

New Camcorder Column

# Video

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FEBRUARY 1987

The #1 Magazine of Home Video

## 67 VHS Tapes Tested

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**Sizzling  
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*Great Video Love Affairs*

**Interviews**  
*Alice Cooper, Tobe Hooper*

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Zenith VHS Camcorder  
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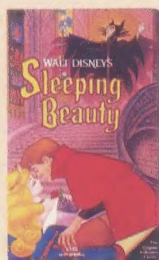


New  
Releases  
*Labyrinth, Ran  
Toxic Avenger, Help!*



# FOR VCR OWNERS WHO KNOW A TAKE ANY THREE MOVIES,

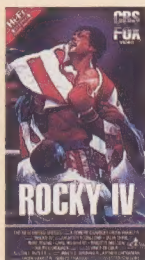
PICK FROM OVER 200 MOVIES ON THESE TWO PAGES.



SLEEPING BEAUTY  
5437022



DELTA FORCE  
3383012



ROCKY IV  
3570042



JAGGED EDGE  
1813052

| TITLE                                    | SELECTION NUMBER | TITLE                              | SELECTION NUMBER | TITLE                  | SELECTION NUMBER | TITLE                        | SELECTION NUMBER |
|--|------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| ROCKY                                    | 0563172          | BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUNDANCE KID | 0517302          | WARGAMES               | 0828002          | THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI | 1606062          |
| THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE              | 3305062          | CHARLOTTE'S WEB                    | 2095022          | GREMLINS               | 6082082          | TO CATCH A THIEF             | 2050052          |
| THE HOWLING                              | 0527202          | FORT APACHE                        | 5526042          | IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE  | 3256052          | ENEMY MINE                   | 3584082          |
| THE BIG CHILL                            | 1527022          | THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY     | 0582222          | DUMBO                  | 5251052          | MOONRAKER                    | 0677102          |
| RAGING BULL                              | 0500132          | GUYS AND DOLLS                     | 3533002          | EDDIE MURPHY—DELIRIOUS | 2055182          | JANE FONDA'S NEW WORKOUT     | 5112042          |
| PURPLE RAIN                              | 6048012          | STARMAN                            | 1723042          |                        |                  | WUTHERING HEIGHTS            | 3126032          |
| THE CARE BEARS MOVIE                     | 7110022          | PALE RIDER                         | 6097012          |                        |                  | A VIEW TO A KILL             | 0989052          |
| TRUE GRIT                                | 2026122          | FRIDAY THE 13TH                    | 2042062          |                        |                  | THE GREAT ESCAPE             | 0638002          |
| SUPERMAN                                 | 0013132          | FUNNY GIRL                         | 1511002          |                        |                  | DR. STRANGELOVE              | 1521082          |
| CITY LIGHTS                              | 0669022          | TWICE IN A LIFETIME                | 4857062          |                        |                  | A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 2  | 3382022          |
| OLD YELLER                               | 5289012          | REDS                               | 2029032          |                        |                  | CRUISING                     | 3500252          |
| A CHORUS LINE                            | 3193012          | THE BLACK STALLION                 | 0504012          |                        |                  | THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD  | 1653082          |
| THE PARENT TRAP                          | 5288022          | AGAINST ALL ODDS                   | 1633032          |                        |                  | SMOOTH TALK                  | 4858052          |
| A SOLDIER'S STORY                        | 1733282          | TERMS OF ENDEARMENT                | 2014182          |                        |                  | ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN      | 6070022          |
| JANE FONDA'S WORKOUT CHALLENGE           | 5260042          | RED RIVER                          | 7507032          |                        |                  | SILVERADO                    | 1810082          |
| TO LIVE AND DIE IN L.A.                  | 7225042          | MISTER ROBERTS                     | 6095032          |                        |                  | WEST SIDE STORY              | 0505342          |
| MARY POPPINS                             | 5276062          | CHARIOTS OF FIRE                   | 6014012          |                        |                  | DEATH WISH                   | 2027132          |
| PLACES IN THE HEART                      | 0978082          | PRIZZI'S HONOR                     | 4802022          |                        |                  | THE COTTON CLUB              | 3110032          |
| EATING RAUL                              | 0793012          | THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK            | 0910092          |                        |                  | STING—BRING ON THE NIGHT     | 5166002          |
| BODY DOUBLE                              | 1713062          | THE CARE BEARS MOVIE II            | 1862052          |                        |                  | PORKY'S                      | 0775112          |
| AGNES OF GOD                             | 1812062          | BLADE RUNNER                       | 3104092          |                        |                  | LOVE STORY                   | 2040082          |
| SESAME STREET PRESENTS: FOLLOW THAT BIRD | 6117072          | GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER       | 1819092          |                        |                  | POLICE ACADEMY               | 6049002          |
|  |                  | ARTHUR                             | 6024092          |                        |                  | COCOON                       | 3553052          |



PRETTY IN PINK  
4224022



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1814042



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| STOP MAKING SENSE                  | 1759192          | ARSENIC AND OLD LACE        | 0735102          |
| AIRPLANE                           | 2033232          | CAT BALLOU                  | 1545002          |
| TEEN WOLF                          | 4104072          | AMERICAN GIGOLO             | 2030002          |
| STAR TREK III—THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK | 2016162          | THE SWORD IN THE STONE      | 5409062          |
| NORTH TO ALASKA                    | 7310002          | MAD MAX: BEYOND THUNDERDOME | 6089012          |
| THE SEVEN SAMURAI                  | 3108052          | ROBIN HOOD                  | 5299002          |
| THE KARATE KID                     | 1710092          | GHOSTBUSTERS                | 1742012          |
| ALL ABOUT EVE                      | 0044062          | "10"                        | 0011072          |
| HELLO DOLLY                        | 0609052          | ALIEN                       | 0002322          |
| FOOTLOOSE                          | 2019052          | THE GODFATHER—PART II       | 0018002          |
| THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING            | 0948052          | SPLASH                      | 5304022          |
| YANKEE DOODLE DANDY                | 0574062          | WITNESS                     | 4114052          |
| RETURN OF THE DRAGON               | 0818022          | THE LONGEST DAY             | 0577032          |



THE TEN COMMANDMENTS  
2026062



SPIES LIKE US  
6116082



JEWEL OF THE NILE  
3571032



DOWN AND OUT  
IN BEVERLY HILLS  
5426052



MURPHY'S ROMANCE  
1853062



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6167062

|                          |         |                                |         |
|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|---------|
| THE WAY WE WERE          | 1529002 | WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION    | 0717122 |
| PEE WEE'S BIG ADVENTURE  | 6098002 | THE GODFATHER                  | 0008022 |
| KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN | 3187092 | AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON | 7140062 |
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| GOOMIES                  | 6081092 | CADDYSHACK                     | 6023002 |
| NOTORIOUS                | 0567132 | SOUTH PACIFIC                  | 3506112 |
| NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN    | 6042072 | AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN     | 2021192 |
| THE WOMAN IN RED         | 7105092 |                                |         |

| TITLE                          | SELECTION NUMBER | TITLE                      | SELECTION NUMBER |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| PRIVATE BENJAMIN               | 6018072          | REBECCA                    | 0664072          |
| DAS BOOT                       | 1520092          | OKLAHOMA!                  | 0054052          |
| THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE | 4000022          | BLUE HAWAII                | 0673142          |
| ANNIE                          | 1516052          | THE MUPPETS TAKE MANHATTAN | 0923122          |
| STRIPES                        | 1513162          | THE PINK PANTHER           | 0561012          |
| CARNAL KNOWLEDGE               | 3122072          | SUNSET BOULEVARD           | 2003032          |
| THE AFRICAN QUEEN              | 0511022          |                            |                  |
| GANDHI                         | 1533042          |                            |                  |
| CASABLANCA                     | 0507162          |                            |                  |
| TOOTSIE                        | 1509042          |                            |                  |
| MAD MAX                        | 7109052          |                            |                  |
| THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL  | 0576042          |                            |                  |
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| FLASHDANCE                     | 2018142          |                            |                  |
| THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN          | 0534212          |                            |                  |
| M*A*S*H                        | 0055122          |                            |                  |
| SUMMER RENTAL                  | 4173032          |                            |                  |
| FANNY AND ALEXANDER            | 3112092          |                            |                  |
| 48 HOURS                       | 2022182          |                            |                  |
| A SOLDIER'S STORY              | 1732882          |                            |                  |
| THE EMERALD FOREST             | 3145002          |                            |                  |
| DIRTY HARRY                    | 6017082          |                            |                  |



GUNG HO  
4225012

| TITLE                                  | SELECTION NUMBER | TITLE | SELECTION NUMBER |
|--|------------------|-------|------------------|
| COUNTRY                                | 5341072          |       |                  |
| THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY               |                  |       |                  |
| VALANCE                                | 2092052          |       |                  |
| THE ROAD WARRIOR                       | 6028052          |       |                  |
| RICHARD PRYOR—LIVE ON THE SUNSET STRIP | 1603092          |       |                  |
| THE KILLING FIELDS                     | 6084062          |       |                  |
| FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE                  | 0690212          |       |                  |
| TRADING PLACES                         | 2017152          |       |                  |
| THE FRENCH CONNECTION                  | 0042422          |       |                  |
| NATIONAL LAMPOON'S EUROPEAN VACATION   | 6096022          |       |                  |
| REVENGE OF THE NERDS                   | 0925022          |       |                  |
| CITIZEN KANE                           | 5501032          |       |                  |
| LAWRENCE OF ARABIA                     | 1514072          |       |                  |
| KING KONG (ORIGINAL)                   | 5502022          |       |                  |
| SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER                   | 2020282          |       |                  |
| GREASE                                 | 2074072          |       |                  |
| LOST IN AMERICA                        | 6088022          |       |                  |
| THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING              | 0856032          |       |                  |
| THE MALTESE FALCON                     | 0508072          |       |                  |
| THE ALAMO                              | 0583052          |       |                  |
| MR. MOM                                | 7104002          |       |                  |
| SHE WORE A YELLOW RIBBON               | 5504002          |       |                  |
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In addition, up to four times a year you may receive offers of special selections, usually at a discount off regular club prices, for a total of up to 17 buying opportunities.

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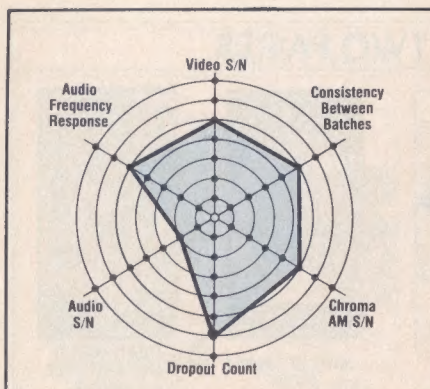
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72



75

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**About the Cover.** An all-in-one automatic blank tape tester may be just a fantasy, but we can dream, can't we? Construction by Ajin. Photograph by Robert Lewis.



"TWO THUMBS UP! The performances are great!"

—Siskel & Ebert & THE MOVIES

"See 'Half Moon Street'! On the scale of 1 to 10, a 9+!"

—Gary Franklin, ABC-TV, LOS ANGELES

Dr. Lauren Slaughter  
Harvard Ph.D.  
Middle East Expert  
Hooker  
Target

AN RKO PICTURES/EDWARD R. PRESSMAN FILM CORP. PRESENTATION  
A GEOFF REEVE PRODUCTION • A BOB SWAIM FILM

Sigourney Weaver Michael Caine

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# Channel One

## Tale of the Tapes

Two years ago this month, Technical Editor Lancelot Braithwaite presented his last biannual report on the state of blank tape. His analysis of 50 VHS tapes was the most exhaustive study of its kind, and cost Braithwaite many sleepless nights of preparation. But his self-imposed insomnia was worthwhile. The February 1985 issue has become a collector's item. It was VIDEO's best-selling issue ever; the few office copies left are selfishly protected.

What's new in blank tape this year? For one thing, there are more brands and grades, a full third more than we found in 1985. Sixty-seven VHS tapes were scrutinized by Braithwaite's measuring devices. He's looking at almost as many Beta tapes for next month's Part II, and at Compact VHS and 8mm tapes—which didn't even exist when we conducted our last tests—for the final installment in April. The other big news is that our technical chief has set stiffer standards, largely because the overall quality of blank tape has so improved.

"Almost everybody's tape performed better than in my last test," he reports. "However, tape is getting so damn good, there's little room for improvement. For example, two years ago, tapes with fewer than 10 dropouts were considered excellent. Today, a tape must have fewer than five dropouts to earn a top grade in that category. An audio signal-to-noise ratio under 51 was considered average. Now, anything under 51.1 is poor. The next improvement has to be in the systems themselves: the VCR's metal heads plus the tape. And by tape, I mean 8mm, either metal particle or metal evaporated." He allowed himself a sly smile that he's really partial to 8mm tape, which performs as well as half-inch with only half the surface area.

Is there a "best" tape? Obviously, this depends on the qualities you're looking for. There is a best tape for you and, more importantly, a best for certain situations (it's not always the highest rated or most expensive). When you scan our exclusive test graphs to see how each company's tape scored, bear in mind that the best tapes will have the largest area within the connected dots. The bigger and more even the snowflake-like pattern, the better the tape is, overall. Is there such a thing as a perfect six-pointed flake? Maybe when it snows, but not in our tape tests. "There's no such thing as perfect tape," declares Braithwaite.

There were, however, a couple of surprises. Konica's Super HG T-120 and Zenith's SHG T-120 performed very well, considering that Konica's tape hasn't been around very long and that Zenith's is supposedly made by JVC (whose equivalent didn't do as well as the Zenith). There were also some non-surprises. Fuji's Super XG H451 and TDK's HD Pro 120 were great, just as they were two years ago. Just below their level were Maxell's HGX Gold Hi Fi, T-120, and the RX Pro, T-120. Of the six tapes just mentioned, Braithwaite says, "There's little perceptible difference among them. It's there, but it's a fussy small difference." Connoisseurs will want to make up their own minds. Braithwaite lost a lot more sleep this year than he did last time, but we think this issue and the next two will also keep you awake, and will be issues you'll want to keep.

\*

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Regular readers will note a change this month in our columns as "The Third Format" becomes "The Camcorder." With 8mm well-launched and Compact VHS adding new twists to minivideo, it seemed time to focus more on the camcorder's growing innovativeness and popularity. "The Camcorder," with West Coast Editor Roderick Woodcock at the helm, will cover camcorders of all formats, the burgeoning accessory market, as well as the nuts and bolts of home video making. Look for hands-on tips about the latest products and the best techniques for using them. We think you'll enjoy it.

—The Editors

## VIDEO

|   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
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# Fast Forward

## Late-Breaking News

### Korea's 4mm Challenge

More details are emerging about Samsung's intriguing—and potentially disruptive—4mm camcorder format, which uses a digital audio tape (DAT) cassette about the



**Samsung's 4mm camcorder.**

size of a Wheat Thin. The camcorder, dubbed the SVC41, will weigh 2.5 pounds without the battery and include a 2.5-inch color LCD viewfinder. An impressive feature lineup promises autofocus, auto white balance, quick playback, low light sensitivity, fades, memory indexing, and a tuner, making it possible to watch and record TV programs. Samsung plans to introduce the SVC41 in Korea this summer for about \$1300. There's no U.S. release date yet, but the company is betting it will have five percent of the camcorder market by 1988.

If 4mm delivers, it could be as disruptive as it is revolutionary. Industry watchers say many consumers are already confused about which minivideo format—8mm or Compact VHS—is the best bet. Will another incompatible tiny format raise the confusion factor enough to harm everyone's prospects?

### Video Forecasts

This is the year VCRs will finally pass color TVs in sales, according to JVC marketing manager Steve Isaacson. He recently told the International Tape/Disc Association that home video will generate \$6 billion in factory sales this year, and sell 15 million VCRs, for a healthy 7.5 percent gain over 1986. His optimism was complemented by Vista Home Video president Nick Santrizos, who reported that pre-recorded tape sales grew by an astounding 2000 percent in the past five years, and predicted that cassette sales will double between now and 1990.

### The Little Tube That Couldn't

The mighty rise of the yen against the dollar has killed off Panasonic's eagerly awaited Pocket Watch. Company spokesmen say the value of the yen caused its projected price to leap from about \$300 to nearly \$500, more than it expects U.S. consumers to be willing to pay for a tiny 3-inch screen. Panasonic first showed the LCD color TV last January, and won compliments for the clarity of its active matrix picture. The Pocket Watch was promised for last spring, then moved to Christmas. Now, it's on hold—except in Japan, where it's been selling for half a year.

### Blue Horizons

Two of Sharp's forthcoming VCRs will have a new tweak: a Blue Screen Noise Elimination System. The feature turns

the audio down and the TV screen blue at the end of a cassette to mask out irritating audio and video noise.

### Fit To Be Decked

VCR penetration continues its seemingly inexorable climb. The latest Nielsen research says that 40 percent of the country's 86 million TV households now have the ubiquitous appliance. That's another huge leap—last year Nielsen estimated only 23 percent of TV homes were equipped with VCRs. Incidentally, the best-decked cities, with penetration levels of 56 percent, were San Francisco and Las Vegas.

### TVCRs Multiply

Sony may have started a mini-trend when it combined a 25-inch monitor/receiver with an 8mm VCR. Other companies now tied to this high-tech hitching post include Goldstar, which has a 19-inch TVCR; Lloyd, with a 13-inch combo; Brentwood Electronics, with a 19-inch remote controlled unit; and Panasonic, which has a 13-inch, side-loading VHS industrial model that some consumer outlets have begun carrying.

### Hi-Def Discs

With High Definition Television (HDTV) looming on the horizon, Toshiba says it has perfected a high definition videodisc that carries 90 minutes of playing time suitable for super-sharp 1125-line HDTV screens. High density recording

and a supershort wavelength laser give the disc its zip. The pros will see it later this year or early next; consumers will have to wait a while longer.

### Waves Of Clay

Flat speakers are following in the tracks of flat screens. Murata Manufacturing has developed a wafer thin ceramic speaker it says is ideal for tiny LCD TVs, as well as portable radios. The larger of two versions of the speaker is only one-tenth of an inch thick, weighs a fraction of an ounce, and should add less than \$2 to the cost of an LCD TV.

### Booming Boob Tubes

The Soviet Union's lagging video culture seems to lead the West's in at least one category: exploding televisions. The Leningrad fire department reports that exploding sets started about 300 fires in 1986 and 406 fires the year before.

### RCA's Compact Contender

RCA, which flirted with 8mm two years ago, has abandoned the fledgling format to pursue Compact camfans instead. Its new \$1400 Compact VHS Small Wonder camcorder, weighing 4.1 pounds with battery and cassette, is a full-featured model and a companion to last year's full-size VHS Pro-Wonder. RCA predicts VHS will control 85 percent of this year's camcorder market, with Compacts accounting for a growing share.



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# Feedback

## Readers Air Their Views

### Laser Lament

A funny thing happened to *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*. Your November, 1986 issue lists the price for both the tape and the videodisc as \$29.95. The tape price is correct, and it has been available since the original release date. But when I ordered a videodisc copy I was informed it would not be released until sometime later. Since then the release date has been pushed back twice, and the price is now \$39.95.

I purchased my videodisc player for three reasons: picture quality, sound quality, and a lower price for movies. However, I must wait months longer before a movie is released in this format. If it is released at all. Delays are the norm, release dates are rarely met, and now I'm paying a premium price for movies that cost \$10 to \$12 less on VHS. Furthermore, I have just found out that Walt Disney Home Video will no longer release on videodisc. What's going on?

Michael J. Harding  
East Aurora, N.Y.

If videodiscs are to videocassettes what CDs are to audio cassettes, why are they being kept such a secret? It often seems that Pioneer has the sole right to make and market both the players and the discs. If the format is as good as Pioneer's ads indicate, I'd buy it, but not until I get some assurances that it won't go the way of CEDs and Quadrophonic.

George Schneider  
Woodside, N.Y.

### Affordable Portable?

Sony should make a portable, record-only version of the sophisticated SL-HF1000 SuperBeta VCR you reviewed in December's "Videotests." Professional editing capabilities and 300 lines of horizontal resolution make the SL-HF1000 the ideal recorder for Canon's top-of-the-line VC-50A video camera.

Although the VC-50A has a lot of professional features and a resolution of 400 lines, its pretest companion VHS recorder, the VR-40, does not have flying erase heads and has a resolution of only 200 lines. There are enough serious amateur videomakers to justify a record-only version of Sony's SL-HF1000 or model with similar features.

Narriso T. Arango  
Houston, Tex.

### Record Discord

I agree with your "Deja View" editorial ("Channel One," Dec., 1986) that took a stand against laws requiring built-in protection codes on VCRs. No one should have the right to prevent me from recording off the airwaves or from a rented tape as long as I do not use it for personal gain. The public airwaves should never become the sole province of individuals or companies, and I should have a right to use tapes I rent as I see fit in my own home.

Robert J. Tilley  
Sterling Heights, Mich.

### Macro Tip

When playing Macrovision-encoded tapes on my Panasonic PV-1730 VCR and Sony KV-25X3R monitor, a bright half-moon glare would appear at the bottom right of the screen. Sony and Panasonic repairmen who saw it said the glare was caused by my high-end equipment picking up the Macrovision signals and displaying them on my screen. I don't get the glare when I use my low-end combination: a Panasonic VCR and an RCA monitor. My advice to those who intend to rent Macrovision-encoded tapes is to use cheaper equipment. You'll get a more satisfactory picture.

Ken Price  
Ontario, Canada

### Switch Glitch

Bob Brewin's scenario in "Cable's New Complication" ("Off the Air," Nov. 1986) was inaccurate. The Federal Communications Commission proposal on A/B switches clearly states that existing cable subscribers are not required to accept visits from cable servicemen or have A/B switches installed on their televisions. Therefore, we are not condemned to having our equipment made obsolete by the FCC.

With my cable service connected to one VCR and the regular antenna connected to the TV, I can switch between cable and over-air broadcasts (an essential, given the frequency with which my cable operator has signal loss) with my wireless remote. Few, if any, people with wireless remote channel changing on their sets need to accept an A/B switch.

Jan R. Harrington  
New York, N.Y.

Bob Brewin replies: Not all television viewers, not even all the sophisticated

readers of VIDEO magazine, peruse FCC bulletins. The point I was trying to make is that the A/B switch is going to cause problems for the unsophisticated. This should be a boon to people who charge \$50 an hour in places like New York City to accomplish the simple task of hooking up a VCR and TV set to a cable and an antenna.

### Blanking Out

While the product hypesters are busy touting the new video formats (Compact VHS and 8mm), I've been looking at store displays of blank tape. So far I have not seen any displays of Compact VHS tapes, and only one for 8mm tape (with a \$14.50 price).

Granted, I haven't really looked for blank tape, but then I wouldn't want to pay a premium price for tape that claims to be almost as good as (or, at best, equal to) VHS. Only documented claims of a new format's superiority will make me give up my collection of more than 250 VHS tapes. Even then, the cost of blank tape will have to be at least competitive. At less than \$5 for two hours, VHS is a real bargain.

Loren Rosebraugh  
Agoura Hills, Calif.

### Looking for Mr. Goodecam

When the PBS series *Live from Lincoln Center* proved what stereo could do for television, I knew that VCRs would someday follow suit. Now I have a Beta Hi-Fi, but I'm still waiting for the right camera/camcorder. I tried the Betamovie and loved it, but was puzzled by the lack of video out/playback functions. These shortcomings could have been remedied, but then the 8mm format was born. Sadly, it seems to have pulled the plug on Betamovie. So, I'm still waiting for an affordable camcorder with Hi-Fi stereo. Which company will come up with it first this time?

Peter A. Bourdelle  
Bethlehem, Penn.

The only stereo camcorders we know of are Kodak's MVS 5000 ("Videotests," Feb. 1986) and Zenith's VM7100 reviewed in this month's "Videotests."

### This Means War

Ever since home video really started to grow, movie companies have expressed concern over revenue lost through illegal











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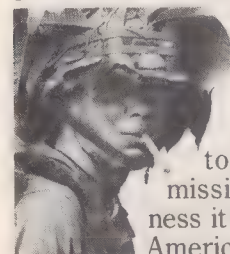


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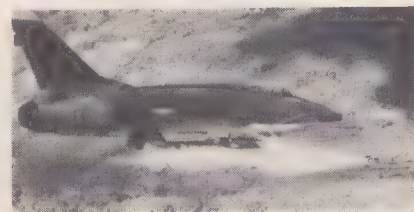
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# The Gazette

EDITED BY IRA ROBBINS

## Life After Batman

Holy comeback, Adam! Are you really making a comedy with Walter Matthau, called *Doing Time on Planet Earth*?

"Yes, I am. It's a comedy with substance, concerning itself with the rites of passage of a young man, and the feelings of alienation teenagers have at that time in their lives."

But why are you riding around in a bullet-shaped red and silver bus in the film?

"Because we're sort of hip people, and you don't know whether we're extraterrestrials or not. Perhaps we're just very stylish."

Golly, Mr. West, didn't you just make a horror film called *Nightmare*?

"Right again. It's a suspense/terror film, but not slash-and-gash or anything like that. I made the picture in Canada."

Folks must still think of you as Batman.

"Of course. The show still plays to millions of people, which is probably why it's not out on home video yet. But in the last few years, I've started to do other roles. The pain of typecasting begins to go away if you're persistent. If you hang around long enough, people start to think you're good or something."

Gosh, Adam, you don't regret playing Batman, do you?

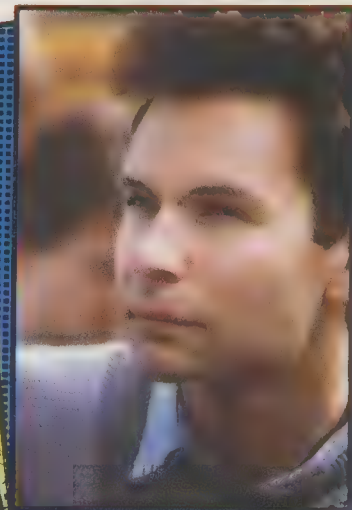
"On the contrary, I was damn lucky to be able to create a character that's caught on with the public and become a classic. It's a great privilege to have played a character that goes on and on."

—Clifford Meth

Adam West (right) discusses his next film.



## Julien Temple: Jazzin' With Jagger



Graham Attwood

"It's not a movie," declares Julien Temple, referring to *Running Out of Luck*, the Mick Jagger vehicle he directed. "It was really intended as a video. It took one week to write and three weeks to film—you don't do a movie that way. No," he decides, "it's a long-form video." Temple, 32, the man behind such masterly music clips as the Kinks' "Come Dancing" and such idiosyncratic movies as *The Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle* and *Absolute Beginners*, had previously filmed *Jazzin' for Blue Jean*, a 20-minute "mini-musical" with David Bowie.

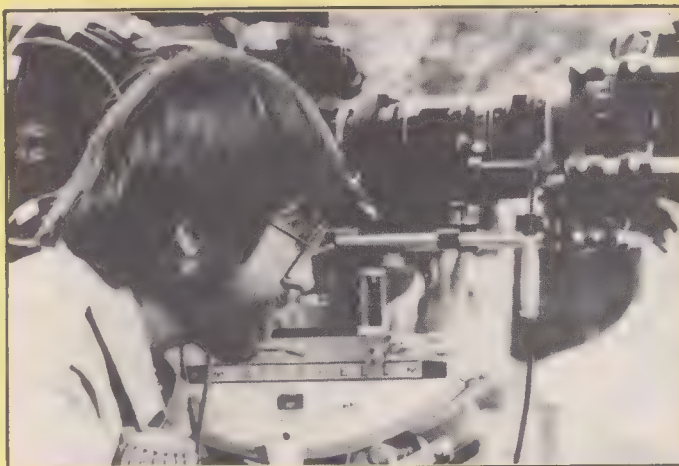
The idea, says Temple, was Jagger's. "We had worked on a lot of the Rolling Stones' stuff and got on pretty well. Mick was keen to do a long-form video, but something different. I was working on a movie which fell through; Mick heard about it and called me up." Jagger was in the midst of recording his first solo album, *She's the Boss*. "He played me tracks and I tried to come up with a script that would allow the songs to make sense on a large scale."

"We chose Brazil because I'd shot the Sex Pistols there and wanted to go back. Also, South America has had a sort of mythical quality for Mick ever since he got lost in Peru [filming Werner Herzog's aborted first version of *Fitzcarraldo*] and left under weird circumstances."

As an expert in this seemingly growing field, does Temple expect rock movie-musicals to be the next entertainment vogue? "Oh," he deadpans, "I hope not."

—Frank Lovece





## Tobe Hooper: Back On The Chain Gang

**B**ack in 1974, when Tobe Hooper made *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, things were simpler, although the director regrets that the groundbreakingly disgusting film "screwed me into that horror genre. I used the chainsaw as a way to get some notoriety on a low budget. I didn't have a star, so I had to select a genre of film which was its own star."

*Invaders from Mars*, Hooper's recent remake of the 1953 science fiction classic, was part of a three-picture deal with the Cannon Group. What was it like to make movies with Hollywood's hottest budget-conscious dream factory? "Being given the quick freedom to go make a film is certainly a plus. Being left alone in the filming is a plus. But when

you need someone to turn to for help, it's a minus." He made the film without benefit of an exact budget. "You go to the execs and find out whether you can afford something."

That worked during casting, but when Hooper began shooting special effects the going got rough. "You don't know if they're going to approve the budget for adding

the animation or the optical [effects]. The budget begins to dictate the end results of post-production, which means some of the magic you intended may not be finished because it might be too expensive. Something like \$5 million was cut out of the effects budget for *Poltergeist II* [he directed only the first] after the film had been shot."

Hooper, who wants his next film to be "a pure comedy," is a self-described video freak who uses a Sony 8mm camcorder, a LaserVision player, and a ten-foot industrial projection TV. This month, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre II* follows *Invaders* onto video, and leads to a discussion of the conversion process. Hooper is a supporter of banding widescreen releases to preserve the original aspect ratio. Except for *Poltergeist*, he admits, "I'm really disappointed with the transfer of my films."

—Mark Fleischmann

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Some recent films intentionally made in black & white:

*Manhattan* (MGM/UA)  
*Raging Bull* (CBS/Fox)  
*Stranger Than Paradise* (Key)  
*Under the Cherry Moon* (Warner)  
*The Elephant Man* (Paramount)  
*Young Frankenstein* (CBS/Fox)  
*Zelig* (Warner)  
*She's Gotta Have It*

## INSTANT REPLAYS

The latest magazine to belly up to the video bar is *Sports Illustrated*, which will begin producing made-for-home-video programs (in conjunction with HBO, another Time, Inc. subsidiary) for distribution by HBO/Cannon. Plans call for at least two titles a year, beginning this summer.

## Liberating The Last Prisoner



Bruce Clark never gives up, and devotees of Patrick McGoochan's 17-episode TV series, *The Prisoner*, have him to thank for it. "I had heard about a 'lost' episode," recalls the insurance under-

writer who serves as the American coordinator for Britain's *Prisoner* fan club. "A version of *Chimes of Big Ben*, the second episode, had been prepared for the British press while the series was still in production. It was not supposed to be televised and was noticeably different from the broadcast version."

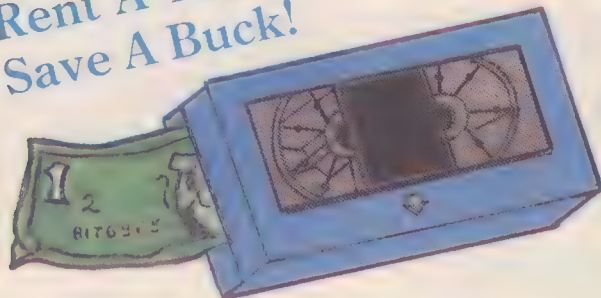
Clark's quest began in 1985 when he learned that two fans had seen the show on New York TV in the early '70s. He contacted the offices of the show's owner, ITC, in both New York and London, but they had no record of it. He checked with collectors across the country, as well as local TV stations, and scoured ads for dealers offering bootleg programs. Near despair after a year of fruitless searching, he heard from ITC's Canadian office. They had located a 16mm print of the show on a shelf. It had been slated for destruction within the month.

"There are at least 25 differences between this show and the released version," explains Clark, "in the scenes, the dialogue, and the opening credits. It's not a historic find in terms of world history, but for *Prisoner* fans, it's a major discovery." Maljack/MPI, which has released all the other episodes on video, is planning to issue it later this year.

—Tom Soter



Rent A Tape,  
Save A Buck!



The proliferation of rental stores has dropped the price of a night of video fun from movie-ticket range to the price of a large soda. The newest maneuver to cut rental rates even more comes from Continental Video, which used a rebate coupon to promote the release of a Mike Norris action feature, *Born American*. Offering consumers a buck off the rental,

the company says, sent sales of the tape to stores soaring, turning a minor title into a major deal.

Other labels are working the promotional angle overtime as well, with numerous contests, giveaways, sales rebates, and discount pricing gambits. (See "Cash Register" in the "Directory" for this month's installment.)

## DANCING FROM ASTAIRE TO RICHIE

In the mind of the legendary Stanley Donen, all the world is most literally a stage: The director/choreographer's characters perform on sidewalks and in gutters (*Singin' in the Rain*), on New York streets (*On the Town*), and all over the walls and ceilings of hotel rooms (*Royal Wedding*). Even more than Busby Berkeley, Donen liberated dance for the movie camera, removing it from the confines of the stage. He's still at it today, directing Lionel Richie's music-video reprise of Fred Astaire's dancing-on-the-ceiling routine.

"My whole history of doing musical numbers has been trying to show things that are impossible to do in real life," says the 62-year-old Donen in his Los Angeles office. "Like mixing cartoons and live action with Gene Kelly (in *Anchors Aweigh*, which Donen co-choreographed), running the film backwards, or using split-screen—that kind of stuff."

For those who want to start their dance diet properly, at least six of Donen's movie-musical classics are on video, as are such non-musical efforts as *Indiscreet*, *The Grass Is Greener*, and *Charade*.

—Frank Lovece

## Top 40

### KID VIDEO

1. *Sleeping Beauty* (2). 1959. 75m. \$29.95. Disney.
2. *Pinocchio* (3). 1940. 87m. \$29.95. Disney.
3. *Alice in Wonderland* (1). 1951. 75m. \$29.95. Disney.
4. *Dumbo* (4). 1941. 64m. \$29.95. Disney.
5. *The Sword in the Stone* (5). 1963. 79m. \$79.98. Disney.
6. *Robin Hood* (6). 1973. 83m. \$29.95. Disney.
7. *Pound Puppies* (7). 1985. 37m. \$14.95. Family.
8. *Winnie the Pooh and Tigger Too* (9). 1974. 25m. \$14.95. Disney.
9. *A Tale of Two Chipmunks* (—). 1986. 24m. \$14.95. Disney.
10. *Jiminy Cricket's Christmas* (—). 1986. 45m. \$19.95. Disney.

### CASSETTE RENTALS

1. *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (—). 1984. 118m. (PG) \$29.95. Paramount.
2. *Down and Out in Beverly Hills* (1). 1986. 103m. (R) \$79.95. Touchstone.
3. *Raw Deal* (—). 1986. 90m. (R) \$79.95. HBO/Cannon.
4. *The Money Pit* (10). 1986. 91m. (PG) \$34.98. MCA.
5. *Pretty in Pink* (3). 1986. 96m. (PG-13) \$79.95. Paramount.
6. *Out of Africa* (2). 1985. 161m. (PG) \$79.95. MCA.
7. *Cobra* (—). 1986. 87m. (R) \$79.95. Warner.
8. *9 1/2 Weeks* (7). 1986. 116m. (R) \$79.95. MGM/UA.
9. *FX* (4). 1986. 108m. (R) \$79.95. HBO/Cannon.
10. *Legend* (—). 1986. 89m. (PG) \$79.95. MCA.

### CASSETTE SALES

1. *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (—). 1984. 118m. (PG). \$29.95. Paramount.
2. *Sleeping Beauty* (1). 1959. 75m. (G). \$29.95. Disney.
3. *Jane Fonda's Low Impact Aerobic Workout* (3). 1985. 50m. \$39.95. Karl.
4. *White Christmas* (—). 1954. 120m. \$19.95. Paramount.
5. *Jane Fonda's New Workout* (2). 1985. 90m. \$39.95. Karl.
6. *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (—). 1981. 115m. \$39.95. Paramount.
7. *Witness* (—). 1985. 113m. (R) \$29.95. Paramount.
8. *The Sound of Music* (4). 1965. 174m. (G) \$29.98. CBS/Fox.
9. *Beverly Hills Cop* (—). 1985. 105m. (R) \$19.95. Paramount.
10. *Pinocchio* (8). 1940. 87m. (G) \$29.95. Disney.

