



Newsletter

October 2015 - No. 39

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In This Issue

Phono stages
Digital sources
Jelco
LS35a
IsoTek
Secondhand Equipment

Quick Links

[Record Doctor V](#)
[GSP Gram Amp 2 SE phono stage](#)
[SMSL X3](#)
[AirTry](#)
[Pro.2 WMR14](#)
[Jelco tonearms](#)
[Rogers LS35a speakers](#)
[IsoTek power conditioners](#)
[SecondHand Equipment](#)
[On Sale](#)
[Demo](#)
[Clearance](#)



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07 3344 5756

Dear Brian,

Follow us on Facebook

We are pleased to announce that we've finally launched a [Facebook page](#) and I hope you'll visit it for more timely updates and news than these occasional newsletters can provide.

I have just invested in a new microscope and now can offer a cartridge inspection service. If you are worried that your stylus may be worn

you can send it to me for inspection. The cost is \$22.00, or FREE if you purchased the cartridge from us. We still offer the Garrott Lab inspection as well, which is more comprehensive because it also covers the suspension and suitability for re-tipping or repair.

With the Xmas selling period approaching, a shipment of our most popular product, the [Record Doctor V](#) vacuum record cleaning machine has arrived and is an ideal gift for a vinyl record enthusiast.

For newsletter readers there is a special offer of FREE postage ON ALL PRODUCTS from now to the end of next month. Use the coupon code NOV15FP on the Shopping Cart page.

Once again this year we will create a Xmas Gift category in November to assist you with ideas for presents for "stereo types".

We also have [ON SALE](#), [DEMO](#), [SECONDHAND](#), and [CLEARANCE](#) categories.



Happy listening

Brian Maddern

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Phono Stages



What's a phono stage, and why do you need one?

When the tiny wiggles in a vinyl record are tracked by a magnetic cartridge the amount of signal voltage generated is very small (even less for low output moving coil cartridges).

So the first thing a phono stage has to achieve is to amplify that voltage up to a level similar to that produced by a CD player or tuner, in order to allow the power amplifier to drive the speakers sufficiently.

Bass signals are recorded on the vinyl at a reduced level, and the treble frequencies are

boosted to be higher than the background noise, so the second function is that this frequency contour has to be reversed. The RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America) agreed to a standard for this in 1953 and all phono stages since then conform to that standard.

Nearly all amplifiers from the 60s to the 80s had a phono stage as part of their input circuitry, and connecting to it was done via RCA sockets labelled PHONO. Since the 90s, when CDs dominated the recorded music scene, most amplifiers DO NOT have PHONO inputs, so a separate phono stage (or phono pre-amplifier) is required. Even if your amplifier does have an inbuilt phono stage there is an advantage in using an external one. The reason for this is that most inbuilt phono stages are minimal, and share the power supply with the rest of the amplifier. In hi fi we find that separate components usually perform their functions better than units with many functions built in, and this is an example.

There's quite a history of the evolution of phono stages, and one man who probably knows more than anyone about that development is Graham Slee. If you are interested in finding out more about phono stages he has quite a story at <http://www.gspaudio.co.uk/all-about-the-phono-preamp.htm>.

We have [phono preamps](#) from \$130 to over \$4000. The photo is of our most popular phono stage over the last 13 years, the [GSP Gram Amp 2 Special Edition](#) which sells for \$495.00 and is sold on a moneyback trial basis. Don't forget there's FREE POSTAGE during November.

Digital Sources



High quality streaming to your stereo

Although this business has focussed on vinyl reproduction for the last 13 years, the wide availability of digital sources makes it impossible to ignore that method, particularly now the quality has progressed way past the original MP3 to high definition services. While writing this article I am listening to Spotify Premium, high quality streaming from my MacBook Pro to an [SMSL X3 lossless wi fi receiver](#) (\$308). The quality is excellent, and the range of artists and titles available is staggering.

We have two other wi fi receivers available, including the [AirTry](#), which is only \$49.95 including postage. It works with iPhones and Android phones, and is far better than Bluetooth streaming which has a very limited broadcast range. With iTunes on a Mac you can set up multiple AirTries in different locations and choose which ones you stream to, which gives you the equivalent of a Sonos system, but utilising your existing equipment. To do similar on a Windows computer you need AirFoil software (which is also available for Mac if you want to use a music service other than iTunes). There are now discounts for multiple purchases of AirTries.

