rather hefty, at almost 64 pounds, requiring a sturdy table or stand (like Sony's KVS-42), and provides a big 100° 19" picture tube for convenient medium-sized viewing. All three sets share a common layout, with their operating controls located on the upper right corner, including 14 channel-preset pushbuttons on a hinged door that swings out to reveal the tuning adjustment controls. Controls for Volume adjustment and Power on/off are also provided, as well as an infrared Remote

Control Detector and Monitor Lamp, which lights up whenever the RM-503 Remote Commander is activated.



A hinged compartment in the bottom of the set contains 6 rotating knobs for adjusting Hue (color phase), Sharpness



(picture peaking), Vertical Hold (a must for watching copy-guarded tapes), Color intensity, Brightness, and Picture (essentially a contrast control). Also provided are switches for the Lumisponder, which automatically adjusts the set's brightness according to room light level, and an Auto switch for locking onto factory preset hue and color levels. A third automatic control under the tuner can be switched for Automatic Fine-Tuning (AFT). For our tests we left the Lumisponder and Auto switches off, but kept the AFT on to lock onto incoming broadcast frequencies.

The bottom right front side has a Master power button used to turn on the remote control circuits inside the sets (which require only a negligible amount of current to remain active) and two earphone jacks, the left automatically disconnecting the set's speaker when used, and the other leaving it unaffected. The back of the set contains a 75 ohm F jack for connecting a VHF antenna and two 300 ohm terminal posts for a UHF antenna. A 300-75 ohm adaptor is supplied for connecting the 300 ohm line to the VHF jack.

The RM-503 Remote Commander is exactly like the one mentioned in our review (issue #23) of the KV-2643R—a 8"x1 1/2"x2" hand held-unit weighing a comfortable 6 oz., powered by two AA batteries, which are thoughtfully provided by the manufacturer. The 503 includes most of the controls found on the upper right of the TV set, including a Volume up/down button, Power on/off, Channel select (sequentially changing stations in order, up or down), and 14 channel-preset buttons to match those on the 2943R. The Commander also adds an additional Mute button which kills the set's audio, for use when you answer the phone or need to "blab-off" a commercial.

Features/Operation: The 1943R we evaluated came preset by the manufacturer for channels 2-13. By switching the Channel Set button to "on," depressing the desired channel button, and adjusting the electronic Tuning button (to the left for low-numbered channels, to the right for high ones), I was able to quickly program in the stations using the internal Band Indicating

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ing Lights and Tuning Indicators as guides. You don't have to hold the button down, since the circuits automatically seek out the clearest available station. The Red/Yellow/Green Band Indicating Lights show whether you're tuned in the low-band VHF (2-6), high-band VHF (7-13), or UHF (14-83) wave lengths, and the red Tuning Indicator lamps light up to tell you what channel number you're closest to. All in all, it seems to be an almost "idiot-proofed" system, designed to take as much muss and fuss out of tuning as possible, and hopefully one with which few consumers will find any difficulty.

For indicating channels 3/4 for VTR use, Sony thoughtfully provides a "Beta" symbol for use with their own recorders. With my tongue planted firmly in cheek, I gleefully asked one local Sony rep whether they'd also have as "VHS" symbol for people with that format, but he only grinned and showed us a "VTR" label that can be likewise affixed to the set and remote channel indicators.

Connecting the 1943 R to an antenna was a breeze, and no more difficult than doing so for VTR's. I did have a minor quarrel with Sony in that no allowance has been made for using the 1943R with mid-band cable frequencies (often used for Pay and informational channels), but I'm hoping that this can be changed in future models.

Once hooked up and preset, the 1943R performed almost flawlessly and the Remote Commander also worked well, allowing the user to change channels and adjust volume from over 20 feet away. Surprisingly, we were able to aim as far as 90° off and still control the set without a hitch, although the instruction manual limits this range to only 30°. The only other feature-related criticism I have is that the set's "Econoquick" circuitry takes almost 8 seconds to provide a stable color picture from a cold start, though this is a small quibble and probably the next best thing to the old high wattage "instant-on" sets of yesteryear. I noted that the 1943R is rated at no more than 120 watts (78 average), which is very low even for a transistorized 19" set.

Performance: Like the previously reviewed 2643R, the 1943R did a good job with all videotape and off-air signals, even doing a half decent job with stringent test signals like color bars and a standard crosshatch pattern. I noticed a small degree of ringing (horizontal detail smearing) and just a trace of color purity problems, particularly in the extreme corners, but these were, for the most part, subtle defects and probably unnoticeable for most people. (For the uninitiated, purity problems generally show up as a small light color "blotch" a few inches in diameter on the picture tube.) For hard core videophiles, having the unit set up and adjusted by an experienced serviceman before taking it home might be a good idea, to insure proper operation and optimum picture quality.

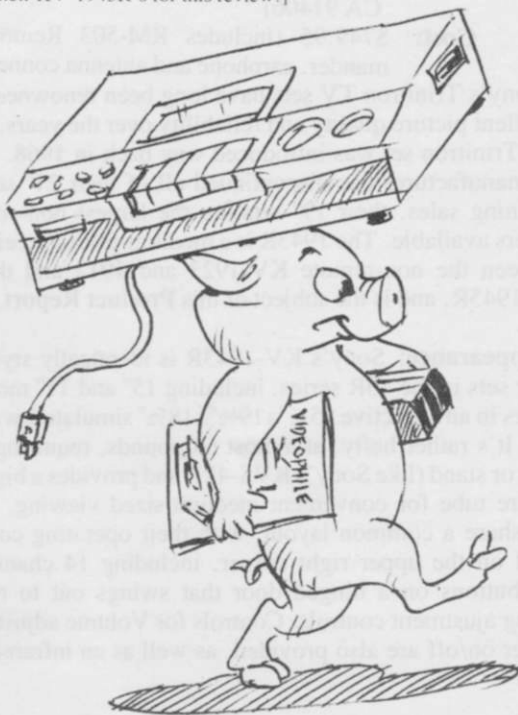
Unlike most sets, the Sony's very fast AFC time-constant, which is part of their horizontal hold circuitry, kept even the most trouble-prone videotapes very stable, particularly in the

upper third part of the picture, which is where skew problems are most noticeable. As we've noted often in past issues, using a Sony set for videotape playback is almost like having a "poor man's Time-Base Corrector," automatically correcting a variety of videotape problems at relatively minimal cost.

With the highest quality source material, the 1943R did an admirable (not to be confused with "Admiral") job, providing a degree of sharpness and image clarity that's hard to beat in any standard consumer TV receiver. With the Sharpness control set at about mid-range, to avoid excessive grain and "over enhancement," the picture was excellent and had the kind of quality we've come to expect from Sony Trinitrons. We'd caution the reader to carefully check out any large Trinitron before purchasing it, however, to make sure the unit is free from the aforementioned color purity problems that have sporadically afflicted a few sets manufactured at Sony's San Diego plant. We've already noticed a few 19" sets with this problem in stores, though the two we evaluated for this report (both purchased last year) were free from any major impairments—at least any that have occurred over the past 6 months.

Conclusion: As a good all-around 19" consumer set, we're hard pressed to think of a better one than the KV-1943R, even though it doesn't quite equal the quality of the CVM series (see following review). The only thing I'd like to see changed, aside from the CATV-adaptable tuner mentioned before, is the replacement of the set's 4" speaker with a larger one for improved sound quality; possibly even a 2-way or 3-way design could be incorporated for non-compromised highs and more solid bass, hopefully at only a slight price increase. That brings up my biggest gripe about the 1943R: paying almost \$750 for a 19" set is almost lunacy, even in these inflationary/recessionary times, considering you can buy two 19" sets or one 25" console for that price from at least 5 other manufacturers. But, *sigh*, none of them will even come close to the 1943R's picture quality, so that's probably going to be one of life's little problems we're just going to have to live with.—MFW

[Special thanks to TV readers Bill Cotter and Larry Love for providing us with access to their KV-1943R's for this review.]



SONY CVM-1750 COLOR TRINITRON MONITOR/RECEIVER



Manufacturer: Sony Corporation, 7-35 Kitashinagawa 6-chome, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo 141, Japan (Distributed by Sony Video Products Company, 9 West 57th Street, New York, NY 10019)

Source: Walt Davis Enterprises, 3439 Cahuenga Blvd. West, N. Hollywood, CA

Serial No.: 208546

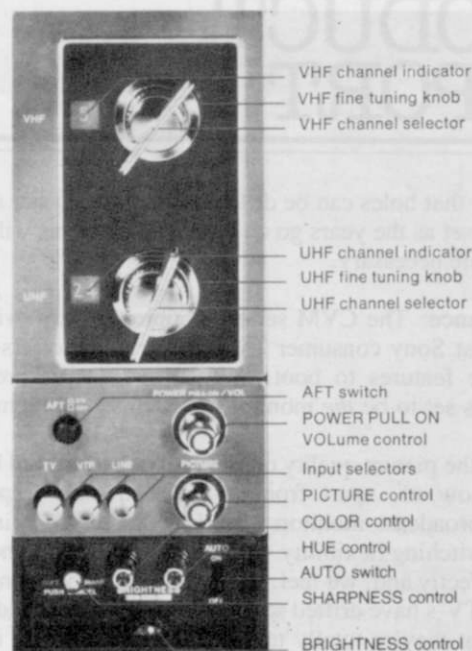
Cost: \$1075.00 (includes color bar reference chart and VMC-3P 8-pin monitor connection cable)

For me, the whole idea of video in the home is pointless if you don't have a good TV set to watch it all on. In *The Videophile's* continuing search for the "ultimate monitor," we began looking at Sony's Trinitron series, which includes three types: the KV consumer series, available from most good electronics and appliance stores; the CVM industrial series, available from most industrial/CCTV video dealers; and the PVM/BVM professional series, available from Sony directly through their Sony Broadcast division. After experiencing nothing but frustration with the minor geometric distortion and color purity problems found in most consumer sets (discussed previously in our review of the KV-1943R), and realizing that the extremely high cost of most professional monitors make them inappropriate for hard core videophile use, I settled on the CVM-1750, which is the subject of this **Product Report**.

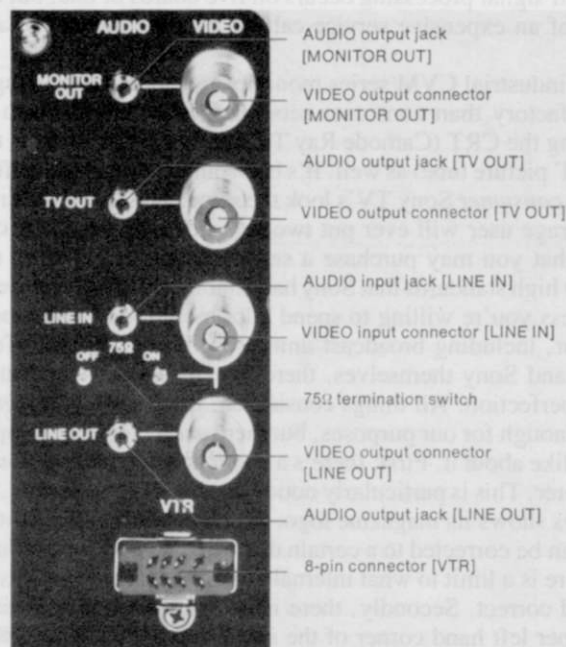
Appearance/Features: The CVM-1750 is an attractive set, enclosed in a real wood cabinet (as opposed to the cheap plastic used in other manufacturer's consumer sets), measuring about 23½"x17"x15", and weighing about 65 pounds. Part of its success lies in its simplicity: It uses the old-style detent tuning for both VHF and UHF, it has no remote control, and it comes in a square box designed with little fuss over its appearance.

The 1750's controls are kept to a minimum, which makes it an ideal monitor to use in situations where people don't know how to properly set up a TV. Hidden behind a door on the front panel, to the right of the screen, are the main controls: Sharpness (otherwise known as "peaking," with the knob pulled out for activation and pushed in to return to a fixed preset level), Hue (color phase shift), Chroma (color level), Brightness, and Auto (an automatic factory preset hue/chroma level). Below the channel selector knobs is a row of three switches that allow you

to select between TV (internal tuner), Line (rear auxiliary inputs), and VTR (rear 8-pin input). Also included is an AFT tuner switch, a Picture control for contrast adjustment, and a standard Power on/off and Volume knob.



The back contains 4 BNC jacks for video Line In, video Line Out, video Monitor Out (which is selectable on the front panel, the output being whatever is displayed on the monitor), and TV Out (which comes directly from the internal VHF/UHF tuner). Four mini-phone jacks add audio to these four video connections, and an 8-pin jack is provided for use with Sony industrial VTR's. (Note that Panasonic and several other manufacturers wire their 8-pin connectors slightly differently, just for spite, though their decks can be used with Sony monitors with the aid of a special adaptor.)



This back panel is designed to be removed by a serviceman without having to disconnect the 3-prong power cord, and all internal controls for convergence, background, and bass are clearly marked for adjustment. In fact, black dots are printed on

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the panel so that holes can be drilled to facilitate easier adjustment of the set as the years go on, when adjustments will most likely be more necessary.

Performance: The CVM series is approximately twice the price of most Sony consumer TV receivers, and offers fewer convenience features to boot. Why, then, do we presently consider this set to be *the* monitor to which all others must be compared?

For one, the picture quality on the 1750 is unmatched by any sets we know of, apart from a few extremely expensive (\$3000+) broadcast monitors that lack the CVM's internal tuner and switching flexibility. Straight out of the box, the 1750 worked perfectly and, we feel, will continue to do so long after most other TV's have drifted so far out of adjustment and faded so badly that they're totally unwatchable. Its 17" size is considered to be optimum for the Trinitron design, another reason the 1750 was chosen.

Why the extra money for what is basically a TV set whose only additional feature is video and audio inputs? It all has to do with quality control. The inside of the CVM-1750 is very much like Sony's discontinued KV-1741R—a favorite of mine from years past. The circuitry is of the older modular type, which to me is preferable to the new "Alpha" chassis which puts everything on one board. This is a small quarrel, considering that the reliability of most Sony products is such that it probably doesn't matter if signal processing occurs on five boards or one, but the threat of an expensive service call isn't a nice thought in any case.

The industrial CVM series monitors are "burned-in" longer at the factory than consumer sets, and more care is taken in selecting the CRT (Cathode Ray Tube, otherwise known as the good ol' picture tube) as well. It's been our experience that often no two *consumer* Sony TV's look the same. This is alright since no average user will ever put two sets side by side, but it can mean that you may purchase a set that won't come up to the usually high standards that Sony has established for themselves.

Unless you're willing to spend a lot more for a professional monitor, including broadcast units from Barco, Conrac, Tektronix and Sony themselves, there's really no way for you to reach perfection. All things considered, the CVM-1750 comes close enough for our purposes, but there *are* a couple of things I didn't like about it. First, there's a slight geometric distortion in the center. This is particularly noticeable when, for example, *60 Minutes* shows its magazine logo, which bows inward slightly. This can be corrected to a certain degree by a good serviceman, but there is a limit to what internal adjustments can compensate for and correct. Secondly, there is a slight misconvergence in the upper left hand corner of the set. It's better than any other commercial TV receiver our technical editors have seen, but it's still not perfect. The problem is noticed whenever black and white material is shown, or certain color patterns are displayed, resulting in a subtle red or blue outline to one side of the image.

This misconvergence exists only in an inch or two of the tube and isn't obvious all the time. If you pay attention to the program being shown, you'll never notice it. But the trained eye has a tendency to roll around the screen to scan for even the slightest flaw, and it can be found if you look hard enough. Unfortunately, our technicians haven't been able to eliminate this problem without affecting other areas of the screen, so I've decided to live with it.

The 1750 is incredibly sharp—so much so, in fact, that it may be *too* sharp for some. Certain slow-speed videotapes played back directly into the video inputs look just dreadful, but material played back from a first or second generation $\frac{3}{4}$ " recording is just remarkable. Watching even such mundane programs as the nightly news can be quite an experience because you're exposed to at least five different levels of quality: live studio cameras, film done in the field, ENG tape done in the field, live ENG microwave feeds, and various commercial sources. Videotape banding, noise, and film scratches are painfully evident. It would seem that the better the TV, the more problems you'll see in the rest of your system. The same principle has applied to perfectionist audio for years, as many of you already know.

Unlike many new consumer sets, the CVM series offers true 100% DC restoration, resulting in pure, unadulterated black when no picture is displayed on the screen. Note that no consumer Sony set since the 42 series (of two years ago) has had this feature, with a typical subtle gray field instead of honest-to-God video *black*. I also dislike high chroma (color) levels, a view with which MFW and AV have often disagreed. I prefer a more pastel "European" approach, with very muted colors—much like listening to a hi-fi with the tone controls set in the "flat" position. [Count me on your side, Joe.—Ed.] I think it's also less fatiguing to the eyes to view a set that isn't out of the overly vivid "Admiral/Sylvania/Montgomery-Ward" school. The Auto preset color level was also a little too hot for me, so it wasn't used.

After living with the set for a few weeks, I felt that the Picture control didn't have enough range and that the 1750 was just a little too bright for my tastes (concurred in by MFW); unfortunately, turning down the Brightness control affected the image detail slightly as well. We had the range of the Picture control changed by adding a resistor, which lowered the contrast somewhat but provided an optimum brightness setting with few compromises.

Conclusion: Giving up the remote control features of the Sony consumer sets is very hard to do, even with a set that provides a picture as perfect as the CVM-1750. Its dependability is world-renowned because thousands of them are relied on daily by professional, industrial, and educational users. In fact, they're seen on TV news shows and even ABC's *Fridays*, which has a bank of them behind Melanie Chartoff's "Friday Edition" set.

The 1750 isn't particularly attractive in physical appearance, and it may disappoint you if you don't run the highest possible quality tapes through it. Similar 17" Sony consumer receivers can be purchased for almost half the cost of this monitor, but the picture quality (which is improved perhaps 10% when the direct video inputs are used) remains untouched by any of them. It offers reliability, simplicity, and some basic no-nonsense features that combine to produce the best overall monitor/receiver for a hard-core home user on a reasonable budget. It may also spoil you, making it difficult to enjoy evenings with friends watching *their* TV's, causing you to squirm uncomfortably in your seat while trying to watch the garish mess that most people

consider to be "a pretty good picture." But until the Profile series becomes available here in America, there's just no other choice.—JM

MFW Comments: I agree with Joe just about 99% of the way on the CVM-1750, except to note that, with my (ahem) years of experience in broadcast video engineering, I should know proper chroma levels when I see them. I have a sneaking suspicion that the internal color intensity controls behind his corneas need some tweaking by the manufacturer.

And to our readers: you will note that we've devoted more time and space to this review than many of the ones in past issues. Because of our new perfectionist-oriented policy, I think it's worth getting into more detail on certain state-of-the-art video products, particularly those that are downplayed or ignored by other publications. Future issues will, no doubt, see an expansion of this concept; your comments are welcomed on this new direction, as well as any other facts of our **Product Reports**.

SONY VO-2610/2611 U-MATIC VIDEOCASSETTE RECORDER



Manufacturer: Sony Corporation, 7-35 Kitashinagawa 6-chome, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo 141, Japan (Distributed by Sony Video Products Company, 9 West 57th Street, New York, NY 10019)

Source: Dealer loan (Audio/Video Craft, 7710 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90046)

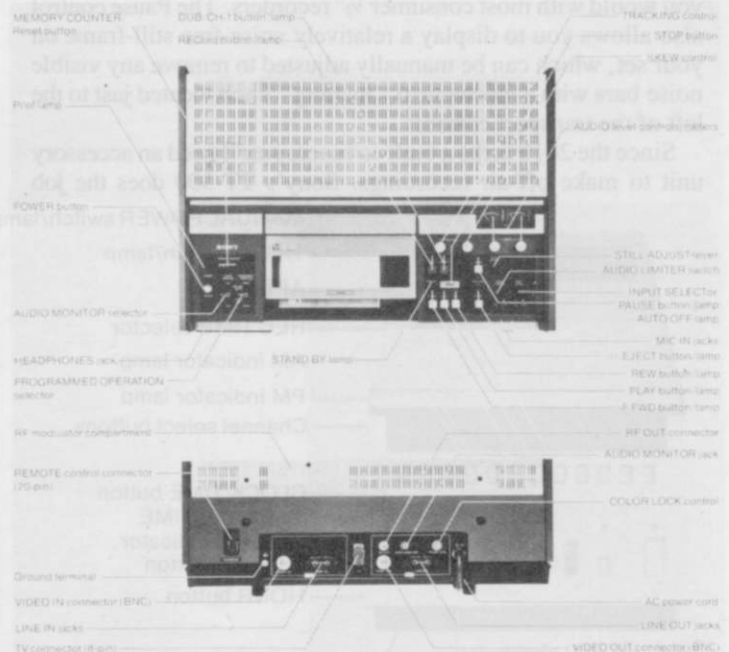
Serial No.: R-378829

Cost: \$2,195.00 (includes FA-20 timer recording adaptor, dust cover, and sample KCA-10 videocassette; does not include optional \$137.00 RM-420 remote control, \$395.00 TT-300 Tuner/Timer, or \$100.00 RFK-534 RF Modulator)

As discussed elsewhere in this issue's *Recommended Components* section, there's little doubt that the U-Matic format offers audio and video performance exceeding practically all standard Beta and VHS recorders, though at a significantly higher price. Since it was first introduced by Sony in the early 70's, this

original videocassette system has been highly successful in many educational and industrial applications, and towards the end of the decade, has become a standard for ENG broadcasting as well. Many of the original "videophiles," who were recording off-air programs and trading tapes between themselves long before the 1/2" cassette was born, continue to use the format to this very day (like KL and JM). The most basic, high-performance 3/4" machine available today is Sony's VO-2610, which is the subject of this **Product Report**.

Appearance: Like most U-Matic recorders, the 2610 is a relative gargantuan compared to the small, lightweight Beta and VHS machines with which most of us are familiar. This bulky 23 1/2"x9"x16 1/2" VTR weighs more than a back-breaking 66 pounds—at least twice as heavy as any comparable 1/2" recorder—and has a transport control configuration somewhat different from most solenoid decks, with its right side containing several light-touch buttons for Record/Ch. 1 Audio Dub/Fast-Forward/Play and Rewind, and a larger button for Stop located midway in the group. Other pushbuttons close by are for Pause (with a small black mechanical lever to adjust the still-frame in playback) and Eject. Two knobs are also provided for turning on an Audio Limiter circuit (which prevents excessive peaks from distorting in both channels) and selecting the record source input between TV (the rear 8-pin jack) and Line (rear



panel BNC/phono jack inputs). Two illuminated stereo VU meters can be used for setting record levels, adjusted by two corresponding level knobs located directly in front of them. Immediately next to these knobs are controls for Tracking and Skew adjustment.

The left side of the 2610 has a mechanical locking pushbutton for Power on/off, a lever switch for monitoring from Channel 1, 2, or both ("mix"), and a Programmed Operation selector that allows rewinding to, or repeating from, 000 on the counter. The front side of the deck has a 2-channel phone jack for connecting a set of stereo headphones and also two mini phone jacks for external microphones. Using the latter two jacks automatically disconnects the rear audio inputs.

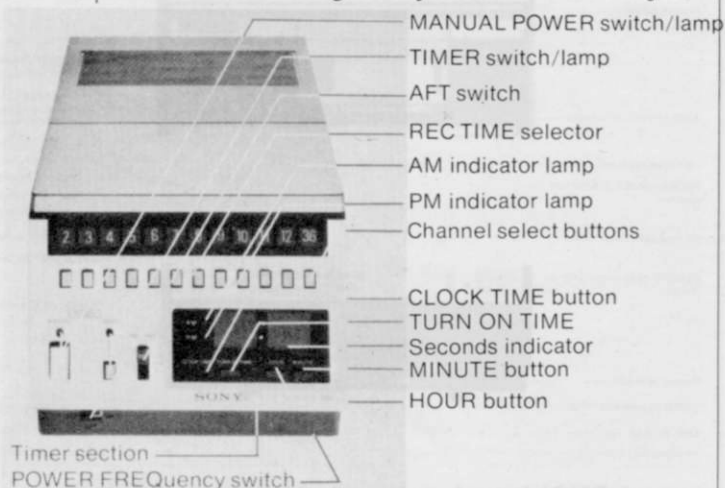
The back side of the VTR has a compartment in which the optional RFK-534 channel 3/4 RF modulator is contained, as

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well as a ground terminal, BNC jacks for video in and out, two phono jacks for audio Line In (channels 1 and 2), two phono jacks for audio Line Out, a mini-phone jack for Audio Monitor out (controlled by the front panel channel 1/2/Mix selector), and a standard 75 ohm F jack for RF out. Also provided is a small knob for adjusting Color Lock, for use with unstable or poorly-recorded programs. This control should absolutely, *definitely* be moved to the front panel, and not relegated to such an impossible-to-reach spot as the back of the deck.

Features: The VO-2610 is Sony's basic $\frac{3}{4}$ " recorder, free of any frills or fancy extra capabilities. Unlike the firm's 2800 and 2860A recorders, the 2610 has no editing functions per se, though you can make semi-adequate pause "crash"-edits just as you would with most consumer $\frac{1}{2}$ " recorders. The Pause control also allows you to display a relatively noise-free still-frame on your set, which can be manually adjusted to remove any visible noise bars with a mechanical "inching" knob located just to the left of the transport controls.