### VIDEODISC SALES

1. *Out of Africa* (7). 1986. 161m. (PG) LV \$34.98. MCA.
2. *Back to the Future* (2). 1985. 116m. (PG) LV \$34.98. MCA.
3. *Brazil* (5). 1985. 131m. (R) LV \$34.98. Embassy.
4. *Santa Claus—The Movie* (—). 1985. 104m. (PG) LV \$34.95. Image.
5. *The Jewel of the Nile* (1). 1985. 106m. (PG-13) LV \$34.98. CBS/Fox.
6. *After Hours* (—). 1985. 97m. (R) LV \$34.98. Warner.
7. *Head* (—). 1968. 86m. (G) LV \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.
8. *Murphy's Romance* (8). 1985. 107m. (PG-13) LV, CED \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.
9. *Police Academy 3: Back in Training* (—). 1986. 84m. (PG) LV \$34.98. Warner.
10. *Spies Like Us* (6). 1985. 103m. (PG) LV \$79.95. Warner.



# They're coming back to give you a buzz.

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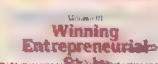
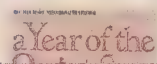


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# The Gazette

**R**egular *I Love Lucy* watchers have seen the name Bill Asher a thousand times—he directed three full seasons of the show. He's since directed or produced such TV hits as *Alice*, *The Patty Duke Show*, *Bewitched* (with then-wife Elizabeth Montgomery), and Dinah Shore's many talk shows; he was also executive producer of the recently cancelled *Kay O'Brien* series.

Somewhere amidst all that, Asher found time to create a quintessentially '60s phenomenon: the Frankie-and-Annette beach movie. "I made *Beach Party* (1963) as a sort of broad-stroke satire of youth movies," Asher remembers. He followed with 1964's *Muscle Beach Party* and *Bikini Beach*. Then, for reasons Asher doesn't completely remember, he decided to cast Buster Keaton—the genius behind *The General*, *The Navigator*, and other silent classics—in the next one.

"I always loved Buster Keaton," says Asher. "I thought, what a wonderful person to look on and react to these young kids and to view them as the audience might, to shake his head at their crazy antics." After over 20 years of alcoholism and a terrible decline, Keaton had been rediscovered by film buffs. In 1964, the 68-year-old legend did a comic turn in an Annette Funicello flick, *Pajama Party*, which led to his memorable moments in Asher's 1965 *Beach Blanket Bingo* and *How*



## BEACH PARTY BUSTER

Movie Star News

*to Stuff a Wild Bikini*. "He loved it," Asher enthuses. "He would bring me bits and routines. He'd say, 'How about this?' and it would just be this wonderful, inventive stuff.

"A lot of the audience seemed to be seeing Buster for the first time," says Asher. "Once the kids in the cast became aware of who he was, they all respected him and were crazy about him. And the other comics who came in—Paul Lynde, Don Rickles, Buddy Hackett—they hit it off with him great."

Keaton appeared in only three more movies after that, and died in 1966. For all their campy silliness, Asher's two films with Keaton give us one last look at one of the best that ever was.

—Frank Lovece



## ALICE COOPER'S ROCKY HORROR

"I've always said that there's a perfect marriage between horror and rock music," says singer Alice Cooper who, after four years of laying low, is back again scaring audiences. The project that brought Cooper back is *Monster Dog*, a film made for video in which he plays an adventuresome rock star transformed into a killer canine/man. "I was at a period where I wasn't really doing anything," says Cooper. "I'd been watching all of these [Dario] Argento splatter movies when they offered me the part. It had an Italian director, so I figured we'd be able to get away with more. It sounded like fun—three months in Madrid, I'd get to turn into a dog, and we'd get to kill eight people," he laughs. Cooper agreed to do *Monster Dog* as long as it was cast with unknowns. "I love C-movies," he says, "but there's nothing worse than a big budget splatter film."

Cooper was thrilled when offered the chance to do the music for *Friday the 13th, Part VI*. "I had just signed a new deal with MCA, and they called up wanting someone to write music for the film. I said I'd love to do it," he recalls. "They asked if I wanted to see the film and I said, 'Do I have

to? I mean, I know what's going to happen.'" Viewers can also catch Jason running around in Cooper's two recent music videos. "Jason is one of the greatest rock images I've ever seen," says Cooper. "Just think of it—give him a guitar instead of a machete and he's totally heavy metal!"

Disenchanted with the music video scene, Cooper would rather utilize video for dramas such as *Monster Dog* or his earlier *Welcome to My Nightmare*. "To me, you were a band first: you played, you did gigs, you were almost a gang. Then you recorded, and maybe you did a video." Cooper finds it "sadly amusing" that some bands' success rests solely on their video appeal. "Music videos define too much," he asserts. "They're three-minute commercials for your song. It's generally not any artier than that."

Cooper also thinks video is better suited for bringing concerts to home audiences. His band will do that with their current tour. "We're contemplating giving blood bibs to the first 20 rows," he says. "I'd hate to see an entire generation get away without experiencing at least one decapitation."

—Clifford Meth













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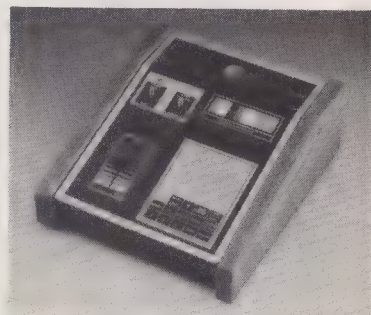


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## New Products

### Pan and Tilt With Spiratone Panomat

The Spiratone Panomat electronically controls panning and tilting of video cameras as well as other photographic equipment. It pans continuously between 30, 60, and 90 degrees, at a rate of 2 to 8 degrees per second. The panhead weighs 27 ounces and accommodates cameras weighing up to 6 pounds. A 3-foot wired remote can be used to control panning, tilting, and speed, and a 20-foot cord is optional for the remote.

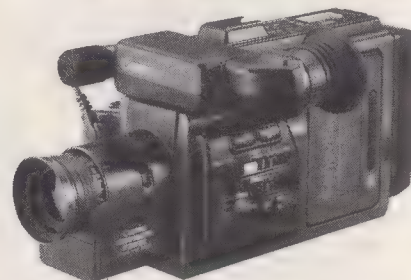
Price: \$124.95.

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### Canon Upgrades 8mm Camcorder

Canon's new 3.5-pound VM-E2 8mm camcorder weighs a pound less than last year's VM-E1 and improves on many of the original's features. The new model has a CCD image sensor that records in light as low as 8 lux. The f/1.2 lens zooms 6x, from 8mm to 48mm. Automatic functions include focus, white balance, and fade. The VM-E2 boasts a flying erase head for sharp edits, as well as still frame and 5x forward and reverse scan in playback.

Accessories supplied with the VM-E2 include a 90-minute battery pack, an AC power adapter, an RF adapter, a battery



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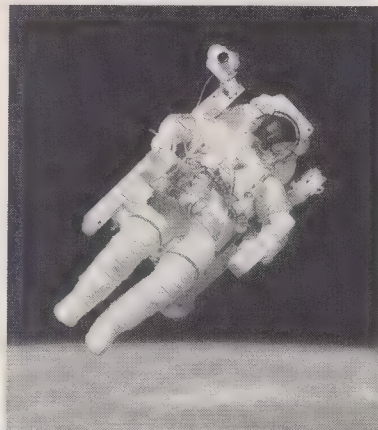
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## New Products



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The AG-1950 also features white clip enhancement, two-channel Hi-Fi stereo audio, a 30-function remote, automatic search, 14-day/8-event programming, and a tuner with 16 channel presets. The optional AG-A95 editing controller provides centralized, microcomputerized control over the AG-1950 and a second VCR.

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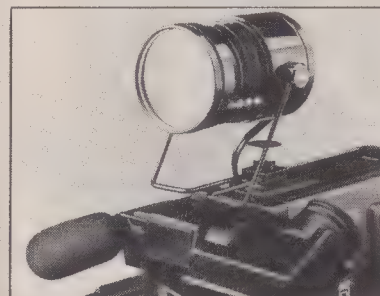
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### Sima CamLight Brightens Videos

Sima's compact new CamLight provides the extra illumination necessary to shoot sharper images in low light. The 7-ounce light can be mounted on top of a camcorder or placed on a table as a side or back light. The Camlight has a color temperature of 3300 degrees Kelvin; its 150-watt color-balanced quartz halogen lamp has a heat-resistant glass shield and a vented metal housing to keep it cool. The extra illumination lets a camcorder lens record at a smaller aperture, providing greater depth of field.

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ORA Electronics' HQ 1000 audio/video signal enhancer gives VCRs, videodisc players, and satellite receivers three of the four HQ improvements. A single integrated circuit combines white clip enhancement, chroma noise reduction, and luminance noise reduction. The HQ1000 can also improve the sound and picture of broadcast transmissions when

used with monitor/receivers, though it does not improve RF signals (those from regular TVs or antennas). The unit is available from ORA Electronics, 20120 Plummer St., Box 4029, Chatsworth, Calif. 91313.

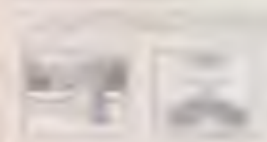
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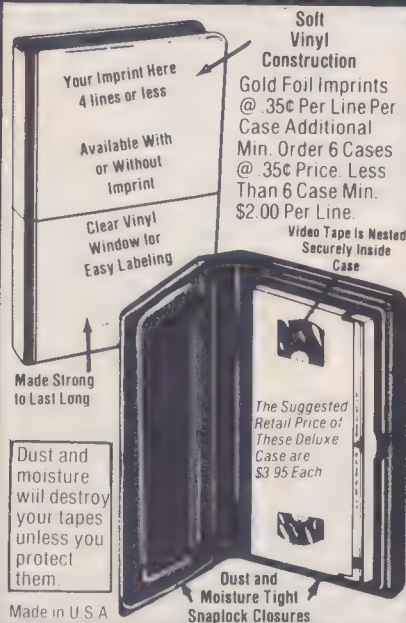






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## New Products



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For additional information,  
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## Clean Sweep for Amaray's Trackmate

Amaray International, best known for its video equipment storage cases, has introduced the Trackmate VHS VCR cleaning system. The Trackmate cassette's brush cleans not only all parts of the tape path, including heads, drums, guides, and tensioning arms, but goes beyond the tape path to places where dirt often accumulates. A felt-tip pen controls fluid application and avoids waste of the cleaning solution. The Trackmate series also includes cleaners for CDs, LPs, and audiocassette decks. Price: \$17.95.

For additional information,  
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## Canon VCR Geared For Audiophiles

Canon's VR-HF710 VHS VCR has all the features of its top-of-the-line VR-HF720 except for onscreen programming. The new model's audio approaches CD quality, with a manufacturer-rated dynamic range of 90 decibels and a frequency response of 20 Hertz to 20,000 Hz. The MTS stereo decoder also picks up SAP (second audio program) broadcasts, and FM stereo simulcasts can be recorded along with TV programs. Audio outputs are provided for both a monitor and an outboard amplifier.

The VR-HG710 is equipped with a 107-channel cable-compatible tuner with a 99-channel memory, as well as an 8-program/one-month timer that's operable from the remote control. HQ circuitry includes white clip enhancement,

chroma noise reduction, and detail enhancement. The four video heads allow nearly noise-free scanning, still-rare, and 1/5x to 1/30x slow motion. The VCR has forward and reverse picture search at 2x and 10x speeds, and index search locates the beginning of scenes by scanning the audio track for blank spaces. An edit switch improves image quality during dubbing, and an auto power feature turns on the VCR automatically when a tape is inserted.

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It's better than Stereo TVs because their speakers, generally, do not have sufficient distance between the left and right channels for a true stereo effect. And the quality of the speakers supplied with your TV... well?

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# Fine Tuning

## Your Video Questions Answered

### Plastic Pipe Dream

**Q** I've seen ads for a chimney-shaped "antenna booster" that plugs into an electrical outlet and promises to "turn the house wiring into a giant TV antenna." Have you ever tested one of these things, and do they work?

Tam Thanh Nguyen  
Fullerton, Calif.

**A** These gizmos have been around since the '50s, and simply don't live up to the claims made in their glossy advertising. What you get is an impressive looking plastic pipe, containing only a simple electrical capacitor. If you want better over-the-air TV reception, check out the selection of rabbit ear antennas at your nearest electronics store, or go to the trouble of installing a good external antenna.

### Flying Tigers

**Q** After reading about what seems to be a standardization of flying erase heads on 8mm camcorders, I still haven't been able to find a full-size VHS camcorder with this feature. Are you aware of any manufacturers that have one under development, and when it would be available?

J.E. Rolstad  
National City, Calif.

**A** Flying erase heads for consumer gear have shown up on many 8mm VCRs. But no VHS or Beta camcorders have appeared with the same feature. Sony may surprise us, but it's doubtful that any more elaborate Betamovies are going to be forthcoming. New VHS camcorders that will be in-

troduced soon should include flying erase heads. Panasonic's new AG-1950 already has it. See this month's "New Products" for details.

### Cable Incapable

**Q** I have two VHS VCRs and a Sony KV-2782R TV set, all of them "cable ready." My cable company is installing a new system and at first told me I wouldn't need a converter to use its service. Now its telling me I'll need to rent a converter to be able to pick up pay-TV channels like HBO, Showtime, and The Movie Channel. Since I'm getting everything now through the VCRs and TV without a converter, how can I get the pay channels without using their converter?

Jerry Carroll  
Everett, Mass.

**A** So-called cable-ready or cable-capable TVs and VCRs usually can't receive any of the pay TV channels being transmitted by a cable company. Most of the companies scramble the signals, making them impossible to receive without also using the descrambler you rent as part of the subscription fee.

You're able to receive the other channels they provide, which are considered to be part of the basic cable package, only because your cable company hasn't scrambled them. At least, not yet. Some cable companies now scramble everything, basic cable and pay channels included, making it impossible to receive or view anything on their services without their special descrambler boxes. Since all of these box-

es only use one broadcast channel (3 or 4), the cable-readiness of your equipment is wasted. With some careful re-wiring, however, you can still receive and record any of the basic TV channels without using the box. We explained how to do that in "8 Ways to Link Audio and Video" (May 1985).

### Bad Connection?

**Q** Recently, a friend asked me if I would copy some Beta tapes onto a VHS cassette. I hooked up my new Sanyo VCR-4400 into my Magnavox VR8486 using audio/video patch cords as well as RF cords, but couldn't get a signal either way. There was no picture and no sound. I finally connected the Sanyo directly to my video monitor using its input jack and connected the monitor output jack into the Magnavox. This worked. Is there some reason why the two machines couldn't be interconnected directly to make the copy in the first place?

Clarence Graham  
San Jose, Calif.

**A** There is no technical reason why you weren't able to copy the original Beta tape onto the VHS cassette using either of your direct hook-ups. With the patch cord method you would have to be certain that the VHS machine being used as the recorder was in the aux or line mode rather than the tuner mode. And if you used the RF transfer method you'd have to have it set to tuner and tuned to the same channel that the Sanyo normally plays back on—either 3 or 4. You would also have to

make sure that the TV/VCR light on the Sanyo is in the VCR mode.

If all of these essential elements were in place, and assuming your initial wiring wasn't faulty, you should have gotten a good copy. The fact that you later managed to copy the tape through your monitor proves that the Sanyo's audio/video inputs and outputs on the two machines were also working properly. Perhaps you just had a bad cable, or a balky phono jack with an intermittent connection.

### Remote Found

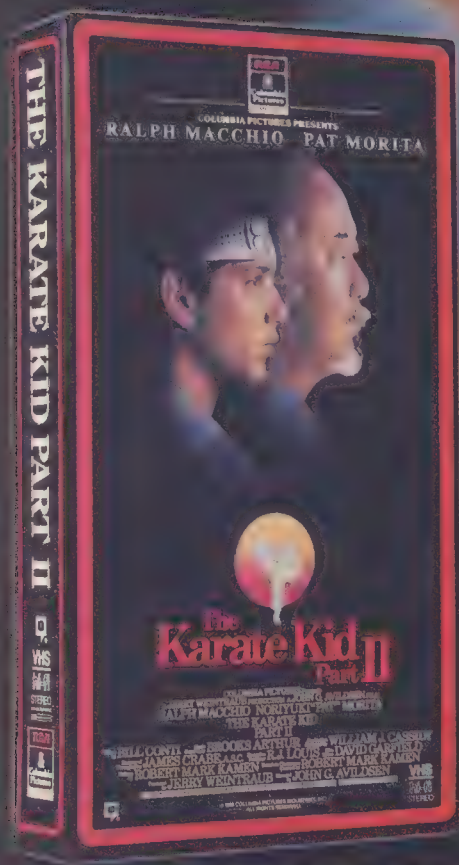
**Q** I have a Quasar VH-5300 portable VHS and a VK731 camera. I use them both to make training tapes and often have to appear in the shots myself. But I can't start and stop the tape without stepping in and out of the scene. The instruction manual that came with the camera says there's a remote control available, but in three years I haven't been able to find one. Is there some way I can wire one up myself so I can get smooth on-camera shots, and is it possible to make a switch so that I can zoom the lens in and out as well?

Richard D. Sisko  
Metuchen, N.J.

**A** Your first problem is the easier one to solve, since there's already a remote pause jack on the VCR and the camera. It's just a simple miniplug, and you can buy an inexpensive corded remote control that should do the trick from an electronics supply house like Radio Shack.



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## Fine Tuning

Your request for a remotely controlled zoom lens is also possible. But it's more difficult to accomplish since you've got to take the camera apart and wire a similar switch into the circuit that controls the zoom motor inside the camera. Instead of tackling that modification yourself, take the camera to a good video repair center, preferably one of Quasar's, so it will have the necessary service manual on hand.

### Lens Limbo

**Q** I'm planning on buying a video camera so that I can copy pictures from my family's photo album onto tape. The problem is that I want to be able to fill the screen with the image from an 8 by 10-inch group photo, and then zoom in for a close-up of each person. Unfortunately, none of the cameras that I've examined will let me do this. Can I get special lenses that can overcome this problem? What brands of cameras will take these lenses?

Robert J. Higgins  
Columbus, Miss.

**A** For years, video cameras and camcorders have lived in an optical limbo. Most of them can focus quite close (12 inches or less), and even closer when the macro focus control is turned on. Unfortunately, there's an optical no-pics-land between these two zones. And that's precisely the area you want to work in. The solution is a set of supplementary close-up lenses that screw into the threads that normally hold the lens hood. The close-up lenses usually come in sets of three, with varying strengths marked +1, +2, +3, etc. The higher power delivers a stronger magnification. You'll probably find that a +2 will deliver the magnification range you need.

If the instruction booklet for your camera(corder) doesn't indicate the thread size of the lens (sometimes it's marked on the lens barrel, along with a symbol that looks like the number 8 laying on its side), take the camera into a camera store and have the store "fit it" for a set. Common thread sizes now in use include 46mm, 49mm, 52mm, 55mm, and 58mm. In addition, there are stepping rings available that let you switch from one size to another. Just be sure that you don't try to fit undersized lenses over a larger lens or you'll lose the edges of the picture.

### Pin Wars

**Q** I have an NEC SuperBeta Hi-Fi VCR. I've noticed that when I record anything from TV, I can't hear any difference in the audio playback, regardless of whether it's in Hi-Fi or not. Is there any reason why I should use the Hi-Fi switch

when recording mono TV programs?

Also, TDK's ads mention that it uses metal roller pins in its cassettes instead of plastic. But Sony, Fuji, RCA, BASF, and Maxell all use plastic pins. Kodak and PD Magnetics use metal, like TDK. TDK is my favorite brand, but is there anything to its claim that metal is better?

Finally, I've heard that a lot of TV stations are now using the Betacam system instead of three-quarter-inch tape.

Shouldn't that breathe new life into the Beta format?

Thomas M. Sipos  
Forest Hills, N.Y.

**A** Hi-Fi doesn't necessarily mean stereo. It does mean better audio—even if it's mono. Linear audio, especially at the slow speeds, is full of hiss and wavering noises, while Hi-Fi audio is usually free of these distortions. If you really can't distinguish between the audio quality of the two systems, maybe it's because you're listening to both through a tinny TV speaker system. Better external speakers might make the differences more audible.


The natural inclination is to think that plastic parts are cheaper and less reliable than metal, but so far, there have been no problems with cassettes using plastic guide pins instead of metal ones.

And what of Betacam? While it's true that many TV stations are using this equipment instead of three-quarter-inch cassettes, that fact is hardly likely to affect the consumer market, since the two formats are electronically incompatible. But as long as Betacam is a viable format for broadcasters, it's reassuring to know that you'll always be able to get supplies of Betacam tapes and use them in regular Beta VCRs.

### Missing Formats

**Q** I have an old Akai VCR that uses quarter-inch reel-to-reel videotape. The machine needs new video heads, and no one can fix it. I want to transfer some of the videotapes made on this machine to VHS cassettes. Do you know of anyone who can help me?

Victor Harper  
Royal Oak, Mich.

**A** The machine you're talking about was sold around 1971 or '72, under the Akai and Roberts brand names. Anyone who has one that's still working and wants to help you out (either with a working machine or by offering to transfer your tapes) is welcome to write to "Fine Tuning" c/o VIDEO and the letters will be passed along. 

VIDEO welcomes your questions. Please do not enclose self-addressed envelopes as the volume of mail does not allow personal replies. Questions may be edited for clarity and space. Address letters to **Fine Tuning, VIDEO Magazine, 460 West 34th St., New York, N.Y. 10001.**





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# TV Den

## Techniques and Technology

### Black & White Backlash

by Roderick Woodcock

For several years now, two companies—Hal Roach Studios' Colorization, Inc. in Toronto, and Color Systems Technology in Marina Del Ray, California—have been busily splashing colors on black & white movies. Only recently, though, has the

tailored their visions for black & white. Advocates claim they are just completing the work of the original filmmakers, adding color to films that would have been shot that way had color film been available at the time.

But color film has been around since the late '30s, and even after it was introduced, many movies continued to be photographed in black & white, for economic and esthetic reasons. Color technology was available to Orson Welles when he lensed *Citizen Kane* in 1942, but he chose black & white instead. Ditto for Woody Allen's *Manhattan*, Martin Scorsese's *Raging Bull*, and David Lynch's *Elephant Man*.

Directors, cinematographers, and actors have all come down hard on the advocates of colorizing. James Stewart, for one, is appalled at the appearance of the colorized version of *It's a Wonderful Life*, his favorite among the many movies he has starred in. And director Frank Capra, who originally cooperated with the colorizing companies, now says he can't stand to watch the movie. The Directors Guild of America and the American Society of Cinematographers deplore colorization, calling it "technical tampering of the worst kind."

The colorists often defend their process with the "color knob" fallacy. If you don't like watching their new versions of your old black & white faves, they argue you can always turn off the hues with the color knob on your TV set. However, there are

two technical problems with this claim. Many modern TVs are so automatic, it's almost impossible to turn the color down to the point where the picture is completely black & white. Some residual color always remains, giving the picture an even more annoying color ghosting that outlines the images. Some VCRs and TVs are so good at doing their normal task of pulling in a good color signal that you can't even purge all the color after you've run the signal through an external video processor like a proc amp.

The second problem is that the colorists alter the relationship between the light and dark parts of the scene. The original gray scale, based on the exposure given the film when it was originally photographed in black & white, has to be futzed with so the movie can accommodate different hues and contrasts. Even if you could turn off the color completely, the picture would look washed out and pasty, with muddy grays instead of crisp blacks, and dingy instead of bright whites.

The colorists point out that they're not altering original prints of movies. They just obtain the best print they can, make a videotape copy, and use that, not the film, for their work. The movie is then dissected digitally, first scene by scene, then frame by frame. The color elements are assigned numbers for encoding individual scenes. Then all the thousands of colorized frames are stitched back together in the form of another videotape com-



Steve Henry

movie industry in Hollywood decided to take serious notice of what's been going on. Apparently many of Hollywood's big names naively assumed that colorizing was going to be confined to undistinguished black & white TV shows from the '50s (like *Wyatt Earp*) and an occasional feature movie. But when the technicians applied their paintbrushes to a bona fide classic—*It's a Wonderful Life*—and announced plans to colorize *Casablanca* and *The Maltese Falcon*, the uproar from film purists was deafening.

The purists protest that the owners of these new computerized crayolas have no business trying to read the minds of the directors and cinematographers who



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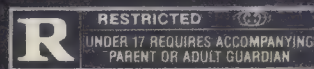
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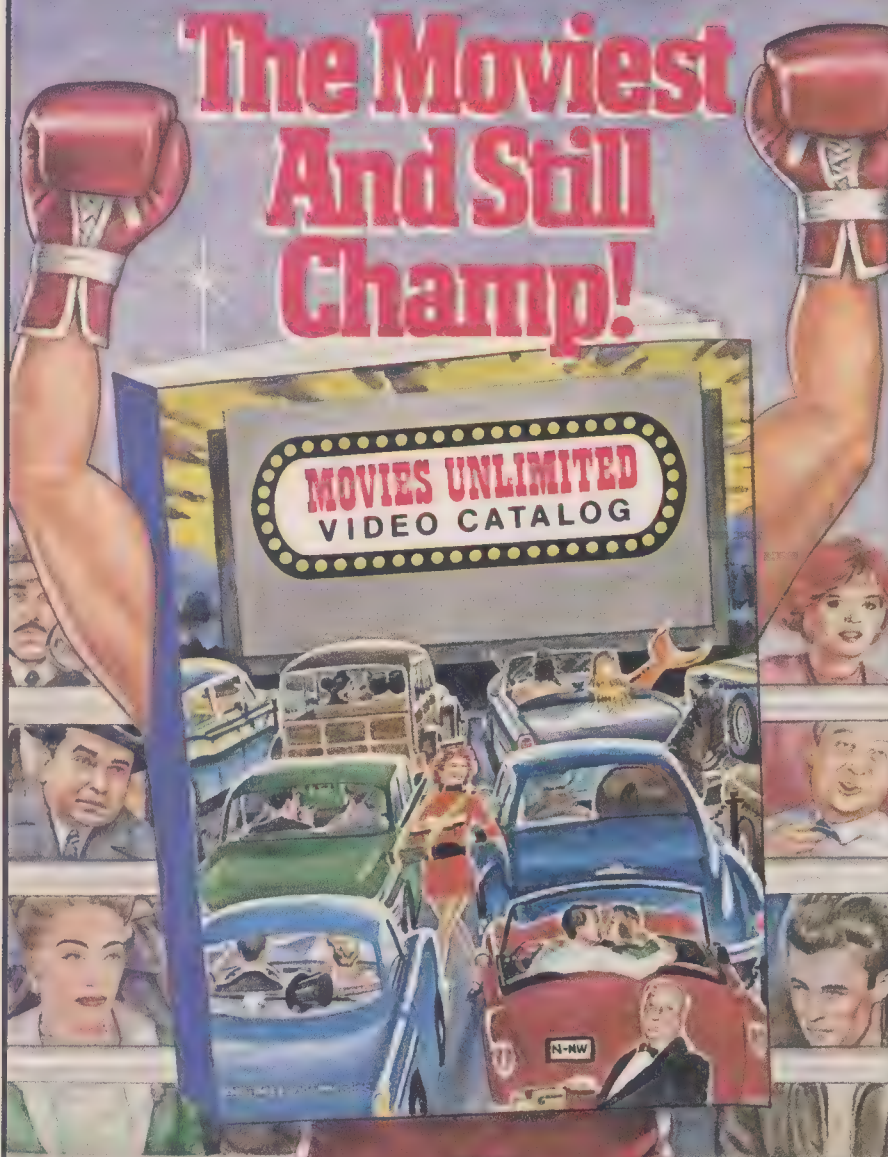
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## TV Den

prised of thousands of assemble edits. These edits, though, aren't part of the original, and give the movie a jittery effect that, although very slight, is nonetheless noticeable to a discerning eye.

Colorizing an average 90-minute black & white film from, say, the 1940s costs roughly \$2000 a minute, which adds up to about \$200,000 for a whole film. That's a big piece of change, even in the high-stakes world of big-time TV syndication and home video. In addition, the process sometimes yields barely one minute of usable colorized film a day. Even with three sets of technicians working 24 hours a day, 5 days a week, it takes months to do even a rudimentary colorizing job.

Colorization (a word that's already trademarked by Hal Roach Studios) amounts to a kind of specialized animation, requiring extraordinarily tedious work to coax the colors to move with the foreground and background images—something especially difficult to do in fast-paced scenes, like dance numbers or action sequences. As in any business, some colorizing technicians are more skilled than others, which explains why one scene can look like vivid Technicolor and the next faded.

But the biggest problem is time. Both colorizing companies are under extreme pressure to meet air dates and other deadlines that have often forced them to make severe compromises. Examples: *The Absent-Minded Professor* has dozens of scenes lacking any color at all and, in general, backgrounds that lack hues that bear any relationship to real life. *It's a Wonderful Life* has some equally shoddy moments, with greyish, bland night scenes, pasty fleshtones, and jarring color mismatches.

The color choices on some of the scenes in *Yankee Doodle Dandy* are laughable. In one Jimmy Cagney wears a sky blue suit that perfectly matches the wall in a lengthy office scene. *Miracle on 34th Street* opens with Macy's Christmas Parade in New York City; sure, Kris Kringle's there, in his requisite red suit, but the crowds are as grey and colorless as the imaginations of some of the people who crank out these hack jobs.

Despite the technical drawbacks and artistic objections, it seems clear that studios will continue to colorize their black & white classics in a desperate attempt to attract audiences that tend to avoid black & white films. The theory is that colorizing will ensure higher ratings for these old chestnuts and eventually justify its immense cost. Meanwhile, the colorizing companies are getting very rich. Their favorite color is green, as in cash.





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# The Camcorner

## New Equipment & Shooting Tips

### Cross Breeding Camcorders

by Roderick Woodcock

Some of the first VHS camcorders could only feed signals into a TV or a monitor. But the newest machines let you go both ways, recording signals off the TV or from other sources. This dual ability makes camcorders more convenient and flexible. But it can also let videophiles conduct some interesting mix-and-match component experiments, if they have friends with different camcorders.

On the convenience front, the RCA CMR-300, for example, has an optional adapter that plugs into the socket normally used by the plug from the detachable electronic viewfinder. The adapter turns the camcorder into a regular VHS recorder that can copy and duplicate tapes, and help with editing.

To check the quality of videos, you can play them back on a TV or monitor using an AV output cable that plugs into a socket on the back of the camcorder. Unlike some other camcorders—such as Kyocera's KD-200, which uses a single socket for the AV inputs and outputs—you can't use RCA's electronic viewfinder, since it has to be disconnected to make room for the external video feed.

A less obvious bonus to being able to record outside signals on a camcorder is the ability it gives the curious to compare camcorders by mixing lenses, imagers, and recording decks from different brands through the use of audio/video cables. It's possible, for example, to record an image from an RCA CMR-300, which uses VHS, onto an 8mm tape inside a Kyocera KD-200, or to re-

cord the Kyocera's CCD-generated signal onto a VHS tape in the RCA unit.

Given the wide range of camcorders now available with both A/V inputs and outputs, hundreds of combinations are probably possible. I tried three using JVC's Compact VHS GR-C7, and the Kyocera and RCA models mentioned above.

First, I connected the JVC to the Kyocera, and recorded the image seen by the JVC's 210,000-pixel, cross-stripe CCD pick-up on a TC-20 cassette as well as on an 8mm cassette. It was possible to run both camcorders at the same time, since the JVC doesn't shut off the audio/video output when it's recording. This interesting feature makes it possible to tape something on the GR-C7 and simultaneously display the same picture seen in the viewfinder on another monitor.

The JVC can record at both the EP and the SP speed, so I tested both. To see the results, I synchronized the camcorders and played back their original tapes into a Sony VTX-1100R tuner, feeding a 25-inch Sony XBR monitor/receiver. I found the colors recorded by the 250,000-pixel RGB chip in the Kyocera had warmth and snap. The JVC chip, which uses a 210,000-pixel CCD, delivered pictures with subdued, almost pastel colors.

Recording the output of the GR-C7 onto 8mm tape didn't really change much at the SP speed. At the EP speed, the 8mm footage showed sharply delineated edges and good contrast. When I reversed the hook-up and used the Kyocera as the

imager, the picture quality on the tapes made in both machines improved, although the slower tape speed still delivered images with a ragged look.

I also connected the RCA and the Kyocera, recording 8mm tapes from the RCA's 300,000-pixel MOS chip and VHS tapes from the Kyocera's CCD. In bright daylight, the tapes looked virtually the same. The quality was stunning and the colors vivid. However, differences appeared under low light. Even though the CMR-300 has a rated minimum sensitivity of 7 lux, compared to 20 lux for the Kyocera, low-light pictures with the RCA were relatively noisy, riddled with lots of little white dots in dark areas.

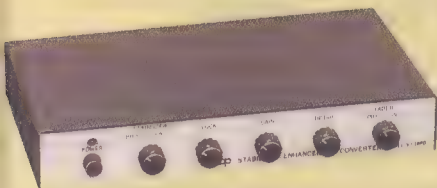
The Kyocera did a better job recording the same dimly-lit scenes, even when its CCD was recording onto the VHS tape inside the RCA. To its credit, however, the MOS chip in the RCA had a very narrow noise threshold. The minute I panned the camera into an area of sufficient light, the picture quality picked right up.

By separating the imaging half of a camcorder from its recording half, and testing each on a dissimilar system, it's possible to make judgments as to which product takes the best pictures under what conditions.

The engineers who design these machines run tests like this all the time, usually with competitors' products. What they learn helps them redesign their own. With a little help from your friends, there's no reason you can't make some interesting comparisons of your own. ▼



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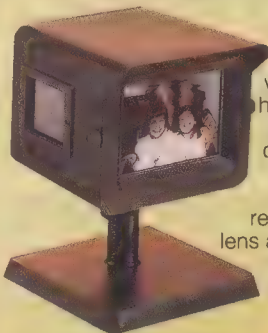


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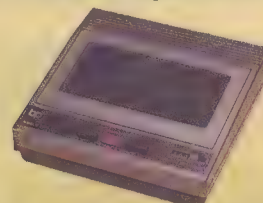
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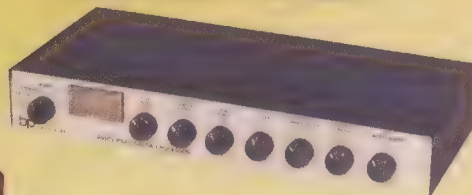


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# FUJI MAKES A CASE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.



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Your videotape lives in a dangerous environment.

Particles of dust hang in the air, just waiting to pounce on your favorite movie and cause unsightly dropouts.

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Because while other tape manufacturers make their case out of cardboard, we use polypropylene.

It gives your tape better protection from the ill effects of moisture, humidity and dangerous falling liquids. And unlike cardboard, it doesn't shred and create tape-damaging particles.

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So get Fuji videotape and help preserve your environment.



Put the good stuff on the good stuff.™





# Video Magazine's 1987 Blank Tape Tests

## Part 1: VHS

**E**very two years or so VIDEO tests the most widely available blank videocassettes to determine the best performers. Our previous tests have shown there is no *perfect* tape, no best grade that outperforms every other on every level. Instead, we've charted each tape's strengths and weaknesses, and presented them in a way that will let you pick the best tapes for your own purposes—whether it's simple TV timeshifting or making heavily-edited home videos.

This year, once again, there were no clearcut winners. However, we did find a group of top contenders that, as the following pages demonstrate, should satisfy most videophiles' quest for perfection. Two tapes—Fuji Super XG H451 and TDK HD Pro—shine, though they differ enough so that you may want to choose one or the other for a particular use. A hair's breadth behind are five more high-quality tapes with interesting strengths that make them suitable for special applications. The tapes are the Konica Super HG, T-120; the Maxell HGX Gold Hi-Fi, T-120; the Maxell RX Pro, T-120; the Sony Pro-X T-120; and the Zenith SHG T-120.

