

Sansui Model SR-717 Direct-Drive Turntable



MANUFACTURER'S SPECIFICATIONS

Speeds: 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ and 45 rpm. **Fine Speed Adjust:** $\pm 4\%$. **Wow and Flutter:** 0.035% weighted rms. **Signal-To-Noise Ratio:** Better than 60 dB. **Tonearm:** Statically balanced, S-shaped tubular. **Features:** Oil-damped tonearm lifter, lateral balancer, direct-readout stylus-force dial, inside force cancellor. **Dimensions:** 20 in. W x 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. D x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. H. **Approximate Nationally Advertised Value:** \$350.00.

There's no doubt about it, these modern turntables bear little resemblance to the old models of just a few years ago! A prime example is the SR-717, Sansui's new top-of-the-line direct-drive unit *par excellence*. It is rather larger than most turntables, measuring 20 inches wide by 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. The top plate and in fact the whole unit is finished in a charcoal black with silver trim, making a nice contrast with the

polished wooded endpieces. The 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. arm is an S-type, and it has a gimbel suspension using knife-edge supports in the vertical plane. The rotatable counterbalance is calibrated in pressures from 0 to 2.5 grams, and there is provision for an additional weight if the cartridge is heavier than 21 grams. On the left of the arm pivot is a shaft for a lateral balance weight, and a suspended weight with calibrated spindle is used for the anti-skating adjustment—what Sansui calls the "inside force cancellor."

The controls are simplicity itself: a pressbutton for 33 $\frac{1}{3}$, another for 45 rpm, each one having a small variable speed control next to it. There is a 3-position lever switch marked *Off*, *On* and *Play*, the last named position operating the arm lowering device. The strobe light is mounted at the front to the left, and the strobe speed markings (50 and 60 Hz) are on the turntable rim. The turntable is made of an aluminum alloy and turns the scales at just over 3 lbs. The motor is a 20-pole d.c. brushless servo type driven by an electronic supply unit that employs 20 transistors plus an IC. A voltage selector is underneath with the phono sockets at the rear, and the complete unit is mounted on four heavy-duty shock-absorber feet—a method of suspension I have always favored.

Measurements

As the cables supplied were low-capacity types, a CD-4 phono cartridge (Audio-technica AT-20) was used for the tests—or most of them. Setting up took a little longer than usual due to the more complicated anti-skating arrangement and the cartridge needed that extra arm weight for correct balancing. Then there was the lateral balancing to be done, but the whole process only took a few minutes. The first test was for wow and flutter, and the measured figure was very low indeed at 0.04% using the DIN 45-507 standard.

I expected rumble to be low too, and I was not disappointed as it measured better than -67 dB (ARLL), which is exceptionally good. The speed control gave a variation of $+5$ and -3% at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ and $\pm 4\%$ at 45 rpm. As with most modern arms, the vertical and lateral friction were too low to measure accurately although no figures are quoted by Sansui. Tracking error was within 0.5 degrees per inch, a good figure for this type of arm. Accuracy of the stylus-force dial was well within 5%, and the anti-skating calibration was

found to be very satisfactory. (It gives a choice of four positions: 0.5, 1, 1.5 and 2 grams.) As the motor is servo controlled from a stabilized power supply, speed accuracy is not determined by the line voltage or frequency. Once the speed control has been set, the speed remains rock steady and no further adjustment will be required.

Use Test

The SR-717 was on test over a period of several weeks—it was such an easy unit to use, I was reluctant to change it! After playing a number of CD-4 records, including ones made with the experimental RCA Quadralator, I changed the cartridge for a Shure V-15 Mk III to find the optimum tracking

force. As expected, this came out at $1\frac{1}{4}$ grams and the anti-skating device was also set at that force. As I have pointed out previously, CD-4 cartridges with a Shibata stylus need rather more force but the effective weight on the record is spread over a greater area. I ought to have mentioned earlier that the unit comes complete with a transparent, hinged plastic lid which adds the finishing touch to a very handsome piece of equipment. As we have seen, it is a top performer too—certainly one of the best half dozen units now available at any price. It's not particularly cheap but then products of this caliber rarely are. . . . *George W. Tillett*

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