Another very reasonably priced unit is the [Pro.2 WMR14 Wi-Fi Music Receiver](#) at \$69.95 which like the AirTry works with AirPlay and DLNA/UPnP devices.

As well as streaming services, you can also purchase high resolution audio files, store them on your computer or smart phone and then play them via a USB cable to a DAC (digital to analog converter). The direct connection will give better results than wi fi, and you won't get the occasional dropouts, but the difference is not enough to overcome the convenience of the wireless method unless you are listening critically. The SMSL X3 also includes USB and micro SD inputs. For output there's RCA, Coaxial, and a full size headphone socket. So it is the most versatile and highest quality of the three.

Jelco tonearms



Best value, most versatile tonearm

In July, Decibel Distribution was appointed sole Australian distributor for Jelco tonearms. Jelco has been making tonearms for over 40 years and have produced them for many famous brands. The current range includes the popular [SA-750D](#), a versatile, superbly made unit at a very reasonable price. It

provides a worthwhile upgrade to the basic models on Rega and Linn turntables. Initially, a limited range will be stocked, but all [Jelco products](#) are available.

According to Mark Baker of Origin Live, the tonearm is the second most important contributor to the sound quality one experiences from a vinyl record player, so upgrading to a better tonearm can make a bigger difference than changing the cartridge.

One word of caution, however, as the deck itself is the most important component, it doesn't make sense to upgrade the tonearm and cartridge of many basic turntables, it's better to trade them in on something better. And my old rule of thumb that you need to spend double to get a significant upgrading of the quality of sound applies to turntables as well as most other components in a stereo system. If you need some help deciding whether to upgrade your existing turntable or go to a new one please email or phone me to discuss your options. enquiry@decibelhifi.com.au or 07 3344 5756. FREE POSTAGE during November.

Rogers LS3/5a speakers



A legendary loudspeaker is re-introduced

In the early 1970's, BBC UK decided to develop their own studio and outside broadcasting (OB) monitor speakers. A small format monitor speaker was needed to give consistent sound reproduction quality across their many studios and field-based recording and broadcasting facilities. This gave rise to a design using KEF drivers and custom designed crossovers using no less than 30 components, to ensure a smooth and linear response across the usable frequency range. The design became very popular, and was licensed in 1975 to several

companies to produce the units in quantity. According to Wikipedia, the LS3/5a model code designates this as "Outside Broadcasting model 5, revision A" miniature monitor loudspeaker.

In 1974 Jim Rogers was one of the first to be granted a licence by the BBC to manufacture these loudspeakers. Now Rogers International (UK) Ltd has produced a [65th Anniversary Edition](#) of these legendary speakers.

There have been numerous reviews of the LS3/5a since the 70s but this latest version has now been reviewed by several people. Have a read of these three ...

<http://www.stereo.net.au/reviews/rogers-ls3-5a-65th-anniversary-edition-loudspeakers/>

<http://www.6moons.com/audioreviews2/rogers/4.html>

http://www.enjoythemusic.com/hificritic/vol3_no3/rogers_ls35.htm

Demonstrations of these remarkable little loudspeakers are by appointment at our Brisbane premises. We are also prepared to sell them on a moneyback 14 day trial basis. And as a **Xmas bonus** we will include a pair of [Apollo Olympus 6 speaker stands](#) in the price of \$2250 (and FREE POSTAGE during November).

IsoTek power conditioners

IsoTek[®]
www.isoteksystems.com



Clean power, pure sound

Our domestic power supply was never designed to provide "clean" power to sensitive electronic devices like computers and audio visual equipment. The term "dirty power" can be legitimately applied to what is the first input to your stereo system. As there is no filtering in the power supply, interference from appliances in your own house and even your neighbours' causes a background level of noise in your stereo that prevents

the equipment sounding as well as is possible. And normal power leads act as aerials for airborne radio frequency interference (RFI) from the multitude of wireless devices around your home. IsoTek claim your system is likely to be operating at less than 80% of its potential.

IsoTek is an English company that for the last 20 years has been investigating and developing ways to clean up the power supply for audio visual equipment. They have a wide range of devices from power cords and boards to full sine wave generators. We offer them on a

money-back trial basis. Phone or email me to discuss which models would seem to be the most appropriate to try with the equipment you have. Many customers have found that improving the power supply has made their current equipment sound so much better they haven't needed to spend on major upgrades.