Bear in mind that your VCR or camcorder was designed for a particular type of tape and may not give you exactly the same results with each brand as our test equipment. That's why it's so important to try tapes yourself; you may need to adjust your choices to account for your gear's preferences, too.

This year, we also found a gratifying improvement in the overall quality of blank tapes, particularly among the weakest: they've simply gotten a lot better. For example, the worst tape in our first tape tests (October 1982) had over 100 15-microsecond dropouts per minute, and about half

the tapes had a dropout count above 30. In our last tests (Feb. and Mar. 1985), about half the tapes had more than 14 15-microsecond dropouts. In this test, the dropout count averaged 10.

Similarly, the range between the best and worst measurements of the video signal-to-noise ratio narrowed from 4 decibels in 1985 to 3.6 dBs this year. The spread of the audio S/N measurements narrowed from 4.8 dBs to 3.7 dBs. As the results get closer to a state of theoretical perfection, it gets harder to make further improvements. The likeliest routes to better quali-

ty are in modifying existing formats—as SuperBeta and High Quality showed to be possible—or in developing new videotape formats, or even new media.

All format modifications make new demands on tape. The introduction of slower speeds required smaller magnetic particles that were more evenly spread on the base film. Linear stereo required more accurate slitting since the left track in linear stereo is less than a third of a millimeter wide and runs at the top edge of the tape.

The Hi-Fi signal, recorded by special heads on the video drum, lays down a signal deep in the tape's magnetic coating. The video head that follows lays the video signal on top of it, erasing part of the audio near the tape's surface. As a result, Hi-Fi requires very smooth tape to help the heads stay a fixed distance from the tape. The Hi-Fi signal is an FM signal that behaves like a video signal, so the video S/N and dropouts are relatively good guides to Hi-Fi recording quality. Most VCRs

switch to the linear track during Hi-Fi dropouts; a few go dead, but that's a VCR design problem, not a tape flaw.

HQ is the most recent VHS innovation. It works best on tapes with very fine particles that can retain the stronger high frequency levels. Metal tape, such as is used for the new M2 professional BetaCam format, and 8mm tape can handle these and higher demands, but the tape is incompatible with standard VHS machines. VHS could be redesigned to work with metal tape but compatibility would go out the window in the process. There is a new particle called barium ferrite that JVC put in a tape called EM, but it's not available to consumers yet.

New formats hold the biggest hope for improvement. Compact VHS is much



**By Lancelot Braithwaite**



touted for its small size. It is compatible with VHS machines through an adapter, but it offers no improvement in picture quality and the cassette can hold one hour at most. Beta tapes keep growing in number but the format's acceptance seems confined to video buffs.

The newest full format is 8mm, still an infant. Its picture started out looking worse than VHS two years ago. Now it equals VHS on many fronts. Beta tapes will be reviewed in the March issue, 8mm and Compact VHS tapes in April.

The digital recording technology that will probably make all current VCRs obsolete is still only a glimmer on the horizon. We don't mean VCRs with digital in their name that are really analog VCRs with some digital circuits, but real digital VCRs that record in ones and zeros like CDs and the soon-to-be-released DAT (digital audio tape). For about the last year, Sony has been demonstrating a true digital VCR for professional use. Prices for it are in the six figures, and it will be four or five years before the technology is cheap enough for consumers. It should be able to record high definition TV pictures, if they, too, ever become a reality. But this is all at drawing board stage, so relax.

## GRADING THE GRADES

Not every video job presents the same problem or requires the same tape. Our examination of tapes is based on this principle. We tested tapes for eight criteria and calculated a ninth. All nine are presented on the chart. Two—the output loss at 2 megahertz and the linear audio track balance—are not plotted on the small graphs that follow the chart because their influence on what you see and hear is small. Yet those figures are of value to those with very critical applications. The Chroma S/N, which is also not shown on the small graphs, may be unduly influenced by the cassette shell or tape transport, a problem we're continuing to investigate.

The remaining six measurements tell the bulk of the tape story. As you look through our graphs, you'll see that as you move up the company's grades of tape, different characteristics stand out. Their choice of what is important at each step doesn't always agree with ours or with your needs. That's why you shouldn't rely only on a tape's "grade" as an infallible guide. There are distinct differences between grades of tape but the labelling doesn't spell out the whole story. Our chart and evaluations are intended to help tell the rest.

## TEST EQUIPMENT

Much of the equipment we used in this test is the same as we used in 1985, but we also added some of today's top consumer

## Look For Part II: Beta In March, and Part III: Compact VHS & 8mm Tapes In April's Video

VCRs. The signals were recorded on a JVC HR-7100U, which was also used as the playback unit for the dropout count, the audio S/N, and the audio frequency response tests.

A Toshiba M-5900 was used as the player for the video S/N, chroma AM S/N, and chroma PM S/N tests. A Zenith VR4100 was used for the output loss and track balance tests. Dispersion was calculated from the video S/N measurements. We used the consumer VCRs because the results more closely match what consumers are likely to see on home equipment, and because JVC, the VHS format licensor, recommended that consumer VCRs be used when we began our tests in 1982.

Video S/N, the chroma AM S/N ratio, and the chroma PM S/N ratio were measured on a ShibaSoku 925R/1 NTSC Color Video Noisemeter. Dropouts were counted with a ShibaSoku VH01BZ VTR Dropout Counter. The output loss at 2 mHz was measured on a Sencore SC61 oscilloscope with a voltmeter.

Audio measurements were made on Hewlett-Packard equipment. Test signal generators were by Tektronics, B&K,

Sencore, Technics, and Heathkit, some of which were modified for our needs. Additional equipment by Beckman, Hewlett-Packard, NAD, Pioneer, and others was used for monitoring and other purposes. A Polaroid CU-5 and its attachments were used to make permanent records off oscilloscopes and TV screens.

## TEST PROCEDURES

We requested tape samples from manufacturers and bought or swapped samples with tape dealers to avoid ringers, as we have done previously. At least three samples of each tape were tested. Then we measured eight characteristics of each, and calculated one. These figures should tell you enough about a tape to make an informed choice.

The characteristics we measured were video S/N, chroma AM S/N, chroma PM S/N, the dropout count, the output loss at 2 megahertz, audio S/N, the audio frequency response, and linear audio track balance. We also calculated the dispersion figure and labelled it consistency between batches. It is measured in decibels and represents the difference between the highest video S/N and the lowest measurement from a different batch of tape. Unfortunately, try as we might, we could find samples from only one batch of some tapes. In those cases, though we still averaged the samples measured, a dispersion figure as an index of consistency between batches would be meaningless.

## Filling In The Blanks: A Tape Test Glossary

**Audio Frequency Response:** a measure of the range of frequencies reproduced by the tape and the machine within 3 decibels on its output level at 1 kilohertz.

**Audio S/N:** a measure of how much noise affects the audio signal. It is noticeable as hiss. Since all tapes are tested under the same conditions, any differences in the S/N ratio are caused by the tape. All our comparisons are based on this principle. Measured in decibels.

**Chroma AM S/N:** a measure in decibels of how much a tape causes the color intensity of a single field to vary. Variations in color intensity are caused by noise affecting the amplitude of the color signal responsible for intensity.

**Chroma PM S/N:** a measure in decibels of how much variation there is in the hue or shade of a single color field. Such variations are caused by noise affecting the phase relationship that determines the hue of a color picture. One manufacturer notes that the tape itself can't change a phase relationship. Yet we do

find variation, even using the same machine for all tests. Some of that variation must come from either the tape or the cassette. We present the figure because the variation exists, though it may turn out to reflect some element in cassette shell design.

**Consistency between batches:** or dispersion. The difference between the best and worst video S/N measured for each sample of videotape. It indicates the variation in quality among tapes that come from different production batches. We could have calculated dispersion figures for each characteristic but felt that would contribute little extra to understanding variation in the manufacturing process. Measured in decibels.

**Dropout count:** literally a count of the portions of the video signal missing from the tape. They are caused by areas on the tape with too few magnetic particles—like a pothole—or by debris on the tape that momentarily separates the tape head from the tape sur-

*continued on page 124*



# How To Use The Blank Tape Test Chart

As last Christmas approached, many of our readers faced a problem oddly similar to selecting a blank videotape: picking the right Christmas tree. They're all green with brown trunks, but then what? Some like tall trees, some short; some prefer thick branches, others thin; some want a certain shape and fullness, and search high and low to find it. Choosing a brand and type of tape for the video job you have in mind can be equally complicated. The chart on the next four pages, and the detailed evaluations that follow, are designed to help you pick the blank tape that's best for you, and to better understand the differences between products that outwardly seem alike.

Before working with the chart—which leaves blank spaces for your own ratings—think about what you'll be using the tape for and the characteristics that seem most important. If dropouts are likely to cause a bigger problem than graininess, pay more attention to the "Dropout Count" column. If good audio is a must, look closely at those columns. Many of today's top machines use a Hi-Fi recording system that will even let you ignore the linear audio track characteristics we measured. (Hi-Fi tracks are more like video tracks.) However, no VHS camcorders record Hi-Fi audio, so linear audio track characteristics may be critical.

If you're enough of a videophile to try various tapes rather than rely on technical evaluations, we've set up the chart to allow

you to record your own blank tape experiences. We suggest you clip the chart and keep it in a folder. As you experiment with different tapes, you can record your performance impressions (or measurements, if you're so equipped and inclined) in the blank columns we've provided.

## Here's how to use our chart:

Simply rate the tapes by writing letter grades or numbers in the blank columns. If you use letters, count up, at the end of each row, the number of excellents, very goods, goods, etc. each tape receives. You can cover your personal preferences in tape quality by adding or dropping a grade on the ratings for the characteristics you value most.

If you apply numbers, use the accompanying "Blank Tape Rating Scale" as a guide or substitute your own numbering system for our letter scale—1 to 7 for the grades is the simplest—and count the totals that way. Again, you can either use the higher end of our scale to reflect your preferences, or, if you're using your own numbers, weigh them to favor the characteristics most important to you. Write the fig-

ures in the columns for "Your Rating," add across individual rows, and look for the highest numbers.

Since different video jobs ideally require different tapes, you may want to color code your ratings to reflect those that apply to tapes intended for camcorders, special Hi-Fi recordings, or simple timeshifting. You may also want to photocopy the chart and use the copies as worksheets. Bear in mind that varying your criteria will change your results. For example, if low price is an important factor, you'll be focusing on a different group of tapes than if it were not.

You'll note we haven't included prices.

*continued on page 125*



**Blank Tape Rating Scale**

## Numerical Guide To The Blank Tape Rating Scale

|                  | Video S/N and Chroma AM S/N <sup>1</sup> | Consistency Between Batches <sup>1</sup> | Chroma PM S/N <sup>1</sup> | Dropout Count | Audio S/N <sup>1</sup> | Audio Frequency Response <sup>2</sup> |
|------------------|--|--|----------------------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Excellent</b> | Over +1.5                                | 0.0 or 0.1                               | Over +0.8                  | 0 to 5        | over 53.5              | 50 to 12k                             |
| <b>Very Good</b> | +1.0 to +1.5                             | 0.2                                      | +0.5 to +0.7               | 6 to 10       | 53.1 to 53.5           | 40 to 10k                             |
| <b>Good</b>      | +0.4 to +0.9                             | 0.3                                      | +0.2 to +0.4               | 11 to 20      | 52.6 to 53.0           | 50 to 10k                             |
| <b>Average</b>   | -0.3 to +0.3                             | 0.4                                      | -0.1 to +0.1               | 21 to 30      | 52.1 to 52.5           | 63 to 10k<br>50 to 8k                 |
| <b>Fair</b>      | -0.9 to -0.4                             | 0.5                                      | -0.4 to -0.2               | 31 to 40      | 51.6 to 52.0           | 63 to 8k                              |
| <b>Weak</b>      | -1.5 to -1.0                             | 0.6                                      | -0.7 to -0.5               | 41 to 50      | 51.1 to 51.5           | 50 to 6.3k                            |
| <b>Poor</b>      | under -1.5                               | 0.7                                      | under -0.7                 | over 50       | under 51.1             | 63 to 6.3k                            |

1. In decibels.

2. In Hertz.



# Tape Tests

| Brand Grade <sup>1</sup> | Video S/N <sup>2</sup> | Our Rating     | Your Rating | Consistency <sup>3</sup> | Our Rating | Your Rating | Chroma AM S/N <sup>4</sup> | Our Rating | Your Rating | Chroma PM S/N <sup>4</sup> | Our Rating |
|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------------------|------------|-------------|----------------------------|------------|-------------|----------------------------|------------|
| <b>BASF</b>              |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| Chrome EQ—120            | +0.6                   | G <sup>8</sup> |             | 0.1                      | E          |             | -1.7                       | P          |             | -0.4                       | F          |
| Chrome SHG—120           | +0.7                   | G              |             | 0.9                      | P          |             | -0.1                       | A          |             | +0.2                       | G          |
| Chrome SHG Hi-Fi—120     | +0.8                   | G              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | -0.3                       | A          |             | -0.3                       | F          |
| <b>FUJI</b>              |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| Std.—120                 | +0.1                   | A              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | -0.7                       | F          |             | -0.4                       | F          |
| Super HG—120             | +1.0                   | A              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +0.5                       | G          |             | +0.3                       | G          |
| SHG Hi-Fi—120            | +0.9                   | G              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +0.9                       | G          |             | +1.3                       | E          |
| Super XG H451—120        | +1.8                   | E              |             | 0.1                      | E          |             | +0.7                       | G          |             | +0.3                       | G          |
| <b>GOLDSTAR</b>          |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| Std.—120                 | -0.7                   | F              |             | 0.6                      | W          |             | -0.5                       | F          |             | -0.2                       | F          |
| HG—120                   | -0.4                   | F              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | -0.9                       | F          |             | -0.5                       | W          |
| SHG Hi-Fi—120            | -0.7                   | F              |             | —                        | —          |             | -1.0                       | W          |             | -0.5                       | W          |
| <b>JVC</b>               |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| Premium Std.—120         | -0.5                   | F              |             | 0.5                      | F          |             | -0.7                       | F          |             | -0.2                       | F          |
| HG Super—120             | -0.1                   | A              |             | 0.7                      | P          |             | -0.6                       | F          |             | -0.3                       | F          |
| Super HG—120             | +0.8                   | G              |             | 0.3                      | G          |             | +0.4                       | G          |             | +0.3                       | G          |
| Super Hi-Fi—120          | +0.9                   | G              |             | —                        | —          |             | +0.4                       | G          |             | +0.3                       | G          |
| <b>KODAK</b>             |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| Std.—120                 | -0.4                   | F              |             | 0.7                      | P          |             | -0.9                       | F          |             | -0.3                       | F          |
| Std.—160                 | -1.0                   | W              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | -1.0                       | W          |             | -0.4                       | F          |
| XHG—120                  | +1.3                   | V              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +0.3                       | A          |             | +0.3                       | G          |
| XHG—160                  | +1.1                   | V              |             | 0.1                      | E          |             | +0.9                       | G          |             | +0.7                       | V          |
| Hi-Fi—120                | +1.4                   | V              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +0.7                       | G          |             | +0.5                       | V          |
| <b>KONICA</b>            |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| High Perf.—120           | +0.2                   | A              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +0.4                       | G          |             | +0.9                       | E          |
| Super HG—120             | +0.8                   | G              |             | 0.3                      | G          |             | +1.1                       | V          |             | +1.2                       | E          |
| Super Hi-Fi—120          | +0.6                   | G              |             | 0.3                      | G          |             | +1.3                       | V          |             | +1.1                       | E          |
| Super Pro—120            | +1.0                   | V              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +0.2                       | A          |             | +0.5                       | V          |
| <b>MAGNAVOX</b>          |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| HQ—120                   | -0.6                   | F              |             | 0.1                      | E          |             | -0.5                       | F          |             | -0.2                       | F          |
| <b>MAXELL</b>            |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| EX—120                   | +0.3                   | A              |             | 0.3                      | G          |             | +0.5                       | G          |             | +0.6                       | V          |
| EX—160                   | -0.5                   | F              |             | 0.1                      | E          |             | -0.1                       | A          |             | +0.6                       | V          |
| HGX—120                  | +0.5                   | G              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +0.8                       | G          |             | +0.6                       | V          |
| HGX—160                  | +0.8                   | G              |             | —                        | —          |             | +1.3                       | V          |             | +0.9                       | E          |
| HGX Hi-Fi—120            | +1.5                   | V              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +1.5                       | V          |             | +0.9                       | E          |
| RX Pro—120               | +1.8                   | E              |             | 0.4                      | A          |             | +1.8                       | E          |             | +1.0                       | E          |
| <b>MEMOREX</b>           |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| HS—120                   | -1.1                   | W              |             | 0.6                      | W          |             | -0.3                       | A          |             | +0.4                       | G          |
| Pro Plus—120             | -0.5                   | F              |             | 0                        | E          |             | -0.3                       | A          |             | +0.2                       | G          |
| Pro Hi-Fi—120            | +0.7                   | G              |             | 0.5                      | F          |             | +0.9                       | G          |             | +0.8                       | E          |
| Pro Cam—120              | -0.2                   | A              |             | 0.7                      | P          |             | -0.2                       | A          |             | +0.5                       | V          |

<sup>1</sup>Certain grade names are abbreviated for space; see test pages for full names. <sup>2</sup>S/N: signal-to-noise ratio, measured in decibels. <sup>3</sup>Between batches, in decibels.



# Tape Tests

| Your Rating | Dropout Count <sup>5</sup> | Your Rating | Your Rating | Output Loss at 2 MHz <sup>4</sup> | Your Rating | Audio S/N <sup>6</sup> | Your Rating | Audio Frequency Response <sup>6</sup> | Your Rating | Linear Audio Track Balance <sup>7</sup> | Your Rating | Your Cost | Your Rating | Your Rating Totals |
|-------------|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|---|-------------|-----------|-------------|--------------------|
|             | 15/33/84                   | G           |             | -2.6                              |             | 52.7                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 7/10/17                    | V           |             | -2.7                              |             | 52.9                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 14/20/23                   | G           |             | -2.4                              |             | 52.8                   |             | 63-9k                                 |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 5/9/12                     | E           |             | -2.4                              |             | 52.2                   |             | 50-8k                                 |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 10/13/13                   | V           |             | -2.3                              |             | 52.6                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 15/16/21                   | G           |             | -2.5                              |             | 52.8                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 3/4/5                      | E           |             | -2.5                              |             | 52.9                   |             | 50-10k                                |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 6/7/9                      | V           |             | -1.6                              |             | 52.4                   |             | 50-9k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 16/23/37                   | G           |             | -2.1                              |             | 51.8                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 10/16/17                   | V           |             | -2.1                              |             | 51.1                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 16/19/26                   | G           |             | -1.9                              |             | 52.4                   |             | 50-9k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 16/21/33                   | G           |             | -1.8                              |             | 53.5                   |             | 50-9k                                 |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 9/11/22                    | V           |             | -2.7                              |             | 51.5                   |             | 50-9k                                 |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 32/43/77                   | F           |             | -2.6                              |             | 52.2                   |             | 50-9k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 10/15/20                   | V           |             | -2.5                              |             | 51.4                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 6/10/14                    | V           |             | -1.9                              |             | 51.5                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 1/3/3                      | E           |             | -1.8                              |             | 52.8                   |             | 63-9k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 6/6/10                     | V           |             | -2.3                              |             | 52.2                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 3/4/5                      | E           |             | -2.3                              |             | 52.5                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 7/12/23                    | V           |             | -2.1                              |             | 52.8                   |             | 63-9k                                 |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 9/16/32                    | V           |             | -2.2                              |             | 53.1                   |             | 63-9k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 4/6/10                     | E           |             | -1.8                              |             | 52.5                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 99                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 5/6/7                      | E           |             | -2.1                              |             | 53.4                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 4/7/8                      | E           |             | -1.7                              |             | 50.8                   |             | 50-9k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 15/21/29                   | G           |             | -1.6                              |             | 51.4                   |             | 50-9k                                 |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 15/21/35                   | G           |             | -1.8                              |             | 51.2                   |             | 40-9k                                 |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 8/9/12                     | V           |             | -1.5                              |             | 51.6                   |             | 40-9k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 14/16/23                   | G           |             | -1.9                              |             | 52.2                   |             | 40-9k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 13/13/18                   | G           |             | -2.3                              |             | 53.2                   |             | 40-9k                                 |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 14/18/21                   | G           |             | -2.8                              |             | 52.7                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 33/42/61                   | F           |             | -1.5                              |             | 51.8                   |             | 50-9k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 6/50/73                    | V           |             | -1.6                              |             | 52.3                   |             | 50-10k                                |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 10/14/19                   | V           |             | -2.4                              |             | 52.2                   |             | 50-10k                                |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 12/16/24                   | G           |             | -2.1                              |             | 52.4                   |             | 50-10k                                |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |

<sup>4</sup>In decibels. <sup>5</sup>15µ sec/10µ sec/5µ sec. <sup>6</sup>In Hertz. <sup>7</sup>In percent. <sup>8</sup>E for excellent, V for very good, G for good, A for average, F for fair, W for weak, P for poor.



# Tape Tests

| Brand Grade <sup>1</sup> | Video S/N <sup>2</sup> | Our Rating     | Your Rating | Consistency <sup>3</sup> | Our Rating | Your Rating | Chroma AM S/N <sup>4</sup> | Our Rating | Your Rating | Chroma PM S/N <sup>4</sup> | Our Rating |
|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------------------|------------|-------------|----------------------------|------------|-------------|----------------------------|------------|
| <b>PANASONIC</b>         |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| Premium Std.—120         | −0.5                   | F <sup>3</sup> |             | 0.1                      | E          |             | +0.3                       | A          |             | +0.5                       | V          |
| Premium Std.—160         | −1.9                   | P              |             | 0.1                      | E          |             | −1.1                       | W          |             | −0.4                       | F          |
| SHG—120                  | +1.1                   | V              |             | 0.3                      | G          |             | +1.2                       | V          |             | +0.1                       | A          |
| Hi-Fi—120                | +0.9                   | G              |             | 0.1                      | E          |             | +0.7                       | G          |             | +0.5                       | V          |
| <b>POLAROID</b>          |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| Supercolor—120           | 0                      | A              |             | 0.3                      | G          |             | −0.1                       | A          |             | +0.1                       | A          |
| Supercolor HG—120        | +1.0                   | V              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +0.8                       | G          |             | +0.7                       | V          |
| SHG Hi-Fi—120            | +0.8                   | G              |             | 0                        | E          |             | +0.8                       | G          |             | +0.6                       | V          |
| <b>QUASAR</b>            |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| Super GT—120             | −0.2                   | A              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +0.1                       | A          |             | +0.2                       | G          |
| SHG—120                  | +0.9                   | G              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +0.7                       | G          |             | +0.3                       | G          |
| Hi-Fi—120                | +0.7                   | G              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +0.6                       | G          |             | +0.4                       | G          |
| <b>RCA</b>               |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| Hi-Fi Stereo—120         | +0.3                   | A              |             | 0.5                      | F          |             | −0.3                       | A          |             | +0.3                       | G          |
| Std.—160                 | +0.1                   | A              |             | —                        | —          |             | −0.1                       | A          |             | +0.6                       | V          |
| SHG—120                  | +1.3                   | V              |             | 0.3                      | G          |             | +0.1                       | A          |             | +0.3                       | G          |
| <b>SCOTCH</b>            |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| EG—120                   | +1.0                   | V              |             | 0.5                      | F          |             | −0.3                       | A          |             | +0.2                       | G          |
| EG + —120                | +0.7                   | G              |             | 0.1                      | E          |             | +0.4                       | G          |             | −0.4                       | F          |
| EXG—120                  | +1.0                   | V              |             | 0.4                      | A          |             | +0.8                       | G          |             | 0                          | A          |
| EXG Hi-Fi—120            | +0.8                   | G              |             | 0.9                      | P          |             | +0.4                       | G          |             | +0.6                       | V          |
| EXG Pro—120              | +1.1                   | V              |             | 0.3                      | G          |             | +0.8                       | G          |             | +0.8                       | E          |
| EXG Cam—120              | +1.0                   | V              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +0.6                       | G          |             | +0.7                       | V          |
| <b>SKC</b>               |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| SG—120                   | −1.8                   | P              |             | —                        | —          |             | −0.2                       | A          |             | −0.1                       | A          |
| SHG—120                  | +0.1                   | A              |             | —                        | —          |             | +0.2                       | A          |             | +0.4                       | G          |
| <b>SONY</b>              |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| Std.—120                 | −0.2                   | A              |             | 0                        | E          |             | −0.1                       | A          |             | 0                          | A          |
| Std.—160                 | −0.9                   | F              |             | —                        | —          |             | −0.5                       | F          |             | +0.1                       | A          |
| ES-HG—120                | +1.0                   | V              |             | 0.1                      | E          |             | +0.3                       | A          |             | +0.3                       | G          |
| ESX Hi-Fi—120            | +0.8                   | G              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +0.2                       | A          |             | +0.2                       | G          |
| Pro-X—120                | +1.3                   | V              |             | 0                        | E          |             | +0.1                       | A          |             | 0                          | A          |
| <b>TDK</b>               |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| HS—120                   | −0.2                   | A              |             | 0.1                      | E          |             | +0.2                       | A          |             | +0.2                       | G          |
| Extra HG—120             | +1.2                   | V              |             | 0.5                      | F          |             | +1.1                       | V          |             | +0.5                       | V          |
| EHG Hi-Fi—120            | +1.3                   | V              |             | 0.4                      | A          |             | +0.9                       | G          |             | +0.3                       | G          |
| HD Pro—120               | +2.1                   | E              |             | 0.2                      | V          |             | +1.2                       | V          |             | +0.7                       | V          |
| <b>ZENITH</b>            |                        |                |             |                          |            |             |                            |            |             |                            |            |
| Std.—120                 | +0.2                   | A              |             | 0.1                      | E          |             | −0.2                       | A          |             | 0                          | A          |
| Std.—160                 | −1.8                   | P              |             | 0.6                      | W          |             | −1.7                       | P          |             | −1.0                       | W          |
| SHG—120                  | +0.8                   | G              |             | 0                        | E          |             | +1.1                       | V          |             | +0.7                       | V          |

<sup>1</sup>Certain grade names are abbreviated for space; see test pages for full names. <sup>2</sup>S/N: signal-to-noise ratio, measured in decibels. <sup>3</sup>Between batches, in decibels



# Tape Tests

| Your Rating | Dropout Count <sup>5</sup> | Our Rating | Your Rating | Output Loss at 2 MHz <sup>4</sup> | Your Rating | Audio S/N <sup>4</sup> | Your Rating | Audio Frequency Response <sup>6</sup> | Your Rating | Linear Audio Track Balance <sup>7</sup> | Your Rating | Your Cost | Your Rating | Your Rating Totals |
|-------------|----------------------------|------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|---|-------------|-----------|-------------|--------------------|
|             | 18/24/42                   | G          |             | -1.9                              |             | 52.5                   |             | 50-8k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 11/17/36                   | G          |             | -2.0                              |             | 52.4                   |             | 63-8k                                 |             | 95                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 9/10/13                    | V          |             | -2.5                              |             | 52.8                   |             | 50-6.3k                               |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 8/11/16                    | V          |             | -2.5                              |             | 54.8                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 17/22/36                   | G          |             | -2.4                              |             | 51.4                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 37/45/69                   | F          |             | -2.4                              |             | 53.3                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 28/37/70                   | A          |             | -2.3                              |             | 52.5                   |             | 63-8k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 8/11/28                    | V          |             | -1.8                              |             | 51.3                   |             | 50-8k                                 |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 7/12/15                    | V          |             | -2.1                              |             | 52.9                   |             | 50-8k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 8/18/34                    | V          |             | -2.2                              |             | 52.1                   |             | 50-8k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 14/17/22                   | G          |             | -1.8                              |             | 51.8                   |             | 50-8k                                 |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 35/64/139                  | F          |             | -2.1                              |             | 52.0                   |             | 50-8k                                 |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 28/35/41                   | A          |             | -2.0                              |             | 53.2                   |             | 50-8k                                 |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 4/5/9                      | E          |             | -2.4                              |             | 53.1                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 11/14/21                   | G          |             | -2.7                              |             | 52.8                   |             | 50-10k                                |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 13/22/35                   | G          |             | -2.8                              |             | 52.8                   |             | 50-9k                                 |             | 99                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 9/13/21                    | V          |             | -2.6                              |             | 52.5                   |             | 50-10k                                |             | 95                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 8/14/23                    | V          |             | -2.7                              |             | 52.8                   |             | 50-10k                                |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 15/15/21                   | G          |             | -2.8                              |             | 52.4                   |             | 50-12k                                |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 26/30/39                   | A          |             | -2.0                              |             | 51.8                   |             | 50-8k                                 |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 20/31/31                   | G          |             | -2.0                              |             | 53.6                   |             | 63-8k                                 |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 6/6/9                      | V          |             | -2.1                              |             | 51.6                   |             | 40-9k                                 |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 15/24/55                   | G          |             | -1.7                              |             | 52.2                   |             | 40-9k                                 |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 6/9/11                     | V          |             | -2.3                              |             | 52.4                   |             | 50-9k                                 |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 11/16/27                   | G          |             | -2.3                              |             | 53.7                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 10/12/15                   | V          |             | -2.8                              |             | 54.1                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 7/11/19                    | V          |             | -2.3                              |             | 52.5                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 3/3/6                      | E          |             | -2.4                              |             | 53.6                   |             | 50-10k                                |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 11/12/36                   | G          |             | -2.4                              |             | 54.4                   |             | 50-10k                                |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 11/16/22                   | G          |             | -2.9                              |             | 54.0                   |             | 50-11k                                |             | 98                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 19/27/43                   | G          |             | -2.2                              |             | 53.3                   |             | 63-10k                                |             | 97                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 38/73/154                  | F          |             | -1.9                              |             | 53.0                   |             | 50-8k                                 |             | 95                                      |             |           |             |                    |
|             | 10/14/20                   | V          |             | -2.1                              |             | 53.1                   |             | 50-8k                                 |             | 96                                      |             |           |             |                    |

<sup>4</sup>In decibels. <sup>5</sup>15 $\mu$  sec/10 $\mu$  sec/5 $\mu$  sec. <sup>6</sup>In Hertz. <sup>7</sup>In percent. \* E for excellent, V for very good, G for good, A for average, F for fair, W for weak, P for poor

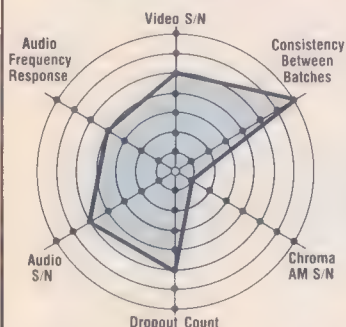


# Tape Tests



## BASF

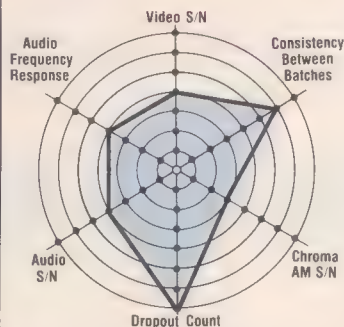
### Chrome Extra Quality T-120



Chrome Extra Quality is BASF's new basic grade. Like most manufacturers it improved quality across all grades including this. Areas showing the greatest improvements were video S/N, consistency between batches, and the dropout count. There was also a small improvement in audio S/N, a small drop in frequency response on the linear track, and a gain on chroma PM S/N that was overshadowed by the improvements of other brands. Overall, this is an average to good tape with high consistency.

## FUJI

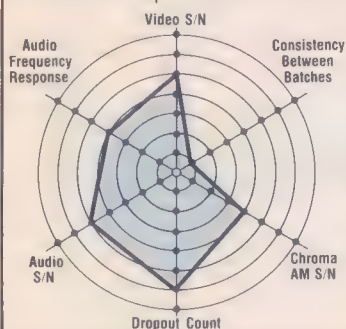
### T-120



Fuji's basic T-120 grade is an average performer with excellent dropout count and very good consistency but just fair chroma AM S/N. The overall good balance, with few unusual peaks and valleys, continues up the line as performance characteristics improve. Compared to our earlier test of Fuji's basic grade, this is more evenly balanced, relative to the tapes of its competitors, which have also improved.

## BASF

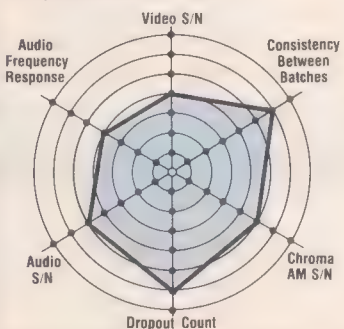
### Chrome Super HG T-120



Chrome Super HG is equal to or a step up from BASF's basic grade in most areas except consistency. The most noticeable improvement is in the dropout count with smaller gains in both chroma S/N figures. It rates better than BASF's SHG in our 1985 tests on all S/N measurements and even on absolute dropout count. But since our rating system has become more demanding, it now rates very good instead of excellent. There were also small losses in audio S/N and frequency response. It is still a good competitor.

## FUJI

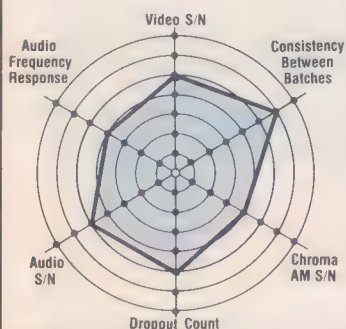
### Super HG T-120



Fuji Super HG T-120 is also well balanced and gives up a rating point on dropout but compensates by gains on both chroma S/Ns and the audio S/N. The result is a tape rated at good or higher on all measurements except video S/N and audio frequency response, which is average. A good all-purpose tape.

## BASF

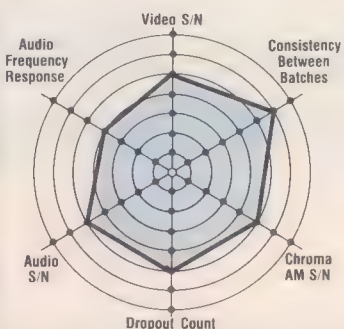
### Chrome Super HG Hi-Fi T-120



Super HG Hi-Fi is a BASF grade introduced just about a year ago. It is good or very good in all areas except chroma AM S/N and audio frequency response, for which it rates average. This well-balanced tape is like BASF's basic grade but with a big jump in chroma AM S/N quality. Like most Hi-Fi tapes there seems to be little difference in picture quality between it and non-Hi-Fi tapes. Manufacturers call the difference, which has many attributes, runability. The one important attribute to Hi-Fi quality seems to be a head-cleaning action.

## FUJI

### Super HG Hi-Fi T-120



Fuji's Super HG Hi-Fi performs better than its Super HG on video S/N and chroma PM S/N. A small increase in dropouts leaves it with four ratings of good, one of very good, and one of average, plus an excellent on chroma PM S/N (not shown on the graph.) It shows strong improvements in consistency and chroma PM S/N over the samples we measured two years ago. Again a good to very good all-around performer.





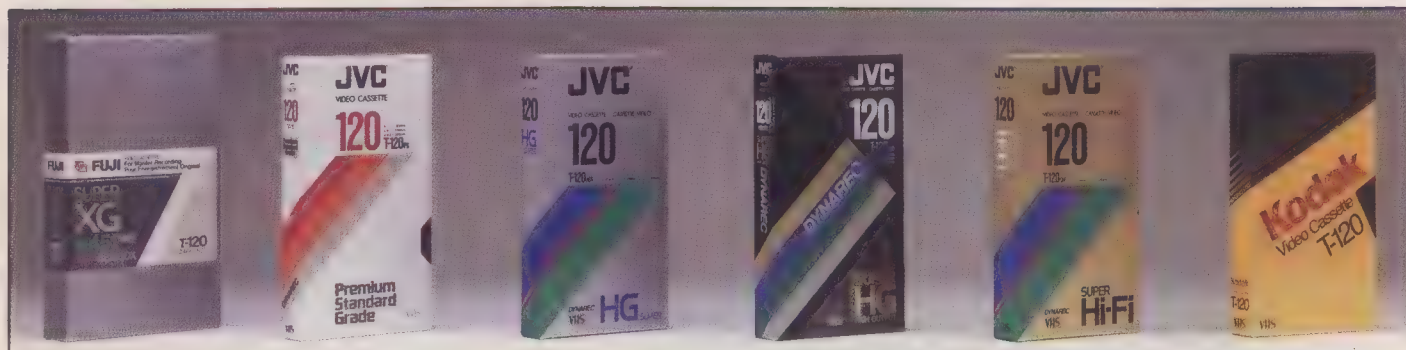
## **MAXELL. THE TAPE THAT LASTS AS LONG AS THE LEGEND.**

He was inarticulate and eloquent. A generation of adolescent rebellion expressed in surly manners and sensitive speech. He left behind a small but remarkable legacy of work. At Maxell, we help you preserve his films, with tapes that are manufactured up to 60% above industry standards. Tapes that will deliver the same great quality and clarity after 500 plays. So as long as there are rebels without causes there will be the movies of James Dean to reflect their struggles and light their ways.