Since the 2610 lacks a built-in tuner, you'll need an accessory unit to make off-air recordings. Sony's TT-300 does the job



very well, as will the firm's earlier TT-100 click-stop model, which can be purchased used from several sources for under \$200. The $7\frac{1}{8}$ "x $5\frac{3}{4}$ "x $15\frac{1}{2}$ " tuner connects to the back of the recorder by means of their 8-pin combination audio/video input/output jacks, requiring only one cable between the two devices. The TT-300 also allows you to set the 2610 to turn itself on and record a program up to 24 hours in advance, much like the first-generation Betamax decks that came out 3 or 4 years ago. Considering that the maximum recording length possible with the standard U-Matic format is only 90 minutes (using a super-thin KC-90 DuPont videocassette), this should suffice for most purposes. The TT-300 also allows you to record one show while you view another, by means of a TV/VTR RF switch located underneath its channel presetting compartment on the top panel.

This switch should definitely be moved to the *front* of the TT-300, since it gets to be very irritating having to open up the panel every time you need to change the RF output.

Sony provides a small plastic cap called the FA-20 Timer Recording Adaptor, which is nothing more than a box-like gimmick designed to clip over the 2610's transport controls, depressing the Record and Play buttons for unattended timer recordings. This would seem to be a last-minute afterthought by the manufacturer, since it would have been a simple matter to design a switch on the VTR to provide the same capability, without resorting to such a Rube Goldbergian technique.

In addition to the VO-2610, Sony also offers the VO-2611 for about \$100 more. The latter deck is virtually identical except for a small internal modification—a new control track monitor head which remains against the tape at all times, to aid in using the deck with editing systems and random-access controllers that require a continuous control track output for timing purposes. Note that because of the U-loading design of the $\frac{3}{4}$ " format, the tape is threaded against the audio and video heads only during record and playback, and is withdrawn back into the cassette when in the stop, fast-forward or rewind modes, very much like the action of most VHS decks. Several years ago, Sony modified the original U-loading system and came up with the "Type II" transport, which keeps the tape partially threaded up at all times to avoid unnecessary delays in switching between modes. All of their 2000 series decks use this type of transport, but even with the modification there remains an annoying 4-5 second wait between winding and playback. The 2610 likewise takes a long time to wind a standard KCA-60 60 minute cassette—4 minutes for rewind and 6 minutes to fast-forward, which is more than twice as much as most $\frac{1}{2}$ " decks.

Performance: If you've convinced yourself over the years that you've built up a collection of $\frac{1}{2}$ " videotapes that look "pretty good," then you may be in for a shock the first time you use a U-Matic machine. You'll probably be struck by the immensely improved image detail and subtle color textures appearing on your screen, which are particularly noticeable with visually-complex material like animation. The signal-to-noise ratio of $\frac{3}{4}$ " is roughly equivalent to a good non-Dolby audio cassette recorder, with an often striking frequency response (particularly in the highs) and a dynamic range far exceeding the capabilities of any Beta and VHS recorders, or most broadcast TV programs for that matter.

The manufacturer's specifications on the 2610 include:

Horizontal resolution: 240 lines (color); more than 320 lines (black and white)

Video S/N Ratio: 43 dB (color); 45 dB (black and white)

Audio Frequency Response: 50-15,000 Hz (no reference given)

Audio S/N Ratio: 48 dB (3% distortion @ 1 kHz)

There's no question that these specifications are extremely conservative, particularly when you consider that just about all Beta and VHS manufacturers quote roughly the same specs, even for slow-speed recorders. I'd estimate the resolution to look effectively 10% better than 240 lines, and the video S/N ratio to better any $\frac{1}{2}$ " machine's so-called "45 dB" specification by a similar margin.

Even though the $\frac{3}{4}$ " format is almost always superior to any $\frac{1}{2}$ " cassette recorder, it is occasionally plagued with certain inherent difficulties (such as skew and dihedral tracking error) that are less noticeable, if not almost nonexistent, in both Beta and VHS recorders. This is because of the much bigger diameter

of the U-Matic's video head, which results in a much greater chance of incompatible tolerances, leading to increased flagging (bending at the top of the screen) and tracking problems. There is more of a problem with older (pre-'76) machines than with the 2000 series, but it's still one of the biggest bugaboos to contend with. In addition, certain poorly-recorded tapes may play back in black and white on other U-Matic machines, requiring an adjustment of the Color Lock control (which is, as we said before, inappropriately located on the back of the VO-2610) to restore full color playback. If you've ever received a dub of a U-Matic tape, particularly those from so-called "pirate" sources, you're probably already aware of the problems that can crop up in $\frac{3}{4}$ " recordings.

But just as a thing of beauty is a joy forever, so, too, is a good $\frac{3}{4}$ " recording, which is, for all practical purposes, almost undistinguishable from good off-air broadcasts even when viewed by a trained eye, except for the tell-tale unstable line at the very bottom of the screen (called "head-switching," which appears in all helical recordings) and a few occasional dropouts, which are generally not half as bad as those found in $\frac{1}{2}$ " recordings. There isn't any question in our minds that the U-Matic format is just about the best available to the hard-core video enthusiast, provided you can afford the recorder (around \$2,000) and tapes to play on it (not much less than \$20/hour).

All things considered, the VO-2610 is probably the best choice available as a good, no-frills $\frac{3}{4}$ " home recorder. Except for the minor points mentioned before, the only quibble I have is the need for a headphone volume control, which has never been provided in any of the Sony $\frac{1}{2}$ " products I know of.

Combined with the TT-300, the 2610 (or 2611) is perfect for delaying off-air programs for later transfer to $\frac{1}{2}$ ", or for high-quality mastering/production use from other sources. Even if you're sure you won't be able to afford one in the near future, you owe it to yourself to evaluate the U-Matic format, and the VO-2610 in particular, just to see how truly good a videocassette recording can be. —MFW

BETA VIDEO IC-28 DISTRIVID RF SYSTEM



Manufacturer: Beta Video, Woodland Hills, CA
(Distributed by Kappa Video, 9612-F Lurline Street, Chatsworth, CA 91311)
Source: Manufacturer loan and dealer purchase
Cost: \$199.00

It's rare that I come across a product that instantly becomes such an important part of my video system that I start to forget a

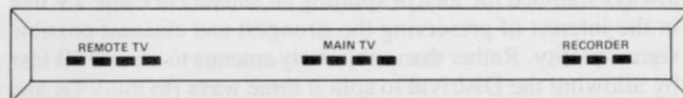
time in which the product wasn't around to free us from some irritating technical misery. If you've been messing around with RF cables, splitters and A/B switches for as long as we have, you're probably exhausted with trying to track down interference problems, working around static-filled switches and having to cope with a rat's nest of tangles and cluttered cables in back of your VTR/Monitor system. Now, with the Distrivid, most, if not all, of these problems have been solved, much to the relief of this reviewer and, most likely, video owners everywhere.

Appearance: The Distrivid is an attractively styled device encased in a 19"x15"x2 $\frac{1}{4}$ " simulated walnut cabinet, with 11 black plastic spring-actuated pushbuttons on its front side. Eight 75 ohm F jacks at the rear of the cabinet are used to select almost any combination of up to 3 VTR's and 1 TV set, or 2 VTR's, 1 TV set and a pay TV decoder, or several other VTR/Pay TV/TV set/TV Game/Home Computer conglomerations.

The Distrivid is cleverly designed to fit right underneath about 90% of most consumer VTR's. The only thing that might not fit on it very well would be a videodisc player or a $\frac{3}{4}$ " deck, but those would most likely be kept elsewhere anyway. By placing your Beta or VHS deck on top of the Distrivid, you're able to keep "cable chaos" to a minimum, using short cables attached between the various F jacks to control co-channel and other spurious RF interference.

Features/Operation: As Kappa Video president Brian Herdeg stated in a recent ad, to match all the capabilities of his firm's patching systems you'd have to invest in something like *three* 2-way RF splitters and *six* A/B RF switches, at a cost considerably higher than \$200. Just hooking up such a system for two TV's, 1 VTR, and a videodisc player would be highly unwieldy and cumbersome, to say the least. Distrivid takes all the confusion out of RF patching by keeping all the splitters and switches inside its wooden cabinet, requiring only 8 cables connected to your equipment for complete multiple-source switching control.

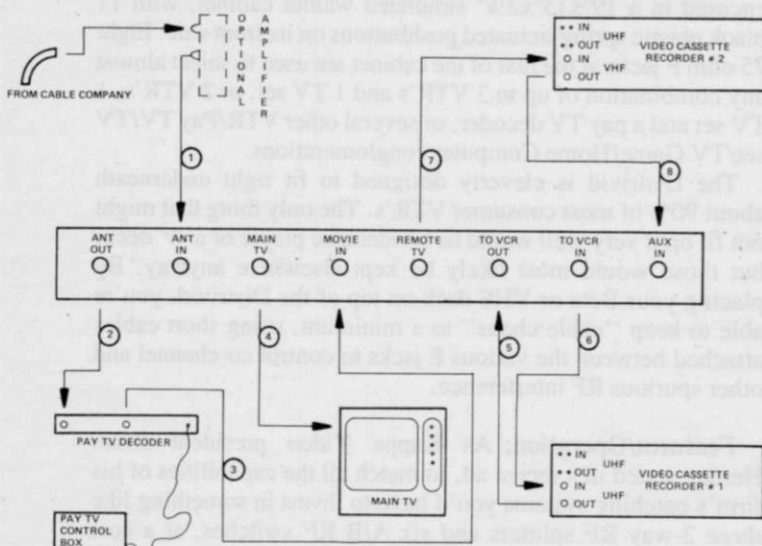
The profusely-illustrated 20-page instruction manual that comes with the Distrivid goes all out in detailing 4 different sample systems to illustrate how the device can best be applied, including instructions on which switches should be selected for a particular combination. The three switch groups on the front panel include 4 sources for "Remote TV" (labeled "Antenna," "Movie," "Tape," and "Aux"), 4 identical sources for "Main TV," and 3 sources for "Recorder" ("Ant," "Movie," and "Aux"); by selecting the appropriate button, you can



record one source while watching Pay TV, or dub a tape while watching off-air broadcasts, or watch two different shows on two TV sets, while recording a third show on your VTR, or record two different shows on two VTR's while watching a third show on your TV set, and probably more combinations that I can't even think of.

The system I think most consumers will find use for is detailed as "System Four" in the manual, using two VTR's, a Pay TV decoder (for off-air subscription TV or cable use), and a TV set, as shown in this diagram. By adding perhaps one or two

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more A/B switches, you could add an additional VTR source with just a little more confusion in wiring.

All in all, with just a little practice, I feel certain that even the layman will have no problem figuring out the Distrivid and its setup after going through the manual once or twice. Even if you don't know what a 75 ohm F cable looks like, or what a 2-way splitter does, the manual's explanation of these and other "Common Video Terms" should be enough to provide a quick overall view of their use in the often-confusing world of home video, without bogging down the reader with longwinded technical explanations or needless facts and figures (unlike, ahem, the tendency of certain technical editors).

Performance: It's here that we deviate slightly from the designated purpose of the Distrivid as put forth by its manufacturer. Call us "lunatic-fringe purists" if you like, but we've always shunned the idea of splitting an antenna or cable TV line in the interest of preserving the strongest and cleanest possible signal quality. Rather than subject my antenna to a 6 or 7 dB loss by allowing the Distrivid to split it three ways (to the VTR and two TV sets), I've opted for attaching the line *directly to the VTR input*. This doesn't allow quite as flexible a setup as those detailed in the manual, but it suffices for most purposes very nicely.

In addition, I disagree strongly with the manufacturer on the idea of dubbing between VTR's via RF outputs and inputs because of the increased noise and the possibility of RF interference during recording. Rather than doing that, we suggest always dubbing with standard 75 ohm video cables (available from many dealers) and separate high impedance audio cables for all transfer work, and keeping all the cables as short as possible to minimize signal loss. As mentioned before, the RF

cables used with the Distrivid (or any other device) should definitely be kept as short as possible, to avoid similar losses and leakage.

I've been very pleased, however, with using the Distrivid to switch the *outputs* of up to four RF video sources (3 VTR's and 1 disc player, or 4 VTR's, or 2 VTR's, a disc player and a home computer, etc.) to two or three TV sets, depending on the configuration used. This doesn't degrade the recorded signal in the slightest, though it does result in a very slightly grainier image on your set because of the splitters inside the unit—about a 4 dB loss, according to the manufacturer—but, again, this is almost undetectable for most consumers and definitely something even I can live with. To be realistic about it, most people will probably not object to the subtle signal loss created by switching the antenna source directly; I have, myself, occasionally left it connected for viewing purposes only, but later plugged it directly into the VTR for recording, to be on the safe side.

The only other small objection I have is that no 75 ohm cables are included with the Distrivid and therefore such cables must be purchased separately or made up by the user. The latter isn't so bad, considering that a 100' roll of RG-59U (the standard 75 ohm cable) costs no more than \$10, and several dozen F connectors cost only a few dollars more. (Unintentional Clint Eastwood/Sergio Leone joke.) The instruction manual doesn't explain how to make up your own cables, which is probably a good idea for a future *Videophile* article—but your local dealer should be able to demonstrate this for you in less than 5 minutes, with the proper tools.

Conclusion: I can offer no higher recommendation for the Distrivid than to say I've already obtained two of them, one for my own system and one for a local TV reader, and of the dozen or so I know to be in use in the area, none have failed or otherwise had any problems over the past 4 or 5 months, and that's more than you can say for most video products.

Although I'm reluctant to recommend it for switching antenna signals or for dubbing between VTR's, as an RF output switcher it's an absolute godsend for the videophile with a medium-to-large system (between two and four video sources). And considering the other switching systems available—practically none—it comes as close to being an "indispensable" accessory as anything I can think of.—MFW

[Editor's Note: Do-it-yourselfers will want to make note of the direct audio/video patching system discussed elsewhere in this issue, for use with advanced dubbing setups.]

KLOSS NOVABEAM MODEL ONE

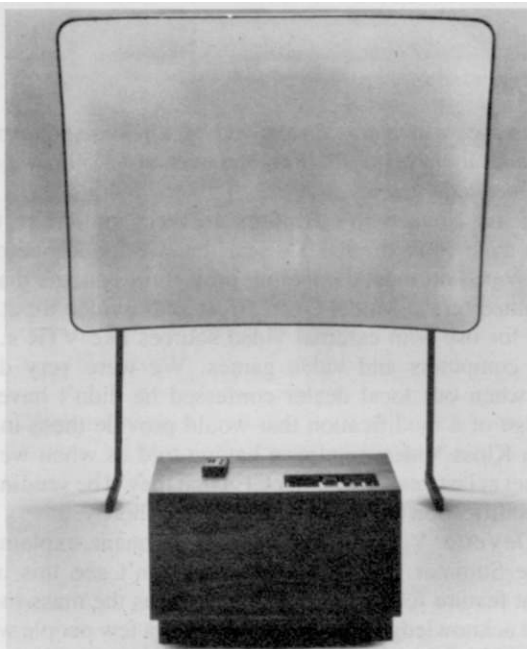
Manufacturer: Kloss Video Corporation, 145 Sidney Street, Cambridge, MA 02139

Serial No.: IINB2126 (Dated April 11, 1980)

Source: TV reader purchase (The Federated Group, 716 N. LaBrea Avenue, Hollywood, CA 90038)

Cost: \$2495.00 (includes projector and screen, alignment cord, remote control and console dustcover)

Long-time TV readers will recall our first impressions of Henry Kloss' most recent projection TV development that was unveiled at last year's Summer CES, discussed in #21. At that time, after evaluating the prototype Model One in Kloss' suite at the Pick-Congress Inn, I wrote that "... we would definitely advise any and all prospective large-screen purchasers to see the



Novabeam before handing over any of your hard-earned dough for another projector," and that it was "... clearly one of the biggest bargains in home video today." Without a doubt, those remarks are as true and accurate today, in Mid-June 1980, as they were a year ago, as you'll see in this in-depth **Product Report**.

Appearance: The Kloss Novabeam Model One is a beautifully-designed projector built in a 27½"x22"x18½" simulated walnut cabinet, combined with a 4'x5½' screen supplied on two sturdy legs that serve as a stand. The top of the console contains the majority of the controls used for image focus and convergence, as well as a switch for placing a 6"x6" cross-hatch test pattern on the screen for alignment purposes, a 10-button random-access tuner and red LED channel display.



knobs for adjusting Color (chroma level), Tint (chroma phase), Brightness, Contrast, and Detail (picture peaking), and switches for Power on/off, AFT on/off, tuner Memory, and a Fine-Tune control. Also provided are two pushbuttons for Volume up/down and a top-mounted ultrasonic sensor for the remote control. A smoked-plastic dustcover can be dropped into place over the console's controls to keep them away from tampering fingers, and a convenient thumb-hole allows removing it quickly and easily when adjustments are needed.

The front of the console contains three 7" f0.7 Novatron projection tubes, which are built in a straight-line Blue/Green/Red configuration similar to Advent's Model 760/761 (discussed elsewhere in this report). Below the center green tube is what the manufacturer calls a "wide-range loudspeaker with equalized power supply," which directs its sound upwards and

bounces it off the reflective screen back toward the viewer for a realistic "movie theater" effect. The lower right corner of the front section contains 4 terminal posts for attaching 300 ohm or



75 ohm VHF antenna leads (switchable by moving a jumper cable) and a 300 ohm UHF antenna, a phono jack for audio out (for connecting the Novabeam to an external amplifier and larger speakers), and a Master power on/off switch for turning off all its internal electronic components (when you go on vacation, for example). The bottom right side of the console has a small switch used to reset the built-in circuit breaker, in case of power surges or other electrical problems.

The remote control provided with the Novabeam duplicates all the console's volume, power and channel function controls as well as providing channel up/down selection and audio Mute button, which automatically cuts the sound level by about 95% (for use when the phone rings, for example).

The 6½' screen has a plastic-coated aluminum foil surface and is easily washable in the event of inevitable fingerprints and smudges, unlike those from several other manufacturers that previously used delicate Kodak Ektalite screens, which are easily soiled and damaged and can be cleaned only with great difficulty. Like most two-piece projection systems, the Novabeam's screen can be attached (without its legs) directly to the wall, for custom installations.

Features/Installation: The Novabeam is shipped in two very large heavy-duty cartons, which our local dealer recommended we hold on to in the event of any defects or service problems. The dealer didn't have any helpful suggestions on just where these cartons might be kept in a tiny, cramped apartment, but c'est la vie. The instruction manual, which is perhaps a little too concise at only 10 pages, advises installing the projector in a convenient location in your living room, recommending the corner area for maximum and most comfortable viewer coverage for most rooms, away from direct sunlight or bright lights.

To set up the projector and screen, a 20-foot alignment cord is provided, using hooks to help secure it in a triangular shape between the center of the console and the two left and right sides of the screen. This establishes an exact distance of 96" (8 feet) from the center of the center tube to the center of the screen. The manufacturer stresses that this distance is an absolute must for proper performance of the Novabeam.

Next, the console's antenna and power connections can be made. When turned on, the projector's image should fill the screen, off by an inch or so equally on each side and the top and bottom. Three adjustable feet on the front of the console can be

extended or retracted to level the image left and right or up and down, as needed. For left/right centering, the console can be pivoted slightly though the manual advises to be careful not to disturb the projector's centering. Once set, its position can be marked with masking tape so that it can be easily re-set if it's inadvertently moved.

The Focus and Convergence controls on top of the unit allow you to electronically adjust the sharpness of each tube's image as well as to align the three images together. To use these controls, you begin by tuning in a station and pushing the Test button. A 6" square cross-hatch test pattern will appear in the center of the screen, which will disappear about ten seconds after the button is released. Three screw controls are used to set the focus for each tube, which should be a one time adjustment according to our local dealer. Next, the Horizontal and Vertical controls are adjusted so that the red and blue lines overlap the green image until they appear as a single set of white cross-hatch lines. Note that, just as with most projection TV's, the green tube's position is left undisturbed to provide a reference for the other two tubes' adjustments.

For the initial installation, a switch inside the Novabeam's cabinet can provide a full-screen 6½" cross-hatch pattern, which a serviceman can use to "fine-tune" the convergence and focus adjustments. The smaller user-selectable 6" test pattern should be all you'll need for occasional touch-ups, which the manual notes may be required over a period of time. We noted that as received from the manufacturer, the Novabeam's image spills off at least an inch or so on each side of the screen, just as most home sets "overscan" all broadcast programs. This is apparently done to help minimize extreme corner-to-corner convergence problems, moving them off the screen slightly. We admire Kloss Video's honesty in admitting in their instruction manual that "... some misconvergence at the extreme edges of the picture is normal," and we noted that it was definitely not worse than just about every other projection TV we've seen.

After the Novabeam's focus and convergence is set, the color, tint and brightness controls are used just as you would with a normal TV set. The manual advises setting the contrast up about halfway for most rooms, but notes that a higher setting may be needed for daytime viewing or brightly-lit rooms. The manual also advises setting the Detail knob up all the way for most program sources, though this seemed to look a little "over-enhanced" to my eyes, particularly when viewing videotapes, so this was kept at about mid-range for most of our tests.

Channel presetting is accomplished by dialing up a station with the AFT off and using the Fine Tune switch to bring in an interference-free image. This setting can then be locked into the tuner's memory by momentarily depressing the Memory switch with a ballpoint pen or a small screwdriver, repeating the procedure until all the desired stations are programmed. Unlike most sets, provisions have been made to use the Novabeam's tuner with mid-band cable TV channels.

From start to finish, the installation should take less than an hour for most homes, and even though it can be done by anyone who takes the time to read the manual carefully and has the patience of using the alignment cord and convergence controls to obtain the sharpest image possible, we strongly recommend relying on an experienced projection TV installer to do the job if at all possible. We noted that the exclusive Los Angeles Novabeam dealer, The Federated Group, is charging \$100 over Kloss' suggested retail price (they claim this was due to a recent

price increase, which was disavowed by a Kloss spokesman), but this does include installation, and even at \$2,595, we think it's well worth the money.

All of the Novabeam's features are very similar to those found in most conventional TV sets, but we found one major point provided on most competing projection systems that has been omitted on the Model One: direct audio/video input connections for use with external video sources like VTR's, disc players, computers and video games. We were very disappointed when our local dealer confessed he didn't have any knowledge of a modification that would provide these inputs, despite a Kloss Video employee having told us when we first saw the set at last year's Summer CES that they'd be sending out such a modification bulletin to their dealers shortly.

Tom DeVesto, V.P. of Kloss' sales department, explained to us at the Summer '80 CES that they didn't see this as an important feature for the Model One as far as the mass-market goes, but acknowledged that there might be a few people who'd be interested in direct inputs. He pointed out that while such a modification wouldn't be overly difficult for an experienced technician, it would probably be a lot of trouble for most dealers to handle modifications in addition to their normal retailing and servicing. However, DeVesto later informed us that their Kloss dealers who ask about the modification will be sent the necessary schematics and instructions.

He went on to say that they have a Model One set up in their factory with direct inputs and that most people who've seen it were unable to tell the difference between an RF-modulated video signal and a direct one. While we don't doubt that, we still feel certain that anyone with a sharp eye (including many of the readers of this magazine and any video professional) will see the difference no matter how subtle it is. Keep in mind that practically no broadcast video monitor is equipped with a tuner, to avoid the extra noise created by unnecessarily modulating and demodulating the picture. We'd estimate that the picture quality is improved by as much as 10% when using a direct connection, depending on the monitor. Direct connections also do away with the chance of co-channel or RF interference, which can appear in any standard VTR RF playback.

Considering that every competing projection system in the \$2,500-\$4,000 price range offers these inputs, as do all broadcast monitors in the same category, all of us with *The Videophile's* technical staff feel that this is a significant omission with which we protest very violently. (Well, maybe not very violently, but we're pissed off about it in any case.) We agree that there might be several good reasons to make the unit as simple as possible, if only from a cost-effectiveness/marketing standpoint, but we're pleased that Kloss' dealers can be notified of the procedure involved to facilitate providing the modification at a slight additional cost (say, \$100 or so).

Performance: Aside from the aforementioned annoying problem, I have to confess that I was very, very pleased with the Novabeam's overall picture quality, which was at least as bright and sharp as any projection system I've ever seen, even when compared to the venerable Advent Model 1000A, which sold for \$1,500 more than the Novabeam five years ago.

The brightness of the Model One was nothing short of phenomenal--perhaps not quite as bright as a comparable 25" TV set, but still more than adequate for most living rooms with average lighting. Like all projection sets, the Novabeam does work somewhat better in subdued lighting--not necessarily

"pitch blackness," but with the room lights directed away from the screen and kept at a low-to-medium level. The image clarity and sharpness were blessed with very good detail, due no doubt to the comb filter circuitry used in the color receiver chassis (provided to Kloss by an OEM supplier).