To give some guidance as to which products might suit a particular client's equipment IsoTek recommend their ['Discovery'](#) product range for systems under \$5,000, ['Performance'](#) items for systems in the \$5000 to \$20000 range, and ['Select'](#) and ['Ultimate'](#) for higher value systems.

As an introductory offer we have discounted prices on many of the IsoTek items on the website. See the [PROMOTIONS](#) category for the "[IsoTek Power Challenge](#)".

As well as the listings of products on our website, there is more information, reviews, testimonials, and news on the [IsoTek website](#).

Secondhand Equipment

Oldies but goodies

Secondhand equipment can be a bargain if in good working condition but there are risks in buying from ebay, gumtree etc. due to misinformation, lack of support etc. and it can be very disappointing to find something doesn't work properly.

Our secondhand equipment comes with a 3 month warranty, the items are identified by the letters "sh" at the beginning of the product code.

In the case of items being sold on consignment (indicated by a "c" at the front of the code), there is no warranty but they have been inspected and tested to confirm they are working properly and are supplied on a 7 day return basis if found to be unsatisfactory.

Items prefixed with a "d" are demo units and have full warranty.

Please browse our [SECONDHAND](#), [DEMO](#), and [CLEARANCE](#) categories, and we also have an [ON SALE](#) category.

With some items the prices are negotiable and open to offers. We are also willing to take trade-ins on most equipment.

Current stock includes:

[dDBJ92B](#) Decibel J92 stand mount speakers \$990 (RRP \$1793). These speakers feature the famous Jordan JX92 full range drivers, and are in high quality timber veneer cabinets.

[cME240](#) integrated amplifier \$750 (was \$850) This classic Australian amp has recently been serviced and is working superbly. Conservatively rated at 90W per channel, it can drive quite inefficient speakers to high sound levels with impressive bass control and overall clarity.

[shRD11S](#) Ariston RD11 Superieur turntable with Grace G707 tonearm \$770 (cartridge negotiable). Better than an early model Linn LP12, this unit deserves a good cartridge and can outperform most current turntables under \$2000.

[shOLS3a](#) Origin Live Silver Mk3a tonearm \$825

[dOAW2000](#) Ohm W2000 omnidirectional speakers (rosewood) \$2750 (RRP \$4400) These speakers will suit someone who wants a sound that fills an irregular shaped space and does not commit the listener to being in the "sweet spot" to appreciate the music.

[shMRCM2](#) Moth RCM2 vacuum record cleaning machine \$550 (current retail \$1650) - for heavy duty use - would suit a record store.

[cSLPS70](#) Technics SL-PS70 CD player \$300. In good condition and plays CDs very well.

[shP220](#) - Yamaha P-220 belt drive fully automatic record player \$220

[shP550](#) - Yamaha P-550 direct drive fully automatic record player \$352

[sh901S](#) Supex 901 Super homc cartridge (Garrotised) \$1100. This may seem like a lot for a secondhand cartridge, but when you consider that the new ruby cantilever and MicroScanner diamond that have been fitted cost \$924 and that the Garrott technician regarded this as one of the best Supex cartridges he had ever worked on, then it is a bargain compared to current alternatives. The fact that it is a high output moving coil also is an advantage in terms of compatibility with any phono stage.

[d1012GX](#) Goldring 1012GX cartridge \$396 (current retail \$549)

[shST403-6AS7](#) Icon Audio integrated amplifier \$2200. New valves.

[cXNDK](#) Xindak pre-amplifier & mono blocks \$1800. In "as new" condition.

[shNAC122x](#) Naim NAC122X pre-amplifier \$1012. Also "as new".

[shNAP250](#) Naim NAP250 power amplifier \$800

[shME850](#) ME 850 power amplifier - recently serviced, a classic powerhouse of an amp \$2750

[c2905](#) Quad ESL2905 electrostatic loudspeakers \$9500 (current model retails for \$23000).

These large panel speakers deserve the very best of electronics to fulfil their potential. Due to their size a large room is recommended. A wonderful transparent sound. Phone for a demonstration. Road cases are included to enable them to be transported safely.

Don't forget there's FREE POSTAGE during November. Use coupon code NOV15FP.



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Constant Contact 

Try it free today