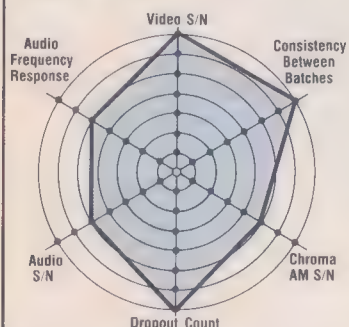


# Tape Tests



## FUJI

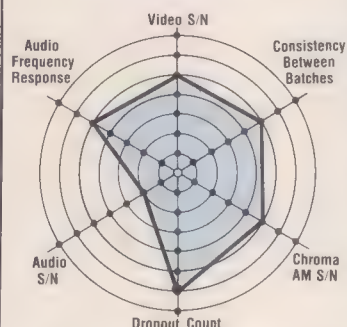
### Super XG H451 T-120



Fuji Super XG H451 T-120 remains among the top tapes tested, with ratings of excellent on video S/N, consistency between batches, and the dropout count. It rates good on all other characteristics. Compared to our last test, there were improvements in the consistency between batches and dropouts, and small decreases on chroma AM S/N and audio characteristics. It remains a top tape.

## JVC

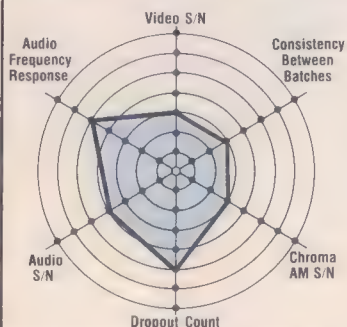
### Super HG High Output T-120



Super HG is the higher of JVC's easily confused middle grades. A glance at the graphs is enough to see the differences. Super HG rates good or very good on every measurement except audio S/N, which is weak. But remember that our standards have gone up significantly for this measurement. On our 1985 tests the same measurement would have earned a rating of good.

## JVC

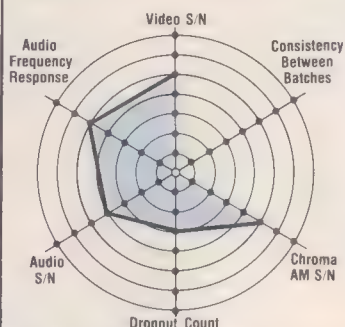
### Premium Standard Grade T-120



Like most tape manufacturers JVC, the VHS format licensor, has released an improved basic formulation based on advances in materials and processing. Its new Premium Standard Grade reflects those changes and is much superior to its earlier basic grade. It is just fair on video and both chroma S/Ns, good on the dropout count and audio frequency response, and average on audio S/N. It is a moderately well-balanced tape with fair consistency.

## JVC

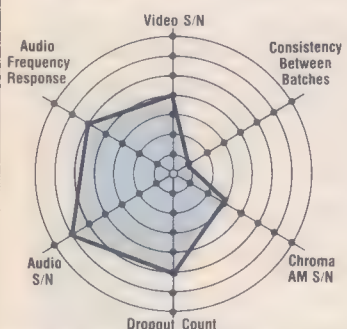
### Super Hi-Fi T-120



JVC's Super Hi-Fi is its top-of-the-line tape. It sold two additional grades for a time but dropped them because six grades of tape may have been a bit confusing for the average user. Unfortunately, all three samples we tested were from the same batch so there is no consistency rating. The only surprise is a significant increase in the dropout count, which makes us rate it at the low end of fair for this characteristic. Remember, though, that all our samples came from the same batch; a wider selection could change that rating.

## JVC

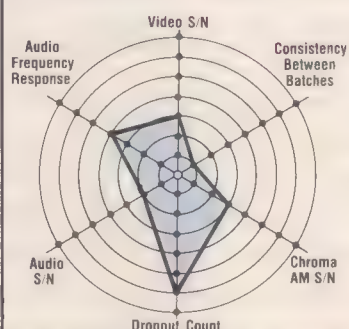
### HG Super T-120



JVC has two grades with confusingly similar names: HG Super and Super HG. HG Super is the lower grade, and is usually priced lower. It shows distinct increases in video S/N, audio S/N, and audio frequency response, with a dropout count similar to JVC's basic grade. The only major weakness is its consistency between batches. Remember, though, that even a poor consistency rating shows a variation of less than 1 dB.

## KODAK

### T-120



Kodak's basic grade of T-120 is a middle of the road tape. A very good dropout rating is its one outstanding positive quality. A negative point is its poor consistency which has a variation of just under 1 dB. Yet because dropouts are probably the number one offender to viewers, the tape presents a picture that is comfortable to watch though a little grainier than average.



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|--|--------|----------------------------------|--------|---|--------|
| WHITNEY HOUSTON #1 HITS                    | 110672 | LIONEL RICHIE: ALL NIGHT LONG    | 110001 | DELTA FORCE                             | 110737 |
| JAGGED EDGE                                | 110498 | ROCKY IV                         | 110616 | PHIL COLLINS: NO JACKET REQUIRED        | 110789 |
| DARLING                                    | 110840 | MADONNA LIVE: THE VIRGIN TOUR    | 110622 | THE KARATE KID                          | 110017 |
| THE TRIP TO BOUNTIFUL                      | 110998 | GHOSTBUSTERS                     | 110048 | CRITTERS                                | 110876 |
| HALL & OATES: LIBERTY CONCERT              | 110671 | A FORCE OF ONE (CHUCK NORRIS)    | 110530 | SHEILA E. LIVE (w/ PRINCE)              | 110731 |
| THE MONKEES, VOL. 1                        | 110796 | JOHN LENNON: LIVE IN NYC         | 110394 | MURPHY'S ROMANCE                        | 110799 |
| CROSSROADS                                 | 110870 | WHITE NIGHTS                     | 110670 | THE CURE? STARING AT THE SEA (VHS only) | 111000 |
| STEVIE NICKS: I CAN'T WAIT                 | 110804 | BLADE RUNNER                     | 110519 | YANKEE DOODLE DANDY (in color)          | 110872 |
| SPELLBOUND (HITCHCOCK)                     | 110207 | CASABLANCA                       | 110018 | SILVERADO                               | 110395 |
| RICHARD PRYOR LIVE ON THE SUNSET STRIP     | 110144 | GENESIS LIVE: THE MAMA TOUR      | 110782 | TINA TURNER: PRIVATE DANCER LIVE        | 110023 |
| TEARS FOR FEARS: SCENES FROM THE BIG CHAIR | 110464 | HALLOWEEN                        | 110452 | THE CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR               | 110814 |
| THE AWFUL TRUTH                            | 110779 | TOSCANINI: THE MAESTRO           | 110843 | VIDEO AID (21 VIDEO HITS)               | 110940 |
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| U2—LIVE AT RED ROCKS                       | 110866 | IRON EAGLE                       | 110833 | KEY LARGO (BOGART)                      | 110192 |
| AGNES OF GOD                               | 110462 | THE CARE BEARS MOVIE II          | 110834 | HOROWITZ IN LONDON                      | 110095 |
| ULTIMATE TENNIS                            | 110480 | DIRE STRAITS LIVE: ALCHEMY       | 110445 | 8 MILLION WAYS TO DIE                   | 110878 |
| THE BEATLES LIVE: READY, STEADY, GO        | 110026 | TERRIFIC SEX: THE DR. RUTH VIDEO | 110624 | ROLLING STONES: LET'S SPEND THE NIGHT   | 110499 |
| KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN                   | 110625 | THE SEVENTH SEAL (subtitled)     | 110494 | MODERN TIMES (CHAPLIN)                  | 110106 |
| WHITE HEAT (CAGNEY)                        | 110809 | ALABAMA: GREATEST HITS           | 110802 | KIDSONGS: DAY ON MacDONALD'S FARM       | 110618 |
| THE 3 STOOGES, VOL. 8                      | 110649 | CLOSE ENCOUNTERS (SPECIAL ED.)   | 110039 | RED RIVER (WAYNE)                       | 110251 |
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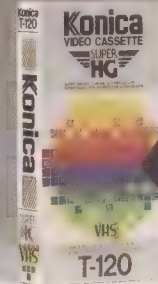
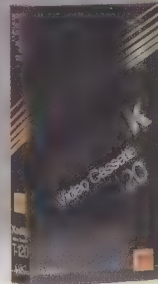
WBX27

VA

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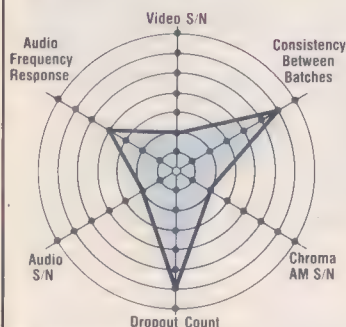


# Tape Tests



## KODAK

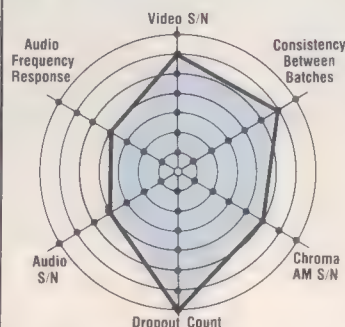
T-160



Kodak's basic T-160 grade shows small losses in video S/N and chroma AM S/N compared to its T-120, but its consistency jumps to very good. The T-160 tapes are not as popular as the T-120s because the cost per minute doesn't make the T-160 as good a value, but for long movies, they're needed. Among the T-160s we tested, the two Kodaks were the only ones to rate very good on the dropout count.

## KODAK

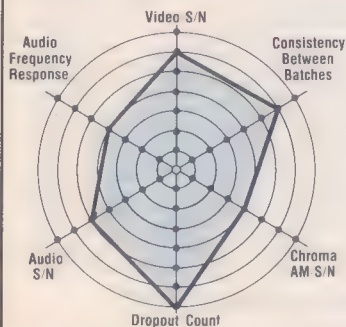
Hi-Fi T-120



Kodak's Hi-Fi T-120 is close to the XHG T-160 in performance. It gives up one rating point on consistency between batches, which is very good, to gain one point on the dropout count, which is excellent. A dropout loses both the picture and the Hi-Fi information, so this seems like a good compromise because dropouts affect the Hi-Fi tracks directly.

## KODAK

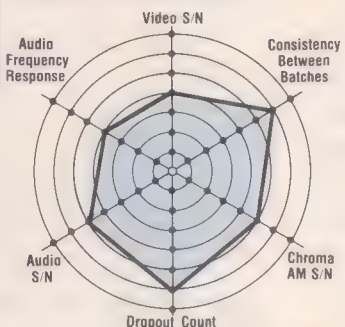
XHG T-120



Kodak's XHG T-120 is better than its basic T-120 on every measurement except audio frequency response, which was the same. With a rating of excellent on dropout count, very good on video S/N and consistency between batches, good on audio S/N, and average or better on the remaining criteria, the XHG T-120 is among the better well-balanced tapes we tested.

## KONICA

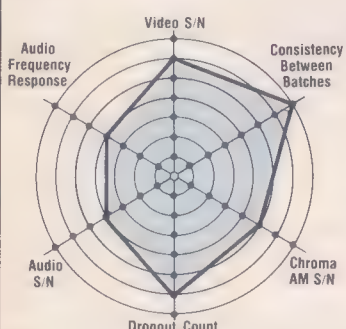
High Performance T-120



In our last tape test Konica was a newcomer with two grades of tape. It has expanded its line to four grades and raised the quality of the basic grade while changing its name. Its new basic High Performance T-120 has earned its name with two ratings of very good, two of good, two of average, and excellent on chroma PM S/N. These results are competitive with the high grade tape of some of its competitors.

## KODAK

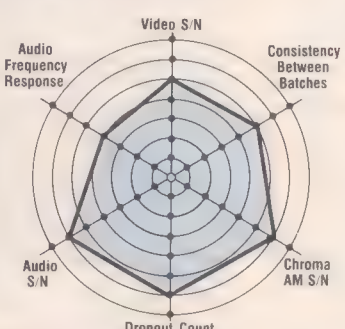
XHG T-160



Normally T-160 tapes are not as outstanding as their T-120 counterparts, but Kodak's XHG T-160 is an exception. It is one rating point better on consistency and both chroma S/Ns, while sacrificing one point on the dropout count and audio S/N. This makes the T-160 competitive with the T-120, which is very unusual and very good for those who need the extra recording time.

## KONICA

Super HG T-120



Konica's Super HG T-120 outperforms its basic grade on four of the six criteria we show on our graph. It equals the lower grade on the remaining characteristics. It is indeed a step-up grade that is a strong competitor with fairly good balance. Its gains were in video, audio and chroma AM S/N, and consistency. Depending on price it could be an excellent value.





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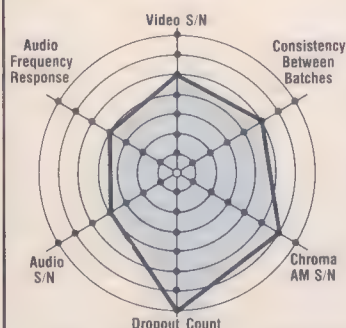


# Tape Tests



## KONICA

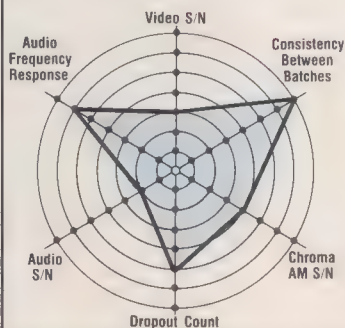
### Super Hi-Fi T-120



Konica's Super Hi-Fi gave up a rating point on audio (linear) S/N for an increase of one point on the dropout count, which is excellent compared to its Super HG. Since the dropout count affects the Hi-Fi audio tracks directly, we consider the choice a wise one. The result is a good competitor among Hi-Fi tapes, with ratings that promise good to excellent picture and average linear audio recordings.

## MAXELL

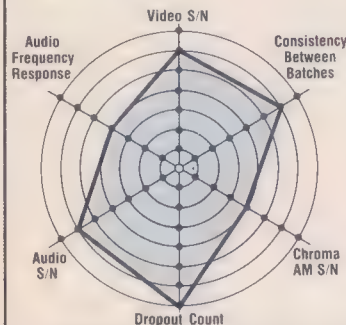
### EX T-160



Maxell's thinner EX T-160 is a little less balanced in its performance but rates excellent on consistency between batches and linear audio frequency response at the expense of one rating point on video S/N and chroma AM S/N. It is a respectable performer that has extra recording capacity for material that won't fit on a T-120.

## KONICA

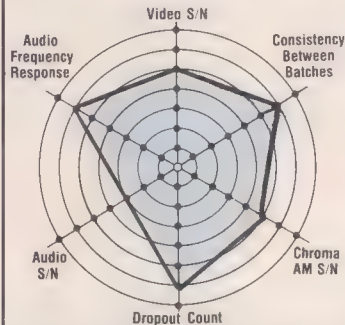
### Super Pro T-120



Konica Super Pro T-120 is, overall, a very good tape with an excellent dropout count and good performance on chroma AM S/N and audio frequency response. Compared to its Hi-Fi tape, it gives up a rating point on both chroma S/Ns for gains on consistency between batches and audio S/N. This combination could be a boon to those who shoot their own tapes since most VHS camcorders and portables offer only linear track recording.

## MAXELL

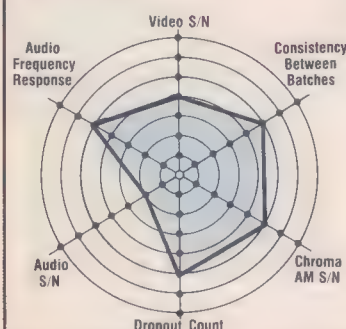
### HGX High Grade T-120



Maxell HGX T-120 is one rating point better than EX T-120 on all measurements except chroma AM and PM S/N and audio S/N. With four ratings of very good, including one for chroma PM S/N (not plotted), and two of good we're tempted to rate the tape as very good overall, but the fly in the ointment is its fair performance on audio S/N.

## MAXELL

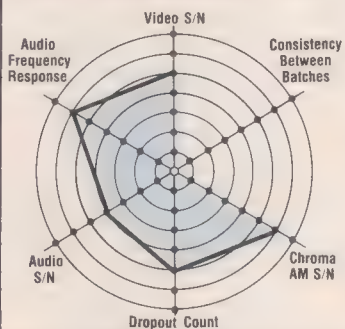
### EX T-120



Don't let the basic designation fool you about Maxell's EX T-120. It rates good on four of the six characteristics we plot on our graph and very good on chroma PM S/N, which is not shown. It measures average on video S/N and weak on linear audio S/N. We'd describe it as a good tape overall.

## MAXELL

### HGX High Grade T-160



The HGX T-160 is a rating point weaker than the HGX T-120 on chroma AM S/N and the dropout count, but a point stronger on chroma PM S/N and audio S/N. These results make HGX T-160 a strong contender among tapes of that length. Although we tested three samples, they were from the same batch so we could not rate its consistency between batches.



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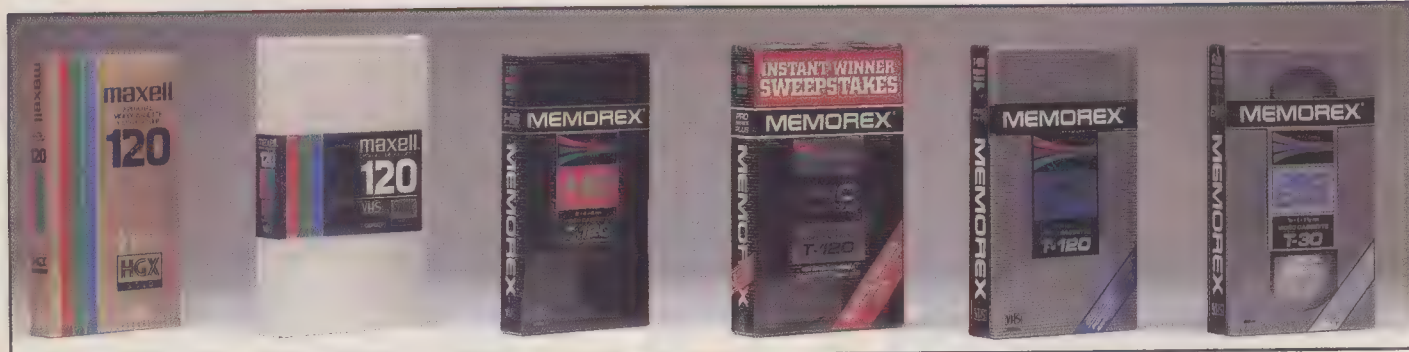
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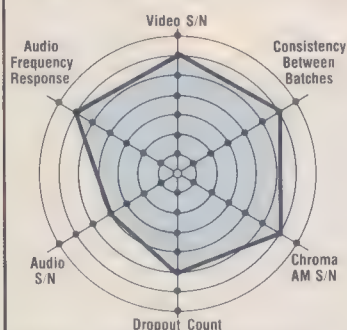
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# Tape Tests

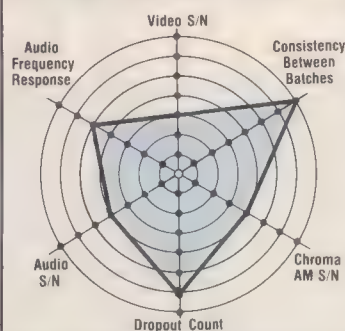


## MAXELL HGX Gold Hi-Fi T-120



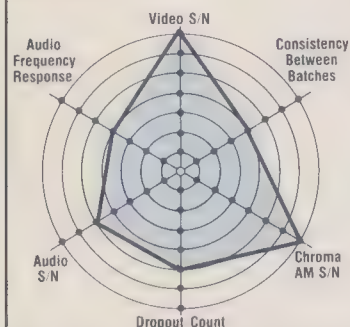
With four ratings of very good, a good on the dropout count, an average on audio S/N, and an excellent on chroma PM S/N, Maxell HGX Gold Hi-Fi is mostly a very good performer. With Hi-Fi performance unaffected by the characteristics of the linear audio track, its only deficiency is its dropout rating. This tape is near the top of the Hi-Fi heap.

## MEMOREX Pro Series Plus T-120



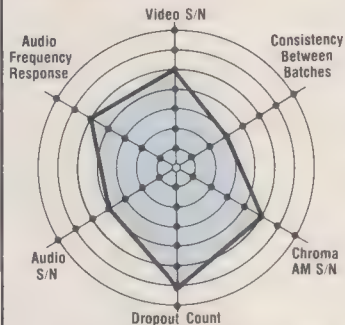
Pro Series Plus is Memorex's step-up grade and many of the weaknesses of the HS disappear. Ratings for chroma AM and PM S/N and audio frequency response remain the same but all the other characteristics improve; notably the consistency between batches which is excellent, and the dropout count which is very good. The result is a tape that is average or above on every rating except video S/N, which is fair.

## MAXELL RX Pro T-120



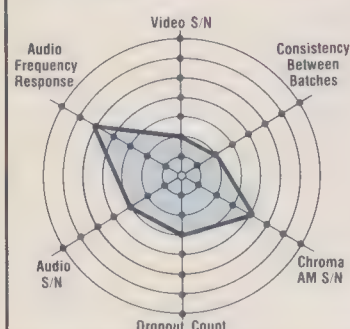
Maxell RX Pro T-120 is excellent on video S/N and both chroma S/Ns. But it falls to good on dropout count and audio S/N, and to average on audio frequency response and its consistency between batches. If you use it for Hi-Fi recording the linear audio measurements don't count and our standards on dropout count are so high that good is a respectable rating. The good rating on consistency represents a deviation of 0.3 dB, which is barely discernable to the untrained. In short, this is a good tape for Hi-Fi recording.

## MEMOREX Pro Hi-Fi T-120



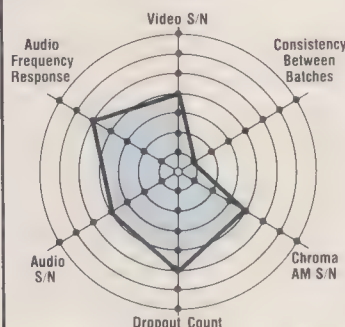
Memorex's top grade is Pro Hi-Fi. Three of its characteristics are good: video S/N, chroma AM S/N, and audio frequency response. However, the excellent rating for chroma PM S/N and the very good for the dropout count are balanced by ratings of average on audio S/N and fair on its consistency between batches. Overall, it's a good tape.

## MEMOREX HS T-120



HS T-120 is Memorex's basic grade and it's a fair performer with two ratings of good, one of average, two of fair, and two of weak. The most noticeable deficiencies are the dropout count which is fair, video S/N (graininess) which is weak, and linear audio S/N (hiss) which is fair. Its weak consistency between batches is more likely to affect editing when scenes have been recorded on different cassettes from different batches, or a user's ability to predict graininess.

## MEMOREX Pro Cam T-120



Memorex Pro Cam is intended for use in camcorders. It is released mostly in the T-30 length but one of the cassettes we tested was a T-120. It rates average on video S/N, chroma AM S/N, and audio S/N; very good on chroma PM S/N; and good on dropouts and audio frequency response. But it came up poor on batch consistency, which is unfortunate because scenes shot with a camera are most likely to be edited together, and changes in video S/N would be very noticeable.



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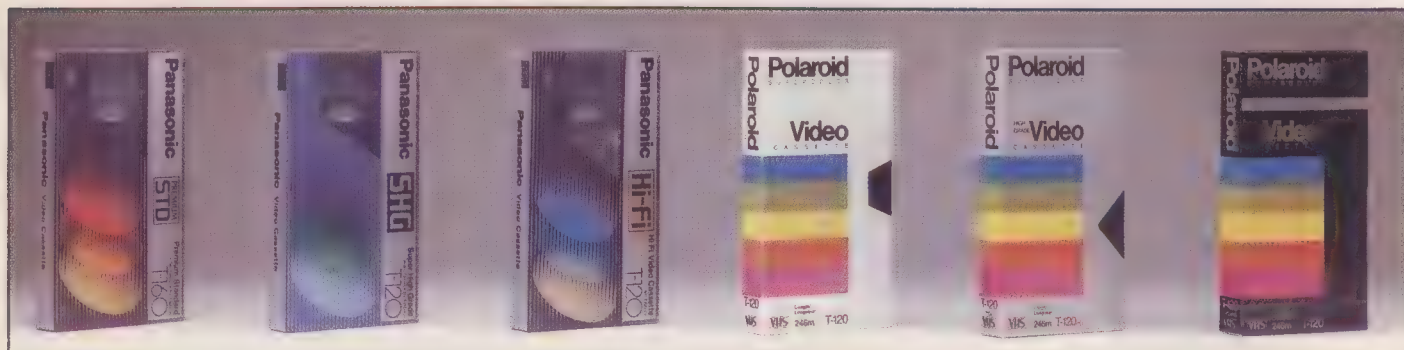
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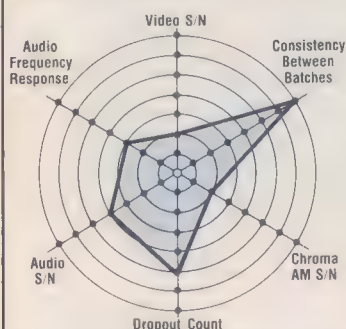
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# Tape Tests

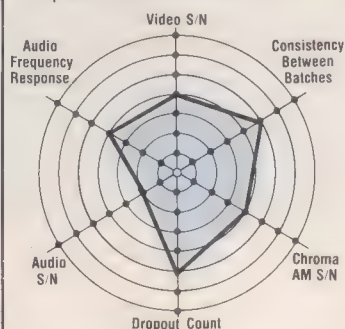


## PANASONIC Premium Standard T-160



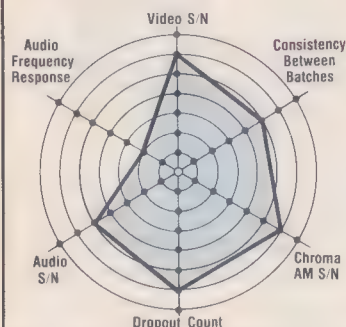
Panasonic's basic grade is available in the T-160 length but its characteristics differ from the T-120 version. Dropout, consistency, and audio S/N ratings remain the same, but chroma AM S/N drops to weak, chroma PM S/N and the audio frequency response drop to fair, and video S/N drops to poor. The latter is most noticeable during viewing.

## POLAROID Supercolor T-120



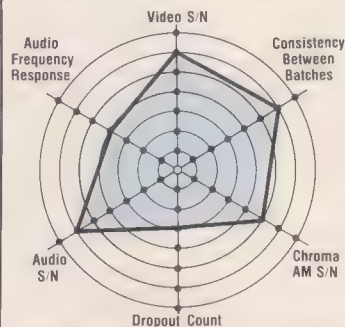
All Polaroid tapes carry the Supercolor designation. The one in the white and rainbow box is its basic grade. It is an average performer with average ratings for video S/N, chroma AM S/N, chroma PM S/N, and audio frequency response. The overall performance level is enhanced by grades of good on batch consistency and the dropout count, and slightly compromised by a fair on audio S/N.

## PANASONIC SHG T-120



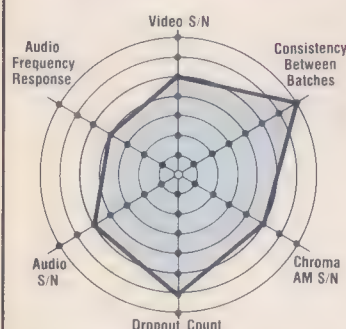
Panasonic's step-up grade is SHG. All its characteristics improve except consistency between batches, which drops to good, and the audio frequency response, which drops to weak. The latter is the only curve-breaker to spoil its otherwise good balance. It earned ratings of very good on video S/N, chroma AM S/N, and the dropout count. Of course if you're using the Hi-Fi tracks the weak spot doesn't count, and you have a good to very good tape.

## POLAROID Supercolor HG T-120



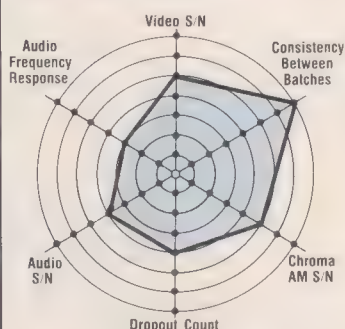
Polaroid's HG is its step-up grade. It is better than the basic grade on every characteristic except audio frequency response, which is also average, and the dropout count, which sinks to fair. It rates very good on video S/N, consistency between batches, chroma PM S/N, and audio S/N, and good on chroma AM S/N. It's an overall good tape despite its fair rating on the dropout count.

## PANASONIC Hi-Fi T-120



Panasonic's top grade is its Hi-Fi T-120. With an excellent on consistency, plus two ratings of very good, three of good, and an average for audio frequency response, it is somewhat balanced, more so if you're using the Hi-Fi tracks. Ratings of very good were for the dropout count and chroma PM S/N. The goods were for video S/N, chroma AM S/N, and audio S/N.

## POLAROID Supercolor SHG Hi-Fi T-120



Hi-Fi is Polaroid's top tape grade, but it is a weaker performer than the SHG on every count except consistency between batches, which is excellent. Its other ratings are very good on chroma PM S/N, good on video S/N and chroma AM S/N, average on the dropout count and audio S/N, and fair on the audio frequency response. The wide range of grades do not contribute to good balance. It can be considered an average tape with high consistency.



Photo/Herbert Migdoll  
Monitor picture The Joffrey Ballet in John Cranko's, "The Taming of the Shrew."

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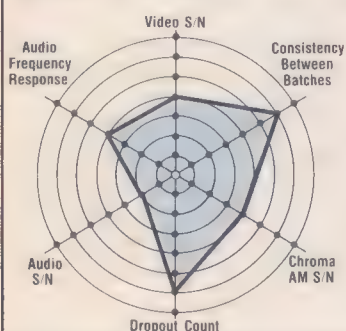


# Tape Tests



## QUASAR

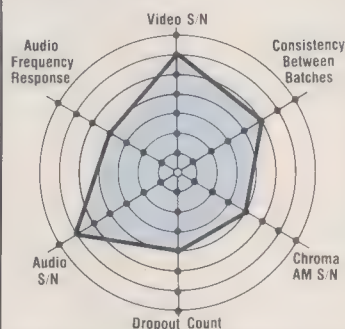
### Super GT T-120



Super GT is Quasar's basic grade. It is an average performer with extra strength, and very good in two areas: consistency between batches and the dropout count. Video S/N, chroma AM S/N, and audio frequency response are average. It is good on chroma PM S/N, but weak on audio S/N. With the very good and good ratings it earned you can forgive it on audio S/N especially if you use it on a Hi-Fi machine.

## RCA

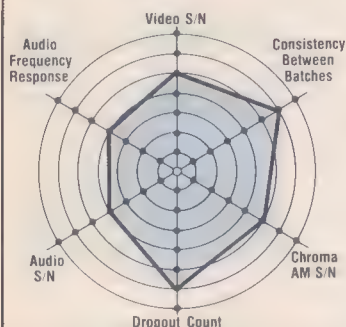
### SHG T-120



RCA's highest grade is Super High Grade which is close to good in overall performance. Even though it has three ratings of average, two ratings of good and two of very good raise its overall rating and make it not too out of balance. Very good ratings were earned on video S/N and audio S/N, while ratings of good were for consistency between batches and chroma PM S/N. Chroma AM S/N, dropout count and audio frequency response were just average.

## QUASAR

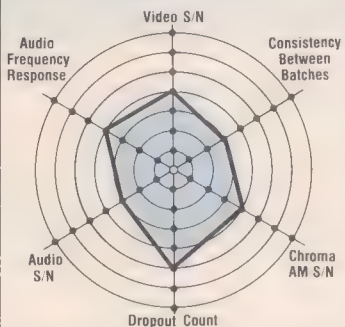
### Hi-Fi T-120



Hi-Fi is Quasar's highest grade, but it performs identically to its Super HG except on audio S/N, on which it was average, one rating point lower. For recording on the linear track, we recommend the Super HG; use Hi-Fi for Hi-Fi recordings because of the self-cleaning action those tapes are supposed to have.

## RCA

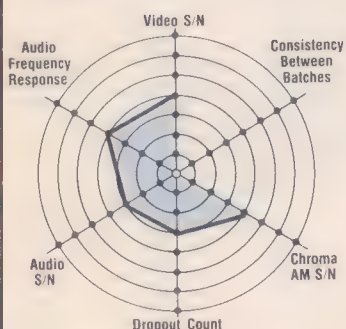
### Hi-Fi Stereo T-120



RCA calls its basic grade Hi-Fi Stereo. At least that's what the box says. The name is strange and confusing since all tapes record in stereo on a stereo machine and Hi-Fi tapes supposedly have special (better) formulations. It is hard to believe this is the grade RCA intends for Hi-Fi recording. This basic tape is an average performer with one rating of good, three of average, two of fair, plus a rating of good on chroma PM S/N, which is not shown.

## RCA

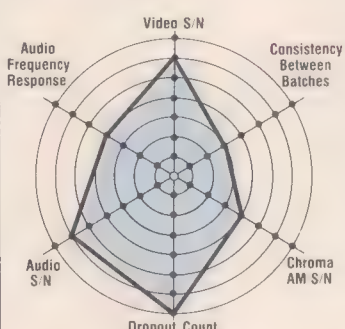
### T-160



RCA uses no special names for its basic T-160. It is a fairly well-balanced tape with an overall performance level near average. It is just fair on dropout count and audio S/N but average on video S/N, chroma AM S/N, and audio frequency response. On chroma PM S/N, which is not shown, it is very good. Although we tested three samples, they were all from the same batch so there is no rating for consistency.

## SCOTCH

### EG T-120



EG is the basic grade in Scotch's lineup of six. A quick look at their graphs should convince anyone they are not identical performers but have varying strengths and weaknesses. The EG is excellent on the dropout count, very good on audio and video S/N, good on chroma PM S/N, average on chroma AM S/N and the audio frequency response, and fair on consistency between batches. It is above average, overall, but the ratings are a bit too spread out for good balance.





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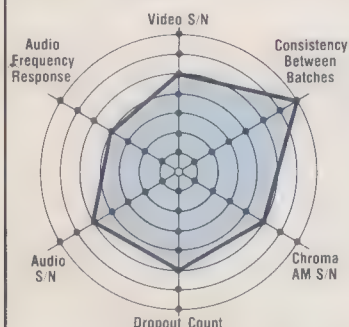


# Tape Tests



## SCOTCH

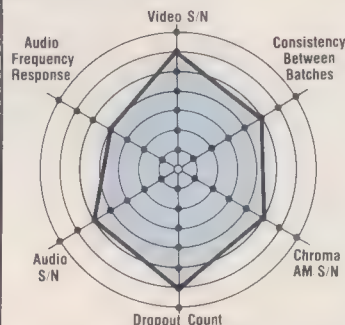
EG+ T-120



EG+ is the step-up grade of Scotch videotape. Its overall rating is just shy of good with four characteristics that rate good plus an excellent on consistency between batches, an average on the audio frequency response, and a fair on chroma PM S/N. This isn't perfect balance, but it is quite reasonable.

## SCOTCH

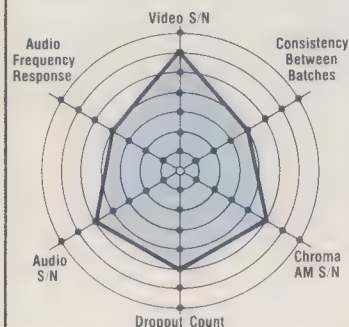
EXG Pro T-120



EXG Pro is a moderately-balanced tape that rated excellent on chroma PM S/N, very good on video S/N and the dropout count, and good on consistency, chroma AM S/N, and audio S/N. Its weakest rating is average on frequency response. Overall, it is a bit better than good, and we like it best of the EXG group.