Perhaps the most interesting comparison one can make with the Novabeam Model One is to place it alongside Advent's Model 761, which is an almost identically-configured two-piece design in a similar lowboy console with three inline tubes. We noted that Advent's f1.0 lenses on their tubes (somewhat improved over their earlier 760's f1.3 lenses) apparently contribute to their reduced light output in comparison to the Novabeam--at least a 25% difference because of the latter's f 0.7 lenses; this is in spite of the fact that the Novabam's screen size is *almost 10% bigger than the Advent's* (6' vs. 6½'). What the Advent does offer that the Novabeam does not is a slightly better-built cabinet, somewhat improved styling, and direct audio/video inputs--all for about \$3-400 more, discounted from a \$3,500 list price as part of a "close-out" special. (In fact, a Federated salesman subtly pressured me to purchase the 761 over the Model One if I really wanted the inputs so badly, but I politely declined.) Although we think the Advent 761 is a fine, well designed system, it seems obvious that you're a lot better off to save your money and go for the Novabeam, despite the minor sacrifices mentioned above.

The only other projection system that really gives the Novabeam some competition (in the opinion of KL and several others), is MGA's VE/VS-707U, which sells for \$1,500 more than the Model One and offers marginally superior color quality and deluxe styling, not unlike the Advent 761 except for the 707's triangular 3-tube configuration. But even still, the Novabeam's larger screen, brighter picture and sharper image are not bettered by the MGA and, again, for the money, nothing under \$4,000 can really touch it.

The manufacturer's specifications on the Novabeam Model One include:

Picture Brightness: more than 80 foot-lamberts; significant lumens output is 175 lumens, more than 5 times the brightness of most movie screens

Power Requirements: 125 Watts (at 120VAC, 60Hz)

We can't argue with these specs in the least, and although the manufacturer doesn't provide a horizontal resolution rating for the Novabeam we'd estimate it to be not much worse than most good quality consumer sets--perhaps 330 lines. We noted that unlike some projection sets, particularly the typical under \$2,000 TV set/lens refractive consoles, the scanning lines are practically unnoticeable on the Novabeam, although they can be seen if you look for them. They definitely aren't present to an annoying degree, and the overall brightness and good definition is, as we said, outstanding all the way down the line. And just to stifle an often circulated rumor about projection TV in general, they really don't put out any radiation significantly higher than that emitted by most standard TV sets, unless you stand directly in front of the projector, allowing the tubes to fry your retinas for ten hours a day, every day for several years straight (which is definitely not recommended).

What didn't I like about the Novabeam? Well, for one, the sample unit evaluated had two minor defects--a small dimple on the left side of the screen, and a slight aberration on the green tube, which caused a tiny line to appear roughly in the center of the screen. The installer promised to replace the tube immediately (although this hasn't been done as of several weeks

later), and the local TV reader who allowed us to evaluate his set decided that the screen's dimple wasn't worth worrying about. Upon hearing of these problems, DeVesto stressed several times that his firm is willing to bend over backwards to make sure that their customers receive the best-quality, absolutely defect-free unit that Kloss Video can build, and encouraged the owner to alert his dealer to taking care of these problems as soon as possible. All the Novabeam's components are covered under a standard 90-day parts/1 year labor warranty, with the Novatron tubes guaranteed for 2 years. If your screen is ever damaged, a replacement can be purchased from the dealer for \$350.

The owner also complained about some difficulty in using the ultrasonic remote control with the console's plastic cover in place, although the instruction manual does point out that "... there should be a clear path for (the remote's) signals from your viewing location to the console." This was solved by--you guessed it--removing the plastic cover whenever the remote was used. He also noticed that the control was capable of occasionally "misfiring" whenever the channel numbers are depressed too quickly. This problem is covered in an additional sheet of instructions on the Novabeam, which advises depressing the second number only *after* the Led display blanks out, which signifies normal operation. The display should reappear after the second digit is received. The additional instructions also advise that you can bounce the remote's ultrasonic signal off your ceiling if you can't otherwise get a clear shot at the console's sensor.

Other than these extremely minor drawbacks, the owner we talked to was very pleased with his Novabeam and praised Kloss' attention to small details, like the fact that they provide their phone number to call in case of difficulty, as well as including a free battery with the remote control and even a stamp on the warranty card (all of which we agreed were nice touches). He was also relieved to find that copyguarded tapes play back with little or no difficulty on the Novabeam, a far cry from the extremely poor performance often obtained with watching such tapes on the earlier Advent 1000A.

Conclusion: All things considered, the Novabeam One is probably *the* state-of-the-art projection TV available as of this writing. If you've been holding off on buying a large-screen projector until now, you owe it to yourself to inspect a Novabeam at your local dealer's... that is, if they haven't already sold out of them. (DeVesto admitted that the sets are in short supply, with the factory geared up to producing only about 400 a month at present. Two thousand Novabeams have been sold to date.)

Keep in mind that the quality of the projected image is often limited by the quality of the program material itself, which is often marginal in the case of 1/2" videotapes, particularly with slow-speed recordings. It's for this reason that we've always suggested using only the fastest possible speeds, relying on the slower modes for delayed viewing only. In addition, keep in mind that every technical flaw--antenna ghosts, dropouts, minor glitches--is magnified 9 times as much as it would be on a standard 25" set. But we cannot exaggerate the dramatic impact of a good quality program viewed on a large screen as good as the Novabeam. It truly has to be seen to be believed.

—MFW



Product Postscripts:

Blank Tape Survey Update:

Just as we predicted, last issue's article on videotape brands proved to be quite controversial, more so with dealers and manufacturers than with our readers, who continue to confirm most of the choices tallied in our comparison chart. We did finally get a chance to inspect Maxell's Beta tape (L-500's only), which proved to be of fairly good quality, approximately equal to Sony and Fuji (#2 on the list). BASF's tape came in a little further



down the line, with a number of dropouts and a couple of mechanical problems leading us to downgrade their rating (approximately equal to Scotch, about #4). We were more impressed with Memorex's packaging—plastic Amaray-supplied boxes with a custom "Memorex" embossed logo. Ampex's similarly-packaged VHS tape recently came into a local electronics store, and our initial tests show it to be no better than its

Beta equivalent, placing it near the bottom of the VHS tapes we surveyed (just below #8, Scotch). We've had no luck in obtaining BASF's VHS tape at this time, but should have at least a preliminary report next issue.

We also received some early samples of Maxell's "HG" (High Grade) VHS formulation, which did indeed show a small improvement in performance in the SLP/6-hour mode, and had somewhat fewer dropouts at the other two speeds. Except for the drawback of its price (\$2-\$3 above the cost of regular videocassettes), the HG series seems to be an honest, though small, improvement over earlier types and worthy of consideration by the videophile. Several readers wrote to sing high praises of the HG's better audio output, and we, too, have noticed a subtle improvement in the audio signal-to-noise ratio, particularly at the slowest speeds. We hope that all manufacturers will soon update their Beta lines with HG formulations (for use with the X-3 mode).

We'd like to mention that a spokesman from the 3M Company has objected to our reviews in #25, citing great improvements in their most recent oxides, which have indeed proved to be of better quality than some of their products from as few as 6 months ago. Still, considering that there's no easy way to tell at a glance the "new" formulations from the old, except for peeking at the batch number printed underneath the cassette flap, we're reluctant to change our feelings on the subject. (Note that all of their new formulations have the characteristic black oxide coating, as opposed to the very poor quality brown formulation used in their much-maligned '77-'78 batches.) We pointed out to the rep that at least two large duplicators (U.S. Video and Magnetic Video) have almost completely ceased using Scotch tape, at least for their 1/2" cassette work, though neither apparently has any problems with their type 379 1" and type 400 2" broadcast videotapes.

On the positive side, Scotch is now in the process of bringing out a new series of "MB" (Master Broadcast) 1/2" cassettes, apparently to add to the success of their "MBU" 3/4" cassettes designed for heavy-duty editing use at TV stations. We've evaluated some early production samples of the 1/2" MB tape and

have found it to be excellent throughout, with few dropouts and a good signal-to-noise ratio. The only drawback, aside from its high price, is that, due to its thicker polyester backing, the maximum lengths that will be available are L-370's for the Beta format and T-90's for VHS. No firm pricing or availability has been announced for these tapes yet, but for limited production and editing use, they would seem to be the best that money can buy.

And speaking of Scotch, we erred last time in reporting that Sony was alone in supplying the largest selection of different lengths for duplicators. We've been informed that 3M's professional division currently offers Beta tapes in L-125, L-250, L-370, L-430, L-500, L-530 and L-625 lengths (with an additional L-750 length available from their consumer division), and VHS tapes in T-5 (five minute), T-10, T-15, T-20, T-30, T-45, T-60, T-90, T-105, T-120 and T-127 lengths, with a T-150 due to be released shortly. We understand that the L-530's and L-625's apparently contain the same thin tape used in the L-750, the T-127 simply adds a few more minutes to the standard T-120, and the T-150 is a new formulation that may or may not be equivalent to the L-750-type tape, depending on who you talk to. We certainly look forward to getting a sample of the latter 2 1/2 hour VHS tape soon, as well as a prototype of DuPont's T-180, which we understand is getting close to the test-marketing stage.

We had just a few complaints from readers (several of whom thought we didn't place certain brands *down* far enough on the list). B.E.W. of Albuquerque, New Mexico, disagreed with our assessment of DuPont's plastic Beta boxes, and in fact believes that "... their actual packaging is better than anything else on the market and I am amazed and dismayed that the other tape manufacturer's haven't followed DuPont's lead in packing their tapes in dust-proof cases." As explained in #21, Amaray Sales Corp. (2251 Grant Road, Suite H, Los Altos, CA 94022) has been offering deluxe Beta and VHS hinged storage cases for some time, similar to those used with U-Matic tapes for almost 10 years. Several other manufacturers, like Mid-America Plastics (c/o Blackburn, Inc., 10150 Crosstown Circle, Eden Prairie, MN 55344) and Reliance Plastics and Packaging (108-18 Queens Blvd., Forest Hills, NY 11375) offer similar cases at comparable prices. DuPont's inexpensive, flimsy hard plastic case is (at least in MFW's opinion) poorly designed, difficult to handle, and isn't nearly as attractive as any of the others mentioned. We'd advise going with one of the other brands before settling on the DuPont boxes, if only because of their greater availability and improved construction.

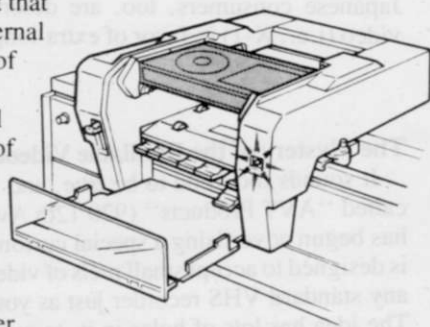
A number of other readers brought to our attention an erroneous statement in which we mentioned that RCA's VK-250 tapes were "... generally not less than 2 hours and 10 minutes (in the SP mode)." Chalk that one up to the usual gremlins at the typewriter. What we meant to say was that RCA's 250's are "... occasionally as long as 2 hours and 10 minutes, and usually at least 2 hours and 5 minutes." A thousand lashes with Taiwanese tape for your humble technical editor.

Lastly, we've received word that TDK has either been having some manufacturing difficulties or delivery problems (depending on who you talk to) with their Beta videocassettes. While we haven't noticed any bad batches yet, we have seen the new TDK Beta shell design which is, without a doubt, the best yet for this format, resembling a two-window VHS cassette, yet providing

the same labeling area as a standard Beta tape. Congratulations to TDK for being the first to improve upon the original Beta design. We'll keep you posted on the rumors of TDK's expected formulation changes, which may be upgrading standard Beta tapes to the new HG oxide, as well as the story behind these manufacturing/delivery allegations, in future issues.

Further thoughts on the AG-200:

After more tests with the new Sony Beta electronic cassette changer, we've found that the unit (at least the one given to us by the manufacturer) has failed almost as often as their earlier mechanical AG-120 changer, much to our disappointment. JM experienced a great deal of frustration with his AG-200, and in particular felt that its instruction manual was "skimpy and confusing." He also felt that having to plug in an external AC adaptor to the back of the unit was a bother, though MFW didn't feel that it was all that much of a hassle.



JM's other criticisms include the fact that it takes almost 20 seconds to change a cassette (8 seconds longer than the AG-120), and isn't as attractive as the older changer (to which MFW disagrees). Perhaps our biggest surprise is the fact that it can't be used with *labeled* cassettes—a formidable problem when using the AG-200 for continuous playback of a multiple-cassette program. We noted that this seems to be a problem only with the spine label, not the top one.

All things considered, while we believe that the AG-200 is an improvement over the AG-120, it's still not completely reliable, with about a 5-10% failure rate (as opposed to the 20-30% failure rate for the earlier model). Yet, we have to admit that the AG-200 is honestly one of the most amazing little technological marvels we've seen in the past few years, and a very noble effort from "Mother Sony" (as JM fondly refers to them). We're going to hope that the AG-300 will be even better and will provide us with the totally reliable *programmable* 4-tape changer we've been awaiting, for use with the 5000-series Beta decks.

Before any of you start to lambast us regarding the need for a changer in the first place, we'd like to point out that given the mass market's insatiable appetite for "long, longer, *longest*" recording times, surely a multiple changer is a better solution than the current crop of 5- and 6-hour models now being offered by most manufacturers. As a matter of fact, we're rapidly getting to the point where the only products we can recommend are either expensive industrial decks or VTR's imported from Japan, neither of which is easily obtainable. Considering the limited quality of the latest Beta and VHS consumer recorders in this country, I don't think we have any other choice. (As an aside, we'd like to officially thank the kind-hearted souls at Sony who recently decided to allow all of those people who ordered the earlier AG-120 changer to keep it without charge. Who says big corporations don't have a heart?)

Further thoughts on the SL-J7:

We were recently told by a local dealer (UDS, 505 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Manhattan Beach, CA 90266) that the J7's tuner is operable in America, but only on channels 5-69, the low-band VHF channels (2-4) are not tuneable on the deck, however. They're still working on ways of modifying the unit for use with all American broadcast TV frequencies. Another

source has told us of Sony's extreme reluctance to make available the necessary parts for such modifications (including the IF Modulator and Tuner boards), refusing to sell them in large quantities, and asking a lot of questions as to how the parts are going to be used in the first place. We can only heave a sad sigh as we realize that none of this would be necessary if Sony would only release a U.S. version of the J7 (or better yet, the programmable/wireless-remote C7), once and for all . . . but . . . noooooo . . .

Further thoughts on RCA's VDP-150:

We neglected to mention in our review of RCA's 2/4-hour portapak that it's not quite as immune to gyroscopic error as Sony's SL-3000, which doesn't act up as much when the VTR is violently moved or turned during recording. As long as you don't plan on using it while you jog down the street at full throttle, the 150 should suffice for most applications. Also, like most portapaks, the RCA takes an inordinately long amount of time to rewind—just a bit more than 4 minutes, as opposed to 2½ minutes for most AC-operated decks.

We were recently informed that the VDP-150 has just been replaced (as of press time) with a new 2/4/6-hour version, the VEP-150, which no doubt replaces the VDP's 29-micron heads with the 19-micron heads required for 6-hour recording, which will—you guessed it—most likely lower the unit's SP and LP recording quality by at least 20%-30%. Although we'll no doubt be reviewing the VEP-150 in an upcoming issue (something we're not really looking forward to), our advice for the moment is to forget about it and buy the 2/4 hour version—or better still, look over Panasonic's new NV-8410, which is an almost identical 2-hour portapak, which should provide the best quality yet. The latter deck, coupled with Panasonic's PV-A35E (not the PV-A32E 7-day/4-event timer, as we erroneously reported in #23) will provide complete 14-day/8-event programmability as well as high-quality recording and still-frame/slow/fast-motion playback.

And at press time, we were notified by Fred Chriss of Muntz Electronics (7700 Densmore Avenue, Van Nuys, CA 91406) that his firm is closing out the VDP-150/VDT-1000 combination for right around \$850.00—a price low enough to cause our mouths to drop open in astonishment, and anger local RCA dealers, too. [Too bad they'll all be sold by the time our readers hear about it.—Ed.]

Further thoughts on the VDT-625:

It's come to our attention that a number of readers who have purchased RCA's 625 have encountered innumerable difficulties with the deck, specifically with a factory defect in its speed-sensing circuitry, which is causing problems with LP/4-hour tape playback. We've had other reports that the SP/2-hour quality isn't quite as good as the review in #25 implies. All we know is, the two samples we checked out performed admirably and provided picture quality almost indistinguishable from JVC's HR-6700, our previous "reference" consumer VHS recorder. Indeed, by virtue of the wide-gap heads used in the 625 and 6700, the SP mode should provide performance almost as good as Panasonic's industrial VTR's, though the latter's improved signal-processing circuitry may tip the scales in its favor.

RCA has informed us that the 625 will be replaced this Fall by the VEP-650, which sheds a half-dozen pounds off the former unit, replaces the mechanical transport with an all-electronic/solenoid version, and adds a high-speed "picture search" capability similar to that found in MGA's HS-3000 (which will be

reviewed in our next issue). It's hoped that the 650 will retain the 625's 4-head configuration for uncompromised 2-hour/6-hour quality, but as of press time we haven't gotten an answer out of RCA's PR department.

Further Thoughts on the CVA Video Stabilizer:

Manufacturer Randy Burnworth recently sent us the newest version of his "Video Stabilizer," replacing the one reviewed in #21. The new one contains a red LED that lights up whenever proper vertical sync stabilization has occurred, which will result in a non-rolling picture from copyguarded tapes viewed on your TV set. The sample he sent us had a minor defect in that the video level coming out of it was misadjusted just a tad too high, sometimes resulting in a faint "buzzing" caused by the over-deviated video peaks straying into the audio subcarrier, but this should be something easily corrected and hopefully a problem only with our sample unit.

We were disappointed and surprised to note that the new Stabilizer lists at \$197.00, more than a 50% price increase over the previous model. Burnworth tells us that its improved circuitry, LED indicator, and cosmetic changes made the price-hike mandatory. We're hoping that perhaps a future "no frills" model could be introduced at a lower cost, for the budget-conscious videophile.

Further Thoughts on the SL-5400:

In #22 we gave a fairly good review to the first of Sony's X-3 recorders, though as of 6 months later occasional complaints still trickle in regarding the 5400's reliability. We've learned from an informed source that Sony had some considerable manufacturing defects with the 5400 (including several hundred units being shipped out from the plant without any lubrication on their loading/unloading transport sections), with a variety of problems cited including: speed-sensing malfunctions; slow loading and unloading of cassettes (up to and including jamming); tuner IC-circuit defects, resulting in drifting reception; and degenerating picture quality, particularly in tracking control. Several Sony spokesmen have reluctantly admitted to some

of these defects, but hasten to add that all of them should be covered under normal warranty service and that they're taking steps to insure that all new units are corrected before they're shipped to America. Apparently, they've at least caught all (if any) defective 5600's, since we're unaware of any unusually common problems in those VTR's to date. MFW has been using a 5600 for at least 4 months without a single failure, so we're going to hope that most of these problems are over with.

Also, to update an off-hand remark MFW mistakenly wrote in #25, X-3 units are indeed now available in Japan and are enjoying some popularity there. The new SL-J1 is said to be identical to our 5400 (except with a Japanese tuner section), and the SL-J3 is likewise identical to either our 5600 or 5800 (depending on who you talk to). We hope that this doesn't mean that Japanese consumers, too, are deserting the pursuit of quality video (i.e., X-1) in favor of extra-long, slow-speed recording.

The Mystery of the Refillable Videocassette:

It sounds too good to be true, and it probably is. A company called "AVT Products" (920 12th Avenue, Seaside, OR 97138) has begun advertising a special custom *hinged* VHS cassette that is designed to accept small reels of videotape which can be used in any standard VHS recorder just as you would a normal cassette. The idea has lots of holes in it, to our way of thinking: first off, because of the problem of closing and opening the cassette, dirt and dust are bound to enter the plastic casing and work its way into the oxide and, ultimately, your video heads themselves. Secondly, storing and loading the small reels will no doubt prove to be relatively difficult when compared to using standard sealed cassettes. Finally, considering that the manufacturer is charging \$12.55 (plus 5% postage and handling), this doesn't seem to be all that much of a "bargain." By doing a little shopping, name-brand cassettes (assembled) can be had for as little as \$13.50 from the pages of this very magazine. In all fairness, we must admit that we haven't yet received a sample of this product from AVT Products, but will continue to investigate it in a future issue.



'COULD BE THE HEADS NEED CLEANING'

The Videophile's Recommended Components

As mentioned in last issue's rather pompous "Statement of Policy," we're taking several radical and revolutionary steps in *The Videophile*, certainly the first for any video magazine we know of, by offering our technical staff's in-depth subjective evaluations of new consumer and industrial video equipment. This issue, we're inaugurating a new feature common to most of the "underground" audio magazines--a listing of our choice of those video components (VTR's, monitors, cameras and accessories) that we feel provide the best possible audio and video quality for the demanding videophile, without regard to price.

Well...almost without regard to price. As a general rule of thumb, we've established an arbitrary limit of \$5,000 on any item listed in this section. After much discussion, we decided that any product costing more than this generally falls more into the "high-end industrial/professional" category, and therefore would be of little practical use to the consumer videophile. While this may sound high to you, it may seem low to some of our more professionally inclined readers. Establishing this limit still allows us to list a few high-end consumer/low-end industrial products that we hope will be of the greatest interest to our readers.

Level One products represent our choice for the "state of the art" in video recording and playback technology for the demanding industrial/consumer user, with all products listed in order of relative quality, from the best on down to the not-so-best. We've decided to omit mention of any super-tech broadcast-quality equipment, which we realize are so far away from the realities of the consumer videophile that listing them here would merely prove frustrating to our readers, there being little likelihood of their purchasing such equipment. If we were to list the candidates for the absolute-without-peer among all current *broadcast* video products, we'd probably have to choose Ampex's \$200,000 AVR-3 2" Quadraplex videotape recorder, along with Bosch Fernseh's \$100,000 BCN-50C 1" Type B recorder, Sony's BVH-1100 and Ampex's VPR-2B 1" Type C recorders, and RCA's automated TK-47 studio camera, which, at \$150,000, is about as

far from a bargain as any camera we know of. As it is, we know full well that going so far as to list high-priced 3/4" and industrial 1/2" units is bad enough, possibly resulting in loud outcries from some of our readers. But, we feel that such a listing is important today and will prove to be of even greater importance in the future for the quality conscious videophile. If you've accepted our policy for the *Product Reports* in our past issues, we sincerely hope you'll read this new section with keen interest and will keep all that we've said in mind.

As this issue goes to press, there are a number of products we have not yet had time to review in-depth, and several items (like Sony's SLO-383) on which we've presently made only tentative evaluations based on manufacturer's prototypes. We've elected to include them in advance of their actual reviews, which will be appearing in future issues, and have included notes whenever possible to alert you of their conditional appearance. In addition, there are a number of VTR's indicated (like Sony's SL-7200) that are no longer available, but can still be purchased used from a variety of dealers. The latter units, when kept in good condition, should provide at least as many years of excellent service as new machines provided reasonable care is taken.

