
Subject: 36 year old technology
Posted by [gofar99](#) on Thu, 20 Dec 2012 01:43:59 GMT
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Hi everyone, Possibly this one should go down in the dungeon, but it does relate to a "source". I had an interesting experience with some "old tech" gear today. I was reorganizing a closet and ran across a whole box of cassette tapes. Roughly 75 of them. One caught my attention and I wanted to hear it. OK, how am I going to do that. Out to the shed and bring in my 36 year old recorder. A high end unit from back then. Harman Kardon HK391. Made back when they were a first rate company. Complete with a hand signed copy of its performance charts. For those unfamiliar with it (likely nearly all of you) it was one of a very few that could deliver excellent performance. Not up to a high end reel to reel, but still a huge way above the average. 30HZ to 22K +/- 1 db at "0" level. All the bells and whistles, Dual capstans, Dolby B, C and HX Pro, LN, Chrome and Metal tape capability and had provisions to fine tune each to the tape you were using. Anyhow, I dusted it off, cleaned the heads and stuck in a tape. Behold it worked fine. I played a few 30-40 year old tapes and they were fairly good. When I made a new one with a chrome tape and dolby c. That is when the surprise occurred. It was really quite good. S/N at least as good as an LP and no audible artifacts (distortion, frequency anomalies and such). All in all a refreshing trip down audio memory lane.

Subject: Re: 36 year old technology
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Thu, 20 Dec 2012 15:32:45 GMT
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I hear you, Bruce. To tell the truth, I really like those decks with the bias adjustment fine-tuning knob. To me, that makes all the difference in the world. A good CrO2 or metal tape can easily hit 20kHz and even a cheap old FeO2 tape can be made to sound really good and crisp. I was in the habit of taking the store-bought cassettes and recording over them with the album because I could get better quality that way and still have the artwork that came with the tape.

Like you, I still have a tape deck like that. I even use it to make cassettes for my Cutlass. Tape deck in the dash and points in the distributor. Pretty much old school.

Subject: Re: 36 year old technology
Posted by [Shane](#) on Fri, 21 Dec 2012 15:43:28 GMT
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Cool Bruce! I got rid of all my tape stuff years and years ago, but wish I still had it now. A friend had a Nakamichi Dragon cassette player that was phenomenal, very top of the line piece of kit. I had an Aiwa AD-F990 deck that was pretty good as well, but not in the league of the Dragon.

Subject: Re: 36 year old technology
Posted by [Azuri](#) on Sun, 19 May 2013 09:32:22 GMT
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That was a nice story Bruce. It's the little things like that which makes being an audiophile so enjoyable. Getting pleasure from the old things like that.

Subject: Re: 36 year old technology
Posted by [RustyC](#) on Sat, 20 Jul 2013 13:48:24 GMT
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How incredible. You must not have been neglecting the recorder or the cassettes as much as I have mine, though. If I'd gotten out something 36 years old from a shed, it would not be worth dusting off. We still have a decent collection of cassettes and play them, mostly in one of the cars, but they are on their way downhill. We've not been re-recording, just replacing with digital. I'll probably be sorry some day.