## SCOTCH

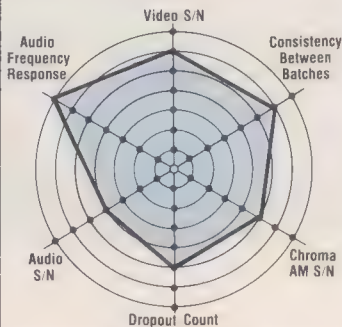
EXG T-120



Scotch has four grades of tape labelled EXG. You could say it really has one grade with three variations tailored for specific uses. The plain EXG has three ratings of average, three of good, and one of very good so it's rather well-balanced with an overall rating somewhere between average and good. Its very good rating was for video S/N. Chroma AM S/N, the dropout count, and audio S/N earned ratings of good. Chroma PM S/N, consistency between batches, and the audio frequency response rated average.

## SCOTCH

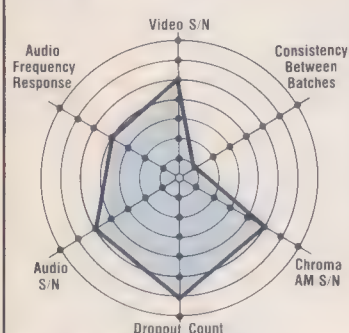
EXG Camera T-120



EXG Camera is the tape in the EXG group specially tailored for making your own tapes using a camera and a recorder, or a camcorder. Scotch improved the audio frequency response on the tape to excellent, which is quite useful since most original recordings are made on non-Hi-Fi equipment. Consistency between batches also improves to very good. Ratings on video S/N, chroma AM S/N, and audio S/N are unchanged. Losing a rating point are the dropout count which dipped to good, and chroma PM S/N which is now very good.

## SCOTCH

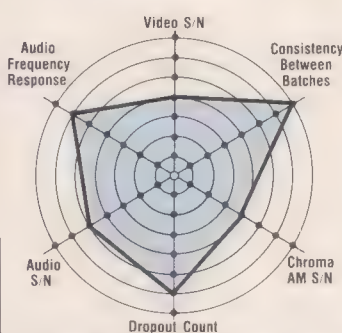
EXG Hi-Fi T-120



Scotch EXG Hi-Fi sacrifices one rating point on video S/N, now good, in exchange for gains on the dropout count and chroma PM S/N, both of which are now very good. Chroma PM S/N, audio S/N, and the audio frequency response remain unchanged at good, good, and average, respectively, but consistency between batches drops three points to poor. If you're not going to edit from mixed batches and don't mind some inconsistency, it's actually a reasonably good tape.

## SONY

Dynamicron T-120



Dynamicron is the name of Sony's magnetic particle rather than a tape grade. Sony's basic grade has no special name; however, it is a good performer with one rating of excellent, two of very good, one of good and two of average. It was excellent on consistency between batches and very good on the dropout count and the audio frequency response. The characteristics that rated average were chroma AM S/N and video S/N. Audio S/N rated good.



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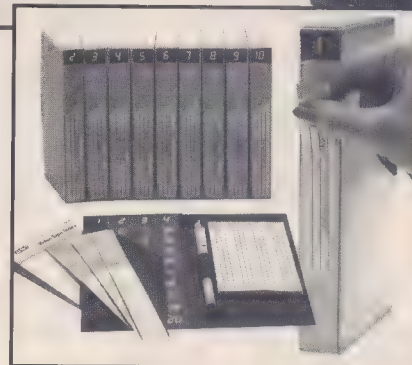
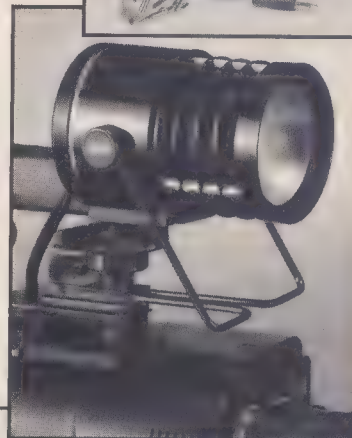
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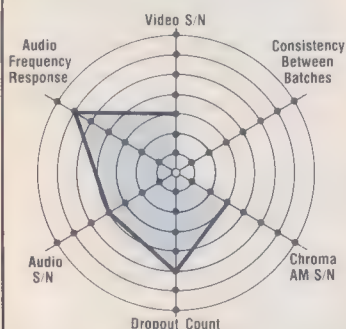




# Tape Tests

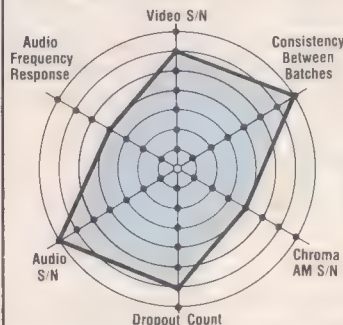


## SONY Dynamicron T-160



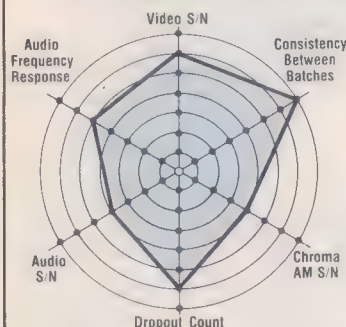
Sony also offers a T-160 length in its standard grade. Since T-160s use a thinner tape stock than T-120s, the characteristics change, usually downward. In this case, its very good audio frequency response and average chroma PM S/N remained the same. Video S/N and chroma AM S/N both dropped from average to fair, the dropout count dropped from very good to good, and audio S/N dropped from good to average. All samples were from the same batch so there is no rating on the consistency between batches.

## SONY Dynamicron Pro-X T-120



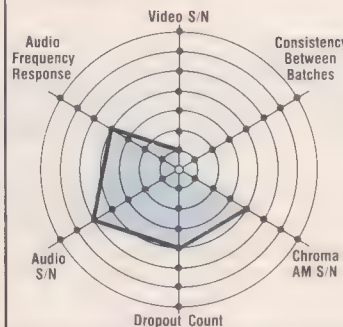
Sony's Pro-X overshadows its ESX-Hi-Fi by just two rating points, one each on the dropout count and consistency between batches. The change in the dropout count is easier to see but the consistency could be of great use if you're shooting original material from which you expect to edit or dub. Its strengths are in consistency, audio S/N, a low dropout count, and video S/N. It's weakest on chroma PM S/N, average.

## SONY Dynamicron ES-HG T-120



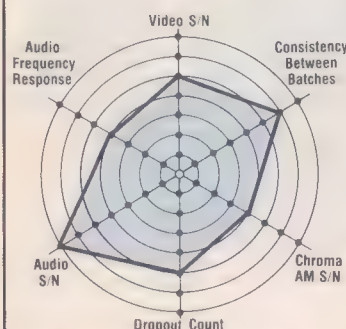
ES-HG is Sony's step-up grade. In overall quality the change from the basic grade appears almost nil because one characteristic went up two rating points and two went down on each. However, considering that the two-point jump was on the video S/N and both decreases affect the linear audio, the picture is significantly better. The use of Hi-Fi audio removes the small change in audio quality completely.

## SKC SG T-120



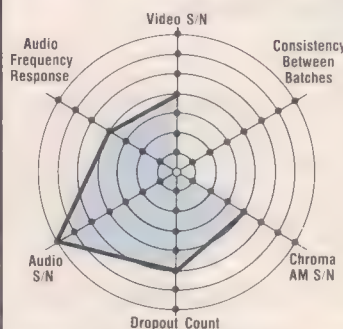
SKC is the brand of another new Korean tape manufacturer. Its basic tape grade is SG. It earned ratings of good on audio S/N and average on chroma AM S/N, chroma PM S/N, the dropout count, and audio frequency response. It's big weakness was poor video S/N. Although we tested three samples, all were from the same batch so we could not rate its consistency. With all but one characteristic as average or better, SKC is off to a good start.

## SONY Dynamicron ESX Hi-Fi T-120



Sony's ESX-Hi-Fi rearranges the same range of rating points. There's one excellent, one very good, three good, and two average. On this tape, audio S/N and consistency are the high scorers, while audio S/N and chroma AM S/N rate average. Again, the overall rating hovers around good. It is another example of how tape choice is best made by analyzing what the tape will be used for. To squeeze the best out of a system, think carefully about the job that needs to be done.

## SKC SHG T-120



SKC also makes a step-up grade labelled SHG. Two characteristics, chroma AM S/N and audio frequency response, are the same as its basic grade. There are increases on four of the remaining characteristics. Video S/N jumped two points to average and audio S/N jumped two to excellent. Chroma PM S/N and the dropout count went from average to good. We do not have a measurement for consistency between batches because all tapes we tested were from the same batch.



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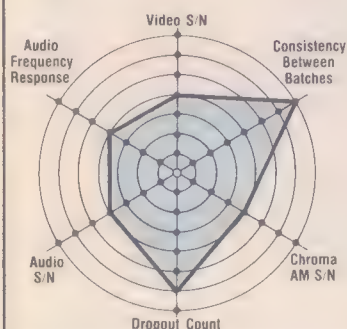
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# Tape Tests

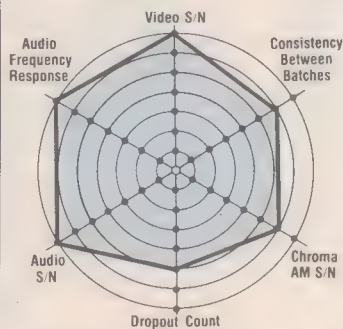


## TDK HS T-120



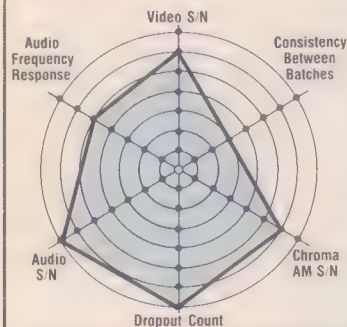
TDK's current basic grade is now HS even though you may still find some of the old standard grade on dealers' shelves. Video S/N, chroma AM S/N, audio S/N, and audio frequency response are average. It also rated excellent on consistency between batches, very good on the dropout count, and good on chroma PM S/N. Overall it is above average. One of our samples had a high dropout count that dropped quickly on successive passes suggesting that some slitting debris had got onto the tape. The first readings were not used for averaging.

## TDK HD Pro T-120



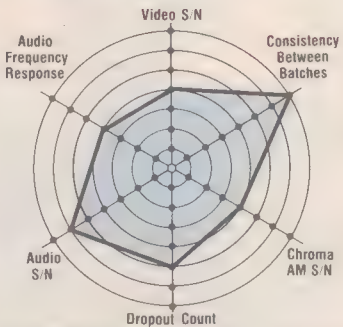
TDK HD Pro was one of the best performers on our last tape test and is again one of the best. It is excellent on three of the characteristics measured: video S/N, audio S/N, and audio frequency response. Three of its other ratings are very good: consistency between batches, chroma AM S/N, and chroma PM S/N, which is not shown. Its dropout count rates a good, but only because we tightened the rating system. It would have rated very good on the old scale.

## TDK Extra HG T-120



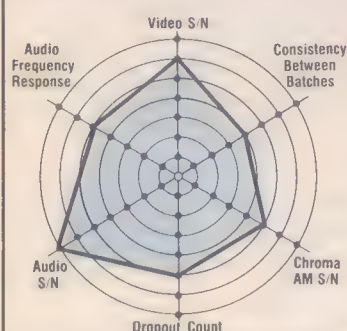
TDK's step-up grade is Extra HG or EHG. Consistency between batches slid down to fair but every other characteristic jumped up to ratings of good or higher with the dropout count and audio S/N reaching excellent. Since even the fair rating on consistency represents a just visible difference between batches, we'll call the tape very good and just not recommend it for editing masters.

## ZENITH T-120



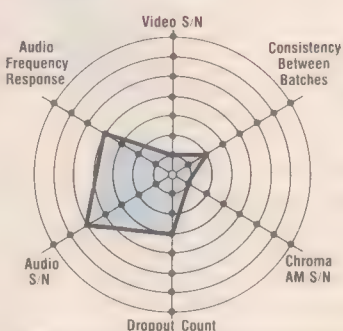
Zenith's basic grade of tape has no special name. It's definitely above average with four ratings of average and one each of good, very good, and excellent. The superior ratings are for the dropout count, audio S/N, and consistency. Think of it as good, overall—high praise for a basic grade of tape.

## TDK Extra HG Hi-Fi T-120



TDK's Extra High Grade Hi-Fi tape has one excellent rating on audio S/N that affects only the linear audio track. Most of its other ratings are good, except for a very good on video S/N and average on consistency between batches. A rating a little better than good is deserved, but we prefer the EHG tape.

## ZENITH T-160



Zenith T-160 theoretically uses the same emulsion as the T-120 but on a thinner base. By our measurements they seem like relatives in name only. It rates poor on video and chroma AM S/N, and weak on consistency between batches and chroma PM S/N. It squeaks up to fair on the dropout count, average on audio frequency response, and good on audio S/N. Overall, it is fair to weak.



# The Turner Year

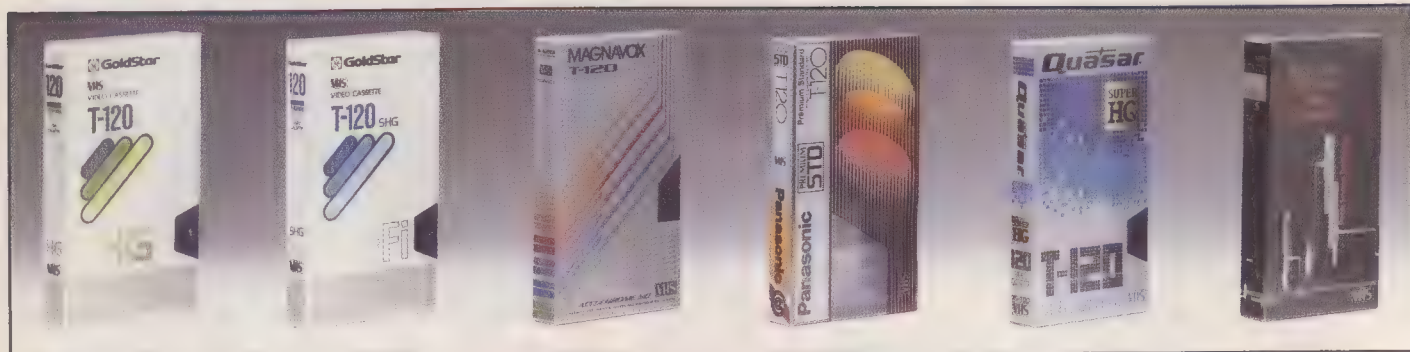


Central Daily

LEGEND

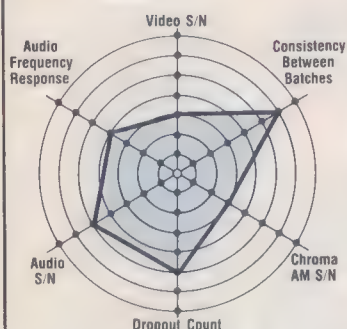


# Tape Tests



## GOLDSTAR

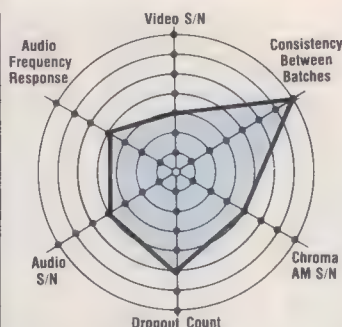
HG T-120



Goldstar's step-up grade, HG T-120, performs better than its basic grade on consistency and audio S/N but is weaker on the dropout count, chroma PM S/N, and audio frequency response. Since the differences vary by no more than one of our rating levels and the HG's lowest ratings were better than Goldstar's basic grade, the result is a better balanced tape.

## PANASONIC

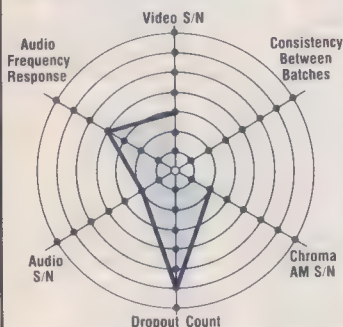
Premium Standard T-120



Panasonic's basic grade is now called premium standard. It has reasonable balance with grades of good on three characteristics: chroma AM S/N, audio S/N, and audio frequency response. Its rating jumps to excellent on consistency between batches, very good on chroma PM S/N, and good on the dropout count, but it slips to fair on video S/N. We call it an average tape with a few better ratings where it really matters in return for a small compromise on video S/N.

## GOLDSTAR

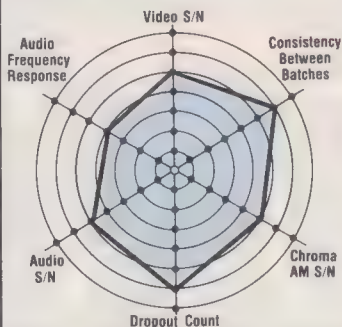
SHG Hi-Fi T-120



Goldstar's highest grade is its SHG Hi-Fi which is weak on video S/N, chroma AM S/N, and audio S/N. However, its dropout count is very good and its audio frequency response is average. Although we tested three samples we couldn't calculate a figure for consistency between batches because all the samples were from the same batch. See page 125 for additional Goldstar tape.

## QUASAR

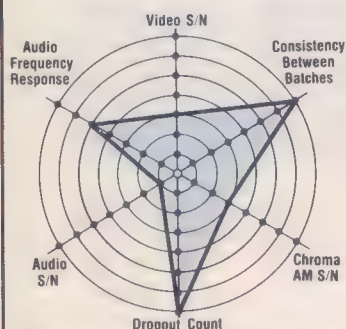
Super HG T-120



Super HG is Quasar's step-up grade. It is distinctly better, with ratings of good or higher on every characteristic except audio frequency response, which is average. It rates good on video S/N, chroma AM S/N, chroma PM S/N, and audio S/N, and very good on its consistency between batches and the dropout count. It deserves an overall rating of good, especially if used on a Hi-Fi machine.

## MAGNAVOX

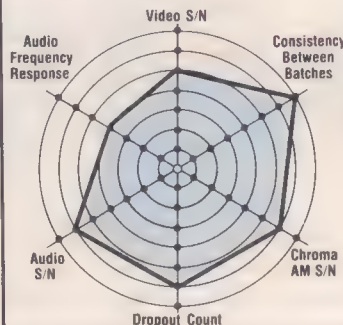
Accuchrome HQ T-120



For a while Magnavox marketed several grades of tape. It now only sells the Accuchrome HQ, which has a wide mix of ratings. It's excellent on the dropout count and consistency between batches, poor on audio S/N, good on the audio frequency response, and average on the video and chroma S/Ns. We consider the balance between characteristics so important that we would give up some of the higher ratings to boost the various S/Ns. Yet the HQ produces an acceptable picture, from which the average audio S/N did not detract.

## ZENITH

SHG T-120



Zenith's SHG T-120 is a very good tape, one of only five to earn that rating in this year's tests. It is excellent on consistency between batches and very good on everything else except video S/N, which rates good, and the audio frequency response, which is average. It should be suitable for most purposes because it is fairly well-balanced, too.





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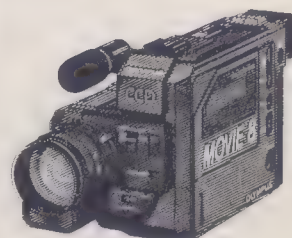
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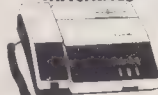
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# Romance's Renaissance

## Can You Find True Love On Home Video?

In 1961, with the gritty streets of New York's Upper West Side as backdrop, Italian Tony (Richard Beymer) pledged his love to the ethereal Maria (Natalie Wood), a Puerto Rican. These *West Side Story* lovers defied the animosity of their respective ethnic groups to optimistically proclaim, in song, "There's a place for us, somewhere," and come together in a desperate kiss. At film's end, with Maria, the innocent victim of racial hatred, slain in a playground battle zone, there's not a dry eye—on screen, or off.

Seven years later, filmmaker Franco Zeffirelli brought a beautiful pair of young lovers to the screen in his version of *Romeo and Juliet*. Newcomers Leonard Whiting and Olivia Hussey adhered to the temper of the times with tasteful nudity as they otherwise traditionally re-enacted this tale of flowering romance amid hostile clans. A painstakingly constructed escape from the real world of Vietnam, political assassinations, and racial confrontations, *Romeo and Juliet* became a box office smash.

Since its 1978 debut as a six-hour mini-series, prime time serial *Dallas* has focused on the trials and tribulations of Pamela Barnes (Victoria Principal) and Bobby Ewing (Patrick Duffy). Drawn together despite her humble origins and his stature as the scion of a powerful and wealthy Texas oil dynasty, the couple has resisted the overwhelming hatred between their two families and wed, although circumstances (mainly soap opera's perennial need for conflict) have conspired to keep them apart much of the time. In or out of each other's arms, however, Bobby and Pam remain in love.

Created in different eras and media, these three productions are all phenomenally successful romances. And all owe their existence to the original romantic family feud penned over 400 years ago by William Shakespeare, who knew audiences are suckers for a good love story. Whether or not love really does conquer all, its representation in theater, on film, and on television is a constant crowd pleaser. Even if love is being tested—or worse, is lacking—in our own lives, we are drawn to the romantic pains and pleasures of those familiar strangers who populate film and TV screens, just as earlier societies responded to romances presented on stage, in song, and in the poems of traveling troubadours.

Current cinema may not be embracing romance with

that same enthusiasm, but fans of aching hearts, burning desires, and passionate embraces will find no shortage of *d'amour* in home video. Many of the classic cinematic clutches are available, as are a growing number of made-for-video romances, proceeding from the genre novel which has long been the staple of lovers of love.

As actor Dack Rambo—whose amorous conquests have enthralled audiences on *All My Children*, *Dallas*, and now as the male lead of the made-for-video romance, *Lilac Dreams*, puts it, "There's always a place for this kind of thing. There's a little bit of romance in almost all of us. Some people are just too cynical to be romantic, but I do think people love seeing the guy get the girl, the girl get the guy."

### SEEDS OF LOVE

Cinema was still in its infancy when the Edison studio created a scandal with *The Kiss* in 1896. But 25 years passed until the first true romantic swoon object, Rudolph Valentino, held sway on the silent screen. In films like *The Sheik* and *Blood and Sand*, Valentino—paired with an exotic locale and an initially reluctant maiden—started what is now known as fantasy romance. Although infrequently seen in today's movies, fantasy romances do fill the pages of several million genre novels purchased every month. They are nothing more or less than pure escape from a humdrum reality, explains Pamela Wallace, author of several Harlequin romances and an Academy Award nominee for *Witness*, which she co-wrote. "When you're fantasizing, you want to forget about your real life. You want an idealized existence to lose yourself in. And that means not living in Fresno and going to Safeway to do grocery shopping and falling in love with a plumber, or whatever."

With the advent of sound and the onset of the Depression, romance became a cinematic staple. The discovery and acceptance of love could be light, frothy, and amusing, as in the classic 1934 comedy, *It Happened One Night*. The budding relationship between Claudette Colbert, as a society girl on the lam from her rich daddy and smarmy husband, and Clark Gable, as a straight-talking, street-smart newspaper reporter, melted the hardest heart, using laughter as its key.

Five years later, two of the cinema's all-time great romances took very different approaches. *Gone with the*

By Toby Goldstein



## 'Shades of Love' is the most ambitious of a host of new video romances.

*Wind*, starring Gable and Vivien Leigh as the tempestuous Rhett Butler and flirtatious Scarlett O'Hara, couched its romantic tale in a sweeping historical drama of the Civil War. In 1939's *Wuthering Heights*, an equally storm-tossed pair—Laurence Olivier's Heathcliff and Merle Oberon's Cathy—played out their unrelieved passion against the stark landscape of 19th century England. Where *Gone with the Wind* was larger than life, *Wuthering Heights* was introspective to the point of claustrophobia. Yet in both films, as in *Casablanca* (1942) and *South Pacific* (1958), the romantic relationship was the focal point, over and above the exotic settings. What remained with the viewer, as handkerchiefs were discreetly being wrung out, was the handsome pair, trying to find happiness against great odds.

That these four films, and many other enduring romances, don't end happily ever after doesn't negate their romantic quality. In fact, according to screenwriter Wallace, a so-called happy ending is less than likely in a successful romance. "When *Witness* was sold, the producer said he bought it because he believed it could be a great love story. And his reasoning was all of the great love stories didn't end happily, in the sense that the two people didn't get together. That doesn't mean it's unhappy. I don't believe *Witness* has an unhappy ending. So I don't think romance is defined by loving happily ever after. To me, a romance is a man and a woman overcoming serious obstacles to reaching a real intimacy with each other. And that doesn't mean that they're going to stay together, but that they've achieved something profound and it will stay with them."

### MODERN LOVE

Not surprisingly, very few films of the late 1960s, '70s, and even '80s—an era of sexual and social upheaval—have been primarily romantic. The exceptions—*Love Story*, *The Way We Were*, *Same Time Next*



'Love with a Perfect Stranger,' a made-for-video romance, with Daniel Massey and Marilu Henner.

*Year*—stand out like quaint oddities in a sea of solipsism and sexual bravado. With only daytime soap operas sustaining the slow and tortuous development of romantic relationships, we have just come through an era where few movies paid tribute to the values and risks of loving another person. Instead, films have portrayed women destroying themselves for men, teenagers flinging themselves mindlessly into sex play, and, recently, a spate of sadomasochism (*9 1/2 Weeks*, *Body Heat*, *Blue Velvet*) revealing a deep-seated unease between men and women.

In this climate, the bed hopping on evening soap operas, for example, is pretty much the province of "bad" characters, such as *Falcon Crest*'s Richard Channing (David Selby) or *Knots Landing*'s Abby Ewing (Donna Mills). Meanwhile, especially on daytime serials, the emphasis has returned to romance, with young lovers, such as a current Romeo-and-Juliet-like pair on *Another World*, exchanging nothing more intimate than a fully-clothed kiss in a sleeping bag. Soap opera weddings remain occasions to get out the hankie, particularly since the faithful viewer realizes such happiness must be brief if the characters are to continue in a major storyline.

Away from serials, prime time programs are also returning to romance. Bright, attractive couples now indulge in the sassy variety of verbal sparring, punctuated by sly, secret, admiring glances, that herald the arrival of romance. In the past two seasons, viewers have played the "will they, won't they" game with the principles on *Moonlighting*, *Remington Steele*, *Scarecrow and Mrs. King*, and *Cheers*, while the shows' producers avoid actually resolving these burning questions. As psychiatrist and author Willard Gaylin wrote in a *TV Guide* analysis of prime time romance, "Television maintains the separation of sex from commitment but, unlike the modern world, it abandons sex for the sake of romance. Modern television has rediscovered the Middle Ages."

If the networks have indeed returned to Arthurian times, and the bulk of current cinema is still centered around sex, violence, or some voyeuristic combination of the two, where does that leave romance? Hopefully, several video companies believe, in their capable hands. With an almost exclusively female target audience, at

*continued on page 125*



Time-travel love: Kathleen Turner and Nicholas Cage in 'Peggy Sue Got Married'



# Cary Grant

*A Fond Look Back At Filmdom's  
Master Of Romance*



PETER C. BORSARI

**T**o the strains of Henry Mancini music, Cary Grant and Audrey Hepburn engage in romantic banter aboard a Parisian tour boat gliding down the Seine. Suddenly, the boat is plunged into darkness. The moment of fear passes quickly, though, as a spotlight scans the banks, seeking out lovers for the tourists' amusement.

"Hey, you don't look so bad in this light," comments Hepburn.

"Why do you think I brought you here?"

replies the ever so suave Grant.

"I thought maybe you wanted me to see the kind of work the competition was turning out," she teases, watching a couple kissing on the bank.

"Pretty good, huh? I taught them everything they do."

Cary Grant was almost 60 when he filmed this scene from Stanley Donen's *Charade*. That line from this highly entertaining homage to Hitchcock is Grant's

---

By Beverley Bare Buehrer





Cary Grant with four of his notable leading ladies: Grace Kelly in 'To Catch a Thief' (left); his third wife, Betsy Drake, in 'Every Girl Should Be Married' (below)...



boastful opening romantic gambit. But perhaps it's just a statement of fact. Maybe he didn't teach us all we do romantically, but Cary Grant's films have certainly taught us that romance can be fun.

Shortly before he died last November, a fan told Cary Grant his secret for 25 years of happy marriage—to approach romantic problems by wondering what Grant would do in such a situation. The 82-year-old star, perhaps the suavest, most romantic man ever to make audiences laugh, was tickled by the remark.

Although his film career ended in the 1960s, Cary Grant remained a beloved, if publicity-shy, icon his entire life. The popularity of his many films, aided by their video availability, will endure for many years to come.

His impressive career spanned four decades and includes almost 75 films. Thanks to the classic status and popularity of many, more than one-third are available on videotape, and their continued appearance seems assured. Generations to come will be able to watch the method and study the style of one of Hollywood's most romantic leading men.

## HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

Just four years into the 20th century, Archibald Alex Leach was born in Bristol, England. Attracted early to the exciting theatrical life, Archie ran away at 14 to join Bob Pender's Troupe of Knockabout Comedians, with whom he came to America and soon adopted it as his new home.

Bit parts in New York plays garnered Archie his first screen test but he was dismissed with, "you're bow-legged, and your neck is too thick." A second attempt in 1931 resulted in both a contract with Paramount and a new name. Actress Fay Wray suggested Cary Lockwood, his char-

acter's name in a play they were doing. But there was already a Harold Lockwood in films, so a different surname was needed. The studio had a list of names just for such an occasion, and Archie closed his eyes, stuck a pin into the list, and became Cary Grant.

He was directed by the best—Cukor, von Sternberg, Walsh, McCarey, Hawks, Stevens, Capra, Curtiz, and Hitchcock—but it was Grant's screen chemistry with some of film's sexiest leading ladies that brought out his distinctive brand of lighthearted, yet heartfelt, romance. Although not a very successful film, *Blonde Venus* (1932) proved the newcomer could easily hold his own against superstar Marlene Dietrich. Mae West coined a great phrase in *She Done Him Wrong* when she propositioned, "Why don't you come up sometime and see me." He did go up and see her for a second film, *I'm No Angel*, but the role was weak.

A spate of forgettable films followed. The unsuccessful *Sylvia Scarlett* fared so badly that co-star Katharine Hepburn and director George Cukor offered to make their next film for producer Pandro Berman for free. Grant, as a petty Cockney crook, however, stole the film and won more than one critic's admiration.

In his first five years in Hollywood, Grant made 25 films for Paramount. Most were B movies, and he became frustrated with the roles he was getting—and not getting. MGM wanted him to play Fletcher Christian in the 1936 version of *Mutiny on the Bounty*. He desperately wanted the part, but Paramount refused to loan him out. This further fuelled his disillusionment with the studio's contract system. When Grant's contract came up for renewal, he asked for script approval—a right reluctantly given only to the biggest stars.

Paramount declined, and Grant daringly decided to become a freelance actor.

His new-found ability to choose roles and studios coincided fortuitously with the arrival of a new film genre, the screwball comedy. This battle of the sexes was fought on a humorous battlefield, where the weapon of choice was fast-paced dialogue. The genre perfectly suited Grant's unique screen persona.

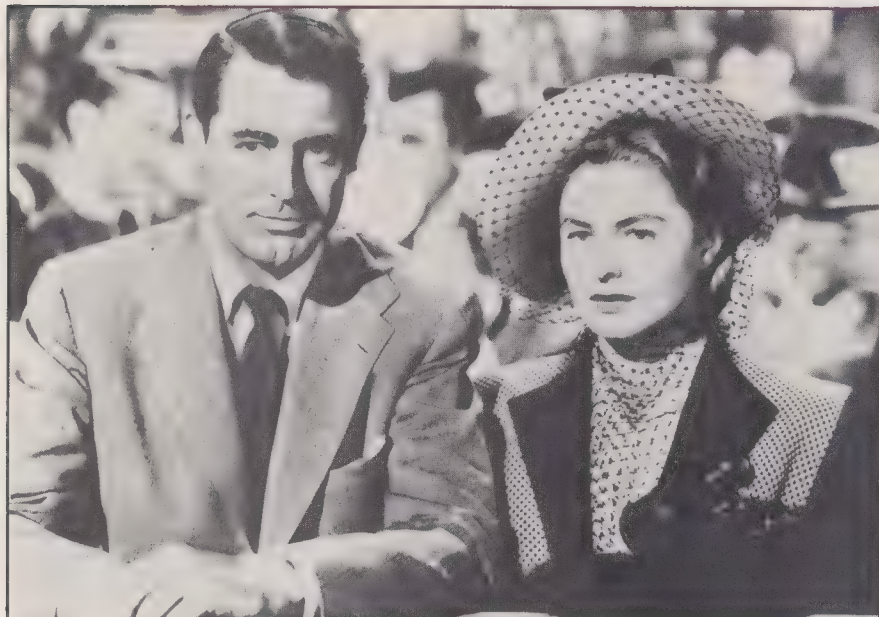
## SCREWBALL STAR

The process began in 1937's *Topper*, where Grant and Constance Bennett played the wealthy (if spectral) George and Marion Kirby. Audiences envied the playful dialogue, prankish mischief, and solidly affectionate underpinnings of their marriage.

*Topper* recently became one of the first films subjected to the controversial process of computer color enhancement. Grant marveled at the technology (calling it "an amazing process") but also admitted, "I wasn't too hot about the colorization of *Topper*." Somewhat startlingly he added, "But then I wasn't too keen about myself in *Topper*."



*Cary Grant offered a beguiling charm and self-effacing humor that made him adored by women and envied by men.*



That same year *The Awful Truth* was released. Grant and Irene Dunne play a divorced couple fighting over custody of their pet dog and trying to undo each other's romantic plans. The pair teamed up again in 1940 for *My Favorite Wife*, in which Dunne plays Grant's supposedly deceased first wife. Merely stranded on a desert island, she reappears to create mischief between Grant and his new spouse.

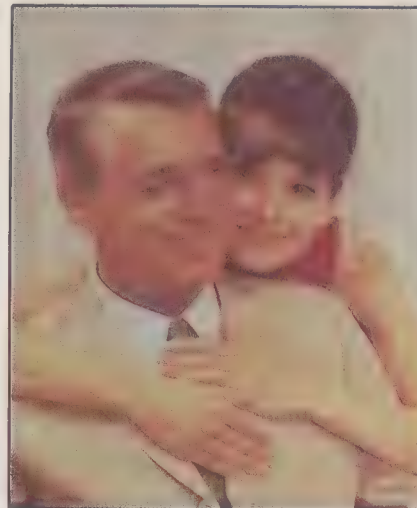
Grant made two classic comedies with Katharine Hepburn in 1938. In *Bringing Up Baby*, Grant (an uptight paleontology professor) and Hepburn (a scatter-brained socialite) scour the countryside looking for a dinosaur bone and a pet leopard. In *Holiday*, Grant breathes life into a stodgy wealthy family as he gradually discovers that the sister he is engaged to is not the one who really appreciates his abilities—especially to execute a back flip. (Tumbling skills Grant learned with the Pender Troupe were often put to use in his films. It was part of Grant's particular allure that he could look urbane and debonair in a tuxedo while pratfalling over furniture. No stuntman stand-in for Grant. As he reminisced recently, "I guess I stopped

doing my own stunts when I stopped making films.")

One of the hallmarks of top-of-the-line screwball comedies is sharp, fast dialogue, and no movie demonstrates this better than *His Girl Friday*. Rosalind Russell plays an ace reporter who plans on giving up the newspaper game to settle down with Ralph Bellamy—plans which are gloriously shattered by Russell's ex-husband, the paper's editor (Grant). Fortunately—and unfortunately—*His Girl Friday* is a public domain film. Videotape copies can be purchased very inexpensively, but the transfer quality varies widely. The movie, however, is enhanced by video viewing because repeated rewinds allow one to catch all the intricate, overlapping, hilarious verbal interplay.

Grant starred in a few other likeminded comedies—*The Philadelphia Story* (1941) again with Hepburn and *Talk of the Town* (1942) with Jean Arthur and Ronald Coleman—but it's *Arsenic and Old Lace* that offers particular enjoyment on video. Made in 1941 but unreleased until the Broadway show had finished its run in 1944, *Arsenic*

*continued on page 129*



*...Ingrid Bergman in 'Notorious' (left); and Audrey Hepburn in 'Charade' (above).*

## VIDEOGRAPHY

### **Arsenic and Old Lace**

1941 (released '44). B&W. Grant, Priscilla Lane, Raymond Massey, Peter Lorre, Edward Everett Horton; dir. Frank Capra. 116m. B/V/LV CBS/Fox. CED RCA.