Level Two products are those that, for one reason or another, fall just shy of a Level One designation--in general, those consumer video products that have proven to be worthy of interest to our reviewing staff on the basis of image quality and features. Likewise, **Level Three** includes the remaining items that we feel to be worthy of consideration yet lack the overall qualities that would place them on either of the two higher levels. For the videophile on a budget, the Level Three and **Best Bet** listings will be your most reasonable choices. In particular, the Best Bet section will hopefully be welcomed by those looking for low-cost quality equipment though with some sacrifices made for keeping them at an affordable price. We expect to expand this section in our next issue, depending on the number of low-end VTR's introduced at the summer CES.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS LISTING

LEVEL ONE

VTR's

Panasonic NV-9240 U-Matic Videocassette Recorder	
JVC CR6600U U-Matic Videocassette Recorder	
Sony VO-2800 U-Matic Videocassette Editor	
Panasonic NV-9200A U-Matic Videocassette Recorder	
Sony VO-2610/2611 U-Matic Videocassette Recorders	
Sony VO-4800 Portable U-Matic Videocassette Deck	
Sony SLO-383 Beta Videocassette Editor	
Sony SLO-323 Beta Videocassette Recorder	
Panasonic NV-8200 VHS Videocassette Recorder	
Panasonic NV-8310 VHS Videocassette Recorder	

Notes

based on preliminary evaluation
tentative
lacks flying erase heads
replaces NV-9200
reviewed this issue
replaces VO-3800
based on preliminary evaluation of prototype
reviewed this issue
reviewed this issue
discussed in #17 & #19

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS LISTING

LEVEL ONE (Continued)

Cameras

Sony DXC-1640 Color Tricon Camera	reviewed in #21
JVC GC-4400 Color Camera	reviewed in #21; withdrawn by manufacturer

Monitors

Sony CVM-1750 17" Color Receiver/Monitor	reviewed this issue
Sony KX-27HF1 "Profile" Color Receiver/Monitor	tentative; not available in U.S. (see explanation)
Barco 26" Color Receiver/Monitor	

Accessories

Trompeter JS-series Audio/Video Patch Bays	
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LEVEL TWO

VTR's

Sony SLO-320 Beta Videocassette Recorder	vertical sync instability (see SLO-323 review)
Panasonic PV-1650/RCA VDT-625 VHS Videocassette Recorder	reviewed in #25
JVC HR-6700 VHS Videocassette Recorder	reviewed in #22; lacks LP mode
Sony SL-7200/SLO-260 Beta Videocassette Recorder	no longer available
Sony SL-J7H Beta Videocassette Recorder	reviewed in #25; not available in U.S.
Panasonic PV-8300 VHS Videocassette Recorder	excessive AGC problems; discussed in #19
Sony SLO-340 Portable Beta Videocassette Recorder	reviewed in #20
Panasonic NV-8400 Portable VHS Videocassette Recorder	reviewed in #20; replaced by NV-8410

Monitors

Sony KV-2645R 26" Color Television Receiver	based on preliminary evaluation
Sony KV-2643R 26" Color Television Receiver	reviewed in #23
MGA CS-1993 19" Color Television Receiver	no longer available

Projection TV

Kloss Novabeam One	reviewed this issue
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Accessories

Sony TT-300 Tuner/Timer	discussed this issue
Maxell HG VHS Videocassette Tape	based on preliminary evaluation of prototype
Winegard "ChromStar" series VHF/UHF antennas	
Sony HVS-2000 Special Effects Generator	
CVA Model 170 Video Stabilizer & Distribution Amplifier	reviewed in #22

LEVEL THREE

VTR's

Sony SL-8200 Beta Videocassette Recorder	no longer available
Sony SL-5600 Beta Videocassette Recorder	updated by SL-5800
Sony SL-5400 Beta Videocassette Recorder	reviewed in #22
Panasonic PV-1500/RCA VCT-400X VHS Videocassette Recorders	reviewed in #20; no longer available
Panasonic PV-1100/RCA VCT-201 VHS Videocassette Recorder	discussed in #14
RCA VDP-150/Hitachi VT-7000 Portable VHS Videocassette Recorders	reviewed in #25 just replaced by VEP-150 & VT-7500
Sony SL-3000 Portable Beta Videocassette Recorder	reviewed in #20

Cameras

Sony HVC-2000/HVC-80 Color Cameras	based on preliminary evaluation
RCA CC-004/Panasonic PK-600 Color Cameras	just replaced by CC-006 and PK-700

Monitors

Sony KV-1943R 19" Color Television Receiver	reviewed this issue
Sony KV-1722 17" Color Television Receiver	no longer available

Projection TV

Advent Model 761 6' Projection TV	discussed this issue
Advent Model 710 6' Projection TV	discussed this issue
Advent Model 1000 7' Projection TV	discussed in #11

MCA Optical Videodisc

Pioneer VP-1000H Videodisc Player	based on preliminary evaluation (see #23)
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Accessories

TDK Beta and VHS Videocassette Tape	reviewed in #25
Sony Beta Videocassette Tape	reviewed in #25
Fuji Beta and VHS Videocassette Tape	reviewed in #25
Beta Video "Distrivid" RF Switching System	reviewed this issue
Amaray B-1 and H-1 Videocassette Cases	
Fuji and Scotch Head-Cleaning Cassettes	reviewed in #25

BEST BETS

VTR's

Sony VO-1800 U-Matic Videocassette Recorder	no longer available
Panasonic PV-2200 Portable VHS Videocassette Recorder	reviewed in #20; replaced by PV-2600 & PV-3000

Cameras

Panasonic PK-400/RCA CC-002 Color Cameras	reviewed in #21; replaced by CC-004/006 and PK-600/700 cameras
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EXPLANATION:

As mentioned in our review of Sony's VO-2610/2611 3/4" recorders, the U-Matic format provides the best possible audio and video quality by virtue of the fact that the tape is wider and travels at a faster speed (3-3/4") than all 1/2" cassette formats. Consequently, U-Matic units are at the top of our Level One listings. For the diehard quality conscious videophile, 3/4" is the no-holds-barred ultimate video recording format—though at a significantly high cost.

Panasonic's NV-9240 is the best recorder under \$5,000 we've found, although we have not yet had a chance to evaluate JVC's excellent CR-8200 Editor (which just slightly exceeds our \$5,000 limit, but what the heck?) Both the 9240 and JVC's new CR-6600 (which we have not tested in-depth) are noticeably better than Sony's VO-2800, which is the lowest cost 3/4" editor we know of—though it lacks flying erase heads for totally glitch free editing. KL has sworn by his NV-9200 for some time now, and we agree that the new 9200A is even better. Both provide slightly better quality than Sony's VO-2610, which we review in this issue. The best portable under \$5,000 we know of is Sony's VO-4800 U-matic deck, which seems even more feature laden than Sony's BVU-110 broadcast portable (which exceeds our \$5,000 limit).

For 1/2" cassette decks, the cream of the crop is Sony's SLO-383, the first true editing deck for the format released thus far. The only complaint we have about it is that it didn't come out a year ago. Sony's 323 is an excellent stereo X-1 unit (as reviewed elsewhere), and rates only slightly higher than Panasonic's NV-8200 and 8310 VHS decks (also discussed elsewhere this issue). The 8310 is probably the best VHS compromise for most videophiles, since it includes a built-in tuner and sells for considerably less than the 8200.

Our inclusion of most of the cameras on our chart is woefully out-of-date, with an incredible proliferation of new color models just now being released from half-a-dozen manufacturers, particularly Sony and Hitachi. As fast as we can review them, the makers obsolete them and come out with new ones. JVC has still not announced the replacement for the GC-4400, but we hope to have news on it in an upcoming issue. We're struggling to get to all of these new cameras just as quickly as we can, so bear with us.

Our search for the "ultimate" monitor has been continually beset with difficulties. As JM reports elsewhere (in his review of the CVM-1750), even new Sony Trinitron receivers aren't without their share of factory defects and misadjustments, so it's only by default that the 1750 monitor wins the prize this go-around. Their recently released KX-27HF1 "Profile" consumer receiver/monitor has received raves from several of our Japanese correspondents, and we're impressed enough to include it here (tentatively) and plan on having one shipped over from Tokyo just as fast as we can.

In the Level Two category, Sony's SLO-320 leads the bunch, having provided dependable performance and quality over all the others listed for almost 2 years, except for an extremely irritating sensitivity to vertical sync problems. This has been done away with in the updated SLO-323. Panasonic, JVC and RCA's 4-headed VHS decks are marginally superior, overall, to Sony's venerable SL-7200/SLO-260 Beta decks, although the SL-J7

remains the best consumer Beta unit currently available. Note that Panasonic's 1650, RCA's 625 and JVC's 6700 are all due to be replaced shortly by new lighter-weight solenoid versions featuring high-speed picture search (including RCA's VEP-650). It's hoped that these will continue the 4-head design of the earlier models, to avoid image quality compromises.

Panasonic's PV-8300 provides slightly lesser performance than the others, even though it has industrial quality 58-micron heads, because of its trigger happy audio and video Automatic Gain Control circuits, which often create an obvious audio noise "breathing" and image "greying out," at least as bad as their original PV-1000 2/4-hour consumer deck.

Sony's SLO-340 portapak is in desperate need of replacement by the manufacturer, if only to compete with the new wave of lightweight portapaks from Panasonic and JVC. Still, it provides just about the best 1/2" portable quality we've seen so far, rivaled only by Panasonic's NV-8400 (just replaced by the super lightweight 8410, which looks very much like Panasonic's and RCA's consumer portables, and may actually surpass the 340 in overall quality).

From all of our preliminary evaluations (at dealer shows and at the CES), Sony's new KV-2645R takes care of the earlier 2643's "yellow bar" problems as well as providing slightly superior picture quality, and adds an additional speaker as a bonus. Our initial inspection indicates that it may be the best consumer set Sony has made in a long time. MGA's CS-1993 is not quite as large, but KL asserts that it beats out practically any Sony set currently available (to which MFW disagrees, because of a slightly lessened stability in videotape playback). Note that any and all sets reviewed or discussed in TV are carefully evaluated on how well they work with VTR signals. Capturing off-air pictures is one thing, but tape and disc playback is another. This should explain our disagreements with several other video oriented publications, which often publish unequivocal raves on certain top-of-the-line Magnavox and RCA sets, even though both often look like garbage when used with most consumer cassette decks.

Henry Kloss' Novabeam One is the only projection set under \$7,000 that we can honestly recommend for serious consideration by the videophile. MFW, KL and JM are in total agreement that it wipes out just about all the other three tube models under \$4,000, through MFW's tentative evaluation of Advent's Model 1100 industrial 7' projector (which replaced their earlier Model 1000 consumer model) indicates that the latter may be just a hair sharper and brighter, for not quite 3 times the price of the Novabeam.

Most standard consumer video recorders are found in our Level Three section, with Sony's venerable SL-8200 leading the bunch as the highest quality, most dependable U.S. deck the firm has released so far (in the opinion of JM and many others). [We should also mention the identical Zenith JR-9000W.—Ed.] Note that its quality rating is by virtue of its X-1/X-2 capability, which is not found in the SL-5600. The 5600's X-2 quality is slightly superior to the 8200, however, and marginally better than most 2-speed VHS decks (like the PV-1500 and VCT-400X listed here). The 5600 has recently been updated by the 5800, which is

said to use "duel-gap azimuth recording heads" to provide better still-framing and slow-motion playback, though we haven't yet learned whether it uses 4 video heads for non-compromised X-2/X-3 recording. The SL-5400 is roughly identical to the 5600 (except for the differences noted last issue) and is just a hair better than most 2/4-hour VHS decks, like the PV-1500 and VCT-400X programmables and PV-1100 and VCT-201 recorders listed here. Note that all of these VHS recorders have been replaced, for the most part, with lower-quality 2/4/6-hour decks using 19-micron video heads. RCA's VDP-150 (identical to Hitachi's VT-7000) is the best consumer 1/2" portable we know of, although it, too, has just been replaced with a lower quality 2/4/6-hour model with the same narrow-gap heads. Why the manufacturer's mania for "long, longer, longest" recording capacity has to extend to portables as well is totally beyond us, considering that no mobile recorder/camera combination we know of will run for more than 2 hours anyway (without external battery packs). Apparently, this is being done in view of the popularity of the 6-hour AC models, allowing the consumer to use his portable at home to put three (or four) movies on a single VHS cassette--a very dubious achievement, to say the least.

Rounding out the Level Three portable VTR's is Sony's SL-3000, which, like the SLO-340, is in desperate need of replacement by the manufacturer, though no new version is expected to be shown at the summer CES. Sony's new HVC-2000 (known as the HVC-80 in Japan) updates the old 1000, adding a much needed 6-1 electric zoom and improving the picture quality slightly, according to our preliminary tests. It's lamentable that they didn't also retain the stereo microphone capability of the Japanese version, which at least one company (UDS, 505 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Manhattan Beach CA 90266) is importing into this country. RCA's 004 and Panasonic's PK-600 are also excellent, low priced color cameras with surprisingly good picture quality, though both have just been replaced by the CC-006/PK-700 (which will be reviewed in an upcoming issue).

Sony's KV-1943R is one of the best all around receivers the company is currently marketing, though it's about due to be replaced by a new model. The 1722 has been MFW's favorite for the past 4 years, but will most likely be replaced with a Profile console shortly (with any luck).

Advent's 761 and 710 projectors (both discussed elsewhere) are the next best bets after the Novabeam, even though both cost considerably more than the latter unit. The obsolete Model 1000 is also adequate, but it loses some brightness by virtue of its larger 7' screen size. While Panasonic's CT-6000 and Sony's KP-5000 are about the best bets in projection consoles, we share Mr. Kloss' opinion that the two-piece systems are preferable because of the compromises inherent in any console design, even though they take up more space and are a little more trouble to keep focused and maintained.

Our opinion of MCA's optical video disc system is already on record (pun not intended; see issue #23), as well as our low regard for the problematic Magnavox Model 8000 player. Pioneer's VP-1000H is the only disc player we'd honestly recommend, though we do so with the caveat that, first, our evaluation of it is at best very tentative, and also that the system is marred by enough disc manufacturing problems to make finding anything worth playing somewhat difficult. It's hoped that the Pioneer player won't have all the bugs found in the Magnavision. It's known that the latter firm is planning to introduce an updated

version of the 8000 with improved styling and features (and, dare we hope, lower cost and better reliability) by the end of the year.

For Best Bets, Sony's VO-1800 is the lowest cost (under \$1000, used) 3/4" recorder worth buying, and will provide picture quality better than almost any 1/2" cassette VTR (though it's roughly equivalent to the SLO-323 and 383). Panasonic's PV-2200 and similar models from Magnavox, Sylvania and Quasar are now being closed out for less than \$7000 by some dealers, which is an excellent price for any portable. Likewise, Panasonic's PK-400 (identical to RCA's 002) is being "blown out" for as little as \$500 from some sources. We can't argue with choosing it over the PK-600 or CC-004, on the basis of price alone.

We've lumped a whole gamut of Accessories at various levels throughout this listing, probably far more than we really needed to. The professional quality and construction of the Trompeter Patch Bays make them worthy of Level One consideration. We've added Sony's TT-300 at Level Two not so much because it's an especially good tuner (it's at least adequate, and no worse than the tuners found in almost any other VTR), but because it's needed by almost all of the industrial decks found in the top two classifications. Other Level Two accessories include Maxell's HG videocassettes, which are marginally better than everybody else's standard grade tapes. It's expected that TDK's HG tapes will most likely be in the same category, though we haven't yet received any samples for confirmation. Winegard's "Chrom-Star" products are JM and MFW's favorite TV antennas, and have been for years. Sony's HVS-2000 (which we hope to review next issue) is probably the greatest bargain ever offered to the videophile, providing complete "fade to black" and title-superseding capability to any camera or VTR for less than \$150. CVA's Model 170 Video Stabilizer is the most convenient anti-copying device we've found, albeit at an inflated price (just under \$200). Their Distribution Amp is likewise of good quality.

The other accessories listed at Level Three, including the TDK, Sony and Fuji video cassettes, the Distrivid (reviewed elsewhere), the Amaray cases and the Fuji and Scotch head cleaning cassettes are all consumer products worthy of use by any videophile.

Since this issue is going to press just as we're trudging down the long aisles of McCormick Place's Summer Consumer Electronics Show, it's expected that by next issue there will be a plethora of new models and replacements for many of the items noted on this listing. We hope that by the issue after that, things will have stabilized a little and will give our aching fingers and glazed-over eyeballs a rest, if only for a moment.

As always, your comments are welcomed, both on these Recommended Components and the Product Reports that appear in this and subsequent issues. Keep in mind that none of our reviews are intended to be taken as "the gospel truth." Like most humans, we're inclined to make mistakes or otherwise give wrong impressions from time to time, so we definitely recommend using your own eyes and ears as an adjunct to anything you read in this or other publications before making a purchase.

Suggestions, gold bricks, rantings and ravings, letters of comment and products for evaluation can be sent to:

The Videophile Products Reports

P. O. Box 480315

Los Angeles, CA 90048



Letters:

Dear Jim:

I have a few questions: First, why does Magnetic Video use 2 tapes, a 1 and a 2 hour tape instead of an L-750 tape? Second, where could I obtain a list of the public domain movies? Also what exactly is a public domain movie? One final question, when a TV series is syndicated, are all shows of the series usually released, or are some held back? -- Larry Bieza, St. Paul, MN

As to Mag Video, we have a couple of guesses. It may be that L-750s have not been available in great enough supply to offer them both to the public and make them available in large quantity to duplicators. Also, it may be that Magnetic Video is using earlier generation VCRs (eg. Sony SL-8200) to do the duplicating, and these machines are not optimized for recording on the thinner tape as are, for example, the later SL-8600 and the 5000 series.

We've covered public domain in our back issues (hint), but generally a film is "in the public domain" if it is no longer (or never has been) protected by copyright. Several attempts to do a catalog (there are 1000's of titles, many of which are obscure or no longer extant) have been made. (NOTE: all you advertisers who sell such a listing ought to run your ad in these very pages. We get this inquiry with some regularity.)

As to the syndicated series, if a series originally had both color and black & white episodes, the b&w ones are usually held back. No matter that these are the very ones that collectors may be most interested in, the firms that push the syndicated package for sale to local stations feel that today's modern viewer won't watch a show unless it is in "living color". Aside from this, there may be an occasional episode held back if for some reason it is no longer considered topical.

Editor:

If you ever decide to not accept advertising on X-rated movies, I might consider subscribing again, even though the rates are too high. -- K.A.P., Chattanooga, TN

We regret that our overriding desire to serve readers of all persuasions is sometimes offensive to some of you.

Dear Jim and assorted over the shoulder readers:

"Whispers", the disco that I work in, is showing less than enthusiastic response during the first 3 days of the week. SooooI had to accept any menial job that came along. The only thing that I could find, was the asst. manager position at ...ROLLER ALLEY... which brings me to the reason for mentioning it at all, the incorporation of VIDEO in rollerskating. ... We are working with a local video store to put a Sony big screen TV and a video camera in the rink, so the lucky skaters can watch themselves as they zip past. -- Bob Thompson, 96 Roosevelt Ave., Waterloo, Ontario, CANADA N2L 2N5

Thanks for the long, meaty letter, Bob. Your mini-ads didn't make the cut (next time for sure), and "Yes", there is one last copy of that certain tape in Beta. It should be on its way to you even before you read the good news here.

WENDELL OLIVER WASHNER
C/O: 70701 FIVE
NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CA 91606



THE VIDEOPHILE
2003 APALACHEE PKY.
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32301

Dear Jim:

Here is a guide which may be helpful to the people with Japanese tuner equipment. Don't completely ignore the tuner. It should work on some of the channels.

US Ch	Freq(MHz)	compatible	J Ch	Freq(MHz)
2	54-60	no	-	-
3	60-66	no	-	-
4	66-72	no	-	-
5	76-82	no	-	-
6	82-88	no	-	-
-	-	no	1	90-96
-	-	no	2	96-102
-	-	no	3	102-108
-	-	no	4	170-176
7	174-180	maybe	5	176-182
8	180-186	maybe	6	182-188
9	186-192	maybe	7	188-194
10	192-198	yes	8	192-198
11	198-204	yes	9	198-204
12	204-210	yes	10	204-210
13	210-216	yes	11	210-216
-	-	no	12	216-222
14-45	632-662	maybe	13-44	don't know
46-63	662-668	yes	45-62	662-668
64-84	770-896	no	-	-

As you can see, U.S. channels 10-13 are direct equivalents to Japanese 8-11. If fine tuning is provided, U.S. channels 7-9 should be able to be tuned on Japanese channel 5-7. UHF channels pretty well match, up through channel 62, which is the Japanese highest. After several years in Japan with a variety of U.S. and Japanese equipment, I found the problem to be not as bad as I originally thought. Also, only the tuner has to be changed, the IF frequencies are identical. As output you could use one of the stand-alone RF modulators available for video games which have video and audio inputs and U.S. channel 3/4 outputs. ...

Hint on the Sony SL-8200: The 5-pin DIN plug in the back, top, right has a video output from the tuner for a video monitor. As long as the power is on, this output is there no matter what function the VCR is in, or if the video IN jack is used. -- Lothar Merker, P.O. Box 595, Clearfield, Utah 84015

Ah, so!

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm trying to find the two enclosed movies on video tape. Would you know of anybody that might have them? -- John Burkhart, St. Louis MO

We're printing your letter primarily as an excuse to say that we do not provide a title search service, except through our mini-ad section. You enclosed clips of "I Perversi" with Carol Baker and "The Driver's Seat" with Elizabeth Taylor, two little known (or perhaps I should say "too" little known) foreign films. Let us know when you find the first one *sigh*. For those who have the bucks there are at least two large catalogs of films on tape available. One is "The Video Source Book" (reviewed in issue #24) which is available from The National Video Clearinghouse, Inc.,

P.O. Box 3, Syosset, NY 11791 (700 pages, 15000 listings: \$19.95); the other is "VideoTex", available from Norman R. Selinger & Associates, Inc., 5415 Butler Road, Bethesda, MD 20016 (208 pages, 3000 listings -all of which are feature films: \$10). The latter firm also has the tapes for sale, but as we have pointed out before, we don't think much of their policy with regard to the return of defective tapes. Oh, and neither of them lists these two movies, John.

Dear Jim,

I just purchased Vol. 1, No. 3 of "Video Review" magazine in order to get an idea of what your competition has to offer. Jim, it's crap compared to "The Videophile". I could not find one article that was objective. (Giving both the good and the bad.)

What irritated me more than anything was the article by your technical editor, Marc Wielage - "The Wide, Widening World of Video Accessories". Oh, it was informative, right down to the Golly, Aw Shucks, Wallace Berry, stereotype. What is the matter with Marc? Has he sold out for the wonderful world of Green? Or, is he so controlled that the "Video Review" will not allow him to publish anything, heaven forbid, which is critical of one of its advertisers? ... The ultimate was the by-line - Marc Wielage, a Los Angeles-based video engineer is a frequent contributor to Video Review. What's the matter ... is it that "Video Review" wouldn't allow him to mention your magazine? ...

Please inform The Big Nate it took five minutes to fix my XL-100 by replacing module MDH 001A with module MDH 001B. No need to call a service man to do the job. My chassis was model CTC 90. When you open the back of the set, the first thing you see are three modules. The one that you replace is the furthest to the right (it's even labeled MDH 001A). My grandmother, God rest her soul could have done the job. -- James L. Perlowski, 6509 Shawnee Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89107

No, Marcus has not "sold out", but he has found it necessary to eat now and then. Video Review (which we admit is imperfect, but feel is the better of the "slick" newsstand video mags) edits his material to a greater extent than I do. Then too the material he submits to them is intended for a less sophisticated audience. I was relatively pleased with the treatment they gave to my own article in VR #1 (relating to VCR taping and the copyright law), though they would not run the footnote to the credit line, I suggested, which would have given the address of The Videophile. That's big business. Thanks for the follow up on The Big Nate's remarks regarding the flagging problems of the RCA XL-100 model TV sets, as covered in issues #20 and #21.

Dear Editor:

In your April 1980 issue, I noticed a comment in Videophiles Newsletter, where you offered the warning "Anybody out there stuck with some obsolete quad equipment?" You may be interested in the following. I recently updated my "obsolete" quad equipment with the new TATE SQ unit from Audionics of Oregon. It appears that when MCA mastered their videodisc of "American Graffiti" from the 35mm Dolby-Stereo print, the surround track, which is matrix-encoded, was passed along also. Actually, there is no reason it shouldn't have been, indicating that all future stereo discs will have this information if it

is encoded on the original 35mm print. Let me assure you that when decoded, the results are breathtaking! "American Graffiti" never sounded this good in the theatre. It makes me glad that I took the plunge in 4-channel and stuck with it. I never dreamed MCA Discovision would be that good. -- Craig Hyland, 5625 15th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98105

Many thanks, Craig. More than anything, I appreciate readers who pass along their discoveries (no pun intended), so that all of us may benefit.

Dear Sir:

... I DO enjoy the magazine very much. BUT, one thing definitely irritates me very much. YOU ARE TOO DAMN MUCH SONY AND BETA ORIENTED!!!! I realize that YOU and evidently ALL your correspondents started out many years ago when the ONLY VCR was Sony, and that's all well and good, but NOW when VHS VCR's are outselling ALL Beta VCRs ... it would seem to me that your continued bias and prejudice toward VHS and FOR any and all Beta machines is extremely UNJUSTIFIED! Or is it that Sony actually subsidizes The Videophile?? (a thought I have long conjectured and every issue convinces me of that more and more!)????

Obviously I LIKE The Videophile or I would NOT be renewing. But IF you continue to run VHS down, and play Beta up (as EVERY issue does so far), then I will NOT renew next time. After all, there are so many VCR magazines for sale now (Videography, Video Review, Home Video, Videoplay - and others such as Panorama) that HONESTLY treat BOTH VHS and Beta similar, can you afford to continue to alienate your VHS readers? -- Bob Snow, P.O. Box 2145, San Bernardino, CA 92406

I can respond in several ways: (1) We have not been favorable to "any and all Beta machines". See the review in Issue #25 in which MFW said "...our opinion is that you'd have to be a fool to choose the Toshiba ...". (2) "ALL (our) correspondents" are not Beta people. The Big Nate comes to mind. (3) The fact that one product outsells another is not evidence of its desirability. Numerous examples come to mind. (4) We are not subsidized by Sony, but it sure would be nice. Maybe some of us could start drawing a salary, or at least be able to cover our expenses. (5) We can't afford to cater to any particular product or point of view merely to avoid alienating someone. If we did, we would be nothing more than the other magazines you mention. They provide a real service to a certain type of reader, but no one seriously would argue that they are competing with us. (6) We call them as we see them, not for the sake of self interest or ego massage, but simply because we figure that our readers want the straight story as nearly as possible.

I want to use this last little bit of space to observe that the term "videophile" is fast becoming a generic word. This is fine with us, since it helps mitigate any problem that we may have with continuing the use of the term as our title. However, we are concerned that you not be misled into thinking that we have endorsed, or are associated with something when we are not. We are not associated with the "Videophile Edition" products being offered by BIB, nor did we permit 3M to use the term "videophile newsletter" on its brochure.

