Subject: Re: After almost 40 years, I'm going to try another Audio Technica
Posted by Bill Epstein on Mon, 04 Aug 2008 09:06:47 GMT
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Whilst waiting for the glue to dry yesterday, I spun a few albums with the 440MLA. It may be true that 40 hours minimum is needed for suspension break-in but the general character won't change, IMHO.Listening to Eva Cassiday, Songbird, I noted that her upper register was sweet and clear, her almost screaming crescendos a little less raucous. There was something about the sound, whether I used the Classe amp, or, later, the 45, that put me in mind of listening to records way back when clear and loud were my only benchmarks.That led me to play CS&N first album, immediately followed by the second; just the thing for a hot Sunday afternoon in a cottage in the woods. The first time I heard the former was when a friend brought it back from Chicago along with the very first Sansui transistor receiver for himself and a pair of Fisher XP-? (8" 2-ways, 100 bucks) speakers for me. That particular afternoon is a technicolor memory and took place in the ca. 1900 farmhouse my new bride and I rented my senior year. The 440 really took me back; the sound evocative of the way we listened to just the music in those days. I played the first album twice, once with the 70 watt solid state and again with the 45. In both cases, the close harmonies were a tad confused and the imaging blurry. There was good delineation of the electric bass but the lowest notes were lost in the way people tend to swallow the last few digits of a phone number as they recite it to you. There was definitely some SET Magic with the 45, some of that sharing the room with the performers, but overall, the AT-440MLA is an 'exciting' sounding cartridge with a 'presence bump'; not particularly high-end-giant-killing but fun to listen to and miles ahead of the dreadful Grado Black.Perhaps another 37 albums will cure some of these ills but I can't imagine it replacing the low output Grado Sonata or the Benz Ace.BTW, I finally remembered that the armwand of the SME III is removable. Boy, does that make changing carts a breeze and did I ever feel foolish for previously removing the entire armboard and tonearm for previous swaps!