### **The Awful Truth**

1937. B&W. Grant, Irene Dunne, Ralph Bellamy; dir. Leo McCarey. 92m. B/V Hi LV RCA/Columbia.

### **The Bachelor and the Bobbysoxer**

1947. B&W. Grant, Myrna Loy, Shirley Temple, Rudy Vallee; dir. Irving Reis. 95m. Blackhawk, Nostalgia.

### **The Bishop's Wife**

1948. B&W. Grant, Loretta Young, David Niven, Monty Woolley, Elsa Lanchester; dir. Henry Koster. 109m. B/V/LV Embassy.

### **Charade**

1963. Grant, Audrey Hepburn, Walter Matthau, James Coburn, George Kennedy; dir. Stanley Donen. 113m. MCA.

### **Every Girl Should Be Married**

1948. B&W. Grant, Franchot Tone, Betsy Drake, Diana Lynn; dir. Don Hartman. 84m. RKO.

### **Father Goose**

1964. Grant, Leslie Caron, Trevor Howard; dir. Ralph Nelson. 116m. Republic.

### **The Grass Is Greener**

1960. Grant, Deborah Kerr, Jean Simmons, Robert Mitchum; dir. Stanley Donen. 105m. Republic.

### **Gunga Din**

1939. B&W. Grant, Victor McLaglen, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Joan Fontaine; dir. George Stevens. 117m. Nostalgia, Vid-America, Blackhawk, RKO.

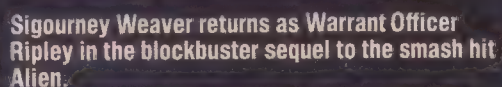
### **His Girl Friday**

1940. B&W. Grant, Rosalind Russell, Ralph Bellamy, Gene Lockhart; dir. Howard Hawks. 92m. Roach, Prism, United, Kartes, Images, etc.

*continued on page 130*



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# VIDEO MAGAZINE'S GUIDE TO *Programming*

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## NEWS AND VIEWS

BY MARK FLEISCHMANN



Laura Dern, Isabella Rosellini, and Kyle MacLachlan in 'Blue Velvet'

### TOMORROW'S VIDEOS TODAY

There's nothing for serious filmgoers to see." That was the lament of 1986 as summed up in an *American Film* editorial. Hollywood's apparent brain-death became a favorite critics' subject, the most exhaustive treatment coming from *New York's* confused but energetic David Denby. Since the movies of today are the videos of tomorrow, videophiles had good reason to be concerned about cinema's distressingly dull state last spring and summer.

As it turned out, Hollywood's much-publicized aesthetic drought didn't endure into fall, as independents came to the rescue with a reassuring film flotilla. Even more encouraging, some of the most daring new items received heavy funding from big-name video labels.

So let's bestow "News & Views" val-

entines on the following titles—and on the filmmakers and executives who gave life to them. At presstime none have been announced for video release—they will be held to fully exploit their theatrical potential—but the box office makes less money nowadays than the video store, so these titles are likely to be among next year's most important videos.

*Sid & Nancy* is the second film by Alex Cox, the English director who attracted attention when his *Repo Man* earned the adoration of aging punks everywhere. *S&N* is the story of Nancy Spungen and Sex Pistol Sid Vicious. Moody and schizophrenic, it begins as punk comedy, then veers into a graphic and disturbing drug tragedy. According to senior VP Rand Bleimeister, Embassy provided more than half the financing for this daring project. After execs viewed an early version, he says, "they went back and re-edited the film. We had some input on that."

*Blue Velvet*, with its delirious glimpses of sadism and perversion, may prove to be a very controversial video release in 1987. It's the most masterful work yet from director/writer David Lynch, who also directed *Eraserhead* (RCA/Columbia), *Dune* (MCA), and *The Elephant Man* (Paramount). Video rights have been sold to Karl-Lorimar, which would like to release it in the spring unless demand keeps it in theaters.

*True Stories* shows the more acceptable side of oddness at work. David Byrne of the Talking Heads directed, co-wrote, co-stars in, and narrates this eccentric meditation on high technology in the heart of Texas. Warner Bros. distributed this indie production of Byrne's first film, and Warner Home Video spokesman Mike Finnegan confirms it for a 1987 video release, but won't say when.

*The Color of Money*, Martin Scorsese's sequel to Robert Rossen's *The Hustler*, puts Paul Newman together with Tom Cruise and screenwriter/novelist Richard Price. Buena Vista distributed the Touchstone Films release, and if you know your trade names, you'll recognize Disney in disguise. Disney Home Video president Ben Tenn won't talk about any video release—not when the movie pulled \$6.5 million in its first week.

*She's Gotta Have It*, directed by Spike Lee, and *Down by Law*, directed by Jim Jarmusch, are two sophomore directorial efforts distributed by Island Pictures. An Island spokeswoman says her company is negotiating with video labels for both titles, but declines to say more. Key Video released Jarmusch's first film, *Stranger Than Paradise*, but there's no indication of future plans. Both pics are from New York University film-school grads.



## LET'S GO, INSTANT VIDEO!

Between acts at Manhattan's Ritz, club-goers stared up at big and small screens hung from the rafters. The club owner knew the Mets and the World Series were momentarily more important to this New York crowd than any musicians. Pandemonium broke out on the dance-floor when the Mets clinched yet another victory; now the top of the bill could go on. When the music ended, the VJ reached for a rock video, and began playing the "Let's Go Mets!" clip.

The scene at the Ritz marked a minor victory for instant video publishing and for Vestron, which created the *Let's Go Mets!* cassette. Jeffrey Peisch, manager of original programming, says Vestron borrowed the name and the concept of instant publishing from the book world. "They've been doing that kind of thing for years—you know, Gerry Ferraro announces her vice-presidential candidacy and six months later there's a book out."

He also tips his hat to MPI Home Video, which had the first major commercial success with an instant-publishing venture last year. MPI's *Super Bowl Shuffle* "came out right around the Christmas selling season. People were already in the stores and oriented to buying gifts." Vestron's own previous efforts include *The Statue of Liberty* and *Liberty Weekend Commemorative Edition*. The Mets program, which could have been an exercise in cheeseball mercantilism, actually turns out to be good clean fun. *Let's Go Mets!* may be a throwaway, but it's the kind some fans might want to collect.

Vestron had been thinking of doing a sports quickie for some time. "The Mets were a natural choice. We began discussions with the team in June—they were doing well but didn't have the huge 20-game lead they had later on. It's a risk,



*Let's Go Mets!*

like anything. They could have blown it."

The remarkable thing about *Let's Go Mets!* is the speed with which it came into the world. "The turnaround time from first day of production to cassettes on the street was about 10 or 12 days," says Peisch.

Call it instant publishing, the electronic broadsheet, or perhaps video journalism. With a little creativity exercised at the right moments, whatever it is could turn out to be a major force in nontheatrical video.

## HOME VISION BRINGS CULTURE TO THE MASSES

Bringing the performing arts into a home-video arena dominated by teen pics is no easy task. Kultur and Video Arts International are among the most important independent labels fighting this good fight. Now they have company in the form of Home Vision, a subsidiary of Film Incorporated, a major independent film distributor. Home Vision specializes in skimming the cream off

American, British, and other countries' public television.

Home Vision's recent releases offer an astonishing array of riches. The "Portrait of an Artist" collection covers everyone from Raphael to Jules Feiffer. There are major opera and dance rosters, "Profile of a Writer" and "War" collections (three titles each), a "Documentary" collection that includes the four-cassette *Africa*, and six volumes of *The Story of the Symphony* with Andre Previn.

As a reporter/critic with a music humanities course in my past but little other specialized knowledge, I was curious to see how the series would appeal to an ill-informed but interested party like me. I was surprised at the depth and scope of the composer-turned-conductor's lectures.

For *Beethoven*, Previn concentrates on the man himself, tracing the genesis of the composer's powerful music to his independent personality. *Brahms* gets a more cerebral treatment as Previn explicates symphonies line by line to etch his portrait of a musical conservative in purely musical terms. *Tchaikovsky* goes in the opposite direction, turning the tormented man's career into an untechnical personality profile, in keeping with the "expressive directness" of his music. *Shostakovich* describes the career of the contemporary Russian composer who incurred (but survived) Stalin's wrath. Here and elsewhere, Previn carefully crafts the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's performance into something neither flamboyant nor dull. The remaining two volumes are devoted to Haydn, Mozart, and Berlioz.

At \$39.95 a shot *The Story of the Symphony* is a good deal for schools, libraries, and ordinary people with an interest in orchestral music. And it bodes well for one of the biggest caches of arts video available.

## SCANLINES

Dustin Hoffman's stage performance in *Death of a Salesman* achieves video immortality with the help of Karl-Lorimar, which will sell the tape for \$59.95.

Morris Video moves into movies with its new More Entertainment subsidiary. First release will be *Scuba Run*, starring Tulla Cove (Daryl Hannah's *Splash* stand-in) and photographed by Jim Crosby (*Miami Vice*).

8mm users needn't worry about getting their hands on the few available tapes. The 8mm Video Council has started a venture called Cinema 8 to cater to partisans of the littlest cassette. The first catalogue—to be updated quarterly—is, as Woody Allen once said of himself, "thin but fun." You can order tapes by mail or phone (800-446-6388, ex. 88; in N.Y.: 212-315-5000, ex. 88). Partial credit for getting this act together goes to Sony, which financed the catalogue to promote the format.

Richard Burton made his last TV appearance in *Ellis Island*, a five-hour-plus docudrama about the famed New York immigrant center. U.S.A. Home Video will sell the entire program, probably in a two-volume twin-pack.



# Reviews

## FILMS PRODUCED FOR THEATERS



*Sweet Liberty*

### **SWEET LIBERTY**

1986. Alan Alda, Michael Caine, Bob Hoskins, Michelle Pfeiffer; wr./dir. Alda. 107m. (PG) Hi D \$79.95. LV CX \$34.98. MCA. Image: excel.

A commercial disappointment because of mixed reviews and a weak marketing campaign during its theatrical release, *Sweet Liberty* is actually an engaging if flawed comedy. The satiric tale revolves around a Hollywood crew's summer invasion of a small university town to turn Professor Michael Burgess' (Alda) historical tome into a lighthearted look at the birth of this nation. Alda has a good ear for humorous dialogue and a keen eye for comedic situations as the conflict between art and commerce unfolds. The age-old struggle is epitomized by Burgess' efforts to portray history realistically despite director Bo Hodges' (Saul Rubinek) belief that filmgoers want rebellion against authority, destruction of property, and removal of clothing.

"The American Revolution was not a

goddamn vaudeville show," complains Burgess. "Alright, we'll fix it," says screenwriter Stanley Gould, who, as embodied by Hoskins, practically steals the film. Known for his humanistic portrayal of British gangsters, Hoskins here demonstrates a great gift for comedy as an earthy American. Caine is also good as Elliott James, the film-within-the-film's conceited but charming leading man. Whether showing Burgess the finer points of fencing, or teaching the university president's wife a few new tricks, Caine invests James with a smooth, self-deprecating air that contributes enormously to the film's sardonic tone. Pfeiffer is equally convincing as a tough, independent actress with whom Burgess has a brief liaison.

*Sweet Liberty* is also the story of the relationship between Burgess and an American Lit teacher, and here writer-director Alda gets into trouble. The film loses momentum when it shifts focus from the making of the picture, and the two plots never achieve a strong balance. Alda himself is not the likeliest historian, and the predictability factor is often far

too high, but *Sweet Liberty* is an entertainingly playful poke at a number of Hollywood's foibles and obsessions.

—Rod Granger

### **LABYRINTH**

1986. David Bowie, Jennifer Connelly; dir. Jim Henson; wr. Terry Jones. 116m. (PG) Hi St cc \$79.95. LV \$34.95. Embassy. Image: excel.

Okay everybody, look rapt. We're going to creep stealthily through the mystical maze called *Labyrinth*. Careful now as we slip through this window, creep down a hole, tiptoe through that dark tunnel....now, let's unlock this exotic-looking door and see what's behind it. What do you think could be in there...? AUUGGH!! MUPPETS!! RUN! RUN!

As pure spectacle, *Labyrinth* is the year's most extravagant eye and ear candy. A collaborative effort of Muppet king Jim Henson, star warrior George Lucas, artist Brian Froud, and Monty Python's Terry Jones, there are elements to appeal to each's following, not to mention a singing and dancing David Bowie in the goblin lead. Unfortunately, these diverse talents are at odds with each other. Henson's Muppets are appealing, yet their mechanical cuteness is downright intrusive in Lucas' seamless illusion approach. Jones' Grimm-like hard edge may scare off the wee tads as much as his scatology will horrify uptight parents. And the film's overt homage to the darker elements of children's book master Maurice Sendak promotes a fantasy that may be upsetting to young children.

In a snotty fit of adolescent pique, Sarah (Connelly) wishes her baby brother snatched by the King of the Goblins, who is only too glad to oblige. Guilt prods her into a gallant rescue attempt in the ultra-confusing *Labyrinth*. Sarah goes through hell and a lot of Muppets to retrieve the infant, but the baby seems to prefer the goblins to his sister's hysterical rantings. The only time the poor lad seems to be having a good time is when

For key to headings, see Legend on first page of Directory section.





**Labyrinth**

he is being danced around by Bowie's Goblin King. Sarah is too whiny and self-absorbed to really earn the audience's sympathy, so you don't root for her success so much as sit back and let the cinematic gods decide who's in the right.

What really saves *Labyrinth* is Bowie. Made up to look like a Tina Turner clone who's never seen sunlight, he symbolizes the unpredictability of the harsh "adult" world, but in so unthreatening a manner that he is actually the most popular character. If you like any of the principals, *Labyrinth* is worth crawling through just to see how they spent their share of the budget. But play this for kids, and don't blame me if they start shrieking next time you turn on *Sesame Street*.

—John Walker

### RAW DEAL

1986. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Darren McGavin, Kathryn Harrold; dir. John Irvin. 90m. (R) Hi \$79.95. HBO/Cannon. Image: good.

It looks as if Arnold has evolved his "stay hungry" philosophy into "stay smug," an attitude shared by a number of his competitors—Clint Eastwood, Chuck Norris, and Sylvester Stallone. Unfortunately, Schwarzenegger lacks Eastwood's finesse, Norris' moves, and Stallone's personality. Actually, the most appealing thing about the guy is his physique: a thoroughly intimidating body lends the only semblance of verisimilitude to his super-cop persona.

Arnold plays Mark Kaminsky, a hot-shot FBI agent ousted from the Bureau by an unconventional investigation. He's offered a second crack at the big time when his ex-boss (McGavin) hires him to

infiltrate and eliminate Chicago's most powerful syndicate. Of course, Kaminsky's mission comes complete with car chases, fistfights, and shootouts.

If you enjoy this kind of thing, one scene is particularly fun. Kaminsky rolls back the top of his white convertible, turns on the Rolling Stones playing "Satisfaction," and races through an outdoor heroin production facility while wasting thugs left and right with his howitzer and other automatic goodies.

Although Schwarzenegger has more trouble with English than acting, he does manage a few funny, well-timed lines ("Who do I look like—Dirty Harry?"). Posing frequently for the mirror, he sneaks in a word or two about the importance of exercise and fitness. Old pros Sam Wanamaker (as the crime boss) and McGavin lend their fine talents to this formula blood-and-guts revenge flick. But, notwithstanding a happy ending that intentionally alludes to *Casablanca*, *Raw Deal* is not worth the time it takes to watch. Skip it. —Clifford Meth

### UNDER THE CHERRY MOON

1986. B&W. Prince, Jerome Benton, Kirsten Scott-Thomas, Steven Berkoff; dir. Prince. 100m. (PG-13) Hi St cc \$79.95. LV CX St cc \$34.98. Warner. Image: good.

Prince always requires a certain suspension of disbelief. Is his chronic self-obsession for real or is it part of the put-on? In the case of *Under the Cherry Moon* the actor-singer-songwriter-director really pushes the envelope of credibility. It was easy to go along with the gag in *Purple Rain*. Prince's character may not have been the most sympathetic of indi-

viduals, and the context wasn't exactly plausible, but the levels of energy, charm, and, above all, the constant procession of musical numbers moved the picture along at such a breakneck pace that audiences were totally caught up.

*Under the Cherry Moon* is a different matter insofar as the narcissistic indulgence outweighs the charm and energy, turning the film into little more than an extreme exercise in Prince's highly publicized self-adulation. First of all, there's the story. Prince plays a totally amoral Cote d'Azur gigolo who attempts to snare a spoiled heiress, played by the decorative but not overly talented Scott-Thomas. Along the way he discovers love and is shot dead by the girl's father (Berkoff) for his troubles. It's hard to care about a love affair between two people who are so unsympathetic that you don't care what happens to them.

The movie's only likable character is Tricky (Benton, again serving as Prince's foil and sidekick). Another problem is Prince himself. He must be on screen for at least 90 out of the 100 minutes, pouting, posing, driving a convertible, and wearing a large number of extremely exotic costumes. The one thing he doesn't do much of is singing. He only really performs two songs, seemingly a major miscalculation for someone whose reputation rests primarily on being a rock star.

The one thing not lacking is style. The sets and costumes are exceptional, and the lavish black & white photography has the attention to detail of an extended perfume commercial, although the contrast on video doesn't do it true justice. Lifestyles of the rich and petulant.

—Mick Farren

### LETTER TO BREZHNEV

1985. Alexandra Pigg, Peter Firth, Margi Clarke; dir. Chris Bernard. 94m. (R) \$79.95. Karl. Image: excel.

Working-class films—unflattering, claustrophobic dramas of England's disaffected and disenfranchised—have long been a staple of British cinema. The gritty realism of great movies like *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, *A Taste of Honey*, and *Room at the Top* provides a bracing antidote to the familiar English menu of regal costumers, James Bond adventures, and Peter Sellers farces.

*Letter to Brezhnev*, in its own idiosyncratic '80s fashion, continues that fine tradition. The setting is Liverpool, where two young women, Elaine (Pigg) and her friend Teresa (Clarke), are facing the equally grim prospects of a lifetime working in a chicken factory and apparently permanent unemployment. The girls are restless, anxious to escape



the dead-end tedium of their lives even for just a few hours. Salvation of sorts arrives in a chaotic nightclub when they pick up two Russian sailors who are in town for a day. (A map may illuminate the situation's geographical logic.) Glamorous Teresa picks the strong, primitive Sergei; Elaine goes for the sensitive, articulate Peter. While Teresa and "Igor" (as she calls him) opt for earthy pleasures, Elaine and Peter stay up all night talking—and falling in love.

Unable to forget Peter, Elaine ultimately pleads her case to the Kremlin, receiving a plane ticket to the USSR by return post. (So much for socialist realism.) Relatives, girlfriends, even the foreign secretary all attempt to dissuade her from going, forcing her—and by implication, themselves—to realistically consider the merits of the life she may be forsaking. What makes *Letter to Brezhnev* so fascinating is that her love for the foreigner violently divides her from her peers, making her seem increasingly like an outsider to friends and family. The plucky heroine role is familiar enough, but Alexandra Pigg makes Elaine a memorable, modern woman.

Americans may find the accents and Merseyside slang impenetrable. (The Beatles sounded like this before becoming wealthy world travelers.) And yes, the story is somewhat contrived, heavy-handed, and slight. But there's a sincere and ultimately moving quality about this look at the joys and miseries of pure, mindless love, and how even the most ordinary lives can change in a moment. Also, it captures the anything-can-happen allure of nightlife, as well as the uneasy social torpor poverty encourages. *Letter to Brezhnev* should not be overlooked.

—Ira Robbins

## DESERT HEARTS

1986. Helen Shaver, Patricia Charbonneau, Audra Lindley; pr./dir. Donna Deitch. 96m. (R) \$79.95. Vestron. Image: good.

When Columbia University professor Vivian (Shaver) arrives in 1959 Reno in a stiff, gray sheath dress and shiny Bergdorf Goodman shoes, her blonde hair pinned into a sophisticated French twist, you know she needs more than a divorce. She needs to loosen up; she needs color. As soon as you see *Desert Hearts*' shots of gaudy chrome slot machines, the supercharged reds, blues, and pinks of desert sunsets, and winking neon casino signs, you know she's come to the right place.

Especially when Kay (Charbonneau), a Reno-bred casino hellion, zooms into view, speeding in reverse in a convertible, riding backwards alongside the car carrying the prof to a dude ranch. With her swinging fringe of dark hair, bold face, and sexy mustang body, Kay is everything Vivian isn't, but she's intrigued and challenged by the ivory tower Easterner. Though the *New Yorker* tries to remain aloof, they edge together, exchanging kisses during a cloudburst, ultimately sharing one of the most raw-nerved, electric love scenes in recent American film.

Director Donna Deitch evinces much more interest in Kay and the wide open West than in Vivian and the Eastern intellectual range, and unbalances the Jane Rule novel on which Natalie Cooper's script is based. In the novel, the local girl's breezy easy-sex attitudes seemed as limiting as the teacher's reserve; in the movie, you're much more likely to wonder what Kay sees in Vivian than vice versa.

But Deitch is definitely in touch with her younger and older Western characters. She knows just how Kay's hit-the-jackpot 25-year-old romanticism can turn into the leathery, sun-creased 50-year-old romanticism of Audra Lindley's dude ranch boss, a woman prickly as a cactus with the whining divorce-seekers she serves, but unable to forget how Kay's father "put a string of lights around my heart." Following her tough, passionate instincts all the way, Deitch has come up with a first film that leaves a neon imprint.

—Kathy Huffhines

## THE GODS

### MUST BE CRAZY

1984. Marius Weyers, Sandra Prinsloo, Xao; wr./dir./pr. Jamie Uys. 109m. (PG) Hi cc \$79.98. Playhouse. Image: excel.

Like a Disney "True-Life Adventure," this opens with narration describing an unfamiliar life form. A big difference: instead of snakes and birds, it's people—the Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert—being ever so whimsically explained. Leave it to a white South African filmmaker to patronize by "idealizing" those whom he often refers to as "the little people."

*The Gods Must Be Crazy* is cratty, covering its racist tracks by making both the villain and the head buffoon white. Yet the "humor" depends on blacks being ruthlessly violent toward each other: Ha ha! He shot him in the leg! He may never walk again! How funny! Never are the blacks allowed a shred of the individuality necessary for character comedy. They are merely pawns who can't understand each other or the whites whose every whim affects their lives.

A Coke bottle falls from a plane, the primitive Bushmen find it and think it to be a gift from the gods. When it becomes a source of community strife, Xi decides to return it. On the way, he runs into the film's white subjects and aids in foiling black terrorists-without-a-cause before returning to his remote home. While the picture begins and ends with Xi and his community, it is never really about them—except when they interact with the whites, who have no interest until they stray outside their customary boundaries, and then only as curiosities.

Little in the film is truly funny. There is plenty of absurdity and lots of speeded up sight gags. Without a sense of the characters being human, it is hard to care about any of it, particularly when the same joke is repeated without variation. *The Gods Must Be Crazy* proves that not just Americans are susceptible to the worst of bad taste: the need to feel superior to somebody, somewhere is worldwide.

—M. George Stevenson

*Letter to Brezhnev*





## FOOL FOR LOVE

1985. Sam Shepard, Kim Basinger, Randy Quaid, Harry Dean Stanton; dir. Robert Altman; wr. Shepard. 108m. (R) HiSt \$79.95. MGM/UA. Image: good.

Although you may wonder just what the hell is going on here, *Fool for Love*'s bizarre characters and pacing make waiting for the answers worthwhile. The story takes place at a run-down motel owned by an unnamed man (Stanton) who turns out to be May's (Basinger) father. May has fled there to escape the memory of Eddie (Shepard), her lover of 15 years who mysteriously shows up stating that he has traveled 2,482 miles to find her and that she must accompany him to Wyoming. After much arguing, yelling, and breaking of things, she agrees to do so. But as they kiss to re-confirm their love, she knees him sharply in the crotch. This slow-moving film's disorienting style is set.

Halfway through, two catalysts appear: the Countess, Eddie's former lover who drives up to the motel and empties a pistol at anything that moves, and Martin (Quaid), May's wimpy boyfriend, about whom Eddie states, "If you ain't a cowboy, you ain't shit." Quaid's role is important: he's the uncomprehending outsider who leads everyone to explain their squalid histories. The film's climax reveals the excruciating truth: Stanton has led a double life, marrying two women and fathering both May and Eddie, who fell in love in high school, unaware of their kinship and unable to escape their attraction for one another.

Writer Shepard and director Altman use some interesting narrative technique here, such as having a character tell a story while the visuals show a parallel scene which may either be the "real" version or another semi-related tale. The activities of the motels' other occupants tell another small story, which seems somehow related to the overall plot.

Altman's normally verbose style is severely undercut by Shepard's lean script, which reveals as little as possible per dialogue line. Unfortunately, the heart-rending plot, Altman's penchant for tediously slow pan and zoom shots, and cheesy orchestral music make *Fool for Love* look like a truncated mini-series. It even has a big finish, during which May walks off down the highway, Eddie rides into the desert on horseback, and the motel burns to the ground while Stanton dejectedly waits for the flames to reach him in his trailer. Still, the situation is powerful, and the acting first-rate. As a tale of the decadent Southwest, *Fool for Love* is a surprising success.

—Adam Phillips

## RAN

1985. Tatsuya Nakadai, Akira Terao, Jinpachi Nezu, Mieko Harada; dir./co-wr. Akira Kurosawa. 160m. (R) sub. HiSt cc \$79.98. CBS/Fox. Image: good.

Akira Kurosawa is Japan's John Ford, sharing Ford's streamlined visual thrust and longing for his country's turbulent past. Both directors have alienated some film buffs with the violence and conservatism of their worldviews; in *Ran*, however, Kurosawa has brought the wisdom of advancing age to his self-declared final film. Loosely based on Shakespeare's tragedy, *King Lear*, *Ran* is an unblinking look at the centuries of savage feudalism the director has devoted his career to glorifying.

Hidetora, lord of the Ichimonji clan, has spent most of his 70 years slaughtering rivals to the power he now holds. He foolishly decides to retire and divide the kingdom among his three sons (loosely adapted from *Lear*'s three daughters) in a scene discreetly peppered with full-screen images of gathering clouds. Taro and Jiro, who butter up the old man, ultimately betray him; Saburo, who follows Shakespeare's advice to "speak what we feel, not what we ought to say," first attracts Hidetora's wrath but ultimately proves his loyalty.

In the most striking scene, Hidetora's grief mounts to Shakespearean madness. Amidst a crimson bloodbath accompanied by grieving dissonant-chromatic strings, Taro gets a bullet in the back as his army besieges Saburo's castle. The strings stop and the roar of warfare kicks in, turning mystic vengeance to animal carnage. With all his escort warriors dead, Hidetora suddenly emerges alone from the burning castle, stunned. He walks between the armies of his two cruel sons; they part as the sea parted for Moses.

Stricken by grief over his misfortune and by guilt over his sins, Hidetora knows he must pay for his past. He is thus unique among Kurosawa's protagon-

nists. When Saburo rides to the rescue, he imagines himself saved, but the compassionate son takes a bullet in the chest right in the middle of their reconciliation. Kurosawa allows Hidetora transcendence but not mercy, remaining true to the spirit of Shakespeare, who nicked the plot from older plays but was first to posit a tragic ending.

Kurosawa also caps his career with an intense moral vision, reserving the final frames not for the death of the old warlord but for the pathos of a blinded prince—one of his few surviving victims. This revelation, unprecedented in a Kurosawa war film, arguably makes *Ran* an analogue to Ford's *Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*—his greatest elegy for a past that no longer exists, and can not—must not—ever exist again.

—Mark Fleischmann

## A FINE MADNESS

1966. Sean Connery, Joanne Woodward, Jean Seberg, Patrick O'Neal; dir. Irvin Kershner. 104m. \$59.95. Warner. Image: excel.

The name is Shillitoe. Samson Shillitoe. What's this—Sean Connery in a comedy? Playing a poet? Yes, here he is in a fine slice of 1966 with the director who would put the real cinematic James Bond to bed 17 years later in *Never Say Never Again*.

Samson Shillitoe is a loony poet with a violent desire to finish an epic poem. Lord help anyone who gets in his way, be it his frumpy but well-meaning wife (a curiously charmless Joanne Woodward), the shrink she sends him to (Patrick O'Neal), or Mrs. Shrink (Jean Seberg). He does concede a few moments to set a ladies' club reading aflutter with lascivious references to stray metaphors "creeping above your knee." Will this classic mid-'60s protagonist stop at nothing in his compulsion to rile the bourgeoisie? Will a lobotomy do it? Nope, the lobotomy doesn't do it. He leaps out of

Ran









# QUICK TAKES ON FILMS

## MURPHY'S LAW

1986. Charles Bronson, Carrie Snodgress, Kathleen Wilhoite; dir. J. Lee Thompson. 101m. (R) Hi cc \$79.95. Media. Image: good.

As a killer psycho with Charles Bronson on her tail, Carrie Snodgress' finely sculpted features look startling even with those cruel lines etched in. Bronson's improved with the years, too—he does a great Charles Bronson! Kathleen Wilhoite is boyishly charming as the foul-mouthed adolescent (“monkey vomit!”) who accompanies him. What a pity such good players get no more than a figleaf of character development in this murderous thriller. The inevitable shootings, drownings, stranglings, etc. are elliptical but shocking. —Mark Fleischmann



Murphy's Law

## LAST RESORT

1986. Charles Grodin, Robin Pearson Rose, Jon Lovitz; dir. Zane Buzby. 84m. (R) \$79.95. Vestron. Image: good.

Once aware that the title refers to a wretchedly bad tropical vacation club, nothing about this shrill, sniggering “comedy” will come as any surprise. In the awful Chevy Chase/John Candy American-travel-victims tradition, Grodin's hysterical schlemiel exudes the wit and charm of a harried supermarket manager as he drags the family off to Club Sand, where the ambience is sleazy, the amenities nonexistent, and the people monstrous. By the time the movie plays its hand—an armed guerrilla insurgency—it has trundled out some of the stupidest, most obnoxious stabs at humor you've seen hundreds of times. The word “breasts” is mentioned a lot, and marijuana, homosexuality, and nudity provide the basis of what try to pass for jokes. Hideous, offensive, and above all utterly unoriginal. —Ira Robbins

## ONE MORE SATURDAY NIGHT

1986. Al Franken, Tom Davis, Nan Woods; dir. Dennis Klein. 96m. (R) St ss \$79.95. RCA/Columbia. Image: good.

One gets the feeling that *Saturday Night Live's* resident vulgarians Franken and Davis had to promise to be nice before being allowed to shoot this slight film in their home state of Minnesota. This embarrassing homage to the horny is

barely less smarmy than your average *Porky's* clone, but, to their credit as anachronists, F&D have created perhaps the first “getting laid” extravaganza with liberal sensibilities. In fact, the only consistently responsible characters here are an upscale black couple, and hardly a single act of stupidity passes without serious guilt feelings by the film's zoo of stereotypes. An inconsequential film? Utterly. But the sight of “rock 'n' roller” Franken's unsuccessful attempt at seducing a teen by teaching her the guitar part to “Wild Thing” is almost funny enough to carry this bag of air.

—John Walker

## MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE

1986. Emilio Estevez, Pat Hingle, Laura Harrington; dir. Stephen King. 97m. (R) St cc \$79.95. Karl. Image: good.

Neither as boring as *Cat's Eye*, *Firestarter*, and *Creepshow*, nor as good as *The Shining* and *Cujo*, Stephen King's directorial debut is a ballsy attempt to shock and amuse an audience that desires little else from its entertainment dollar. The ridiculous premise—that the earth's passage through a comet's tail causes all machinery to go on a homicidal rampage—suggests a grisly and illogical assortment of comic possibilities, most

of which King employs. On the level of a *Roadrunner* cartoon, it's kind of a hoot. Confirming King's intent, there's as much heavy metal (courtesy of AC/DC) on the soundtrack as you can swallow.

—Richard Gehr

## 8 MILLION WAYS TO DIE

1986. Jeff Bridges, Rosanna Arquette, Andy Garcia; dir. Hal Ashby. 115m. (R) Hi cc \$79.98. CBS/Fox. Image: good.

If you're the type of person who can't get enough of *Miami Vice*, this film might serve as some sort of substitute. The convoluted, illogical story has an alcoholic former cop (Bridges) redeeming himself by taking down a murderous drug pusher (Hispanic, of course). You've got your chase scenes, drug abuse, hookers (white, of course, with requisite hearts o' gold), pimps (black, of course), and—to assuage the morals panel—pious sobriety: this ex-cop attends AA meetings. Whatever happened to Hal Ashby? He didn't used to make rambling, hypocritical, preachy movies like this. Maybe it has something to do with that Rolling Stones tour documentary...

—Richard Gehr

## MY LITTLE PONY—THE MOVIE

1986. Anim. 89m. (G) cc \$79.95. Vestron. Image: excel.

Let me get this off my chest right away: I hate *Smurfs* and *My Little Ponies* and all those cartoon commercials that originated as products. With that caveat, I must confess that this is not such a bad film. There's plenty of non-violent action as the ponies try to stop the evil witch Hydria and her dastardly daughters from covering Ponyland with the purple lava-like smooze. The animation quality is superior to most of the Saturday morning brigade (cept Pee-Wee Herman, god bless 'im). The voices of Danny DeVito, Madeline Kahn, Rhea Perlman, and Tony Randall add extra charm to the occasionally clever script. You could do worse. Then again, there's a scene where the ponies lose their dream castle and move into a new home called “Paradise Estates.” Why do I suspect *Paradise Estates* is—or soon will be—the latest *My Little Pony* toy, sold separately? You could do better. —Marianne Meyer



# VIDEOS

## MADE FOR HOME VIEWING

### MONTY PYTHON'S FLYING CIRCUS

1970, 1972. *Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, Michael Palin; dir. Ian McNaughton.* 3 cas. 60m. ea. \$24.95 ea. Paramount. Image: good.

What has six heads and makes you laugh? *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, the groundbreaking British series which began a whole style of television humor (and whose tradition, if not wit, went into *Saturday Night Live*). Its 45 episodes, filmed between 1969 and 1974, have inspired a cult following unsated by a plethora of books, albums, stage shows, and feature films.

The show was created by five Britons and an American for the BBC to fill a late-night slot originally occupied by a religious program. (As one Python observed, "We were initially seen by insomniacs, intellectuals, and burglars.") Their off-the-wall humor knew no limits and made no exceptions, poking fun at TV, the clergy, politicians, movies, pretentiousness, pomposity, and life in general. Before *Python*, TV sketches had beginnings, middles, and ends. The group did away with that, frequently having characters stop scenes by saying, "This is silly," and walking off, or just having a piece of bizarre (and often violent) animation take over. (In one bit, Graham Chapman's head is sawed off and used in the cartoon that follows).

This collection of six shows from 1970 and 1972 features a cross-section of some of the Pythons' best work: the Ministry of Silly Walks (a government agency that gives grants for silly walk research); the *Attila the Hun Show* (in the style of the *Debbie Reynolds Show*, with silly opening song, American accents, bad jokes, and a laugh track); the Argument Clinic ("I came here to have a good argument"); the Spanish Inquisition ("No one expects the Spanish Inquisition!" cries out an inquisitor, who tries to torture his victims with "the comfy chair" and "the soft cushion"); the Charades Trial (in which a jury gives its verdict through a game of charades); the Summarize Proust Competition (in which contestants are given 15 seconds to summarize the author's works); and a James Bond-style film (with snazzy credits) called *The Bishop* (who rides around in a sports car to the tune of *Peter Gunn*).

The Pythons excelled at mock docu-

mentaries, and these tapes feature a classic: an examination of the Piranha Brothers, a pair of unsuccessful gangsters. A criminologist explains, "A murderer is only an extroverted suicide," and a Piranha colleague breaks down on camera, exclaiming, "I've seen grown men pull their own heads off rather than see Doug." Interviewer: "What did he do?" Criminal: "He (long pause, biting his lip) used sarcasm...dramatic irony, metaphors, pathos, puns, parody, and satire."