The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

The following are unsolicited remarks with respect to the indicated dealers. To be fair, we cannot ordinarily list someone as a bad egg simply on the basis of a single complaint. This policy accounts for the fact, in part, that some of the remarks you may have sent in are not reproduced here. All comments with respect to particular dealers are excerpted from readers' correspondence that we have on file. With respect to Chapter 770, Florida Statutes, relating to civil actions for libel, publication of these excerpts is in the good faith belief that said readers' comments are a true account of their experiences. Also, since it is not practical to repeat everything each issue, new readers may want to pick up copies of TV #19-25 in which the first 7 installments of GB&U appear.

Dear Mr. Lowe,

...two concerns that I feel are worthy of praise -- Tape City in New York City, and Video Service Center in Sacramento, CA. There may be others just as good, but I'm sure none better when it comes to price and service. -- D.H., Manchester, MO

Dear Jim:

Time-Life and their Video Club continues to impress me with their special interest releases, many exclusives. ... The club is really worth the \$15 membership fee. -- D.S., Pearland, TX

Dear Jim,

In the April issue I read a letter praising Fotomat regarding 8mm film to tape transfer. (The writer) should consider himself very lucky in dealing with Fotomat. Not everyone has had such good results. ... I should say that my 8mm and Super 8mm films have turned out looking okay, but not sounding all that good with my high quality super-8 sound films. ... I should mention that all their film transfers are done in California, which means that no matter what store you go to you're subjecting your films to a lot of traveling. -- S.F., Seagate, NY

We didn't have the space to run Steve's entire letter in which he disagrees that the Fotomat service is fast and that the prices are reasonable. We have had one other letter which indicated that an acceptable transfer had not been achieved by Fotomat, as well as others that have indicated favorable results and all around satisfaction. We, therefore, have no advice to offer with respect to their service, except to say that perhaps you should not expect too much from mass market operations, and watch for the next issue of this magazine in which we will finally run our feature on how to do your own film chaining transfers.

ADDENDUM:

I want to take a little space to update two subjects mentioned in the previous issue (#25). First as to the observation that Warner's Home Video is cutting films that are represented as being complete, we have discovered that although some cutting (such as the lengthy closing credits of "Superman", to be reviewed next issue) may be taking place, the shortened running time for the most part is due to an almost imperceptible "speeding up" of the film in order to fit movies that run in excess of, say, 2 hours onto a 2-hour cassette. MFW plans to have one of his famous long-winded hell-raising editorials in the next issue, on the problem of Warner's "time-squeezing" policy, as well as on the subject of limited quality in prerecorded tapes generally.

Secondly, we have heard from and/or about International Wholesalers of Miami and Video Wholesalers, also of Miami. These are two of the larger mail order video houses around. Both have a lot of advertising, a lot of shipping going on, and are both struggling for as large a share of the same market as possible. Some of you are going to be thrilled with their prices and have good luck with their service, others may be frustrated. This is always the risk you run with mail order discount purchases. While the service of these two firms (based on feedback that we get), is neither uniformly good or otherwise, it is not our impression that either of them is bending over backwards to treat their customers with the individual attention that is possible with a smaller enterprise or one that has vowed to cater to "videophiles" as opposed to the mass market discount electronics mail order market.

Editor:

I have purchased many tapes from the Video Club of America and have had no problems with service or quality. -- I.G., College Park, MD

Dear Jim,

... When I joined the Video Club of America, I waited over 3 months to get my tapes and finally they came. When I opened the box, I found only one tape and the shipping slip (which) stated two tapes. So I called the Video Club. They were very rude to me, I was told the computer stated two tapes, I must have two tapes, then they hung up on me. I was so upset, I jumped into my car and drove over to Magnetic Video, which is approximately 15 minutes from me, and demanded my tape. A man went into the back room and came out with the other tape I ordered. They said they were sorry, but I'll never buy another tape from them. So when T.R. Kantner talks about "anonymous gossip" give him my name. ... Also in reference to Parker Video, I visited Parker Video last year. What I found was an answering service and a mail drop off. It's too bad we have to have rip-offs like this in video. -- Michele Peters, Troy, MI.

There's just enough space left for some shorties:

"I wish to praise Roll Your Own for their prompt replacement of a defective copy of "10". -- Calverton NY

"... I can heartily recommend Cinema Resources for prices, condition of merchandise, and speed of delivery. -- M.W., Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA

"I received a stabilizer and an enhancer from Showtime Video Ventures. Both units were damaged in the mail. Showtime repaired both units in record time and returned them to me via airmail. Needless to say, I am very impressed." -- Capt. C.W., APO San Francisco

STATE OF THE ART

ART VUOLO, JR. (MR. MEDIA)
P.O. BOX 219, YPSILANTI, MICHIGAN 48197

Here we are into the Summer of 1980 and video madness continues to sweep across the country. Either the number of people who read this publication is growing rapidly, or all of a sudden those of you who have been with us for months are writing to me. The mail is amazing. By the way, those self-addressed envelopes are VERY much appreciated for quick return from yours truly.

Because MFW has painstakingly spent hours putting together his incredible review of this year's Consumer Electronics Show (held in Chicago June 15-18), I will not attempt to use this page to duplicate his efforts. But, I must say it was the biggest and best show yet. Those of you who were there will no doubt agree. Marc Wielage and I were guests on a late night talk show with host Jacky Runice on WRCK (W-Rock) FM in the Windy City. The time really flew by fast—2 hours whisked by like 2 minutes! Since we had spent the entire afternoon walking the floors of McCormick Place feasting our eyes on all the latest toys, we were regular experts by the end of the day. Thanks to ABC-FM for the opportunity.

Speaking of talk shows, I have really been on the air-waves of late. During the month of June, four shows on four different stations. In early June it was Dave Barbour's program on WTRX in Flint, MI, then with Jacky on WRCK (FM) Chicago, followed by WXYZ on the David Newman program in Detroit and, lastly, the popular "Spare Change" show on WRIF (FM) Detroit with Harvey Ovshinsky. On the last program I was joined by Rick Redouty of Sony in Detroit, still the top Betamax service technician in the world! The WXYZ show was unique, as it looked at the legality situation with F.B.I. agent Kevin Bouch from the Detroit office.

Talking about the F.B.I.—transition fans—I have experienced a Close Encounter of the First Kind from the local "Boys in Blue." Let me say this at the outset—if you are "clean" and if your video tape shelves are not filled with all the movies that just premiered last week, and if you do not own a film chain and realize no actual profit (financially) from the duplication of video tapes—you have absolutely nothing to worry about. If, however, you possess a mint copy of *The Empire Strikes Back*, I would either unload it fast or make damned sure nobody knows you have it—'cause it WILL get you in trouble. I have closed almost every column for the past two and a half years with the comment "stay legal." That's not just a cute phrase—it's a subtle warning. Too many people have been burned really bad and, like an I.R.S. audit, sooner or later they get around to everyone.

I had just finished the talk show in Flint the night before when, at 8:05 AM, the phone rings and the voice says, "This is the F.B.I." and I responded with, "Sure it is," and almost hung up on the guy. Because I had just spent a couple of hours on the air the night before urging people to stay "clean," I was sure that this was some kind of joke. The agent came over an hour later and asked questions about my hobby. The majority of my video collection, like most of yours, comes from TV, cable movie channels and live camera. After he realized that I was involved in, he felt a bit embarrassed for calling on me. The folks they really want are whirling off bootleg copies of major motion pictures for top dollar and are raking in big profits. It was through this article (*The Videophile*) that the New York office

was prompted to contact local authorities to "check me out." So, be aware that the authorities read these pages and those of you who do stupid things like publicly seeking illegal titles in the mini-ads section had best reconsider before you submit such requests. This publication tries to edit any non-kosher solicitations, but it is not always possible. By the time the F.B.I. agent left, we decided a talk show with a qualified representative would be interesting and so did the producer at WXYZ. It was a very interesting program, too!

BITS & PIECES DEPARTMENT:

The nice people at RCA are determined to get me to switch over to VHS—but I'm too deep into Beta to jump ship at this point. The format war will more than likely go on forever though as the two continue to counter-offer deals, gadgets, features, and special effects. For a long time the battle score was 80-20 VHS, then for the longest time it was 70-30 VHS—now a recent study, published in June showed the spread to be 60-40 VHS, but the gap is closing. More people, including this writer, believe that the reason for this is BetaScan—the feature that makes it easy to skip the commercials and find the part of the tape you want instantly. Now RCA has the same type of feature. It doesn't go as fast, and will work only in the LP and SLP modes (not in the SP speed), but it is similar enough to make Sony sweat again. You can also change channels from the remote unit (it's not wireless though). The new RCA model VET250 is priced at a very affordable \$900 and is all solenoid logic controlled. It even remembers to de-wind the tape back into the cassette, AFTER the power is turned off! They're making 'em more idiot-proof all the time. The "search mode" is not as fast as the Sony, which travels about 20 times normal speed, but it works fairly well. Picture quality still looked like tape. It was similar to an X2 dub from the original in Beta when the material was taped right off the air first generation. The unit backs up a bit with the pause button affording very nice edits though.

Another nice new toy from RCA is the 19" video monitor/receiver model VEM575. It features instant switching between regular TV tuner and two video sources. So you have an A/B type switching system built-in already. For about \$500, it's a good deal.

Last, but not least, from the boys at RCA is a new camera which will not be out until the fall of this year. It's (James Bond fans will love it) the model 007 and it does everything! Automatic white-balance for perfect color every time, and an iris that lets you fade out from one scene and into another—for you creative types in videoland! No price yet, but my guess is the \$1,000 to \$1,200 range.

I continue to carry on a hot and heavy love affair with my Sony SL-3000 portable VCR, which takes great pictures from almost every place you can imagine. While in Indianapolis in late May for the 500 mile race, I turned a few heads with the ABC logo in the side—more free publicity for the network. Get friendly with local TV folks and see if you can obtain a TV station channel decal—they really turn heads in a crowd. See ya next time with more strange but true tales of videObservations. Keep 'em clean, stay legal (please) and in touch!



The Videophile PROGRAM REVIEWS

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

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

Reviewers this issues, identified by their initials, are: JC—James Camner; JL—Jim Lowe; DS—David See; MFW—Marc Wielage. Their views are not necessarily those of *The Videophile*.

TAPES

Halloween (Compass International, 1978)

Credits: Cast—Donald Pleasence, Jamie Lee Curtis, P. J. Soles. Director—John Carpenter. Music—John Carpenter.

Length/Format: 93 minutes/Beta

Story: The film begins on Halloween night, 1968, in the small town of Haddonville, as a young boy becomes mentally disturbed by the sexual behavior of his sister and her boyfriend. He is so disturbed, in fact, that he murders them both with a butcher knife.

Ten years later, on the night before Halloween, 1978, the now-grown boy escapes from the mental institution to which he was committed, and heads back to Haddonville. A psychiatrist (Donald Pleasence) is on his trail immediately, since nobody knows exactly what this psychopath will do, especially on the tenth anniversary of the original deed.

Upon his arrival in Haddonville, the killer is attracted to a high school girl (Jamie Lee Curtis) and follows her around town all day. All the while, her best friend (P. J. Soles) refuses to listen to these stories of mysterious strangers.

That night as the girls are babysitting in nearby houses, the truth about this Halloween homecoming becomes apparent as the psychiatrist races against time to find the killer before *he* finds a new Halloween victim . . .

Evaluation: John Carpenter's *Halloween* has been compared favorably with the works of Alfred Hitchcock. Even though produced on a limited budget, Carpenter's direction does a fine job of building suspense and eventually terror. All elements of the film work well together to lead the viewer to the ultimate conclusion, which won't be given away here. Plea-



sence is very good as the psychiatrist, as is Curtis as the pursued. The musical score is also very effective. *Halloween* is a film that stands up to repeated viewings easily, and does not suffer in the least from the limitations of watching on the small screen. The quality of the video and audio is excellent, as is the quality of the 35mm film print used for the transfer. Highly recommended!

—DS

Source: Time-Life Video Club

[**Note:** *Halloween* is available to non-members of the Time-Life Video Club from MEDA, 7243 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90046, and its dealers.]

★★★

The Jerk (Universal, 1979)

Credits: Cast—Steve Martin, Bernadette Peters, Catlin Adams, and Jackie Mason. Director—Carl Reiner; Rated R

Length/Format: 94:00 minutes/Beta X-2

Story: Steve Martin's first full-length feature (aside from his brief appearances in the *Absent-Minded Waiter* short and *Sgt. Pepper*) opens with a comical premise—"I was born a poor black child . . ."—and deals with the story of Navin Johnson, self-admitted jerk, who leaves his adopted family to seek his fortune in the big city, first as a gas station attendant and later as a carnival barker/kiddie train conductor. On the way to fame and fortune, he has a number of encounters with a sadistic lady motorcycle driver, a deranged random-victim killer, and a host of others before making a fortune with a wacko eyeglass-frame invention and settling down with his true-life love, Bernadette Peters. It's about at this point that the film's pace grinds to a screeching halt, with Martin turning into an almost maudlin character right out of the "Jerry Lewis Would-Be Pathos Victim" school, losing his fortune in a bizarre turn of events and winding up as a bum—whoops, not a bum (as Steve himself points out), but a jerk. But all's well that ends well, in a surprise semi-twist ending that takes care of practically all the loose ends and is funny as well.

Evaluation: For those who are familiar with Steve's nightclub act and his *Saturday Night Live* monologues and routines, the film is bound to be enjoyable, but somehow lacks the spontaneity and laugh-a-minute chaos that has characterized these past efforts. Although *The Jerk* has a number of extremely funny sight gags (like "Navin" running nude out into his yard, using two strategically placed dogs to avoid shocking the passers-by, or several scenes detailing his love affair with Catlin Adams, the lady motorcycle driver), as a whole it falls far short of being a "laff-riot comedy classic" in the same vein as *Blazing Saddles*, *Animal House*, or most of the Marx Brothers films. However, for Steve Martin fans, or for comedy fans in general, it should be well-received; and as Steve himself pointed out, last year when the film was released, *The Jerk* certainly does have " . . . the blue language they love so much . . . a great chase scene . . . and a dull part so theater owners can sell more popcorn." I assume meaning his long dragged-out singing duet with Miss Peters. You won't find a lengthy scene with Bill Murray as an obnoxious night-club singer (ala his *Saturday Night Live* character), since this was cut out of the final release version, but you will find Steve appearing as a Mexican Cat Juggler (credited to "Pig-Eye Jackson") and at least a solid hour of laughs, which is more than you can say for a lot of comedies these days. I might add that although *The Jerk* was pounced on rather severely by most critics, it's going to make some \$60 million at the box office, indicating that its most important critics—the public—seem to think it's considerably better.

The Sony L-500 Beta cassette viewed was an excellent transfer, obviously from a top-quality 35mm print, and was duplicated with Magnetic Video's well-known "MV-Guard" anti-copying process, which adds a small title relaying that fact in the extreme upper left portion of the picture (not visible on most TV sets). Although there was just a trace of audio wow and flutter occasionally, this was probably due more to the videocassette dub than anything else, and was certainly not objectionable. Overall the quality was very good, rating at least a B, though at best I'd give the content only 2½***s.—MFW

Source/Price: MCA Videocassette #66005/\$59.95 for Beta and VHS. MCA DiscoVisison #16-015/\$24.95 (Standard Play)

[**Ed.'s Note:** For those who'd like a paperback version of the movie, Warner Books recently published a \$2.25 "photo-story" adapted by Carl Gottlieb from the original script penned by Steve Martin, Michael Elias and Gottlieb himself, essentially compiling a hundred or so stills with semi-humorous captions describing the story, scene-by-scene.]

★★★

1941 (Universal, 1979)

Credits: Cast—Dan Aykroyd, John Belushi, Ned Beatty, Christopher Lee, Toshiro Mifune, Robert Stack, and a cast of thousands. Director—Steven Spielberg. Rated PG.

Length/Format: 120 minutes/Beta X-2

Story: To attempt a complete description of a movie this bananas would be extremely impractical (to say the least), but suffice it to say that it concerns the activities of a dozen or so Los Angeles residents over-reacting to the fear of a Japanese invasion a week after Pearl Harbor, around Christmas of 1941. Dan Aykroyd plays an Army sergeant trying to coordinate the chaos and riots happening on Hollywood Boulevard, Robert Stack is perfectly cast as General Stillwell, head of LA's armed forces battalion, John Belushi plays "Wild" Wayne Kelso, a crazed Army Air Corps pilot (complete with stunts that are more than just a little reminiscent of his "Bluto Blutarsky" character from *Animal House*), and Christopher Lee and Toshiro Mifune are a Nazi and Japanese submarine commander, respectively, who accidentally manage to trigger the chaos by surfacing right off the California coast. Together with the supporting characters, the cast re-enacts a sometimes hilarious, often spectacular farce that provides more action and outlandish special effects than any film I've seen in a long time (except for the soon-to-be-released *Blues Brothers* movie), though some of the situations take a long time to develop their punch lines and resolutions.

Evaluation: When the film first appeared last December, reviewers were quick to brandish their critical swords and cut the movie to ribbons, emblazoning their essays with headlines like "SPIELBERG'S PEARL HARBOR" and "1941: THE BIGGEST DISASTER OF THE DECADE." In particular, they singled out John Belushi for handing in a virtual carbon-copy of his deranged role in *Animal House*, and subjected him to even more of their angry barbs. While I think the critics may have overreacted to *1941*, perhaps expecting a lot more from the man who made both *Jaws* and *Close Encounters*, some of their complaints do have a basis in fact. *1941* seems to have strived for the same kind of crazy, chaotic pratfall-filled effect that was done so well 17 years ago in *It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad World*, with at least a half-dozen stories happening simultaneously and all converging on each other at the climax of the film. But, apparently, something went wrong between the time the screenwriters first got together and the time when the film reached its final completed form. At best, *1941* provides a few occasional laughs and some mind-blowing special effects (provided by

movie veterans including A. D. Flowers, Greg Jein, L. B. Abbott, Frank Van der Veer, and their various crews, all of whom deserved but did not win Oscars for their excellent work), as well as a fantastic dance/fight scene that has to be seen to be believed and an incredible aerial dogfight above Hollywood Boulevard between Belushi's P-40 Warhawk and Tim Mathe-son and Nancy Allen's Beechcraft trainer, but as a whole, it fails to deliver the expected laughs.

Still, there are at least a half-dozen gags that were enough to make me guffaw out loud—chief among them being a scene in which a group of Japanese sailors kidnap truckdriver Slim Pickens and take him and all his possessions down into their sub. They have a problem forcing his large table-model radio through the hatch, and one of them remarks (in Japanese): "We should try to figure out a way to make these things smaller." And again, the U.S.O. Club dance is at once frenetic, dazzling and hysterically funny—easily the highlight of the film. Surprisingly enough, I found myself enjoying the film more on a small screen than I did in the theater, with the effects and action working very well on television. Still, as a comedy, the overall result is sadly disappointing—particularly considering the immense skill and talent of Spielberg and the technical wizards who assisted him.

The Sony L-500 videocassette viewed was of excellent quality, and the audio was equally outstanding—possibly from 35mm magnetic tracks, with a more extended high-frequency range than I'm used to hearing from prerecorded tapes. Although there was a little wow and flutter noticeable here and there, and the opening of the movie (with Susan Backlinie reprising her role from *Jaws* as a skinny-dipping girl, this time "attacked" by a submarine periscope) was a little dark, the quality of the tape was nothing short of superb—one of the best I've seen so far. In particular, John Williams' music has rarely been more spectacular (except for his exciting themes in *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back*), and William Franker's excellent cinematography transfers well to video. I'd give the story 2 ***'s (with the effects and technical work at least 4 ****'s) and the audio/video quality a B+.—MFW

Source/Price: MCA Videocassette #66007/\$59.95 (for Beta and VHS) MCA DiscoVision #16-014/\$24.95 (Standard Play)

[**Ed.'s Note:** For those interested in the behind-the-scenes story of 1941, Ballantine Books has released a large \$7.95 paperback entitled *The Making of 1941*, featuring pages from the shooting script, interviews with Spielberg and his production staff, as well as descriptions of all the major stunts and the wizardry behind them.]

★★★

Instant Replay (The Music Issue)

Length/Format: 2 hours (Maybe a little more)/Beta X-2

Content: Although billed as "The Music Issue," this issue of the "magazine" on tape contains its usual departments (eg. news, commercials, video art, satellite report, etc.). With an emphasis on the potential of video and music, the two hour presentation includes: A look at a \$2200 special effects keyer (a no-frills version offering only fade-to-black and title generating is less), the new video juke box, examples of a variety of video sources dubbed with a musical sound track, and some exclusive interview features with Billy Preston and Devo. Also included is some rare European footage on Jim Morrison and The Doors singing "When the Music's Over," which includes footage of the famous (?) riots that accompanied the Democratic party convention in Chicago, a rock and rollerskating segment, and much more.

Evaluation: As usual, Chuck Azar, John Robson and the gang at Instant Replay have assembled a really fine selection of material and put it together with an obviously high level of loving care. This tape passed what I consider to be the acid test, so far as the interest level is concerned. I watched this tape (or the first hour, anyway) when I was too tired to do anything else and, frankly, didn't feel like doing it. Yet, within a few minutes, I was totally engrossed. The most enjoyable segments were the British commercials, the incredible acrobatic snow skiing, the rollerskating feature (though the cheeky lass accounts for 50% of that evaluation) and the satellite report which includes a few seconds of Max Robinson on the ABC news calling over his shoulder to an off-screen staffer: "Make sure I can see that shit." (I assume that regular over-the-air broadcast viewers were seeing a commercial at that point.) There are also a couple of small surprises for fans of Ringo Starr and Mick Jagger.

On the minus side, I felt that The Doors segment was overly long (though some of you may consider this rare footage as the best thing on the tape), and the video art segment of Elton John's "Your Song" played as a sound track for World War II Nazi newsreel footage left me somewhat perplexed.

The technical quality of Instant Replay's product continues to improve. The picture and sound on the Sony brand L-500 that we viewed were quite good throughout (with allowances for the duplication of certain contributions not produced in-house) and most of the edits were smoothly handled. Chuck suggests that the audio of the tape be played through your stereo system for maximum enjoyment. We did, and recommend that you do so as well.—JL

Source: Instant Replay

★★★

"10" (Or ion Pictures, 1979)

Credits: Cast—Dudley Moore, Julie Andrews, Bo Derek, Robert Webber. Director—Blake Edwards.

Length/Format: Approx. 120 minutes/VHS (Uncut)

Story: This was the box-office smash picture of 1979 which introduced Bo Derek as the latest entry in the sexy poster girl sweepstakes. The story line involves the mid-life crisis of a 42 year old Hollywood song writer who seeks to hold onto, and live out, his adolescent fantasies, at the risk of losing one heck of a fine lady in the process. His pursuit of the youthful vision and perfect "10" (so they say), Miss Derek, is undeterred by a nasal bee sting, a mouthful of dental work, and stumbling through a Mexican resort in a drunken stupor. Only when the fantasy becomes a reality does he see the world for what it is and come to his senses (I guess). In short, it's the story of every man, torn between the world of respectability and truly worthy goals and the temptation represented by the guy across the way whose non-stop orgies are glimpsed through the telescope on the terrace.

Evaluation: As a film "10" rates a 6 or 7. I really enjoyed it, even after seeing it twice before in a theater. As a tape, however, it gets only a 5. This is the first of the new package from Warner Brothers that I have seen, and I was truly disappointed in the quality of the film-to-tape transfer. The cropping was OK, and there were only a few dropouts, but the image quality was so far below what I expected that it was immediately noticeable. The lack of sharp focus and too much contrast looked exactly like what you would normally expect to find in a dubbed copy. To a certain extent, I suppose this is a problem shared by all features not primarily produced for the 1/2" videocassette format, but it was markedly obvious in this case. The picture quality was not really poor, it's just that it was no better than a good duplicate of

a good original. Warner Home Video cassettes come in a new "album-style" packaging that includes full credits, liner notes, and a nice color picture on the cover flap.

The story is a fine comedy, not a great one, and has a few scenes that get a laugh time after time. If "10" is a favorite of yours, don't let this review hold you back, but if it's ever on HBO, I'll bet you could record a better copy right in the privacy of your abode.—JL

Source: Videobrary

★★★

Comedy and Kid Stuff (Shokus Video, SVCO-1)

Length/Format: A little less than 2 hours/Beta X-2

Content: Here we have 4 complete TV series episodes from the early 50's:

The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show (1952). Complete with original *Carnation* commercials, this is a fine example of this popular series. Considering the current Arab oil crisis, the storyline contains a topical element. Humor based on misunderstanding, typical of old radio and early TV, is presented in good form by George, Gracie, Harry Von Zell and Bea Benaderet.

I Married Joan (1952). Judge Bradley Stevens (Jim Backus) and his slightly wacky wife (Joan Davis) were featured on one of my favorite early shows. This episode, which includes original *GE* commercials, contains two complete and substantially unrelated stories, one in which Joan takes a job as a TV commercial "star," and the other in which she attempts to serve two dinner guests, who can't stand each other, without letting either know that the other is in the house.

