

HI-FI CHOICE No 35 CONTENTS **Turntables and Compact Disc Units** by Martin Colloms

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BEST BUY

Dunlop Systemdek IIS

Dunlop System Transcription Ltd, PO Box 9, Troon, Scotland
Tel (0563) 29777



Presumably Dunlop were so pleased with the performance of their model II that they felt it was worth developing the design to an even higher standard, and hence the emergence of the more expensive IIS. This model includes the excellent concave platter of the original *Systemdek*, a massive machined Mazak casting which weighs a generous 4.75kg. A thin felt mat is permanently bonded to the platter and in conjunction with the Dunlop clamp supplied firmly clamps the record, the concavity helping to remove warps at the expense of a mere 1° or so tilt in the record plane with respect to the cartridge. A tonearm with a head rotation facility is ideal, allowing proper compensation of this angle, although in practice few users would be aware of the effect.

The three inboard suspension springs were rather compliant, and held all the dynamic chassis modes to 4Hz and below, this including rotation. The chassis itself is a bit top heavy, and yaws more than usual — this could adversely affect wow. The established steel and aluminium plate subchassis has also been retained, but is now of increased thickness and strength. Improvements are also apparent in the matter of arm lead dressing, which when optimised helps to control the rotational mode.

Lab report

There was no need to fear suspension effects on the speed characteristics, which in the event measured well. DIN peak wow and flutter held to a fine 0.08%, with superbly low flutter and satisfactory wow. The motor and drive demonstrated excellent torque, with the 0.16% slowing under load indicative of minimal dynamic wow effects. Start-up was good considering the massive platter.

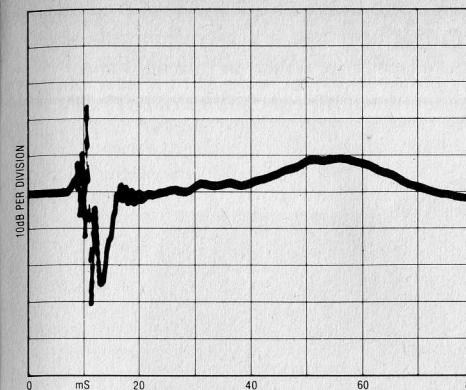
Rumble was also more than satisfactory at -76/-78dB, the deck's failure to reach -80dB being the result of a coincidence of the sub-chassis/arm resonance at 300Hz and the DIN B peak weighting curve!

The disc impulse response was pretty good, though evidence of a longer low frequency resonance was apparent in the decay region around 20Hz. Acoustic isolation was rated as very good, while the vibration isolation was truly excellent.

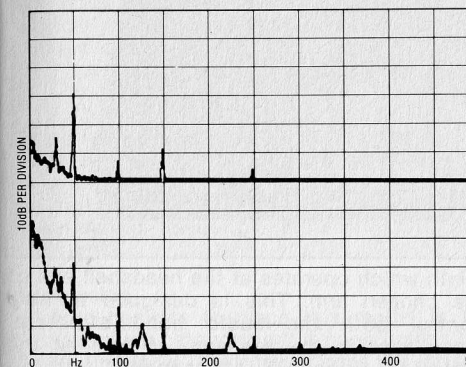
Sound quality

First impressions were of a gutsy 'Dunlop' bass, fondly remembered from the original *Systemdek*, and in our view a property of the massive platter.

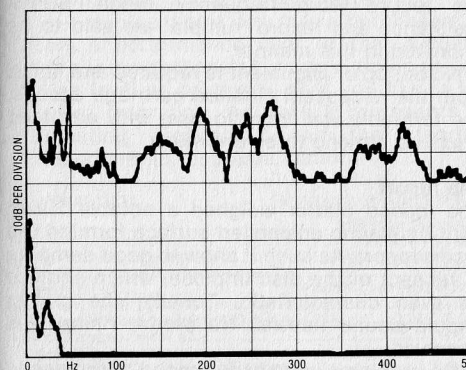
The sound was solid and well contained, with



Disc impulse transmission showing damping



Rumble, electrical (above) and total (below)



Breakthrough, acoustic (above) and vibration (below)

Charts above characterise general turntable behaviour. See text for commentary on these results, see Technical Introduction for explanation of test techniques

a crisp open midband. Pitch stability was very good, and the turntable exploited the dynamics and transient attack that were present in the programme. The stereo images were stable, and well focused, while the sound stage was transparent, and deep, except in a small area of the lower midrange.

Conclusion

This is the best sounding Dunlop that *HFC* has tested yet. It renders obsolete the earlier III and offers a very good standard at a moderate price, and despite my reservations concerning appearance and the odd lid, a strong recommendation is clearly deserved.

GENERAL DATA

| | Motor unit |
|--|--------------------------|
| Type | belt drive, subchassis |
| Platter mass/damping | 4.75 kg/good |
| Finish and engineering | very good/very good |
| Type of mains lead/connecting lead | 3 core/— |
| Speed options | manual change, 33/45 rpm |
| Wow and flutter (DIN peak wtd, sigma 2) | 0.08% |
| Wow and flutter (lin peak wtd 0.2-6Hz/6-300Hz) | 0.14% < 0.05% |
| Absolute speed error | + 0.05% |
| Speed drift, 1 hour/load variation | synchronous/— 0.16% |
| Start-up time to audible stabilisation | 4.3 secs |
| Rumble, DIN B wtd, L/R average (see spectrum) | -76/-78 dB |
| Size (w x d x h/clearance for lid rear) | 41 x 34 x 16.5cm/6.5cm |
| Ease of use | good |
| Typical acoustic breakthrough and resonances | very good |
| Subjective sound quality of complete system | very good |
| Hum level/acoustic feedback | very good/excellent |
| Vibration sensitivity/shock resistance | excellent/fairly good |
| Estimated typical purchase price | £220 |



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