You could say the same about *Monty Python's Flying Circus*. Or as George Harrison once observed, "Let's face it. There are certain things in life which make life worth living, and one of those things is Python." —Tom Soter



*Amos n' Andy: Anatomy of a Controversy*

### AMOS N' ANDY: ANATOMY OF A CONTROVERSY

1983. *Nar. George Kirby.* 55m. \$29.95. Avery (distributed by MPI). Image: good.

Germany has its Nazi past to contend with; we have *Amos n' Andy*. That may be stretching it a bit, but the radio-turned-television comedy series does remain a cultural flashpoint in this country's minefield of race relations. The NAACP, which hounded the program out of production in 1953 and off the air in 1966, raised a similar stink over this doc-

umentary. CBS Inc., *Amos n' Andy's* copyright owner, has cautiously licensed the videotape for only a two-year sales period.

Will the show always be too hot to handle? Probably. The "controversy" goes all the way back to its 1920s origins: two white southerners, Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll, doing black-dialect humor. *Anatomy of a Controversy* doesn't skirt the issue, but it doesn't quite hunker down with it either. The tape shows Gosden and Correll (in blackface) in a 1932 film and an equally offensive 1934 cartoon. Because it had a black cast, the television show receives revisionist praise from narrator George Kirby and interviewees Redd Foxx, Marla Gibbs, and Jesse Jackson. There are also snippets of talk from cast members Ernestine Wade (from a 1975 *Tom Snyder* appearance) and Alvin Childress.

But the heart of the presentation is clips from the series itself, highlighted by a 12-minute condensation of one episode. What makes *Amos n' Andy* worth watching is neither *Amos* nor *Andy*, but the conniving George "Kingfish" Stevens. The marvelous Tim Moore overplayed "Kingfish" to perfection, doubletalking the dimwitted *Andy* (Spencer Williams, Jr.) and staring in amazement when his victim inevitably took the bait.

The show *was* funny. The laughter, however, came with strings attached. In one sequence shown here, "Kingfish" is in a courtroom before a white judge. Suddenly we're back in the "real" world. We're not even watching a brilliant comedian; "Kingfish" becomes a brutal stereotype. *Anatomy of a Controversy* would have done well to seek out *Amos n' Andy's* production crew and probe their feelings about the show. Let's respect the black talent that went into the program—and then find other things to laugh about. —Scott Isler

### THE EBONY TOWER

1986. *Laurence Olivier, Roger Rees, Greta Scacchi, Toyah Wilcox; dir. Richard Knights.* 79m. Hi \$79.95. Vista. Image: good.

In his old age, Laurence Olivier has chosen some odd projects. For every *King Lear*, there's *A Little Romance* or *The Betsy*. Of course, Lord Larry is entitled to get his ya-yas out after decades of being the World's Greatest Thespian.



But another motive may be the fun he had being the matinee idol of millions of well-bred young ladies in his youth.

Which is why the old dog is so perfect in *The Ebony Tower*. A parable about art and its creation (as one might imagine from the source, a John Fowles novella), this concerns an old artist (Olivier) who shares his French estate with two art students. Young, lovely art students. Superannuated bliss? Well, for him it is. He gets what sex he can manage, forbids them to wear swimsuits, and encourages one, "Mouse" (Scacchi), in her painting. The old genius is a bit crotchety—insulting, really—but the girls don't seem to mind.

Enter the complication: a painter/critic (Rees) come to interview the Great Man. While following a different school, Rees' character has nothing but respect for the old guy's work. And his taste in women. He also encourages Mouse and wants to run off with her.

The two men face off in a verbal joust—old vs. young, representational vs. abstract—all for the love of a girl. Despite the artistic *trompe l'oeil*, Olivier is Heathcliff all over again—passion vs. intellect, the world of romance vs. the security of the world. In Larry's best line, he cries "art isn't about fundamentals, it's about fundaments!" Good fun!

Although little more than intellectual popcorn, *The Ebony Tower* is well-realized popcorn. Scacchi and her cohort (Wilcox) are very good and Rees provides a fitting foil for the deft Olivier. Produced for British TV, the visuals are a bit flat, but the direction is nicely compact.

—M. George Stevenson

### MY NAME IS BARBRA

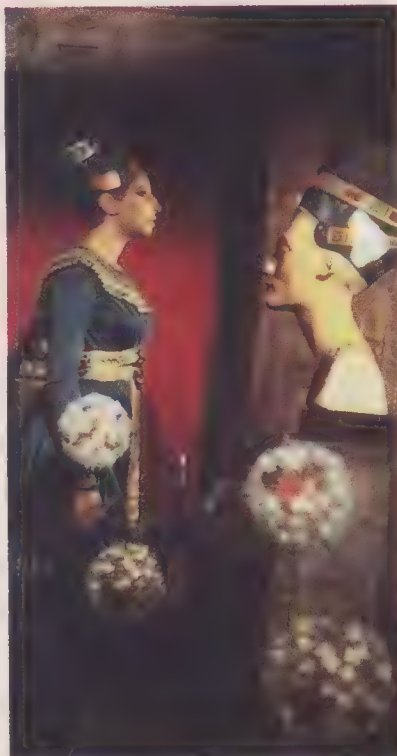
1965. B&W. Barbra Streisand; dir. Dwight Hemion. 54m. Hi \$29.98. CBS/Fox. Image: good.

### COLOR ME BARBRA

1966. Barbra Streisand; dir. Dwight Hemion. 54m. Hi \$29.98. CBS/Fox. Image: good.

By now, Barbra Streisand is familiar enough to be a cliché, which is odd since her career has been marked by her penchant for taking chances. In fact, she is usually least successful artistically when trying to play safe (mid-'70s proto-rock) and best when pushing near the edge.

On the heels of *The Broadway Album*, her strongest (and most daring) work in years, the video release of her two mid-'60s TV specials provides even better evidence for this view. Both *My Name Is...* and *Color Me Barbra* present vintage performances of standard Barbra repertoire, but also highlight some evocative work in unfamiliar realms. And both go soundly against the grain of that era's



Color Me Barbra

standard variety show.

High-concept before there was such a thing, both are solo—no guest stars—and are divided into a studio segment, a location segment, and a concert segment (with live audiences). Her locations are bizarre: Bergdorf Goodman and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Both are used to excellent advantage. In the department store, she sings a medley of '30s poverty songs; in the PMA, songs suggested by the paintings, including a wonderful "Where or When" (a song about déjà vu) in the Egyptian collection.

The studio sets are a circus (with live animals) and a child's world, where she is more variety-show traditional, but her kid act is charming and the numbers double-edged and sharp. Although not much of a dancer, her ability (even at 23) to bring off a performance greater than the sum of its parts is impressive.

Her early brilliance and radical song styling come to the fore in the concert segments. *My Name* features songs from *Funny Girl* (which she was doing on Broadway at the time); *Color* contains quite simply the best "Where Am I Going" (from *Sweet Charity*) ever. Nowhere is there the belabored mannerism of her later work. Here, she is the chanteuse of whom Glenn Gould(!) said "with the possible exception of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, no one has brought me more sheer pleasure." Ditto.

—M. George Stevenson

### BILLY JOEL—THE VIDEO ALBUM, VOL. I, II

1986. 48m., 40m. Hi \$19.98 ea. CBS/Fox. Image: excel.

Seeing these clip compilations makes me feel sorry for Billy Joel. First, I feel bad because so many of these videos completely fail to entertain. Second, the cost of making these weak videos probably came straight out of his record royalties. The poor guy probably had to pay a small fortune for a bunch of clips that make him look bad.

Three of the ten videos in *Vol. I* are stock performances: Joel sits or stands at his keyboard and sings or lip-syncs. He makes few stage moves, so there isn't much to look at. Unimaginative camerawork works against him, too.

Most of the other pieces in *Vol. I* are only slightly more entertaining. "Tell Her About It" casts Joel as an act on the *Ed Sullivan Show* in 1963. Between shots of Joel's performance, a fat man reads a newspaper with the headline "Russian Orbits Earth," while up in space, the orbiting cosmonaut has somehow tuned in Joel's spot. The director must have been hard-pressed for ideas to resort to such a far-fetched scenario. "Piano Man" does somewhat better by showing us the characters Joel sings about: an old man engrossed in his gin and tonic, and a middle-aged bartender who dreams of becoming a movie star. In this instance, the clip has a clear connection to the song.

"Pressure," which opens with Joel hypnotized by a big-screen TV flashing "hate," "friends," "love," and "mother" at near-subliminal speed, is easily the most creative clip in *Vol. I*, conveying the pressure Joel sings about. In his living room, broadloom turns to quicksand and sucks him under.

*Vol. II* likewise suffers from a surfeit of bland performances. "Everybody Loves You Now," "You May Be Right," "Los Angeles," and "It's Still Rock n' Roll to Me" are remarkable mainly for their lack of imagination. Thanks to a dash of humor, "Uptown Girl" is a different and better story.

Pathos makes "Allentown" work, showing the optimism and job opportunities of returning World War II veterans changing into pessimism and unemployment lines. The video meshes superbly with the song's lyrics about the decline of America's industrial heartland.

In Joel's best clips—"Allentown," "Uptown Girl," "Pressure," and "Piano Man"—the visuals complement the songs and, sometimes, add a new layer of meaning to the lyrics. Too bad so few make that grade.

—Andrew Roblin



# VIDEO QUICK TAKES

## KISS MEETS THE PHANTOM OF THE PARK

1978. KISS, Anthony Zerbe, Carmine Caridi; dir. Gordon Hessler. 96m. \$59.95. Worldvision. Image: poor.

Before MTV and music videotapes, rock groups with overblown egos and huge followings had limited ways to spend other people's fortunes on celluloid adventures. For their regrettable/forgettable feature debut, KISS made a moronic TV movie—set in an amusement park where the band is performing—concerning a mad subterranean scientist who attempts to replace our musical super-heros with evil clones. The effects are as cheesy as the story is infantile, and calling what the New York quartet does here “acting” would be a gross misuse of the language. No wonder the Monkees revival is so big—at least those guys have a sense of humor.

—Ira Robbins

**HOME EMERGENCY VIDEO**  
1985. 31m. \$24.95. ThetaMark (1101 Westwood, Plano, Tex. 75075). Image: good.

Heart attack, choking, drowning, bleeding, poisoning, and burns are hardly pleasant subjects, but Dr. Lawrence Magruder handles them well in this low-budget how-to. The program alternates dramatized vignettes and Magruder's explanations of what's happening. With paramedic Kyle Vaught, he shows how to perform CPR, the Heimlich Maneuver, and other lifesaving techniques. He keeps his advice simple and to the point; what details he adds are just the necessary ones. This may be the closest thing ever to a tape that *everyone* ought to see.

—Mark Fleischmann

## ANIMAL STORIES

1986. Anim. 30m. \$29.95. Children's Circle. Image: excel.

Here's a pleasant triple treat for parents who want their kids' video viewing to acknowledge and respect the entertainment value of books. The three stories vary in tone, animation style, and content but all make for delightful repeat plays. *Petunia* is a comic tale of a know-it-all goose whose bad advice makes for barnyard mayhem. *Why Mosquitos Buzz in People's Ears* is a visually stunning, award-winning version of an old legend.



KISS Meets the Phantom of the Park

*Andy and the Lion* is a Norman Rockwell-like retelling of *Androcles and the Lion*.

—Marianne Meyer

## KID CREOLE AND THE COCONUTS: THE LEISURE TOUR

1986. 60m. Dir. Peter Orton. \$29.95. Embassy. Image: good.

August (Kid Creole) Darnell has always loved to ride musical merry-go-rounds. You never know what he and his 12-piece band are going to play next. At this show—taped at Paris' Le Zenith club—the Kid, sidekick Coati Mundi, and a lovely bunch of Coconuts all go to camp with neo-Caribbean pop and Carmen Miranda statements. In person, the Kid and his crew throw one of the best parties you'll ever attend, yet on video they're strangely tepid. The muted audio mix lacks bite, and the Coconuts' singing and dancing are both off this night. Save your money and buy two tickets the next time the Kid's in town.

—Frank Lovece

## JOE BOB BRIGGS: DEAD IN CONCERT

1986. Dir. Jim Rowley. 60m. \$39.95. United. Image: good.

This may reflect a parochial view of journalism, but what qualifies a film critic—even the *numero uno* drive-in doyen, Texas' own Joe Bob Briggs—to be a stand-up comic? In a bizarre, unsteady concert tape, Briggs delivers the drive-in oath (“...blood, breasts, and beasts”),

gripes about his dismissal from a Dallas paper, holds forth on religion, dating, and the farming of dirt, insults a few ethnic groups, and leads his audience through the scurrilous parody (“We Are the Weird”) that earned him pickets, censure, and unemployment benefits last year. While Joe Bob is a wonderfully repulsive character in print, a courageous reveler in trash, he's not that funny a performer. This barely scores on the vomit meter, although the customized FBI warning is a hoot.

—Ira Robbins

## GORE VIDAL:

### THE MAN WHO SAID NO

1982. Dir. Gary Conklin. 99m. \$60.00. Mystic Fire (24 Horatio St., New York, N.Y. 10014). Image: good.

Anyone familiar with Gore Vidal, orator, will not be surprised to learn that Gore says a lot more than “no” in this documentary of his bid for a California Senate seat. Is Gore Vidal an articulate spokesman for the verbal elite? Yes. Is Gore Vidal a U.S. Senator? No, which proves that the effete, however noble, will never topple the turgid power structure. A self-described realist who, conversely, appears to view his prospective place in politics as something of a birthright, Vidal effectively razor-tongues the opposition, but loses the big enchilada. Perhaps the most realistic thing Vidal did was to have his Senate bid filmed.

—John Walker

## OZZY OSBOURNE: THE ULTIMATE OZZY

1986. Dir. Andy Morahan. 85m. Hi St \$29.98. CBS/Fox. Image: excel.

And now, h-e-e-e-re's Ozzy, the Johnny Carson of heavy metal. Like Carson, he makes a grand entrance, descending to the stage in the lap of a monstrous Ozzy-idol. Like Carson, he pumps up the show with co-star abuse, dragging his guitarist by the hair across the stage. Ozzy could even market his fashion sense—he goes for sparkling gown-like numbers—in a line of clothes, as Johnny does. Every adolescent male power fantasy comes true in Ozzy's concert, which makes up the bulk of this video. In the conceptual tidbits, a leather Lolita gives just the right touch of prurient interest. Like him or not, Ozzy's grip on his audience is unbreakable.

—Andrew Roblin



# Directory

## NEW RELEASES ON TAPE AND DISC

### Action

**The Adventures of Bullwhip Griffin.** 1966. Roddy McDowall, Suzanne Pleshette, Karl Malden, Hermione Baddeley. Boston butler reluctantly accompanies charge on prospecting trip. 110m. Hi \$69.95. Disney.

**And Smooth as Silk.** 1986. Cec Verrel, Bill McLaughlin. Woman cop stops drug ring. 84m. (R) Hi \$79.95. MGM/UA.

**The Archer: Fugitive from the Empire.** 1981. Lane Caudell, Belinda Bauer, Victor Campos, George Kennedy. Sword and sorcery; young warrior claims his throne. 97m. Hi D \$39.95. MCA.

**Attica.** 1980. Charles Durning, George Grizzard, Anthony

Zerbe. TV-movie account of 1971 prison riot. 97m. Hi \$59.95. Charter.

**Blue City.** 1986. Judd Nelson, Ally Sheedy, Paul Winfield, Anita Morris. Son of murdered Florida mayor wants justice. 83m. (R) Hi \$79.95. Paramount.

**Challenge.** 1976. Earl Owensby. Mobsters murder family of Senate candidate when he declines their campaign contributions. 90m. (PG) \$59.95. VCL.

**Code Name: Emerald.** 1985. Ed Harris, Max Von Sydow, Eric Stoltz. Agent infiltrates German intelligence before D-Day. 95m. (PG) LV cc \$34.98. CBS/Fox.

**Dead End Drive-In.** 1986. Ned Manning, Natalie McCurry, Peter Whitford. Drive-in is really state run concentration camp for the unemployed. 92m. (R) B Hi V cc \$79.95. New World.

**Doomed to Die.** 1940. B&W. Boris Karloff, Marjorie Reynolds, Grant Withers. Karloff as Chinese detective Mr. Wong, on case of murdered shipping magnate. 69m. \$29.95. Images.

**Dr. Strange.** 1978. Peter Hooten, Clyde Kusatsu, Jessica Walter, John Mills. TV movie featuring Marvel Comics sorcerer. 94m. Hi D \$39.95. MCA.

**Dr. Syn, Alias the Scarecrow.** 1964. Patrick McGoohan, George Cole, Tony Britton. Originally produced for *World of Disney* TV show: English minister takes on pirate's guise to fight King George III. 129m. (G) Hi \$69.95. Disney.

**Fire with Fire.** 1986. Craig Sheffer, Virginia Madsen, John Polito. Boy in reformatory falls in love with girl from Catholic school. 103m. (PG-13) Hi \$79.95. Paramount.

**Five Mile Creek Vol. 14.** 1985. Louise Claire Clark, Rod Mul-linar, Liz Burch, Michael Caton. Two episodes of series set in Australian pioneer community. 96m. Hi \$49.95. Disney.

**Gun Fury.** 1953. Rock Hudson, Donna Reed, Phil Carey, Lee Marvin; dir. Raoul Walsh. Civil War vet pursues outlaws who kidnapped his fiancée. 83m. Hi \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

**Hanging on a Star.** 1978. Deborah Raffin, Danil Torppe, Wolf-man Jack. Woman manager's campaign to make unknown rock band a top attraction. 93m. (PG) Hi \$79.95. MGM/UA.

**The Karate Kid II.** 1986. Ralph Macchio, Pat Morita; dir. John G. Avildsen. Sequel with teen pupil accompanying master on return trip to Japan. 113m. (PG) Hi St ss cc \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

**Life Is Beautiful.** 1979. Giancarlo Giannini, Ornella Muti. Spanish man accused of conspiracy against state. 102m. B Hi V \$59.95. New World.

**Lives of a Bengal Lancer** 1935. B&W. Gary Cooper, Francis Tone; dir. Henry Hathaway. Cooper and Tone as pals in British foreign regiment. 110m. Hi D \$29.95. MCA.

**Low Blow.** 1986. Cameron Mitchell, Troy Donahue. Cult leader turns women into hypnotized killers. 90m. (R) \$69.95. Vestron.

**Menace on the Mountain.** 1970. Patricia Crowley, Albert Salmi, Charles Aidman. Civil War renegades take over southern family's home. 89m. Hi \$69.95. Disney.

**Never Too Young to Die.** 1986. John Stamos, Vanity, George Lazenby, Gene Simmons. Pair of secret agents foil demented hermaphrodite's plan to poison city's

## PROGRAMMING LEGEND

### DATE

Varies according to type of program as follows: **Films:** original theatrical release. **Made-for-broadcast:** first telecast. **Made-for-video:** first release in any format. **Compilations:** production of collected work.

### FORMAT

All programs are available in Beta and VHS unless noted. All programs on videodisc are also available on videocassette unless noted. The following abbreviations apply:

**B:** Beta videocassette  
**V:** VHS videocassette  
**8:** 8mm videocassette  
**LV:** LaserVision videodisc  
**CED:** CED videodisc

### AUDIO FEATURES

All available audio information is provided. The following abbreviations apply:

**St:** stereo  
**Hi:** Hi-Fi  
**D:** Dolby noise reduction  
**ss:** surround sound  
**cc:** closed-captioned for the hearing impaired  
**CX:** CX encoded

### IMAGE QUALITY

For theatrical releases, this rating refers to the transfer quality and overall visual appearance. For non-theatrical productions, it refers to overall visual quality.

**excel.:** exceptionally attractive and/or faithful to the original

**good:** adequate but unremarkable

**poor:** seriously flawed

### ETCETERA

Official MPAA ratings (G, PG, PG-13, R) are provided when available. All programs are in color unless noted. Prices are not generally given for CED discs.

**anim:** animated  
**B&W:** black & white  
**cas.:** videocassette  
**comp.:** compilation  
**dir.:** directed by  
**m.:** minutes  
**nar.:** narrated by  
**pr.:** produced by  
**RE:** reissue  
**sub.:** subtitled  
**wr.:** written by

Editors' choices in the "Directory" are highlighted with red titles.



water supply. 97m. (R) Hi St ss D cc \$79.95. Charter.

**Nikki, Wild Dog of the North.** 1961. Jean Coutu, Emile Genest. Pup separated from master in Canadian wilderness must fend for itself. 73m. (G) Hi \$69.95. Disney.

**The Nine Lives of Elfege Baca.** 1958. Robert Loggia, Robert F. Simon, Lisa Montell. Sheriff in frontier New Mexico. 78m. Hi \$69.95. Disney.

**No. 1 of the Secret Service.** 1977. Nicky Henson, Richard Todd, Aimi MacDonald. Agent foils plot to murder world's top financiers. 87m. (PG) Hi \$79.95. MGM/UA.

**Raw Deal.** 1986. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Darren McGavin, Kathryn Harrold, Sam Wanamaker. FBI chief hires ex-agent to find out who's leaking company secrets to the mob. 90m. Hi \$79.95. HBO/Cannon.

**The Ski Bum.** 1975. Charlotte Rampling, Zalman King. Ski resort instructor becomes key to businessman's takeover plan. 94m. (R) Hi \$59.95. Charter.

**SpaceCamp.** 1986. Kate Capshaw, Lea Thompson, Tom Skerritt. Teenagers visiting NASA accidentally launch into space on board shuttle. 115m. (PG) LV St ss CX \$34.95. Vestron.

**The Student Nurses.** 1970. Elaine Giftos, Brioni Farrell, Barbara Leigh. Four nurses with exceptional bedside manner. 89m. (R) Hi \$59.95. Charter.

**A Tiger Walks.** 1964. Brian Keith, Vera Miles, Sabu, Una Merkel. Abused tiger escapes from circus truck in small town. 88m. Hi \$69.95. Disney.

**Vendetta.** 1985. Karen Chase, Sandy Martin, Durga McBroom. Sister of woman murdered in prison commits crime to meet killer face to face. 89m. \$79.95. Vestron.

**War Bus.** 1985. Daniel Stephen, Rom Kristoff, Urs Althaus. Trio of marines use abandoned bus to transport civilians out of Vietnam territory. 90m. Hi D \$79.95. Embassy.

**Where the Hot Wind Blows.** 1960. Gina Lollobrigida, Marcello Mastroianni, Yves Montand, Melina Mercouri; dir. Jules Dassin. Melodrama of young Italian woman and her suitors in tawdry coastal town. 120m. \$39.95. Monterey.

**Wizards of the Lost Kindgom.** 1985. Bo Svenson, Vidal Peterson, Thom Christopher. Scramble to retrieve magic ring that keeps evil sorcerer in check. 76m. (PG) \$69.95. Media.

**The Wrestler.** 1973. Ed Asner, Elaine Giftos, Harold Sakata. Promoter approached by mobsters who want his profits. 103m. (PG) B Hi V \$59.95. New World.



**The Adventures of Black Beauty: A Long Hard Run/Game of Chance.** 1972. Village horse race; Beauty lost to carny huckster. Two cas. 30m. ea. Hi \$14.95 ea. Sony.

**The Adventures of Mark Twain.** 1986. anim. Voice of James Whitmore. Twain stories with clay figures. 86m. (G) Hi \$59.95. Paramount.

## CASH REGISTER

Special promotions and other pricing news

► Following up its successful music promotion last fall, Sony has permanently reduced prices on an additional selection of Video 45s, EPs, and LPs. Five 45s, including *Phil Collins, Tears for Fears*, and *Sheena Easton—Private Heaven* drop from \$16.95 to \$9.95. Eleven EPs, among them *Bowie—Jazzin' for Blue Jean*, *The Jam*, *Pete Townshend*, and *Bananarama*, go from \$19.95 to \$14.95. The ten LPs reduced from \$29.95 to \$19.95 include *American Suite*, *Devo*, and *Breakin' Metal*.

If you prefer jazz, opera, and classical programming to poprock compilations, take note of V.I.E.W.'s reduced prices on 30 catalogue titles. All jazz concert tapes, previously \$39.95, are now \$24.95 to \$29.95. This includes programs featuring Bobby Short, Mabel Mercer, and Gil Evans. *The Kirov Ballet*, *The Bolshoi Ballet*, *The Moiseyev Dance Company*, and all other dance titles drop from \$59.95 to \$39.95. The same reduction applies to all opera titles except *Mozart's Magic Flute*, a two-tape production that now costs \$49.95. Finally, two acclaimed concerts with Yehudi Menuhin have been reduced from \$39.95 to \$29.95.

► There's nothing high-toned about HBO/Cannon's hottest new sale item—*Rambo, First Blood Part II*. Sylvester Stallone's top-grossing actioner, which debuted last January at \$79.95, now sells for \$29.95. The initial *Rambo* outing, *First Blood*, is available at the same price.

► All four titles in Embassy's "Reel Deals II: Take Home Winners" sale were released at \$79.95, but through April they can be yours for \$24.95 apiece. The tapes are among Embassy's biggest sellers: *The Emerald Forest*, *The Sure Thing*, *Eddie and the Cruisers*, and *A Chorus Line*. Another 20 titles make up the company's concurrent "Survival Kit" promotion—same deal, different films. Top items here include *The Ruling Class* (the full-length British version), Blake Edwards' *The Tamarind Seed*, *The Hit*, and *Another Country*. —Steve Daly

**Babar and Father Christmas.** 1986. anim. Elephant king seeks out Santa. 30m. \$14.95. Hi-Tops.

**Cartoonal Knowledge: Confessions of Farmer Gray.** 1986 comp. anim. B&W. Dir. Paul Terry. Silent cartoons *Chemistry Lesson* ('22), *The Window Washers* ('25), 5 more. With organ accompaniment. 54m. \$24.95. Images.

**Christmas Stories.** 1986 comp. anim. Adaptations of award-winning storybooks: *Morris's Disappearing Bag*, *The Clown of God*, *The Little Drummer Boy*, *The Twelve Days of Christmas*. 30m. \$29.95. CC.

**Defenders of the Earth Vol. 2.** 1986. anim. *The Mind Warriors*, *Hall of Wisdom*. 45m. \$14.95. Family.

**Dick Tracy and the Oyster Caper.** 1961. anim. TV fare featuring

famed comic strip detective. 60m. \$29.95. Hi-Tops.

**The Fabulous Fleischer Folio Vol. 5.** 1983 comp. anim. Vintage cartoons with a Christmas theme from Max Fleischer Studios: *Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer* ('48), *Peeping Penguins* ('37), 4 more. 43m. Hi \$49.95. Disney.

**Hanna Barbera's All-Star Comedy Ice Revue.** 1986. Roy Clark, Bonnie Franklin, hosts; with skaters dressed as Fred Flintstone, Yogi Bear, Huckleberry Hound, others. 60m. \$19.95. Worldvision.

**He-Man and the Masters of the Universe: The Rarest Gift of All! To Save Skeletor.** 1986. anim. Two cas. 25m. ea. \$14.95 ea. Magic.

**Hero High's Supermagical Adventures.** 1981. anim. Six stories set in school for superheroes. 80m. Hi \$19.95. Embassy.

The Fabulous Fleischer Folio Vol. 5





**Higglety Pigglety Pop.** 1985. Production of Maurice Sendak's picture book filmed at England's Glyndebourne Festival Theatre. 60m. Hi St \$29.95. Home Vision.

**The Hunchback of Notre Dame.** 1986. anim. Adaptation of Victor Hugo story. 60m. \$19.95. Lightning.

**Inhumanoids.** 1986. anim. Toy tie-in: Earth besieged by race of subterranean monsters. 90m. \$24.95. Hi-Tops.

**Madballs.** 1986. anim. Toy tie-in: gross-looking creatures leave native planet Orb for Earth. 30m. \$19.95. Hi-Tops.

**More Dinosaurs.** 1986. Live action/anim. Gary Owens, Eric Boardman host make-believe safari for prehistoric creatures. 30m. \$19.95. Twin Tower.

**Music and Feelings.** 1986. *Mister Rogers* video featuring material from PBS program plus new footage. With Ella Jenkins, cellist Yo Yo Ma. 65m. Hi cc \$19.98. Playhouse.

**My Favorite Fairy Tales Vols. 1-5.** 1986. anim. Three stories per cas., including *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Puss 'n' Boots*, *Cinderella*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Ali Baba*, *The Three Little Pigs*, *The Ugly Duckling*, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. 45m. ea. \$9.95 ea. Hi-Tops.

**My Pet Monster.** 1986. Toy tie-in: boy turns into shaggy blue beast whenever he's hungry. 60m. \$29.95. Hi-Tops.

**Robin Hood.** 1986. anim. English outlaw and his merry band. 60m. \$19.95. Lightning.

**Scooby-Doo.** 1986 comp. anim. Saturday morning TV show: canine sleuth and friends. 50m. \$19.95. Worldvision.

**She-Ra, Princess of Power: Friendship/Loo-Kee Lends a Hand.** 1986. anim. Two cas. 25m. ea. \$14.95 ea. Magic.

**Shirt Tales.** 1986. anim. Pint-sized crimestoppers. 45m. \$19.95. Worldvision.

**Sylvia Anderson's The Animates.** 1978 comp. anim. Shorts produced for British TV; 13 segments. 57m. \$14.95. Family.

**T.V. Classics Vol. 2.** 1986 comp. B&W. Episodes of '50s kiddie shows *Howdy Doody*, *Art Linklet-*

*ter and the Kids*. 52m. \$19.95. MPI.

**Tales of Magic Video Book Three.** 1977. anim. *Aladdin's Lamp*, *The Ugly Duckling*, *The Three Little Pigs*, 6 more. 90m. Hi \$19.95. Embassy.

**Voltron: The Return of Sven.** 1986. anim. Toy tie-in: robot defense league. 45m. Hi \$9.95. Sony.

**Where the Wild Things Are.** 1985. Production of Maurice Sendak's picture book filmed at England's Glyndebourne Festival Theatre. 60m. Hi St \$29.95. Home Vision.

**The Wonders of Aladdin.** 1961. Donald O'Connor, Noelle Adam, Vittorio De Sica, Aldo Fabrizi. Lad stumbles upon magic lamp. 93m. Hi \$59.95. Charter.



**Andy Kaufman: Sound Stage.** 1983. Sketches, stand-up routines featuring Kaufman, guest Elaine Bosler. 59m. \$59.95. Lightning.

**Angels Over Broadway.** 1940. B&W. Douglass Fairbanks Jr., Rita Hayworth; wr./dir. Ben Hecht. Would-be hood set to swindle suicidal man saves him. 75m. LV \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

**Bellboy and the Playgirls.** 1962. June Wilkinson. Sex farce co-wr. by Francis Ford Coppola. 93m. Hi \$59.95.

**Billy Crystal: Don't Get Me Started.** 1986. Eugene Levy, Christopher Guest, Rob Reiner. Crystal as Fernando, Buddy Young Jr. 60m. Hi \$59.95. Vestron.

**The Comedy Jam.** 1986. Stand-up routines featuring Howie Mandel, Paul Rodriguez, many others. 60m. \$59.95. Lightning.

**Destry Rides Again.** 1939. B&W. Marlene Dietrich, James Stewart, Brian Donlevy, Jack Carson. Gun-shy sheriff sets out to clean up Western town. Features Dietrich's rendition of "See What the Boys in the Back Room Will Have." 94m. Hi D \$29.95. MCA.

**The Ed Wynn Show.** 1950. B&W. Episode of CBS-TV program with guests Lucille Ball, Desi Arnaz. 29m. \$19.95. Images.

**Fawlty Towers.** 1975/9. John Cleese, Prunella Scales. Episodes of BBC series about inept hotel manager Basil Fawlty. 4 cas., 3 episodes per. Approx. 95m. ea. Hi cc \$29.98 ea. CBS/Fox.

**Finnegan Begin Again.** 1985. Robert Preston, Mary Tyler Moore, Sylvia Sidney, Sam Waterston, David Huddleston. Made-for-cable feature about affair between over-the-hill newspaperman, middle-aged schoolteacher. 112m. Hi \$29.95. HBO/Cannon.

**From Here to Maternity.** 1986. Carrie Fisher, Lauren Hutton, Patrick Duffy, Paul Reiser, Griffin Dunne, Brooke Adams. Trio of women eager to become mothers. 40m. \$59.95. Vestron.

**Hardbodies 2.** 1986. Brad Zutaut, Brenda Bakke, Fabiana Udenio. Hollywood film crew in Greece finds location distracting. 89m. (R) Hi \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

**The Horse in the Gray Flannel Suit.** 1968. Dean Jones, Diane Baker, Morey Amsterdam, Kurt Russell. Ad exec comes up with campaign featuring horse so he can keep animal for daughter. 114m. (G) Hi \$69.95. Disney.

**Hot Touch.** 1986. Wayne Rogers, Marie-France Pisier, Samantha Eggar. Art forger's stormy romantic life. 92m. \$69.95. T.W.E.

**Howard the Duck.** 1986. Lea Thompson, Jeffrey Jones, Tim Robbins; dir. Willard Huyck. Wisecracking fowl from another planet arrives in Cleveland. 111m. (PG) Hi St ss D cc \$79.95. MCA.

**International House.** 1933. B&W. W.C. Fields, Peggy Hopkins Joyce, Rudy Vallee, George Burns, Gracie Allen, Bela Lugosi, Franklin Pangborn. Zany tale of guests arriving at Chinese hotel for unveiling of invention. 72m. Hi \$29.95. MCA.

**Joe Bob Briggs Dead in Concert.** 1986. Stand-up by controversial comedian/movie columnist John Bloom. 65m. \$39.95. United.

**Kid Millions.** 1934. B&W/Color. Eddie Cantor, Ethel Merman, Ann Sothern, George Murphy. Musical fantasy of Brooklyn lad rewarded for saving life of sheik's daughter. 90m. Hi \$39.95. Embassy.

**The Long Shot.** 1986. Tim Conway, Harvey Korman, Jonathan Winters, Jack Weston, Stella Stevens, Ann Meara; dir. Paul Bartel. Racetrack tip prompts frantic effort to raise capital. 89m. (PG-13) Hi \$79.95. HBO/Cannon.

**Love at First Sight.** 1978. Dan Aykroyd, Mary Ann McDonald. Spoof with Aykroyd as blind employee in china shop. 90m. (PG) \$59.95. VCL.

**The Medicine Man.** 1930. B&W. Jack Benny, Betty Bronson, Georgie Stone. Benny as debonair huckster peddling bogus health tonic. 67m. \$29.95. Images.

**Misfits of Science.** 1985. Dean Paul Martin, Kevin Peter Hall, Mark Thomas Miller. Pilot for NBC-TV series: research scientist forms watchdog group. 96m. Hi D \$39.95. MCA.







EDICIANA









Kathy Smith's ToneUp

**The International Workout.** 1986. Aerobic exercises geared for minimal risk of injury. 45m. \$19.95. A.N.S.

**The Jazzercise Better Body Workout.** 1986. Judi Sheppard Missett leads exercise set to jazz music. Two cas.: *Tight & Toned, Fit & Physical*. 15m. ea. Jazzercise (2808 Roosevelt St., Carlsbad, Calif. 92008; 619-434-2101).

**Kathy Smith's ToneUp.** 1986. Workout aimed at weight reduction and muscle tone using aerobics, resistance bands. 60m. \$29.95. JCI.

**Secrets of Magic.** 1986. The Great Tomsoni demonstrates 40 tricks involving cards, coins, mind reading, more. 60m. St \$24.95. Twin Tower.

**Take Time with Pat Boone.** 1986. Boone, Connie Letney. Exercise routines set to Big Band tunes. 55m. \$19.95. All.



**Boris Godunov.** 1986. Yevgeni Nesterenko. Russian opera taped live at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre in '78. 190m. 2 cas. Hi St \$69.95. Kultur.

**Carmen.** 1985. England's Glyndebourne Festival Opera, London Philharmonic Orchestra; cond. Bernard Haitnik. Plot sum-

mary, production notes enclosed. 160m. (2 cas.) sub. \$59.95. Home Vision.

**Colonel Abrams.** 1986. Combination CD/LV includes complete album plus videos "Trapped," "The Truth," "Over and Over." St CX \$16.95. Pioneer.

**Guitarra! The Guitar in Spain.** 1985. 4 cas. Evolution of Spanish guitar from 1500 to present. Selections performed by Julian Bream. 60m. ea. \$39.95 ea. Home Vision.

**Hard to Handle: Bob Dylan with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers.** 1986. Concert program orig. aired on cable. Includes "Like a Rolling Stone," "Just Like a Woman," 8 more. 60m. LV St CX \$29.98. CBS/Fox.