Winky Dink and You (1953). Jack Barry hosts the well-remembered kids' show in which the viewer was invited to put the "magic window" on his TV screen and draw pictures that served as part of the story. At the time, it was not unusual to hear of someone who didn't send in 50¢ for a Winky Dink kit (Winky Dink, Box 5, New York 19, NY . . . though they may be out of them by now) and, consequently, drew the wrath of his mother by drawing with a crayon directly on the television screen. Jack Barry, who also hosted *Juvenile Jury*, went on to greater things as host of *The Big Surprise* (where he was replaced by Mike Wallace), *Twenty-One* and *Concentration*, while Winky Dink was last seen at the Home for Critically Ill-Rendered Animated Characters. There are no commercials. Apparently, CBS itself sponsored the show.

Carson's Cellar (1953). This one predates by nearly 10 years Johnny Carson's ascendancy to the role of host on *The Tonight Show*. You may be forgiven for never hearing of it, as *Carson's Cellar* was a local show on KNXT-TV; channel 2 in Los Angeles, way back when. It's remarkable how similar the Carson monologue of today is to that done by the skinny 25-year old on this episode. Guest star Jack Bailey appears in a sketch in which he is crowned "Schnook for a Day."

Evaluation: Buy it! It's as simple as that. Shokus Video is run on a collector-to-collector basis, and it certainly shows. The choice of material, the price and the tape (Fuji) are all you could hope for. The duplication is not of strict professional quality, the tell-tale flicker of the done-at-home film chain is evident. I also had to adjust the tracking control all the way to one side to get rid of the "flagging." But these are minor considerations when the content is such a delight.

Of the four, the *Burns and Allen* episode is probably the best. *Winky Dink* is a throwaway (it's really awful) but a historical

curio nonetheless. The other two are both quite enjoyable. The Carson show, though not uproariously funny, would seem to be a must for the true Carson fans who will undoubtedly enjoy the quiz show satire "Take It or Nothing" and the sketch on "How to Stuff a Turkey." It goes without saying that all four are in black and white. Highly recommended.—JL

Source/Price: Shokus Video/\$39 (Beta X-2); \$41 (VHS); \$59 (Beta X-1)

★★★

Hymn of the Nations (United Films, 1944) Black and White

Credits: Arturo Toscanini conducting the NBC Symphony Orchestra, The Westminster Choir, and Jan Peerce, tenor soloist. Narration by Burgess Meredith.

Length: 28:00 minutes

Content: Toscanini conducts the NBC Symphony Orchestra in the overture to *La Forza Del Destino* by Giuseppe Verdi and the *Hymn of the Nations* also by Giuseppe Verdi.

Evaluation: Toscanini consented to make this movie for European distribution as a propaganda message to Italians after the fall of Mussolini. The movie begins with Toscanini conducting the *Forza* overture, then shows the Maestro preparing to conduct the *Hymn of the Nations* while also briefly showing the other famous Italian refugees active in America. Then Toscanini conducts the *Hymn of the Nations* in a stirring performance highlighted by the brilliant singing of Jan Peerce. While this is not Verdi's best music, opera lovers and Toscanini fans will surely want this film. The quality is quite good overall in sound and picture with an occasional jump and wavering sound at the very beginning. This reviewer first viewed this movie at the Museum of Modern Art in New York where a packed hall gave the film a standing ovation at the conclusion. It is *that* stirring!—JC

Source: Reel Images

★★★

It's Love Again (Gaumont-British, 1936) Black and White

Length: 90 minutes

Credits: Cast—Jessie Matthews, Robert Young, Sonnie Hale. Director—Victor Saville.

Story: Musical comedy about a struggling dancer/singer who lets Robert Young, playing a society columnist, foist her off as a famous Indian personality. Complications ensue, but by the time the hoax is discovered Jessie Matthews has done a lot of dancing and singing and has had a romance with Young.

Evaluation: Jessie Matthews is the female equivalent of Fred Astaire. She had her own style of dancing, which is absolutely fantastic, and she was worshipped in England. This was her favorite film and she is in great form in it. Some of the costumes she wears are unbelievable, for she had a great body and showed it! One costume looks as though it were sprayed on. If you like the Astaire-Rogers films, you will probably enjoy this one for the fantastic talents of Jessie Matthews. Unfortunately, the music, sets, and photography do not equal those Astaire enjoyed in Hollywood, but they are good enough to let her triumph. One can only regret the complications which prevented her from making *Gay Divorcee* with Astaire as he had wanted. Sound quality and picture were excellent.—JC

Source: Discount Video Tapes



—NOTICE—

The following two tapes are true "hard core" pornography, containing explicit sexual activity that leaves nothing to the imagination. If such goings-on are offensive to you, please do not purchase them and then complain to us.

Easy (Skylark Productions, 1979)

Credits: Cast—Jessie St. James, Georgina Spelvin, Desiree "Pretty Peaches" Costeau. Director—Anthony Spinelli.

Format: VHS

Story: The storyline (such as it is) concerns a young school teacher who has little or no ability to keep her libido under control. Consequently, she is "taken" after class and at home by a couple of students, shares her charms with a blind man (among others) and is forceably initiated into the world of girl/girl encounters by Ms. Spelvin. True love eludes her, even unto the end.

Evaluation: The plot(?) is no better or no worse than the average XXX-rated feature film. The highly emotional Ms. St. James has an exceptionally pretty body, especially so if you are inclined toward slight young ladies with blond hair. Toss in a few other young lovelies, good lighting and pacing and *Easy* comes out as a pretty fair hard core porno film. Nothing really

out of the ordinary, but O.K. It even has a surprisingly adequate original musical track. Unlike some of these we've reviewed, *Easy* is not a comedy, so don't expect any giggles with your titillation.

Where this cassette really shines is in the brilliance and clarity of the video tape color picture quality. In this respect, I have not seen a better quality prerecorded tape. The lighting, focus and general clarity are unsurpassed. Production values of "Cal Vista" tapes (of which this is one) seem to be a step above many others in several respects. Even the sturdy plastic case is custom made in the shape of a Rolls Royce grill. Kitsch lovers will want to know that they even toss in a tiny little plastic nude girl "hood ornament" that you can mount on the case. The tape also includes previews of some other Cal Vista features.—JL

Source: Cal Vista Video.

★★★

800 Fantasy Lane (1979)

Credits: Cast—Jamie Gillis, Serena, Desiree Costeau and a bevy of buxom beauties. Director—Svet.

Format: VHS

Story: Two service station employees hit on the idea of getting a free vacation by posing as wealthy oilmen and getting some young Hollywood real estate agents to show them around all the posh estates for sale. The two are treated (and the girls are subjected) to a wide variety of fantasy fulfillment activities that range from the humorous to the bizarre. There's even a slow-motion topless tennis game for you sports fans. The boys get into some tight spots along the way and at one point their cover is almost blown, but they manage to work it all out in the end.

Evaluation: If Charlie Rich wants to know what goes on behind closed doors, he should get a copy of *800 Fantasy Lane*. Jamie Gillis (of "Misty Beethoven" fame) is in rare form in this one. I'd say he's the best male actor currently starring in XXX films. While this film is quite funny in parts, it also has some scenes (the dungeon bondage orgy comes to mind) which may be too strong, if not darkly evil, for those of you who prefer your porno on the light side. The female lead is Serena, the real life wife of Mr. Gillis, and there are upwards of a dozen other fine looking ladies to be found. Just when you think you've seen everything, there's an incredible dream sequence in which Jamie Gillis is an animal trainer in a cage with a trained horse (Serena) and two other girls as a tiger and a leopard. The scene succeeds quite well in renewing the viewer's interest in the otherwise same-old-stuff activities. The picture quality, while not quite the equal of *Easy*, is very good, indeed. Even the music is O.K. Previews of other films are included. I'd recommend it for the more jaded among you.—JL

Source: Cal Vista Video



SOURCES:

Blackhawk Video
1235 West 5th Street
Davenport IA 52808

Cal Vista Video
6934 Canby, #105
Reseda, CA 91335

Discount Video Tapes
P.O. Box 7122,
Burbank, CA 91510

Instant Replay
2960 McFarlane Rd., Ste. 210
Coconut Grove, FL 33133

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

Reel Images
495 Monroe Turnpike,
Monroe, CT 06468

Shokus Video
P.O. Box 8434,
Van Nuys, CA 91409

Video Tape Network
115 East 62nd Street
New York NY 10021

Ted Reinhart Enterprises
Edgewater Acres Resort
Alexandria PA 16611

Time-Life Video
Harrisburg, PA 17105





Ted Reinhart's Western Roundup

A variety of subjects comprises my "Roundup" column in this issue.

I was pleased and honored to discover that a recent order for one of my sales cassettes, *Helltown*, was being purchased by its director, Charles Barton. Thanks, Mr. Barton. Hope you are enjoying your movie (formerly titled *Born to the West*).

Some months ago I purchased an image enhancer from Showtime Video Ventures to use strictly for my personal tape collection. I promised the good people of SVV that I'd write my impressions (no, they didn't give me a "deal"). After running this piece of equipment in every conceivable way, I have reached these conclusions: When used in conjunction with a video camera for direct film chaining, there is a noticeable improvement in picture detail. For dubbing tape to tape, the image enhancer never reproduces a superior copy over the original. If your master is of good quality, you will find the copy a bit better than when not using this accessory, but if a master is inferior, an enhanced copy will be worse. I took note that my image enhancer also improves the video signal received from the cable lead-in. Is it worth \$287?? To the person you're doing dubs for, yes.

A really great *Rough Riders* (Buck Jones, Tim McCoy, Raymond Hatton) double feature is my Western Roundup video tape for this issue (see review and ad elsewhere in this issue).

Ted Reinhart
Edgewater Acres Resort
Alexandria, PA 16611

Best of the Movie A-West

I'll now conclude my series of paragraphs covering the "top 10 A-western movies of all time." My choice for ninth spot is a strong John Wayne vehicle, *The Three Godfathers*. This 1948 MGM release was actually the fifth version of a story written by Pete Kyne for the Saturday Evening Post way back in 1910. Basically, *The Three Godfathers* is built on the Christmas Story. Three outlaws—Wayne, Pedro Armendariz, and Harry Carey, Jr.—rob the bank in Welcome, Arizona. In making their getaway to the desert, Carey is wounded in the arm. The three stop at a water hole and find a

covered wagon stuck in the sand. Inside is an expectant mother, whose baby Pedro delivers. As the mother is dying, she asks that the men look after her newborn son. They agree and become the three godfathers. As the outlaws continue their escape journey across the desert, Carey eventually dies and Armendariz shoots himself after breaking his leg. Wayne then struggles to get the child to New Jerusalem and, nearly finished himself, arrives on Christmas Eve. Because of his dedication to the baby, he receives a light sentence and plans to return to raise his godson.

Finally, at the bottom of the barrel, but as fine a western as you'll ever see, is *Wagonmaster*. As with the above, this is another sterling effort by director John Ford, but, with this motion picture, Ford deserves more praise, considering that he was working in black and white and casting two unproven actors in the principal roles—Ben Johnson and Harry Carey, Jr. Both did justice to director Ford's expectations. This RKO production, released in 1950, tells of two drifters (Johnson & Carey) hired on by Ward Bond and his wagon train of Mormons to lead the congregation beyond the San Juan River into Utah. During the journey, members of a medicine show join the train, and later a band of outlaws force their way into the procession. Thus the trouble begins. The bad men meet their end and the wagon train reaches its destination. The simply outstanding musical score featuring The Sons of the Pioneers is a major plus for *Wagonmaster*.

Both of these movies are more than worth the cost of a blank to record—and keep.

My "top ten," listed together:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. <i>High Noon</i> | 6. <i>Red River</i> |
| 2. <i>Shane</i> | 7. <i>The Gunfighter</i> |
| 3. <i>Stagecoach</i> | 8. <i>The Westerner</i> |
| 4. <i>Ride the High Country</i> | 9. <i>The Three Godfathers</i> |
| 5. <i>Broken Arrow</i> | 10. <i>Wagonmaster</i> |

★★★

A Double Feature

North of the Great Divide (Republic, 1950) Color.

Credits: Cast—Roy Rogers, Penny Edwards, Gordon Jones, Roy Barcroft, Jack Lambert, Foy Willing and Riders of the Purple Sage. Director—William Witney.

Story: An Indian tribe, settled on a reservation along the American-Canadian border, is suddenly faced with starvation. Roy Barcroft has begun operating a salmon cannery and his traps are preventing the fish from swimming to the point where the red men usually catch them. With their main source of food no longer available, the Indians turn to stealing. This brings Roy Rogers, a representative of American Indian Affairs, on the scene. Roy soon learns of Barcroft's greedy actions in taking all the salmon, which is not only causing unrest with his charges, but could eventually bring extinction to the fish. Eventually, Barcroft goes too far. While sabotaging a rival salmon cannery on the Canadian side of the river, his henchmen kill a Mounted Policeman and cast the blame on the Indian chief. Roy Rogers and the Mounties soon right the wrongs and the salmon traps are removed, permitting conditions to be restored to normal.

Evaluation: I'm fighting myself . . . honest . . . but I can't resist the urge to write . . . there is something mighty "fishy" about this western. There, I got that off my hook. Roy Rogers was nearing the end of his long Republic Pictures' tenure (he did six more pictures before hitting the trail to NBC Television). Gone from the favorite Roy Rogers stock company were Dale Evans, Gabby Hayes, and the Sons of the Pioneers—replaced by Penny Edwards, Gordon Jones and The Riders of the Purple Sage. The latter names were strictly "second stringers," and the Rogers movies suffered as a result. *North of the Great Divide* isn't really a bad picture, but it falls short of what we always expected of Roy and his classy products. The video quality of the "Trucolor" is pretty good, sound is excellent.

Days of Old Cheyenne (Republic, 1943) Black and White.

Credits: Cast—Don Barry, Lynn Merrick, William Haade, Emmett Lynn, Herbert Rawlinson, Charles Miller, Bob Kortman. Director—Elmer Clifton.

Story: A young cowboy, Don Barry, drifts into Cheyenne where he immediately becomes involved in a saloon brawl with some town toughs. Don subdues them with ease, attracting the attention of political boss, Big Bill Harmon (Haade). Big Bill arranges for Barry to become Marshal, and eventually promotes him to the position of Commissioner of the Rangers. Don's progress doesn't end here, as he eventually is elected Governor of the Territory, with Harmon's influence. Barry begins to realize that Big Bill expects to control the office for personal gain. Don resists and the two men have an encounter ending in Harmon's death.

Evaluation: We all realize that the B-Western was never restricted by realism. The extremes of this genre provided us with the escapist entertainment which made these movies so popular. But *Days of Old Cheyenne* goes a bit too far. Don Barry's rapid ascension from common drifter to Governor borders on the absurd. The action is good, but the plot is rot. Picture and sound quality are excellent.

Source: The Nostalgia Merchant.

★★★

A Double Feature

Westward Ho (Republic, 1935) Black and White.

Credits: Cast—John Wayne, Sheila Mannors, Frank McGlynn, Jr., Jack Curtis, Yakima Canutt, Bradley

Metcalfe, Hank Bell, Glenn Strange. Director—Robert N. Bradbury.

Story: A family wagon caravan, consisting of Mark and Hannah Wyatt, their two young sons (John and Jim), and a number of cowhands, is crossing the plains when, without warning, they are attacked by Lufe Gordon and his outlaw gang. Only the children survive, although John is thought to be dead. The youngest boy, Jim, is taken by the outlaws. Twelve years later, John has grown into John Wayne, now leader of a vigilante group who call themselves "The Singing Riders." Wayne is devoting his life to fighting badmen and is especially determined to locate the gang who killed his folks and kidnapped his kid brother. Meanwhile, Jim has been raised as an outlaw, not realizing who he really is and not aware of his past. Wayne finally catches up with the Gordon gang, and Jim learns his true identity and saves his big brother's life just moments before John would have been killed by the outlaws who raised Jim as their own. John Wayne disbands his vigilante group and turns to ranching.

Evaluation: It takes no degree of acting knowledge to foresee a 1935 John Wayne becoming a superstar of the future. As primitive and low-budgeted as the Duke's early films were, he still stood out as a "giant." If the A-westerns hadn't grabbed Wayne, he would have been a long-running King of the B's. *Westward Ho* was John's first Republic western, and even though the movie plotted the over-used brother against brother concept (hey, maybe it began in this picture), it is a very satisfactory production. It's obvious that the SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) had not yet started controlling the mistreatment of movie horses. There are a vast number of scenes employing the use of "trip" wires and other inhumane devices which later were not permitted. This condition prevails in the second feature of this tape as well. The picture quality is fairly good; sound is scratchy in a number of sequences.

Lawless Frontier (Lone Star/Monogram, 1934) Black and White.

Credits: Cast—John Wayne, Sheila Terry, George Hayes, Lloyd Whitlock, Yakima Canutt, Buffalo Bill, Jr., Jack Rockwell. Director—Robert N. Bradbury.

Story: Half-breed outlaw Zanti (Whitlock) robs and kills John Wayne's father and mother (where have we read this before?). Later Zanti and his gang attempt to do away with George Hayes and his granddaughter (Terry), but are foiled by Wayne, who has been trailing the killers. John captures the half-breed, but he escapes into the desert. After a long pursuit on foot, Wayne finds his enemy at a poisoned water hole from which Zanti has drunk. Zanti dies and the rest of his group is captured.

Evaluation: I liked this movie more than its companion. It's cheaply done, but the story line is stronger and more convincing. The action is fast, and Duke is great. In fact, I rate the overall quality of this item superior to the year later *Westward Ho*.

Source: Nostalgia Merchant.

★★★

The Last Bandit (Republic, 1949) Color.

Credits: Cast—William Elliott, Adrian Booth, Andy Devine, Forest Tucker, Jack Holt, Grant Withers, Stanley

Andrews, Charles Middleton. Director—Joseph Kane.

Story: William (that's "Bill" formalized, because it was a higher budget movie) Elliott and Forest Tucker are outlaw brothers. Frank and Jim Plummer. Elliott goes straight and becomes an express agent for the railroad. One of his duties is to protect valuable shipments of gold. Tucker arrives on the scene intending to rob a scheduled cargo of great value. Meanwhile, Tucker's former girlfriend (Booth) has plans of her own. She schemes to get the riches "in her own way," but love has a way of turning one honest (she falls for Elliott). Tucker forces Adrian to go with him as he and his gang raid the train with the big haul which is being guarded by brother William. Elliott is slightly wounded and thrown off the train. The crooks drive the engine to an old spur line and into an abandoned mine where they strip the train of all its gold. Elliott and a posse overtake the gang and their wagons, and Forest Tucker is killed. There's bound to be wedding bells for the surviving lovers.

Evaluation: In the late 40's "Wild Bill" Elliott, major star of the B-West, was promoted to medium budget A-westerns. All of these higher grade Elliott products were quite good, but I personally feel Bill was not the "complete" actor, not to be considered a top-ranking star in the same league with John Wayne, Gary Cooper, Randy Scott, Joel McCrea, and others. Elliott had some shortcomings which prevented him from hitting the big time. The most pronounced was his ineptness with the love scenes. The guy could handle his six-guns and a horse, but be damned if he was smooth with a woman. He seemed very uncomfortable in the clinch, and in this motion picture, ole' Wild Bill had a dandy lass to pitch the "woo" to—Adrian Booth. Now here's a member of the craft who should have become a leading major movie starlet. She had it all but the right break. Anyway, everyone should appreciate *The Last Bandit*, even if Elliott fizzles in the hot scene. The color (Trucolor) of this tape varies in quality, is bleached out in places, but for the most part all looks and sounds good.

Source: The Nostalgia Merchant.

★★★

The Painted Desert (RKO-Radio, 1938) Black and White.

Credits: Cast—George O'Brien, Loraine Johnson (Day), Ray Whitley, Stanley Fields, Fred Kohler, Max Wagner, Harry Cording. Director—David Howard.

Story: George O'Brien discovers Loraine Johnson (later to become Laraine Day) and her grandfather holding a mining claim on land which belongs to him. George will not reveal his ownership, as he is attracted to Loraine. Her grandfather sells this claim to Fred Kohler. For the girl's sake, O'Brien then buys the claim from Kohler. Day's grandfather is killed and she accepts George as a "partner" in the mining business, still not aware that the mine has always belonged to him. A great strike of gold is made and Kohler attempts to disrupt the operation so that he can gain control of the mine. While dynamiting a shaft, Kohler is killed. Johnson then learns of the true ownership, but becomes a permanent partner by marrying O'Brien.

Evaluation: When I asked to review this videocassette, I was expecting to receive the "original" *Painted Desert*, starring William Boyd, Helen Twelvetrees, and a new kid named Clark Gable. Even after opening the package, my

expectations remained the same for, sure enough, on the label were the name of Boyd and Twelvetrees. But, lo and behold! Up on my screen flashes the names of the performers featured in this "remake." Someone got their labels crossed, or what? Anyway, this is one super movie, right or wrong. I can hardly wait to see the original, permitting me to compare the two. It will take some doing to make the "other" version superior. I honestly cannot fault this product in any way (other than being mislabeled). If you like a good medium budget western, spend your dollars on this one. Visual and sound qualities are very fine.

Source: Blackhawk Films.

★★★

A Double Feature

West of the Law (Monogram, 1942) Black and White.

Credits: Cast—Buck Jones, Tim McCoy, Raymond Hatton, Evelyn Cooke, Milburn Morante, Harry Woods, Roy Barcroft, Bud McTaggart. Director—Howard Bretherton.

Story: Harry Woods and his gang are hijacking all the gold shipments out of the Gold Creek Mines. The town newspaper owner sends for Buck Jones, a U.S. Marshal, to help stop these crimes. Buck arrives, later followed by Tim and Ray, who are posing as a minister and an undertaker, but who are in reality also Marshals. The trio learns that the town's leading citizen is the "brains" behind all the robberies, and The Rough Riders soon bring all the crooks to justice.

Evaluation: In my book, the entire Rough Riders series was by far the best of all "trio B-westerns." The chemistry of Jones, McCoy and Hatton was a perfect blend, yielding nothing but quality excitement from start to finish. *West of the Law* was the final Rough Riders movie made. Picture and sound quality are good.

Below the Border (Monogram, 1942) Black and White.

Credits: Cast—Buck Jones, Tim McCoy, Raymond Hatton, Linda Brent, Eva Puig, Charles King, Dennis Moore, Roy Barcroft. Director—Howard Bretherton.

Story: Buck Jones poses as an outlaw so that he may have a better chance to clean up a gang of thieves and rustlers at Border City. Ray and Tim, the other members of this undercover law enforcement trio, are in town to lend Buck a helping hand. The boys learn that Roy Barcroft is leader of the bandits, and Jones finds a way to become a member of his gang. Buck's real identity is discovered, but he escapes. The Rough Riders then join forces side-by-side and bring the criminals to justice.

Evaluation: As is with the previous title, here is another Rough Riders "goodie." Monogram Pictures could always be proud of their consistent, top-quality productions. A perfect balance of action, comedy, strong story structure, and exceptionally good settings, plus stirring music, results in a nifty little movie.

The quality of sight and sound are good.

Source:

Ted Reinhart



(continued from p. 13)

Granville, Chairperson of the Subcommittee on Legislation of Motion Pictures, Television and Radio, of the ABA, is the person to contact if you have any pertinent (or impertinent) suggestions. She may be reached c/o B.M.I., 320 W. 57th Street, New York, NY 10019. Incidentally, we heard of a tape manufacturer who said that if a blank tape tax ever becomes law, it simply won't make any more *blank* tape. Instead, the company would record "The Star Spangled Banner", over and over again on every tape, sell it as prerecorded and leave it to the buyer to erase and record over it ... a move that ought to make the National Anthem the best-selling prerecorded tape of all time.

The National Federation of Decency is urging everyone to boycott watching TV from July 7 to July 13 (and CBS in particular for the whole month of July) to protest the death of a 4 year old child whose mother (after watching "Exorcist II: The Heretic") cut the little girl's heart out.

The Video Club of America has agreed to make tapes supplied by Nostalgia Merchant available to its members. VCA Business Manager, T.R. Kantner (whom we haven't heard from lately) says that the club has 50,000-100,000 members. (I'm surprised they can narrow down the estimate so precisely. --Ed.) Canadian readers: VCA of Canada plans to begin operation in July, with headquarters in Windsor. // VCA has also announced its intention to release "special interest" material in five categories: Film Classics, Family Entertainment, Sports Blockbusters, Nightclubs & Cabarets, and Quality Movies for Adults.

Among the new feature-laden television sets now being introduced is one from Zenith of particular note. The "Space Phone" can be set to receive your incoming phone calls. When the phone rings, you can mute the TV sound by remote control. Caller's voice is piped in through the TV's speaker and there's a microphone built into the set so that you can use it like a speaker phone. Just the thing for those who are not inclined (or are unable) to get out of their chairs when the phone rings.

Fans of "Bicentennial Minutes" may want to check out a new program - "FYI" (For Your Information)- an ABC network show that is 45 seconds long and airs at 12:58, 2:58 and 3:58 P.M. EDT every weekday. FYI is hosted by Hal Linden, and features discussion of such topics as health, sexuality, child raising, new careers and how to save money. About 125 episodes have been produced so far. That's the beauty of having a programmable recorder. Anyone who cares to could record all 3 episodes each day and only use 3 minutes of tape.

LAST MINUTE FLASH DEPT:

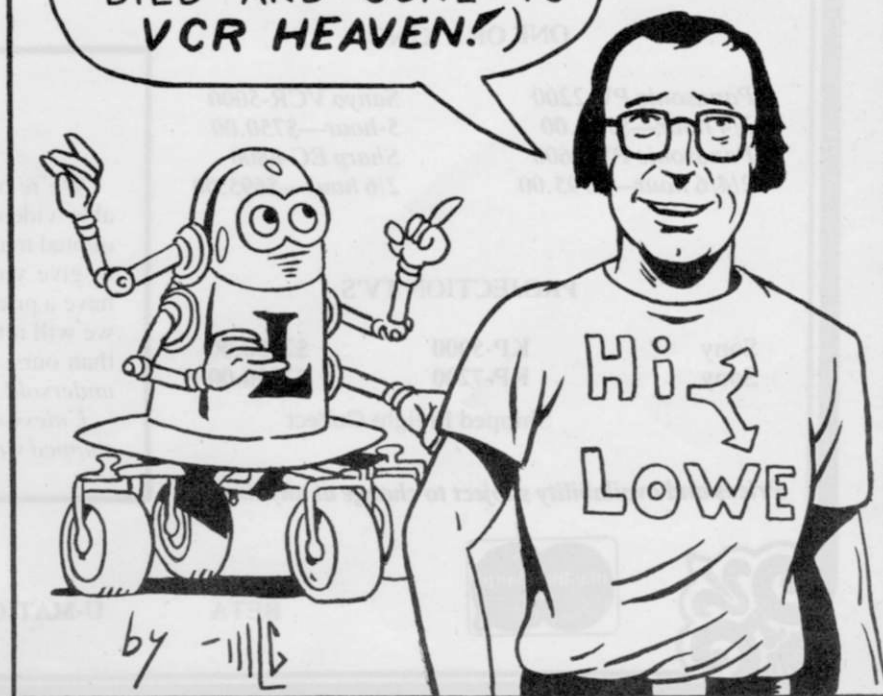
CBS Video Enterprises is releasing 25 titles on tape from MGM and other sources. Among them: "The Wizard of Oz", "2001: A Space Odyssey", "Dr. Zhivago", "Ben Hur", "An American in Paris", "A Night at the Opera", "Adam's Rib", "Jailhouse Rock", "Network", "Coma", "The Champ", "Blow Up", "The Boys in the Band", "Snoopy Come Home".

MCA may be releasing "The Blues Brothers" even before the Summer is over. // As announced last issue "Alien" is now available. Magnetic Video has already had orders for 10,000 copies of it from dealers.

GEE **JIM**...THANKS FOR VOLUNTEERING TO WATCH **LUBIN** FOR ME! AFTER ALL, HE IS A **ROBOT**!



COME ALONG **LUBIN**! LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO THE FINE ART OF PUSHING BUTTONS ON A **VCR**! (FOUR HANDS...I'VE DIED AND GONE TO **VCR HEAVEN**!)





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Sacramento, California 95815
1-800-824-7875

7/15/80

SUMMER SPECIALS

BLANK TAPES

Beta

4½ hr. Sony	L-750 per doz.	\$ 180.00
4½ hr. Zenith	L-750 per doz.	\$ 177.00
5 hr. Sony	L-830 per doz.	\$ 210.00
5 hr. Zenith	L-830 per doz.	\$ 207.00
3 hr. Fuji	L-500 10 lot	\$ 120.00
3 hr. Sony	L-500 per doz.	\$ 144.00
3 hr. TDK	L-500 10 lot	\$ 120.00
3 hr. Zenith	per doz.	\$ 141.00

VHS

4 hr. Fuji	10 lot	\$ 145.00
4 hr. Maxell	10 lot	\$ 145.00
4 hr. Panasonic	per doz.	\$ 174.00
4 hr. RCA	per doz.	\$ 168.00
4 hr. TDK	10 lot	\$ 145.00

All tapes in dozen or lot only.
Add \$4.00 per dozen or lot for handling.

ONE OF A KIND

Panasonic PV-2200
2/4 hour—\$725.00
Panasonic PV-2600
2/4/6 hour—\$795.00

Sanyo VCR-5000
5-hour—\$750.00
Sharp EC-6800
2/6 hour—\$695.00

PROJECTION TV'S

Sony	KP-5000	\$2550.00
Sony	KP-7200	\$2950.00

Shipped Freight Collect

Prices and availability subject to change at any time.

VIDEO RECORDERS

Hitachi	VT-5800A	\$ 775.00	2/4/6 hr.
JVC	HR-6700	\$ 925.00	2/6 hr.
Panasonic	PV-1650	\$ 925.00	2/4/6 hr.
Panasonic	NV-8200	\$1125.00	2 hr.
RCA	VDT-625	\$ 950.00	2/4/6 hr.
RCA	VDT-501	\$ 720.00	2/4/6 hr.
Sony	SL-5400	\$ 950.00	5 hr.
Sony	SL-5600	\$ 995.00	5 hr.
Zenith	VR-9000W	\$ 795.00	5 hr.
Zenith	VR-9700J	\$ 895.00	5 hr.

Add \$20.00 to all recorders
for shipping, insurance and handling.

SONAR BULK ERASER
\$35.00—Shipping \$4.00

ALSOP VHS HEAD CLEANING CASSETTES
\$25.00—Shipping \$2.00

★★★SPECIAL NOTICE★★★

We're on our way to becoming the largest and most dependable video equipment sales store in the U.S. Because prices quoted may change significantly at any time, our policy will be to give you the best service and lowest prices possible. If we have a price reduction on any item when we receive your order, we will refund the difference. If you obtain a price quote lower than ours, check with us before you buy. *We don't want to be undersold.*

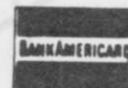
Unless otherwise stated, all items are stocked and will be shipped within 24 hours.



BETA

U-MATIC

VHS



VIDEO SERVICE CENTER

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THE PORTABLES ARE HERE

Color Cameras

JVC	GX-77	\$ 795.00
Panasonic	PK-700/750	\$ 795.00
Panasonic	PK-600	\$ 725.00
Panasonic	WV-3200	\$ 795.00
Panasonic	WV-3320	\$ 875.00
RCA	CC-003	\$ 580.00
RCA	CC-006	\$ 750.00
Sony	HVC-1000	\$1095.00

Recorders

JVC	HR-4110	\$ 950.00 2 hr.
Panasonic	PV-2600	\$ 795.00 2/4 hr.
Panasonic	PV-3100	\$ 850.00 2/4/6 hr.
Panasonic	PV-3200	\$ 930.00 2/4/6 hr.
Panasonic	NV-8100	\$ 995.00 2 hr.
RCA	VDP-150	\$ 795.00 2/4 hr.
Sony	SL-3000	\$1025.00 3 hr.

All portables are AC/DC. We have all accessories in stock!

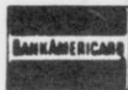
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They Open and Close Like a Book To Protect Your Cassettes

Black Vinyl Grain - Amaray Brand
Beta 20 for \$22.00
VHS 20 for \$23.00

Brown or White Smooth Vinyl
Mid-America Brand
(without label holders, deduct 10%)
Beta 20 for \$30.00
VHS 20 for \$33.00

\$4.00 for shipping each lot of 20



BETA
U-MATIC
VHS



SUMMER TAPE SPECIALS

Alien—\$55.00
The Jerk—\$50.00
Bruce Lee, Super Dragon—\$40.00
Star Virgin (X)—\$60.00
Story of O (X)—\$55.00
Superman—\$52.00
Electric Horseman—\$50.00
Fantasy (X)—\$60.00
Halloween—\$40.00
Mr. Bill Show—\$27.00

Sony Industrial/Professional Products
(in stock)
Call for quotes!

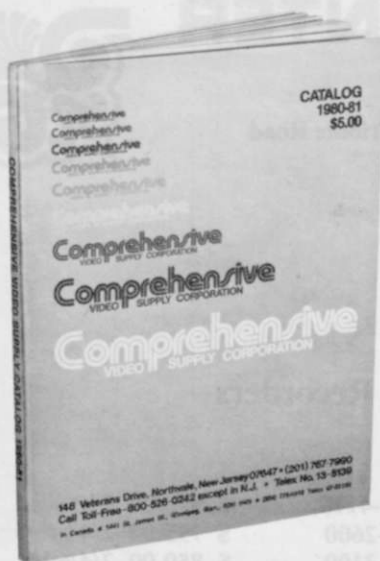
VO-2611
LVO-7000
GXC-1640
VO-4800
SLO-323

\$1850.00
\$3260.00
\$2325.00
\$2560.00
\$1250.00

- Add \$10.00 to all camera orders for shipping and insurance.
- Add \$20.00 to all recorders for shipping and insurance.
- Write or call toll free for adult list!
- Please allow 2 weeks for personal checks to clear.
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TITLE _____

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Western Roundup!

★★★The Rough Riders★★★

Buck Jones, Tim McCoy, Raymond Hatton

a double feature:

West of the Law
and

Below the Border

VHS II \$35

Beta II \$30

Plus \$2 shipping

Ted Reinhart
Edgewater Acres Resort
Alexandria, PA 16611



INTRODUCING 3-D Video title LETTER SETS!

FOR THE HOME VIDEO PRODUCER!
GIVE YOUR HOME VIDEO PRODUCTIONS THAT HOLLYWOOD PROFESSIONAL LOOK WITH INFORMATIVE TITLES, CAPTIONS AND CREDITS.

HERNARD SET # DP-90 THE PROFESSIONAL VIDEO TITLE LETTER SET: CONTAINS OVER 1000 3-D LETTERS AND CHARACTERS. COMPLETE ASSORTMENT OF SELF STICKING (CAN BE USED OVER AND OVER) 1 1/4" - 3/4" - 1/2" UPPER AND LOWER CASE, CONDENSED AND EXPANDED LETTERS. INCLUDES TITLING STAND, COLORED BACK-GROUNDS, AND A VARIETY OF SPECIAL CHARACTERS FOR THAT SUPER DYNAMIC PUNCH.

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INCLUDES SHIPPING

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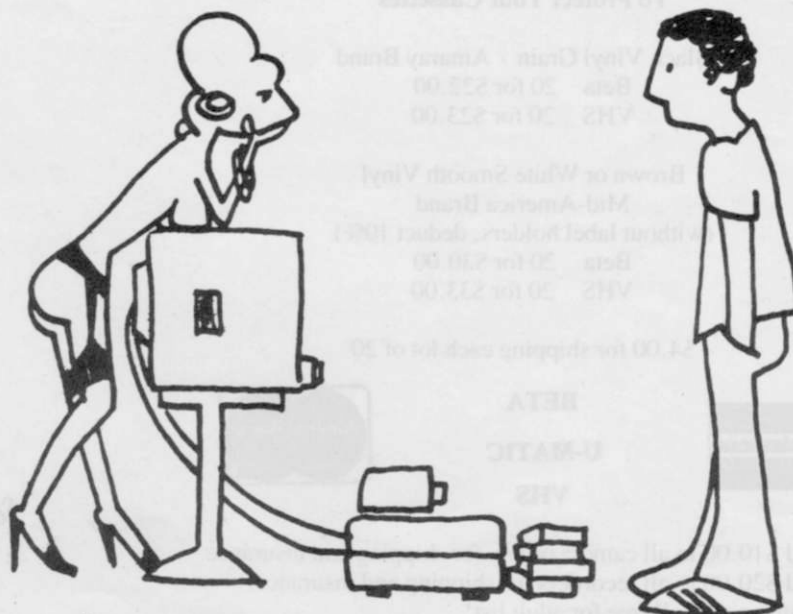
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UPPER DARBY, PA. 19082

OR CALL (215) 352-5559

*DEALER INQUIRIES INVITED.



'NOT NOW... I'M TAPING STAR TREK'

—NOTICE—

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



MINI-ADS

FOR SALE

QUASAR VX 2 hour tapes \$15 a piece, box of 5 for \$70 (I pay postage). All recorded once with classic shows: *Twilight Zone*, *Maverick*, *Time Tunnel*, etc. First come---David Kirk, 7522 Avenue T, Brooklyn NY 11234 (212) 763-6284 (weekends).

Video Disc Player (Magnavox) w/5 FREE discs - *Ali Fights*; *Marx Bros.*; *Bolero*; *Silent Safari*; *Solar System*. Perfect condition \$595 (includes shipping). Mike Boyce, 3 Consulate Drive, Tuckahoe NY 10707 (914) 793-0377.

FREE - 8 movies with purchase of Video Disc Player \$795. New Condition. Don Bayer, R.D. 1, Box 240, Sheffield MA 01257 (413) 229-8926 after 6:00 pm EST.

Two XXX-rated VHS tapes. *Daddy's Little Girl* and *Teenage Trouble* \$20 each or \$35 for both. Will also consider trade. Stanley Lienti, 220 N. State Street, Shillington PA 19607.

Sold my Betamax--need to sell old tapes or trade for VHS tapes. 11 tapes - \$10 each. 10 tapes with X-2 movies, \$15 each. Movies include: *Invasion of Bodysnatchers*, *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *It Happened One Night*, *The Women*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *GWTW*

\$30. Or will sell all 21 for \$200. Include postage with order or SASE with inquiries. Susan Horn, 121 Randy Road, Crowley TX 76036 (817) 297-9857.

Used pre-recorded Beta videocassettes: *Superman* - 6 cartoons from the 1940's (55 min.-Niles Film Products) \$15; *Courageous Cat* - cartoons (60 min.-Video Tape Network) \$15; *Young Comedians Jamboree* - with Andy Kaufman, early Robin Williams, David Steinberg, others (76 min.-Time Life Video) \$20; *Super Bloopers 2* - outtake films and commercials (about 45 min.-HKA Cinema Service, now known as Video Dimensions) \$15; Scotch B-HC Video Head Cleaner cassette - never used - \$20. Mark Kernes, Apt. 909, 3900 Chestnut, Philadelphia PA 19104.

PANASONIC B&W Video Camera WV-450A with 16mm f1.6 lens, built-in microphone, power supply, cords for Sony and VHS recorders. Two years old, but used less than 30 hours. \$140 (I will pay UPS shipping). D.L. Cason, 3733 Frostwood Road, Knoxville TN 37921.

BETA

WANTED: *Asylum*, *Vault of Horror*, *Electra Glide in Blue*, *Conqueror Worm*, *Dr. Terror's House of Horrors*, *Island of Terror*, *Tales From the Crypt*, *Blood Demon*, *Curse of the Demon*,

Torture Garden, *Gone in 60 Seconds*, *Premature Burial*. Have ON-TV. Let's swap lists. Jim Boeckmann, 2782 Hazelton, Cincinnati OH 45239 (513) 825-4131.

Want Japanese sword movies, Charlie Chan, Science Fiction. I am just starting out and my collection is rather small at present. Also looking for Japanese swords in any condition. Alan Luck, 119 38th Avenue North, Nashville TN 37209 (615) 297-6029 best after 10:30 pm CT.

Wanted Beta 2. James Bond - interested in all of them, especially *Goldfinger* and most recent ones such as *Moonraker*, preferably without commercials. Also *Superman (the Movie)*, Disney classics. Will trade lists for swapping. No X-rated. J.W. Terry, 2122 Woodhaven Cape, Girardeau MO 63701.

Beta brand-name tapes to trade for similar quality: Warners *Superman*; *VCX Debbie Does Dallas*, preferably for M. Chambers; *Marked Marvel* for another Nostalgia Merchant serial; Roy Rogers double *Robin Hood-Navajo Trail* for *Trig-ger Jr.* or other Nostalgia Merchant double Western except Rogers (collection complete); Bill Elliott *Hellfire* for other Nostalgia Merchant or equivalent. Interested in Blackhawk Autrys. Elmer Kelton, 2460 Oxford, San Angelo TX 76901.

Important New Instructions Re: Advertising

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

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

DEADLINES: Ads absolutely **MUST** reach us by the deadline. Please, no more phone calls and speedy express deliveries after the deadline. The deadlines for the next two issues are: Issue #27-August 1 and #28-October 1.

MINI-ADS



Am desperate for educational programs or movies. Have lots of uncut movies in Beta II, *Towering Inferno*, *Sound of Music*, *Bridge Too Far* and 100 others. I have everything but educational/National Geographic specials, etc. Will trade lists. S. Wilson, Box 1366, CFPO 5056, Belleville Ontario Canada K0K 3R0.

Wanted: Any *Irish Rovers*, *Department S*, and certain episodes of *Virginian*, *Combat*, *Wagon Train*, b&w *Gunsmoke*, *Hitchcock*, *Daniel Boone*, and *My Partner The Ghost*. If you can help, please write or phone N. Hardin, P.O. Box 7834, Reno NV 89510 (702) 322-4309.

Thunderbirds and Stingray are now running in Houston. If interested contact: J.M. Dolan, 5302 Pagewood Street, Houston TX 77056 (713) 965-0853 (late hours).

WANTED DESPERATELY ON BETA: Movies - *Some Like It Hot* (1959; Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis, Jack Lemmon) with no commercials. Older TV series - *Robin Hood*; *Sea Hunt* (any and all); *Bonanza* episode with TV Guide writeup "The Cartwright Boys vie for the attention of lovely Dolores Tenino (Marianna Hill)," and the following Superman episodes, uncut: *The Talking Clue*, *The Lucky Cat* (both color), in addition to the three episodes listed in my mini-ad in the June edition (which appeared in the Just Plain Wanted section). Quality must be good. Commercials can be left in in the TV series. Can trade the same TV shows listed in my June mini-ad with the following exceptions: Can now offer *Mission: Impossible*, *Ghost and Mrs. Muir*, *My Three Sons*, *Munsters*, *Rookies*, and *Mayberry RFD*; but *Addams Family* and *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* are no longer shown here. Can also trade any movies that may come up. Send me your list and I'll send you mine. Let's also trade TV Guides - maybe we've both missed something. Jim O'Toole, 123 N. 4th Street, Apt. 308, Mankato MN 56001 (507) 387-3616.

ROCK 'N' ROLL: Owner of SL-8200 & SL-5600 wishes to correspond with serious videophiles who can dub onto BETA format rock clips, concerts, promos, movies, etc. Also into movies, short subjects, animation and TV. Have access to LA area cable systems and can dub to VHS & U-Matic. To receive my lengthy list all ya gotta do is send me yours. I W-I-L-L send you mine, unlike some of the other "people" who place these ads. Your 15¢ investment may reap you many hours of viewing pleasure. Do it! Lou Cohen, P.O. Box 861, Cypress CA 90630. (Phone # comes with list).

In Beta II I have 35 action serials, 38 Laurel and Hardy sound shorts, many Laurel and Hardy movies, 53 Amos 'N Andy shows and 13 Charlie Chan movies in fine quality to trade for same. Also looking for *Have Gun Will Travel* and *Hec Ramsey* episodes starring Richard Boone. Bob Wachtel, 1354 East 64th Street, Brooklyn NY 11234 (212) 763-1490.

Wanted in Beta format for trading purposes, Richard Pryor NBC, Jonathan Winters Show, Firesign Theatre HBO, *Topper*, *Burns & Allen*, *Bilko*, *You Bet Your Life* (Groucho Marx), *Zachariah*, *200 Motels*, *Last Days of the Fillmore*, *Little Shop of Horrors* and cartoons. Will swap lists. Jim McGuinn, 1617 East Alder Street, Walla Walla WA 99362 (509) 525-9080.

Adult cassettes, exchanged for only \$2 each to cover return shipping. Beta only. Have hundreds of titles. Will also trade one XXX-Rated cassette for two used cassettes. Also want Amos 'N Andy, Smith & Dale. Have oldies, Chaplin, Keystone Cops, cartoons, serials. Hal Allace, 8633 N. Springfield, Skokie IL 60076 (312) 676-1771.

WANTED ON BETA II - 1974 movie *Open Season* starring Peter Fonda, John Philip Law, William Holden and Cornelia Sharpe. Also want sharp copies of the following: *Godfather I and II*, *Marathon Man*, *7% Solution*, *The Point* and any performances by Kenny Rankin, Al Green, Morgana King, Al Jolson and Roger Whitaker. I have 35 action serials, 53 Amos 'N Andy shows, 38 Laurel and Hardy sound shorts and many other items to trade. Bob Wachtel, 1354 East 64th Street, Brooklyn NY 11234 (212) 763-1490.

Any RED SKELTON sketches from TV in the 1960's. D.L. Cason, 3733 Frostwood Road, Knoxville TN 37921.

It will be WORTH your while if you can supply me with UNCUT tapes of the following movies: *Drive-In*; *The Bitch* (U.K.); *Don't Look Back* (Bob Dylan documentary); *Hieronymous Merkin*; *Duck, You Sucker*; *El Topo*; *Get To Know Your Rabbit*; *Hellzapoppin*; *The Holy Mountain*; *The Invisible Boy*; *If...*; *Just A Gigolo* (U.K.); *Just Imagine*; *Mr. Freedom* (French); *O Lucky Man*; *100 Monsters* (Japanese); *Patty* (X-rated story of Patty Hearst); *The Stud* (U.K.); *Salon Kitty* (X-rated); *The Twonky*; *Sisters*; *Zachariah*. And these TV shows: *Search* - any with Tony Franciosa or Doug McClure; *Under Milk Wood* (PBS); *Way Out*. Contact the VERY generous Mark Kernes, Apt. 909, 3900 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia PA 19104. (VHS is OK if it's all you've got.)

Un-cut only, *The Sweet Ride*, *Second Wind*, *Breezy*, *The Stud*, *The Bitch*, *Forty Carats*, *Truckstop Women*, *Vampyres*, *Baron Blood*, *Master of Love*, *The Florida Connection*, *Fast Company*, *Five Easy Pieces*, *Devils Rain*. J.M. Dolan, 5302 Pagewood Street, Houston TX 77056 (713) 965-0853 (late hours).

VHS

I want on VHS *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, uncut, SP preferred. Helen Ward, Lowery Lane, Mendham NJ 07945.

Wanted: 40's Bowery Boys, nostalgia titles like *The Big Broadcast* and 1946 *The Big Sleep*. Have few cassettes but over 2,000 nostalgia rarities for trade: radio, tv, serials, toys, premiums, comics, etc. Want films like *Apocalypse Now*, *Across 110th Street*, *Between the Lines*, *Bounty Killer*, *Cisco Pike*, *Dealing*, *Dusty & Sweets*, *Deer Hunter*, *Electra-Glide*, *Gimme Shelter*, *International House*, *Jimi Hendrix*, *Kentucky Fried*, *Last Tango*, *Lenny*, *Marat Sade*, *The Mack*, *Mean Streets*, *Medium Cool*, *Putney Swope*, *Superfly*, *Slap Shot*, *Wattstax*, similar. Have select personal memorabilia from tv, movie, rock-stars - will swap. Call me. (314) 649-5048. Rex Miller, Star Route Box 331-J, East Prairie MO 63845.

WANTED DESPERATELY: *Casablanca*, *The Big Sleep*, *To Have and Have Not*, *Treasure of Sierra Madre*, *The Caine Mutiny*, *Dead Reckoning*. Need these in VHS. Will do anything reasonable to obtain copies. D.L. Nichols, P.O. Box 64712, Lubbock TX 79464 (806) 794-4109.

Established Videophile looking for any concert footage of the rock group BOSTON. Old or new material, Evening Magazine segment, etc. Even one song on videotape would be greatly appreciated. Also interested in video of many other groups, no disco. *James at 15/16*. Does anybody have them? Also the movie *The Bawdy Adventures of Tom Jones*. Have much to trade and many connections. Come on someone, help me out with these last few items I need. Michi W. and Mike B. thanks for all your help so far. Ken Fix, PSC Box 2224, Dover AFB DE 19901.

ALL TRADING LISTS WANTED, and uncut Very Good to Excellent VHS: *Goodbye Norma Jean*, *Phantom of Paradise*, *Freaks*, *Female Trouble*, *Gay Deceivers*, *Warhol*, and numerous films of all categories, especially the unusual and camp. ANXIOUS to swap blank tape or movies NOW. J. Brennan, 654½ W. Oakdale, Chicago IL 60657.

MINI-ADS



Wanted A-quality, XXX-Rated dubs, science fiction, horror, paranormal features or golden age TV!!! VHS.SP play only!! Can trade from current HBO cable guide or New York area local TV (*Dr. Who?* Other?) Also, collector's interested in comic books will trade comic book sets price guide valued for fresh blank tapes or prerecorded features & dubs. Tony LePore, RD2-L62 Ludwig Drive, Monroe NY 10950 (914) 496-7894.

Wanted good VHS copies of recent movies like *Life of Brian*, *The Fog*, *American Gigolo*, *Black Hole*, *Silent Scream*, *Changeling*, *Star Wars*, etc. O. Sy, 765-29 San Antonio Road, Palo Alto CA 94303 (415) 493-8148.

Wanted from our honorable VHS owning British cousins complete hour and a half BBC and commercial television coverage of May 5th SAS assault on Iranian Embassy. Will trade or buy. Send requirements first letter. Rule Britannia. Goodman, 227 Watson Street, Suite C, Monterey CA 93940 USA.

Wanted on VHS *Abie's Irish Rose*, *Something of Value*, *Faithful in my Fashion*, *Somebody Up There Likes Me*, *Never Say Goodbye* with Rock Hudson, *Fraulein*, *See Here*, *Pvt. Hargrove*, *Shine on Harvest Moon* with Dennis Morgan, *Benny Goodman Story*, *Buster Keaton Story*. Joanne Kessler, Box 160533, Miami FL 33116.

WANTED: Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, *Rear Window*, *Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956), *Rope*, *Trouble With Harry*. Also *Beach Ball*, *Where's Poppa?*, *How to Succeed With Sex* (Circa 1970). I need other Hitchcock titles; want *Vertigo* desperately. Thanks for response to my first ad. John Hornsby, P.O. Box 848, Mandeville LA 70448.

VHS: DESPERATELY wanted on LP, episodes of *Longstreet--Nakia--I Spy--Route 66--Here Come The Brides*. Pilot: Marcus Welby & Serpico, Rich Little Show w/ Glaser & Soul 26-4-76. Anything with actors James Stacy and Glaser & Soul. We'll trade or make other arrangements. Sylvie Camden, 579 Boyer Street, Granby, Quebec Canada J2G 8C9.

Wanted: VHS; I am looking for someone in Hollywood who gets KTLA. I am interested in Gene Autry movies and other westerns. I have a large list to trade and have HBO. Michelle Peters, P.O. Box 781, Pontiac MI 48056 (313) 589-2492.

We are attempting to get a tape exchange club going in the Orange and Rockland area of New York, and northern New Jersey. If interested

contact me. All ratings from G to XXX. John Devine, Box 487, Greenwood Lake NY 10925.

WANTED: Warhol's *Frankenstein*, *Rocky Horror*, *Candy*, *Eraserhead*, *Empire Strikes Back*, 2001, *Terror of Tiny Town*, *Zachariah*, *Dawn of the Dead*, any Beatles, Streisand, or X-rated, plus *Ugly George* and *Midnight Blue*. Trade only. Send list. Keep it fun. Kurt Neiburg, Box 1555, Clemson SC 29631 (803) 654-5010.

BARBRA STREISAND VHS Tapes Wanted. Any appearances, interviews, award presentations, etc. Especially need Streisand on 1969 Oscars and 1977 Grammy Awards. Anything and everything wanted on Streisand. Randy Emerian, 5824 East Hamilton Avenue, Fresno CA 93727 (209) 255-3200.

WANTED: Certain episodes of *The Untouchables* to finish my collection. Will trade the same or old TV shows, TV westerns & B westerns. I have many many shows no longer in syndication. All letters answered VHS & VX200. E.J. Stuart, Jr., 228 Greenbrier Road, Weirton WV 26062.

Please help! VHS couple desperately wants to buy, borrow or trade for: CA Jan 1, *Midnight Special*, *Kirshner*, etc., 1975 Tony Awards, Cher, Judy, any magic shows or magicians, Betty Boop, the 2 Ronnies, *Hot L Baltimore*, *Smothers Brothers*, *Manhattan Transfer*, *Rock Follies*, *Disney World Special* with Luci Arnez, David Steinberg's psychiatrist sketch with Bill Soluga. Need urgently someone to tape occasional show on HBO. Have to trade large collection of movies - TV - also ON TV & Z. J. Good, 310 South San Gabriel Blvd., San Gabriel CA 91776.

WANTED: Good Quality VHS copies of *Last House on the Left*, *Prophecy*, *Dawn of the Dead*, *They Came from Within*, *Saturn 3*, *Caligula*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and so forth. Have interesting list of items to trade. Mark Mitckes, 209 Sutters Mill Lane, Knoxville TN 37919.

WANTED DESPERATELY: The movie *Zachariah* starring Don Johnson. I will do almost anything to get this movie. I have over 300 movies and 150 television shows to trade with. Brian Gray, 5711 South Gary Place, Tulsa OK 74105.

Wanted Desperately On VHS the following movies: *Saratoga Trunk*; *Inn Of The Sixth Happiness*; *Notorious*; *Marked Woman*. E. Lockett, 712 Ashland Avenue, Santa Monica CA 90405.

Hopalong Cassidy, Rat Patrol, Lost in Space, Charlie Chan, I Spy, Ghost and Mrs. Muir, Maverick, Mission Impossible, Twilight Zone,

Man from Uncle are running here (Washington DC)....I'm looking for Western TV series (Gene Autry, Range Rider, Buffalo Bill, Jr., Have Gun, Will Travel, (early) Gunsmoke, 1950's comedy-variety (like Colgate Comedy Hour)....I have several hundred issues TV Guide for trade/sale (1953-1970). Let's swap current TV Guides.... Joe Oleksiewicz, 430 East Nelson Avenue, Alexandria VA 22301.

Un-cut only. *The Sweet Ride*, *Second Wind*, *Breezy*, *The Stud*, *The Bitch*, *Forty Carats*, *Truckstop Women*, *Vampyres*, *Baron Blood*, *Master of Love*, *The Florida Connection*, *Fast Company*, *Five Easy Pieces*, *Devils Rain*. J.M. Dolan, 5302 Pagewood Street, Houston TX 77056 (713) 965-0853 (late hours).

DISCS

Video Disc Player (Magnavox) w/5 FREE discs - Ali Fights; Marx Bros.; *Bolero*; *Silent Safari*; *Solar System*. Perfect condition - \$595 (includes shipping). Mike Boyce, 3 Consulate Drive, Tuckahoe NY 10707 (914) 793-0377.

JUST PLAIN WANTED

TV PILOTS: *Swat*, *McHale's Navy*, *Get Smart*, *F-Troop*, *I Spy*. PLUS ANY: *Car 54*, *Time Tunnel*, *Rifleman*, 1 hour *Twilight Zone*, *Green Hornet* (Secret of Sally Belle, Deadline for Death), *Ra-whide*, *My Favorite Martian*, 3 *Stooges* (uncut), *Astro Boy*. I have many old rare shows to trade. Write: David Kirk, 7522 Avenue T, Brooklyn NY 11234.

Opera and Shakespeare buffs see what the Opera Exchange Club has to offer (inexpensive) (by way of trade) to build your collection - VHS, SP, LP & SLP and Beta X-1, X-2 & X-3 speeds & modes. Soon hope to have PAL & SECAM compatibility. If you have operas to trade or sell send us your list or write for club information. G. Blair, 13711 Doty Avenue, Hawthorne CA 90250.

Wanted Desperately: *Beatles Around the World*, *Catch Us If You Can*, *Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1923), *Fatal Glass of Beer* (1932), *History of the Motion Picture* (Killam), *Smile* (1975), *Tonight 13th Anniversary Show* (1975), *Monty Python Meets Beyond the Fringe*, John Lennon (all), Elvis (first 4 Dorsey Brothers Shows, 1956), *Nosferatu* (1978), CBS-TV *SkyLab Special* (Cronkite 7/15/79). If you have ANY of the above, please contact me immediately! Thank you. Richard G. Seget (days: (201) 354-4900 ext. 22), or write c/o SEMCO VIDEOPILES, 158 Miller Street, Elizabeth NJ 07201.

MINI-ADS



WANTED VHS OR BETA - *Dog Pound Shuffle* (Spot) David Soul and Ron Moody. PBS Jazz Special with George Shearing, Eubie Blake, Teddy Wilson, and Marian McPartland. Babe Ruth (Perspective on Greatness) Channel 17 May 2. Have VHS or Beta Bogart, Cagney, flying and war to trade. Don Pierce, (505) 268-0520, 1013 San Mateo, SE Albuquerque NM 87108.

Need PAL contacts in ENGLAND and AUSTRALIA who accept NTSC in trade. Also need contacts there with PAL television and NTSC camera. And anyone else who can transfer NTSC tape through PAL camera to PAL tape. (Any U.S. military personnel in AUSTRALIA with equipment?) Barbara E. Warne, P.O. Box 4678, Albuquerque NM 87196.

Some of those faces on XXX's can get very boring!! If you have any VCX, Quality X, TUX, Essex, Calvista, AVC, Arrow, Video King, or Four Star Prerecorded Tapes, why not trade with me? No money involved. VHS or Beta formats. Especially want Calvistas' *Visions of Clair*, *Easy*, VCX *Tropic of Passion*, Essex *Lollipop Palace*. What do you have? Jack Laydon, 1427 South 9th Street, St. Charles IL 60174 (312) 584-4988. Please, no calls after 6 pm.

WISCONSIN (or nearby) RESIDENT wanted who made a tape of the 30 minute political by/about California Governor Jerry Brown, aired in March 1980. Would like a copy of program, will arrange details with you. Writing me a postcard is easiest. Paul Rayton, 4294 Verdugo View Drive, Los Angeles CA 90065 (213) 257-9169.

BIG BAND movies or soundies, Beta or VHS, need *Hollywood Hotel*, *The Gang's All Here*, *Sun Valley Serenade*, *Orchestra Wives*, *Benny Goodman Story*, *Gene Krupa Story*. Will buy or trade. (Have many movies & soundies.) Charles French, 9877 East Maplewood Circle, Englewood CO 80111.

Wanted on film or videotape (any format) the following: The Annie Christmas Special, NBC (Dec. 4, 1977); C'Mon Saturday, NBC, special preview of children's programs (Sept. 9, 1977); Captain Kangaroo, with Andrea McArdle as guest, CBS (Sept. 30, 1977); Mo & Joe, CBS (1974 TV Pilot for Mary Hartman with Andrea McArdle); Welcome Back Kotter, ABC (Feb. 3, 1977) (extended one hour episode all about Horshack with Andrea McArdle in the role of Horshack's kid sister Doris); The 50th Baseball All-Star Game, NBC (July 17, 1979) (with Andrea McArdle singing the national anthems for the U.S. & Canada.) Wonderama (from early 1977) (a local children's program out of New York City

with Andrea McArdle, and other cast members from the Broadway show *Annie* as guest stars.) I need reruns of these syndicated shows with Andrea McArdle on; *Dance Fever* and *The Palace* hosted by Jack Jones, and any talk shows, as I do not get many in town, can always find someone with equipment to playback on. I collect everything on Philadelphia's own singer-actress Andrea McArdle, Broadway's original "Annie." I will buy newspaper and magazine clippings, photos, programs, autographs, etc. Would also like to hear from anyone with a Quasar 1000 videorecorder. Bill Smutny, 2701 Leonard, La Crosse WI 54601 (608) 857-3341.

WANTED: Shakespeare's Twelfth Nite, VHS or Beta, name your terms. Fouled up and failed in my attempt to get it on PBS last month. Please help me out. G. Blair, 13711 Doty Avenue, Hawthorne CA 90250.

I will give ANYTHING for the following movies: *She-Devils on Wheels*; *Rockin' The Blues*; *Lucky Pierre*; *B-O-I-I-I-N-G!*; *Thunderbirds 6*; *Miss Nymphet's Zap-In*; *Mark of the Devil* (1970); *Mondo Topless*. Also interested in dozens of 50's/60's teen & rock films, such as *Devil's Angels*, *Beat Girl*, *Joy Ride*, *Teenage Doll*, *Jamboree*, *Go Johnny Go*, *Eegah*, as well as EARLY Russ Meyers, John Waters, and Warhol. I have an abundance of uncut movies/TV series to trade, including: *Saló*; *Rabid*; *Eraserhead*; *Blood Feast*; *Gore Gore Girls*; *Chainsaw*; 2001; *Clockwork Orange*; *W.C. Fields*, *Marlene Dietrich*, *Bond* (w/ Sean Connery) *Man From Uncle*; *Millionaire*; *Wyatt Earp*; *My Favorite Martian*; *Wagon Train*; *Saint*; *Twilight Zone HOUR*; *Cheylene*; *Time Tunnel*; *Dobie Gillis*; *Secret Agent*; *Green Hornet*; *Wild Wild West*; *Outer Limits*; *Invaders*; *Untouchables*; more! I'll even accept blank tapes in trade. Michael Burgujian, 15-35 146th Place, Whitestone NY 11357 (212) 746-4473.

DESPERATELY WANTED: *The War Widow* shown on PBS. Will trade blank tapes or currency. R. Meyer, 2492 N. Jerusalem Road, N. Bellmore NY 11710.

WANTED DESPERATELY on any tape format (prefer VHS); NBC - *First Fifty Years* and its sequels (*A Closer Look* Parts I and II); CBS - *On The Air*; ABC's 25th Anniversary; or any similar programs. R. Bry, 931 Himnan Avenue, Evanston IL 60202. PLEASE???

WANTED DESPERATELY: Quadrophonia, and any and all rock/new wave video. I have 250 movies and lots more! Brian Gray, 5711 South Gary Place, Tulsa OK 74105.

Un-cut only, *The Day Time Ended* or *When Time Ran Out*, *The Fog*, *Five Easy Pieces*, *Human Experiments*, *Love Camp 7*, *Devils Rain*, *Baron Blood*, *The Stud*, *The Bitch*, *Child Under A Leaf*, *The Wifemistress*, *Mackenna Gold*, *Kidnapped Coed*, *Forty Carats*, *Avanti*, *Breezy*, *Lady in Red* or *Bullets*, *Sin*, & *Bathtub Gin*, *Last House on the Left*, *Vigilante Force*, *Second Wind*. J.M. Dolan, 5302 Pagewood Street, Houston TX 77056 (713) 965-0853 (late hours).

WANTED DESPERATELY: The movie *Zacharia* starring Don Johnson. I will do almost anything to get this movie. I have over 300 movies and 150 television shows to trade with. Brian Gray, 5711 South Gary Place, Tulsa OK 74105.

Wanted Desperately On VHS the following movies: *Saratoga Trunk*; *Inn Of The Sixth Happiness*; *Notorious*; *Marked Woman*. E. Lockett, 712 Ashland Avenue, Santa Monica CA 90405.

Martin & Lewis reunion on 1976 MD Telethon - WANTED on VHS - Also, Martin hosting The Big Show (March 1980); any other Martin & Lewis TV appearances together.....Joe Oleksiewicz, 430 East Nelson Avenue, Alexandria VA 22301.

Desperately need people to record the following series, all PRESENTLY being aired somewhere: T.H.E. Cat; Sky King; Combat; Highway Patrol; Route 66; My Three Sons (b/w), and more! Top dollar for Way Out; Mr. Terrific; Tales of Tomorrow; 60's commercials & TV spots. Michael Burgujian, 15-35 146th Place, Whitestone NY 11357.

I have over 700 titles - a large Disney collection, various music tapes and many current and old movies - would like to work trade for "A" copies of....Ant & Ardvark cartoons, Tasmanian Devil cartoons, *The Sword & Stone*, *The Fox & Hound*, *The Last Picture Show* (uncut), *Carrie* (uncut), *The Texas Chain Saw Masacre*, any John Waters films. Send lists or call Jack Satter, 2017 Aspen, Garland TX 75042 (214) 495-0666.

PERSONAL

DRUGS, SEX, ROCK & ROLL!!! Wanting to start video music trading club. If interested, send lists, etc., to: Brian Gray, 5711 South Gary Place, Tulsa OK 74105.



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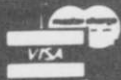
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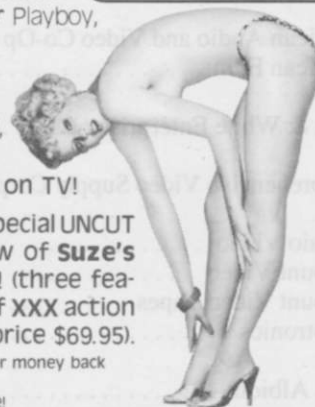
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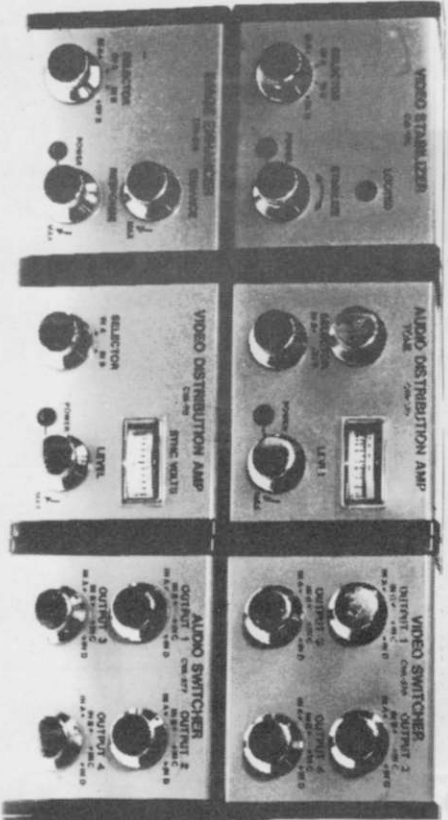
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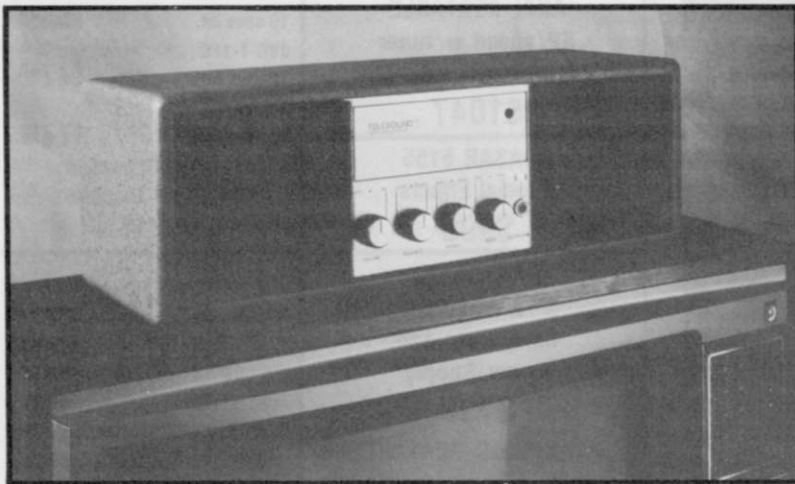


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ALL IN THE (VIDEO) FAMILY

While social critics debate the effect of television on the American family, the tube has independently



begun to grow a family of its own. According to Ken Ingram, senior vice president of Magnavox and chairman of the Electronic Industries Association's Consumer Electronics Group, "The television receiver is becoming more of a video terminal which will accommodate a vast array of accessories."

Ingram says that "video systems" will be the catchword of the '80s, rendering today's concept of television obsolete. Computers, home-control devices and virtually all home entertainment equipment will be interconnected, synchronized and programmed in many American homes.

"We're entering the era of videorecorders—a period of great promise, but a period of uncertain conditions that will test our ingenuity and resourcefulness," says Ingram. In other words, where will we plug everything in?□



he says, "all of whose movements are speeded up considerably. Things happen very much as they do when you switch quickly from one TV channel to the next. The movements all have a rapid stop-go quality—directions change abruptly and the dancers must move with highly controlled speed."□
Does he mean SP, LP or SLP?□

Viewpoints is a monthly potpourri of video news written by Video Review's Managing Editor David Hajdu. Have you heard an unusual story related to video? We'd like to hear about it.

" where will we plug everything in?"

David Hajdu, Video Review

"How do I connect both VCR's to dub?"

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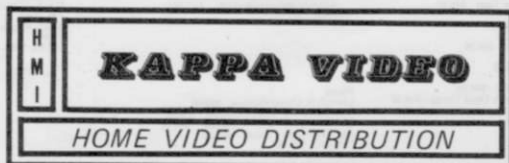


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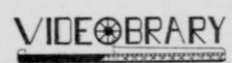
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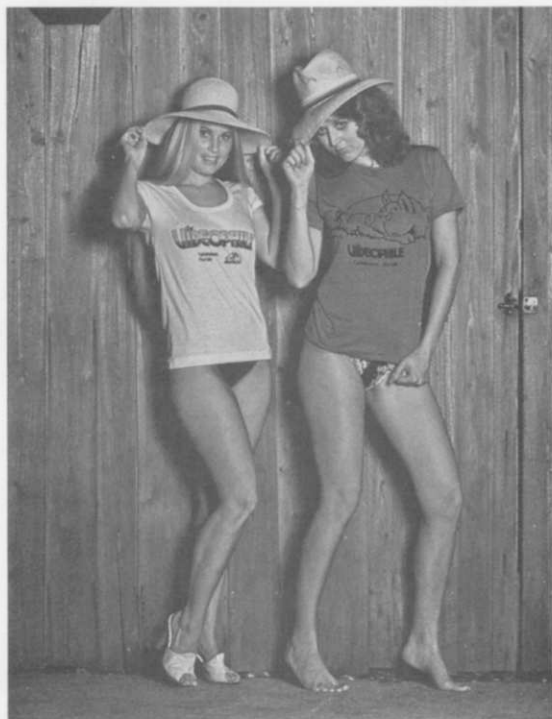
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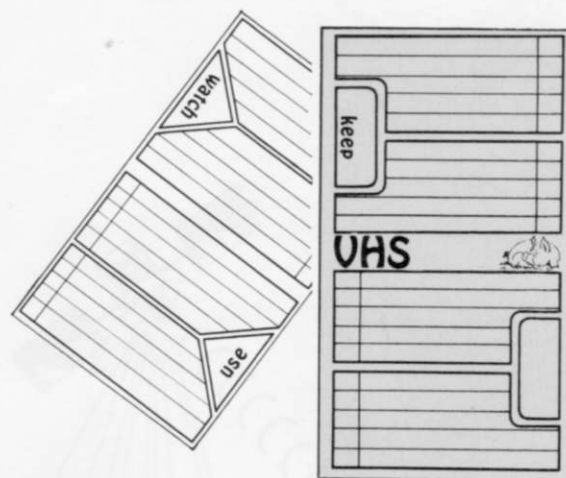
Despite popular demand, we are proud to present *The Videophile* t-shirts! These are not cheap paper "iron on" transfer shirts, nor are they of the rubbery "peel-off-in-the-dryer" type. Rather they are expensive 50% polyester/50% cotton shirts which have been individually hand screened. The shirts are available in two designs, two styles, and three prices, as follows:

Men's Blue "piggie" design	\$6.00
Women's Blue "piggie" design	\$7.00
Men's "color logo" design	\$7.00
Women's "color logo" design	\$8.00

The men's shirts come in sizes S, M, L, and XL. Women's come only in size L (which is, in fact, smaller than a men's S) and are of a higher quality knit. Hey, it's just money! Besides, you'll love 'em.

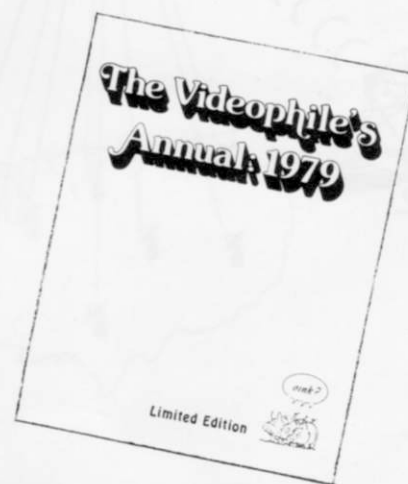
Cassette index cards

Cassette index cards for both formats! 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 are custom designed to fit into Beta and VHS 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 2 pads for \$2.50.



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It's about time! *The Videophile's Annual 1979* is finally available. Within its portfolio we have for you facsimile reprints of TVN #7 and #8, an index to the first 19 issues, a complete reprint of the 100 page decision in the famous Universal/Disney/Sony "Betamax" copyright lawsuit, and an exclusive interview with our founder, publisher and editor, which he hopes will put all that talk to rest once and for all. This is a limited edition of only 1,000 copies and will not be reprinted. At \$10, it's no bargain, but collector's items never are.



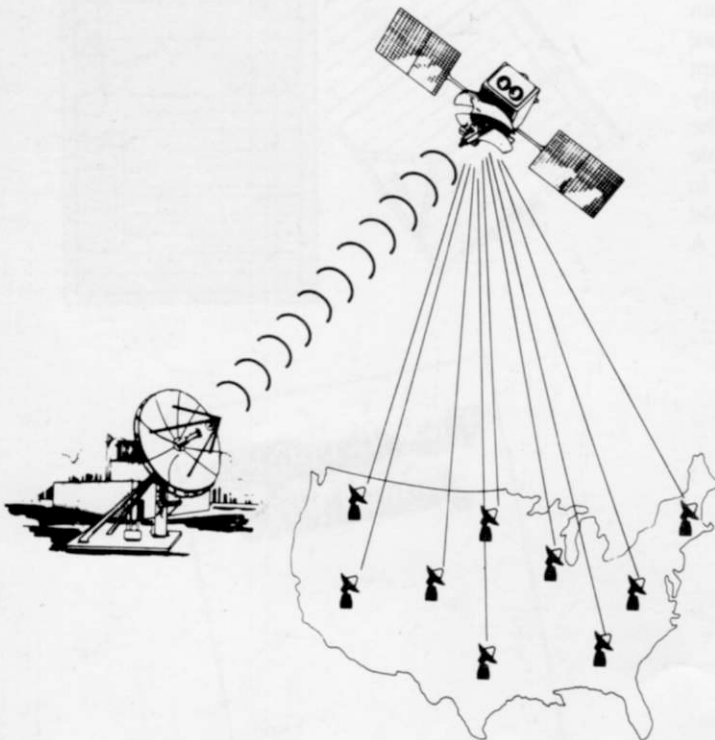
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