**Heart.** 1986 comp. Videos "These Dreams," "Never," "What About Love?," "Nothin' at All." 18m. LV (8-inch) St CX \$12.99.

**Hot 'n' Heavy.** 1986 comp. Videos by heavy metal groups Venom, UFO, Lee Aaron, Anthrax, others. 54m. Hi St \$29.95. Jem.

**More Women in Rock.** 1986 comp. Concert performances by The All Stars, Judy Tzuke, Lee Aaron, Rock Goddess, Darts, Amazulu, others. 52m. Hi St \$19.95. Sony.

**Neil Diamond: I'm Glad You're Here with Me Tonight.** 1986. Diamond backstage, in rehearsal, performing title tune, "Sweet

Caroline," "You Don't Bring Me Flowers," more. 60m. LV St CX \$29.95. Vestron.

**The Pointer Sisters: So Excited.** 1986 comp. Videos "Dare Me," "Jump," "Freedom," more. 30m. LV (8-inch) St CX \$16.95. Pioneer.

**Romeo and Juliet.** 1966. Margot Fonteyn, Rudolf Nureyev, David Blair, Desmond Doyle. Royal Ballet production; music by Prokofiev, choreography by Kenneth MacMillan. 124m. Hi D \$59.95. Embassy.

**Tammy Wynette in Concert.** 1986. Includes "Stand By Your Man," "I Don't Want to Play House," "Amazing Grace," more. 60m. \$29.95. MusicVideo.

**Ten Years After: Going Home.** 1986. Concert taped at London's Marquee Club, July '83. 55m. Hi St \$29.95. Jem.

**They Shall Have Music.** 1939. B&W. Walter Brennan, Joel McCrea, Gene Reynolds, Marjorie Main. Student at faltering music school convinces star violinist to appear in fundraiser concert. 101m. Hi \$39.95. Embassy.

**'Til Tuesday.** 1986 comp. Videos "Voices Carry," "What About Love," 3 more. Hi St \$19.98. CBS/Fox.

**Wham! in China—Foreign Skies.** 1986. Concert footage plus look backstage. Songs include "Bad Boys," "Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go." 60m. LV St CX \$29.98. CBS/Fox.

**Women in Rock.** 1986 comp. Interviews, performance footage, videos featuring Brenda Lee, Carole King, Janis Joplin, Pat Benatar, Whitney Houston, Madonna, Aretha Franklin, Tina Turner, others. 57m. Hi St D \$29.95. MCA.

**Zoot Sims—In a Sentimental Mood.** 1985. Jazz saxophonist in session with Red Mitchell (bass) and Rune Gustafsson (guitar). 52m. Hi St \$29.95. Sony.



**Infra-Man.** 1976. Li Hsiu-hsien, Wang Hsieh. Astronaut/super-being saves Earth from Princess Dragon Mom and her mon-

sters. Dubbed. 89m. (PG) \$49.95. Prism.

**Making Contact.** 1985. Joshua Morell. Good and evil spirits take up residence in boy's closet. 80m. (PG) B Hi V \$79.95. New World.

**Overdrawn at the Memory Bank.** 1983. Raul Julia, Linda Griffiths. Future controlled by corporate computers. 84m. B Hi V \$69.95. New World.

**Tripods.** 1985. Three episodes from British TV series: 22nd-century Earth controlled by alien invaders. 150m. Hi \$79.95. Sony.



**CrunchTime.** 1986 comp. Pro football's roughest players: Dick Butkus, Howie Long, Mike Curtis, Larry Csonka, Randy White. 45m. \$19.95. NFL.

**Going for It.** 1986. Expert skateboard, dirtbike riders offer safety tips, pointers on style. 30m. \$14.95. Morris.

**Wayne Gretzky: Hockey My Way.** 1986. Instruction by Gretzky, star center of Edmonton Oilers. 60m. \$39.95. Coliseum.



**Alaskan Safari.** 1968. Documentary exploring habitats of wildlife. 120m. \$19.95. United.

**Colonel Culpepper's Flying Circus.** 1981. Texas museum devoted to restoring, preserving WWII planes. With footage of simulated dogfights. 50m. \$39.95. Home Vision.

**Falklands: Task Force South.** 1982. Britain's historic naval battle as recorded by BBC News camera team. 114m. \$39.95. Home Vision.

**48 Hours on Crack Street.** 1986. Nar. Dan Rather. CBS-TV documentary on drug traffic in New York City and environs. V only. \$15.00. CBS Interactive Learning (One Fawcett Pl., Greenwich, Conn. 06836; 1-203-622-2771 collect).



**Life Is a Beach!** 1986. Gary Busey, Cheech Marin host look at beach party featuring Iron Man World Championships, beauty contest. 75m. St \$29.95. Twin.

**The Mystery of Picasso.** 1956. Documentary wherein Picasso creates 15 art works. 85m. (PG) \$69.95. Vestron.

**The Quick and the Dead.** 1977. Stacy Keach hosts look at hazardous careers of Formula One racers; interviews with Jackie Stewart, Niki Lauda. 107m. St \$39.95. Twin.

**The Romantic Hero Video Calendar.** 1986. Profiles of 12 heartthrobs; written by romance novelist Serita Stevens. Includes wall calendar. \$59.95. Romance Video (1765 N. Highland Ave., Suite 770, Los Angeles, Calif. 90028; 213-654-6254.)

**Seapower.** 1981. Documentary on world naval history; extensive footage of new British and U.S. vessels. 109m. \$39.95. Home Vision.

**Video Centerfold #4.** 1986. Playboy playmate Luanne Lee sun-

bathing, figure skating, surfing, performing her song "You're the one." 30m. \$9.95. Karl.

**Vietnam: The Secret Agent.** 1981. Look at use of toxic defoliant Agent Orange in Vietnam and U.S.; archival footage, interviews with veterans, scientists, Dow Chemical personnel. 56m. \$29.95. MPI.

**Vietnam: The War at Home.** 1978. Color/B&W. Look at Anti-war movement, with focus on Wisconsin student radicals. 100m. \$29.95. MPI.

**Vietnam: Time of the Locust.** 1986 comp. B&W. 1974 anti-war documentary, plus 2 government-sponsored films: *A Day in Vietnam*, narrated by Jack Webb, *The Battle*. 55m. \$29.95. MPI.

**Visions of War.** 1986. Package of programs chronicling events of WWII. Titles: *World in Flames Books 1-3 (Hitler's Rise to Power, The Fight for Freedom, The Final Battle)*, 80m/cas., \$79.95. *The Warlords*, 75m., \$39.95. *Blitzkrieg*, 80m., \$39.95. *Berlin 1945*, 60m., \$39.95. Pacific.

## PROGRAMMING SOURCES

**A&H** Video Sales, 430 W. 54 St., New York, N.Y. 10019; 212-489-8130.

**A.N.S.** International Video, 196 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10018; 212-736-1007.

Sybil Danning's **Adventure** Video: see **IVE**.

**All Seasons** Entertainment, 18121 Napa St., Northridge, Calif. 91325; 800-423-5599.

**CBS/Fox** Video, 1211 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10036; 212-819-3200.

**CC** Studios, 389 Newtown Turnpike, Weston, Conn. 06883; 203-226-4666.

**Charter** Entertainment: see **Embassy**.

**Children's** Video Library: see **Vestron**.

**Coliseum** Video: see **A&H**.

Walt **Disney** Home Video, 500 S. Buena Vista St., Burbank, Calif. 91521; 818-840-1111.

**Embassy** Home Entertainment, 1901 Ave. of the Stars, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067; 213-553-3600.

**Family** Home Entertainment: see **IVE**.

Video **Gems**, 731 North La Brea Avenue, Box 38188, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067; 213-938-2385.

**HBO/Cannon** Home Video, 1370 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019; 212-977-8990.

**Home Vision**, 5547 N. Ravenswood Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60640-1199; 800-826-3456; in Ill. 312-878-2600 ext. 336.

**Image** Entertainment, 6311 Romaine St., Hollywood, Calif. 90038; 213-468-8867, 800-421-4585.

Video **Images** (Video Yesterday), Box C, Sandy Hook, Conn. 06482; 1-800-243-0987.

**IVE**, 21800 Burbank Blvd., Woodland Hills, Calif. 91365-4062; 800-423-7455.

**JCI** Video, 9000 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90069; 213-271-5131.

**Jem** Music Video, 3619 Kennedy Rd., Box 708, South Plainfield, N.J. 07080; 800-932-0579.

**Karl-Lorimar** Home Video, 17942 Cowan Ave., Irvine, Calif. 92714; 714-474-0355.

**Key** Video: see **CBS/Fox**.

**Kultur** International Films, Ltd., 121 Hwy. 36, West Long Branch, N.J. 07764; 201-229-2343.

The Video **Late** Show: see **IVE**.

**Lightning** Video: see **Vestron**.

**Magic** Window Video: see **RCA/Columbia**.

**MCA** Home Video, 70 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, Calif. 91608; 818-508-4315.

**Media** Home Entertainment, 5730 Buckingham Pkwy., Culver City, Calif. 90230; 800-421-4509.

**MGM/UA** Home Video, 1350 Sixth Ave. New York, N.Y. 10019; 212-408-0600.

**Monterey** Home Video: see **IVE**.

**More** Entertainment: see **Morris**.

**Morris** Video, 413 Ave. G #1, Box 443, Redondo Beach, Calif. 90277; 213-379-2414.

**MPI** Home Video, 15825 Rob Roy Dr., Oak Forest, Ill. 60452; 312-687-7881.

**Vestron MusicVideo**: see **Vestron**.

**New World** Video, 1440 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90025; 213-444-8100.

**NFL** Films Video, 330 Fellowship Rd., Mt. Laurel, N.J. 08054; 800-NFL-TAPE.

**Pacific** Arts Video, 50 N. La Cienega Blvd., Suite 210, Beverly Hills, Calif. 90211; 213-657-2233.

**Paramount** Home Video, 5555 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90038-3197; 213-468-5000.

**Pioneer** Artists, 200 W. Grand Ave., Montvale, N.J. 07645; 201-573-1122.

**Playhouse** Video: see **CBS/Fox**.

**Prism** Entertainment, 1875 Century Pk. East, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067; 213-277-3270.

**RCA/Columbia** Pictures Home Video, 3500 W. Olive Ave., Burbank, Calif. 91505; 818-953-7900.

**Republic** Pictures Home Video, 12636 Beatrice St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90066-0930; 213-306-4040.

**Hal Roach** Studio Film Classics, 1600 N. Fairfax Ave., Hollywood, Calif. 90046; 213-850-0525.

**Sony** Video Software, 9 W. 57 St., New York, N.Y. 10019; 800-847-4164.

**Trans World** Entertainment, 6464 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90028; 213-461-0467.

**Twin** Tower Enterprises, 12345 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, Calif. 91604; 818-761-0932.

**United** Home Video, 4111 So. Darlington St., Suite 600, Tulsa, Okla. 74135; 800-331-4077.

**U.S.A.** Home Video: see **IVE**.

**VCL** Communications, 2980 Beverly Glen Circle, Los Angeles, Calif. 90077; 213-474-4225.

**Vestron** Video, 60 Long Ridge Rd., Stamford, Conn. 06907; 203-968-0000.

**Vista** Home Video, 645 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022; 212-486-7272.

**Warner** Home Video, 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, Calif. 91522; 818-954-6000.

**World** Video Pictures, 12401 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles, Calif. 90025; 213-820-6100.

**Worldvision** Home Video, 660 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10021; 212-832-3838.



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# BERGER-BRAITHWAITE VIDEO TESTS

**February 1987**

**Zenith VM7100 HQ VHS Camcorder**

**Pioneer VH-900 HQ VHS Hi-Fi VCR**

**NEC EM-E8U 8mm Camcorder**

**Multivision 3.1 Digital Video Adapter**

## Zenith VHS Camcorder



At last, there is a stereo Hi-Fi camcorder, Zenith's VM7100. Up to now the only stereo camcorder has been the Kodak MVS-5000, but its

digital stereo is limited to 14,000 Hertz on the high end. Other 8mm camcorders have an audio frequency response to 20,000 Hertz (-6 decibels at worst), but they are all mono. All VHS and Compact VHS machines so far have only mono linear tracks with limited frequency response. So, this Zenith is really a breakthrough.

Zenith didn't stop with Hi-Fi stereo. The VM7100 has two of the HQ circuits—and a contour detail circuit for sharpening edges, a feature normally found on professional equipment. It is also the first full-sized VHS camcorder to record at the EP speed, for eight-hour capacity on a T-160 tape. It offers a fully automatic (switchable to manual) focus, white balance, iris, and fade.

The Hi-Fi level may be set manually or with the ALC (automatic level control), just like the best table models. In short, the VM7100 combines the best of a top-end table model, less the tuner/timer, and a sophisticated solid-state camera. It isn't small, light, cute, or as heavy as its many features would suggest.

**Description.** The VM7100 is a somewhat chunky machine styled in silver gray and black with touches of red. It measures 8-1/8 inches high by 5-1/8 wide by 13-1/2 deep, and weighs 5.6 pounds. Its handle weighs 0.2 lbs., and the battery adds another 1.3 lbs.

The camcorder is powered by a 60- or 90-minute battery, an AC adapter, or a car battery adapter, all of which slide onto grooves on the back. The top of the ma-

chine has the loop for the carrying strap and an accessory shoe to attach the carrying handle, with a second accessory shoe located on top of the handle. The left of the body is bare but for the battery release and a cheek pad. At the front of the base is a multi-pin input/output connector. On its underside are a tripod socket and a non-skid pad.

The recorder controls are concentrated on the forward third of the right side. The record and power buttons are on top, followed by a large gray area with touch pads for audio dub, stop, pause, rewind/search, play, and fast forward/search. The eject button lies below these, and the tracking control is at the front edge.

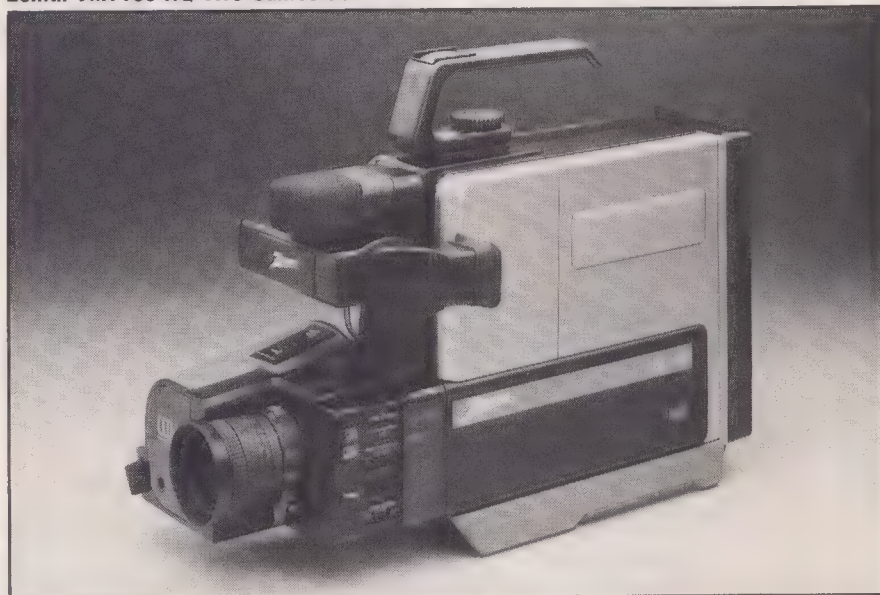
At the bottom of the gray area are slide switches for SP/EP, auto/manual ALC for Hi-Fi, and Hi-Fi/mix/normal audio output select. The raised black area below has buttons for counter memory and reset above an LCD display which shows the counter, tape function, low battery, and Hi-Fi level. The peaks on the display hold

for about two seconds to make manual setting of quickly varying levels easier. Below the display are sliders for manual right and left Hi-Fi level adjustment. Mini jacks for stereo earphones and a remote control are on the base.

On the grip that wraps around the right side of the lens are the camera run/pause control, and the tele/wide angle rocker. Under a sliding door on the other side of the lens are manual controls for white balance, AGC, iris standard, iris + and -, and quick review on/off. A bit forward of the door is a button that activates all the auto circuits. On the front left edge of the lens cowl are buttons for fader on/off and focus mode, which switches between autofocus, manual focus, and focus lock. On the lens itself are the manual focus and zoom rings, and a button for macro focus.

The electronic viewfinder (EVF) mounts on an accessory shoe at the front of the camcorder. It has a swiveling head with a magnifier and a soft rubber eyecup. It has onscreen indicators for recorder speed,

**Zenith VM7100 HQ VHS Camcorder**





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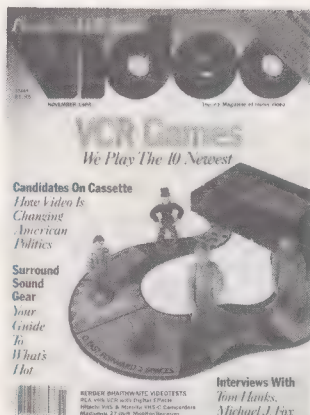
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# BERGER-BRAITHWAITE VIDEOTESTS

**February 1987**

**Zenith VM7100 HQ VHS Camcorder**

**Pioneer VH-900 HQ VHS Hi-Fi VCR**

**NEC EM-E8U 8mm Camcorder**

**Multivision 3.1 Digital Video Adapter**

## Zenith VHS Camcorder



At last, there is a stereo Hi-Fi camcorder, Zenith's VM7100. Up to now the only stereo camcorder has been the Kodak MVS-5000, but its

digital stereo is limited to 14,000 Hertz on the high end. Other 8mm camcorders have an audio frequency response to 20,000 Hertz (-6 decibels at worst), but they are all mono. All VHS and Compact VHS machines so far have only mono linear tracks with limited frequency response. So, this Zenith is really a breakthrough.

Zenith didn't stop with Hi-Fi stereo. The VM7100 has two of the Hi-Fi circuits, and a contour detail circuit for a feature normally found in high-end equipment. It is also the only VHS camcorder to record for eight-hour capacity and offers a fully automatic (auto) focus, white balance, and a Hi-Fi level.

The Hi-Fi level may be adjusted with the ALC (automatic level control) just like the best table model. The VM7100 combines the features of the table model, less the sophisticated solid-state circuitry. It is small, light, cute, or as features would suggest.

**Description.** The VM7100 is a what chunky machine, solid black with touches of silver. It is 8-1/8 inches high by 5-1/2 inches deep, and weighs 5.6 pounds. The other 1.3 lbs.

The camcorder is powered by a 90-minute battery, an AC adapter, all of which are grooved on the back. The

chine has the loop for the carrying strap and an accessory shoe to attach the carrying handle, with a second accessory shoe located on top of the handle. The left of the body is bare but for the battery release and a cheek pad. At the front of the base is a multi-pin input/output connector. On its underside are a tripod socket and a non-skid pad.

The recorder controls are concentrated on the forward third of the right side. The record and power buttons are on top, followed by a large gray area with touch pads for audio dub, stop, pause, rewind/search, play, and fast forward/search. The eject button lies below these, and the tracking control is at the front edge.

At the bottom of the gray area are slide switches for SP/EP, auto/manual ALC for Hi-Fi, and Hi-Fi/mix/normal audio output select. The raised black area below has buttons for counter memory and reset above an LCD display which shows the

for about two seconds to make manual setting of quickly varying levels easier. Below the display are sliders for manual right and left Hi-Fi level adjustment. Mini jacks for stereo earphones and a remote control are on the base.

On the grip that wraps around the right side of the lens are the camera run/pause control, and the tele/wide angle rocker. Under a sliding door on the other side of the lens are manual controls for white balance, AGC, iris standard, iris + and -, and quick review on/off. A bit forward of the door is a button that activates all the auto circuits. On the front left edge of the lens cowl are buttons for fader on/off and focus mode, which switches between autofocus, manual focus, and focus lock. On the lens itself are the manual focus and zoom rings, and a button for macro focus.

The electronic viewfinder (EVF) mounts on an accessory shoe at the front of the camcorder. It has a swiveling head with



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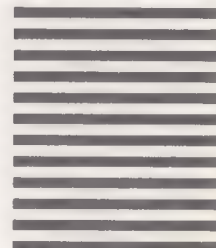
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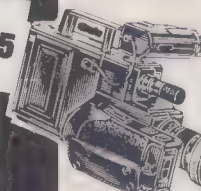
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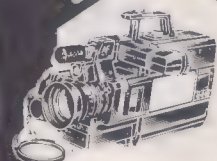
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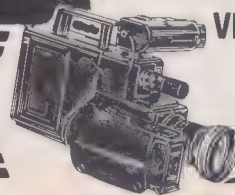
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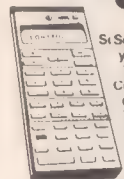


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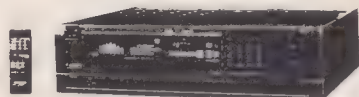
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| Factory Trained Sales Staff | ✓          | No                |
| Extended Warranties         | ✓          | ?                 |



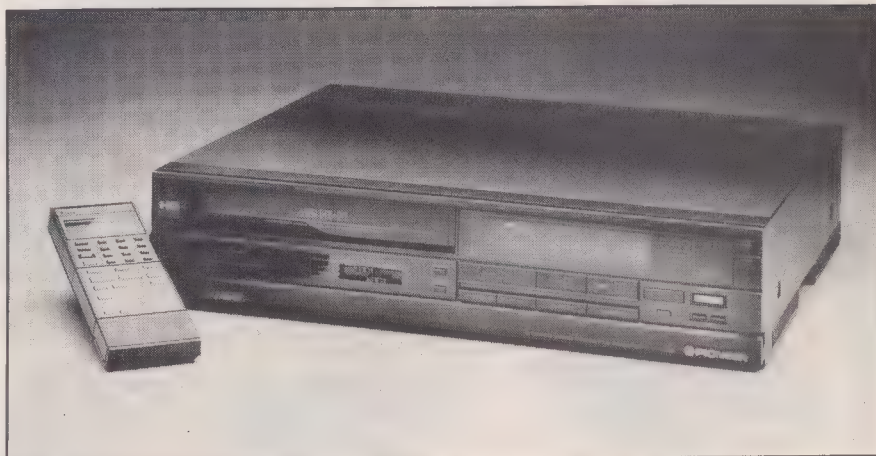
works by seeking signals that the VCR puts on the tape when you start a recording from the stop mode. An indicator in the display tells when the feature is engaged.

The main tape transport controls are in two rows under the display. In the top row are buttons for play, stop, and pause, a -/+ rocker for channel down/up scanning, and the record button. Below are shorter buttons for rewind/search, fast forward/search, slow, frame advance, VCR/TV, IRT (instant recording timer) start, and IRT length. The start button delays instant recording to start at any half-hour point over a 24-hour period.

The bottom of the front panel has a headphone jack and a compartment with a thumbwheel for headphone volume control, and switches for meter/ALC (automatic level control), Hi-Fi auto/off playback, auto stereo on/off, and SAP (second audio program) on/off. The Hi-Fi off position forces playback of the mono linear track. The SAP on position records SAP on the linear track if SAP is broadcast, or on the main track in mono if SAP isn't present. In the off position, the main audio is always put on the linear track.

To the right of the switches are thumbwheels for normal and slow tracking. In the center of the compartment is an input select button that cycles through the recording options of standard broadcast, simulcast, or aux. Additional buttons select the recording speed (playback speed selection is automatic), preset/normal, AFT, and add to or erase the tuner's memory presets, and set the clock and timer. Tucked in the far right corner is a reset button, to be used if the display appears abnormal.

On the rear panel are the AC cord, an accessory AC outlet, and the stereo audio



**Pioneer VH-900 VHS Hi-Fi VCR**

and video inputs and outputs. To their right are the vertical lock jitter control, a normal/CATV input switch, F-connectors for VHF/cable in and out, a channel 3/4 RF output switch, mini jacks for making the VCR part of a Pioneer system, and screw terminals for UHF input and output.

The slim, long remote control looks more like a calculator because of its LCD window. Forward of the window is the VCR power button. Below the window is a 10-digit keypad with secondary functions for selecting recording times and patterns. Other button groups are for channel/aux - and +, timer set, check/correct, clear, transmit, VCR/TV, record (two buttons), play, stop, pause/still, rewind and search, fast forward and search, frame advance, slow, repeat, and Scanplay. Timer set activates the display and the prompts for program number, channel, week, day, time on, and time off. You program it to record for a specific day, either of two

weeks, and Monday-through-Friday.

**Operation.** The controls on the VH-900 are easy to find and read. It is also designed so that operation of most controls is intuitive. Some features, like repeat, Scanplay, and the timer setting on the remote, stand out, and the VCR will even turn off after rewinding if you press the power button during rewind.

We missed the inclusion of audio dub and insert edit, and others are likely to miss stereo linear tracks, especially if they already own a number of linear stereo, non-Hi-Fi tapes. But those features interest only a few, and omitting them keeps the price down. All the standard features are present, and Pioneer's switching arrangement for MTS (multichannel television sound), SAP (second audio program), and Hi-Fi is among the least confusing we've seen. The firm put a lot of emphasis on ease of operation. We rate it excellent.

**Performance.** The VH-900 produces a

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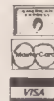
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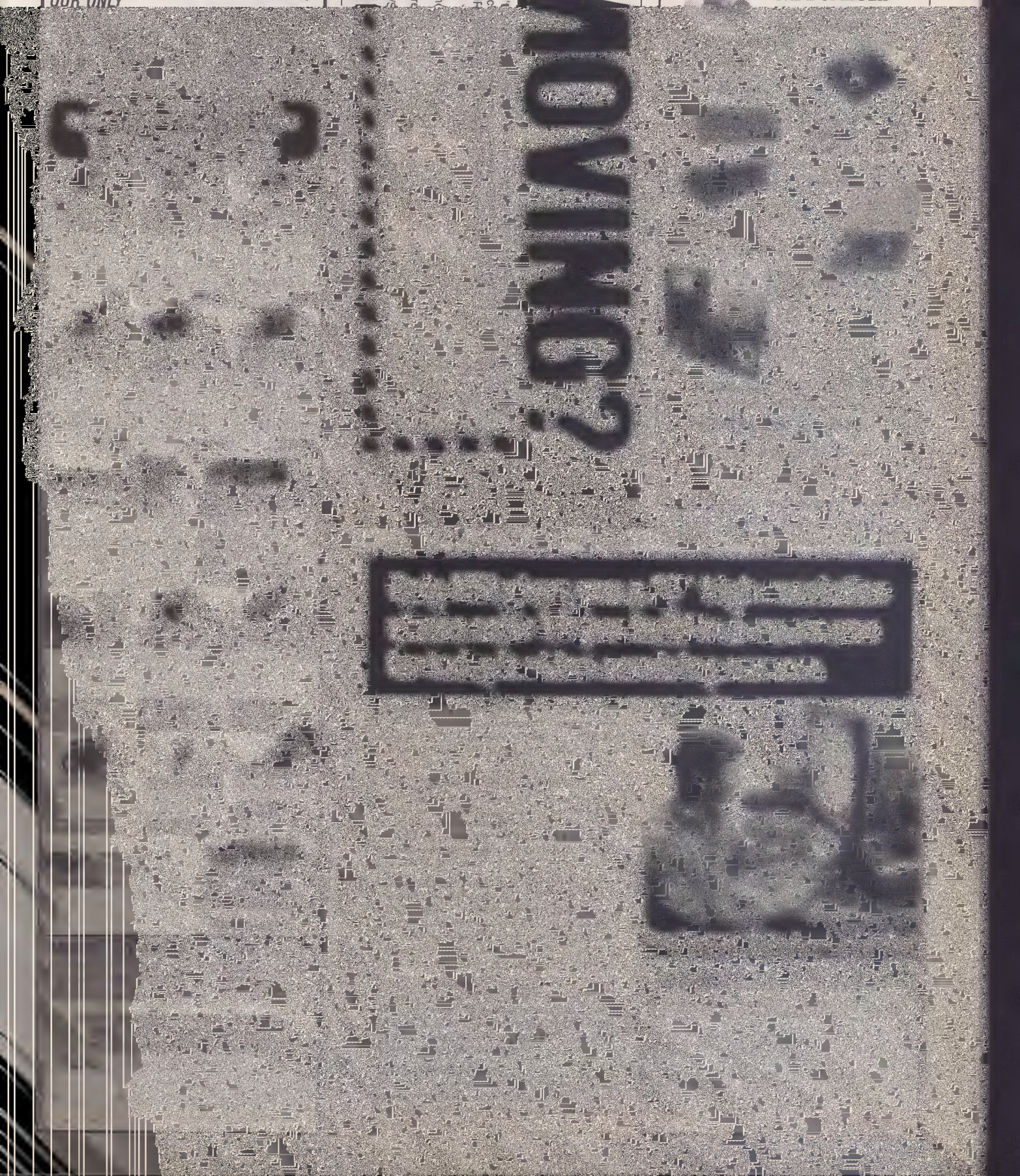


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## Test Report: Pioneer VH-900 HQ VHS Hi-Fi VCR with MTS

### DATA

Date of test: November 1986

Suggested retail price: \$999

Weight: 17.6 lbs.

Dimensions: 3-3/4 x 17-1/8 x 13-1/2 inches (h x w x d)

Power requirements: 120 VAC, 60 Hz

Power consumption: 39W, nominal

Tape format: VHS HQ

Tape speeds: SP, LP, EP

Play speed select: automatic

Still frame: yes

Frame advance: yes

Slow motion: 1/10x

Speed play: no

Rapid search: see Cue & review

Cue & review: 5x, SP; 7x, LP; 9x, EP, approx.

Visible FF and Rew: no

Fast forward/rewind time: 5 min.

Remote (camera) pause: no

Remote: IR wireless with LCD programming panel, and buttons for power, timer set, check/correct, clear, and transmit. A 10-digit keypad doubles for days of the week, A.M., P.M., weekly/daily, +/- channel, and aux. Also buttons for VCR/RV, record, play, stop, pause, rewind (search), fast forward (search), frame advance, slow, repeat, and Scanplay.

Separate eject: yes

Counter digits: 4

Counter memory: yes

Program start locator/index/cue: Scanplay

Audio dub: no

Video dub: no

Auto rewind: yes

Linear audio: mono

Hi-Fi audio: stereo

Tuning method: frequency synthesis

Channel selectors: up/down scan of preset stations on VCR; direct access plus scan of preset channels on remote

Preset method: automatic memorizing of all active channels plus add/erase of individual channels from memory

Broadcast tuning range: 2 to 6, 7 to 13, 14 to 83

Cable tuning range: 2 to 13, A-2, A-1, A to I, J to W, W+1 to W+12

AFT: yes, doubles for auto channel memorization

MTS stereo: yes

SAP: yes

Channel lock: yes

Timer: 4 programs, 2 weeks

Auto channel-change: yes

Accessories: remote controls with batteries, antenna cables, and transformer

## RESULTS & RATINGS

Horizontal resolution: 240 lines, measured

S/N, video luminance: 43.2 dB, SP; 44.0, LP; 44.4 dB, EP unweighted; 50.7 dB, SP; 50.6 dB, LP; 50.9 dB, EP weighted, measured

S/N, chroma AM: 45.8 dB, SP; 42.2 dB, LP; 40.3 dB, EP

S/N, chroma PM: 44.7 dB, SP; 40.6 dB, LP; 40.1 dB, EP

Audio frequency response: Hi-Fi — 20-20,000 Hz, +0.4/-1.5 dB, all speeds; linear (-3 dB)—100-12,000 Hz, SP; 100-8000 Hz, LP; 100-6,300 Hz, EP

S/N, linear audio: 43.6 dB

Dynamic range, Hi-Fi: 81 dB

Audio distortion: 0.3%, Hi-Fi; 1.9%, linear

Overall picture quality: very good/excellent

Audio quality: excellent

Ease of operation: excellent

Overall performance: excellent

## Scale

Excellent  
Very good  
Good  
Average  
Fair  
Weak  
Poor

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| PV 1742 | CALL |
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| KV2781 | 649 |
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| VR 3300  | 629  |
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| VR 1430    | 379      |
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| 4220   | 309  |
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| 4430   | 315  |
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| VK 307  | BE      |
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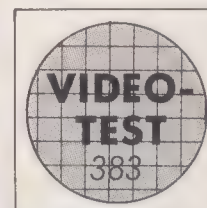
very good/excellent picture with sharp edges, thanks to the HQ circuitry with its extended white clip level, luminance noise reduction, and detail enhancement. Its horizontal resolution is above 240 lines, with a standard play video signal-to-noise ratio of 43.2 decibels, unweighted, and 50.7 dB, weighted. The SP chroma AM S/N is 45.8 dB. The SP chroma PM S/N is 44.7 dB. Comparable measurements were made at the other speeds and are detailed

in the Test Report box.

Hi-Fi audio measurements were the typical 20 Hertz to 20 kiloHertz, +0.4/-1.5 dB, with a dynamic range of 81 dB, and a total harmonic distortion of 0.4 percent. On the linear track, -3 dB frequency response was 100 to 12,000 Hertz at SP, 100 to 8000 Hz at LP, and 100 to 6300 Hertz at EP. Audio S/N was 43.6 dB and total harmonic distortion was 1.9 percent. Overall, audio was excellent.

**Conclusion.** The Pioneer VH-900 is an attractive VCR with very good/excellent performance and all the most popular features. It is easy to use, and its timer programming using the remote control display is a pleasure because it isolates the information you need most from the busy front display. The more you use this VCR, the friendlier it seems. Its suggested price is \$999.95. We especially recommend it for owners of Pioneer monitors and monitor/receivers because it integrates nicely into an A/V system.

## NEC 8mm Camcorder



In the midst of the excitement surrounding NEC's introduction of VCRs with digital processing, NEC sneaked in an 8mm camcorder without

much fanfare. The Auto 8 EM-A8U is an attractive, easy-to-use machine with all the standard features.

The front of the camcorder houses the CCD camera section with the handgrip cuddled around the right side of the lens. Power and setup controls are on the left under the electronic viewfinder (EVF). Controls for the recorder are on top, rather than on the side as in most models. The vertical battery compartment is at the rear, and a fold-away bail-type handle at the top is convenient but unobtrusive. The area that rests against your cheek is textured for comfort, and the underside is nubbled so it won't slip off your shoulder.

The Auto 8 is almost completely automatic. The automatic iris can switch to manual, while a normal/high sensitivity switch adjusts for contrast down to light levels as low as 7 lux. There is no automatic fade, but the manual iris mode lets you control the speed of a manual fade. White balance can switch between indoor, outdoor, and automatic, and focus is switchable between automatic and manual. A button provides one-shot automatic focusing in manual.

The recorder section is moderately plain, with search but no frame advance or slow motion. However, there is an edit switch for higher quality dubs and insert editing.

**Description.** The EM-A8U is mostly black, although a large part of the recorder section is dark blue with metallic flecks. It looks like a fat cigar box with a handle on top and the lens and a grip projecting from one end. It weighs 5 pounds without battery and cassette. Its NP-22 battery weighs 10 ounces and a typical 90-minute

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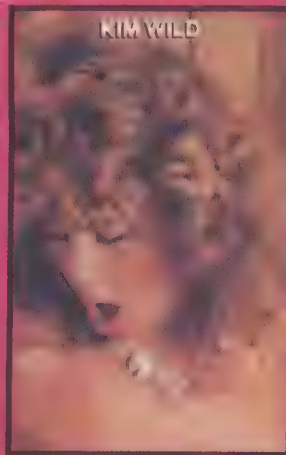
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## Videotests

cassette adds another 1.5 ounces. With the handle folded and the viewfinder set for normal shooting, it is 7-1/2 inches high by 6-3/4 wide by 13-1/2 deep. The folding handle adds three-quarter-inches of height, and the viewfinder can be extended 2-1/4 inches outward for left-eyed operation, although the camcorder must be held in the right hand.

The front camera section should be familiar to anyone who has used a camcorder recently. The grip cradles the right side of the lens, with a run/pause button where your thumb goes, separate tele and wide angle buttons for middle and index fingers, and an adjustable strap that runs around the back of the hand. The lens has the two usual rings for manual focusing and zooming, with a stubby lever on the zoom ring and a separate release button for macro focus. The lens is protected by the lens hood. A white lens cap doubles as the target for one-touch auto white balance. Under the lens are the infrared emitter and receiver for autofocus.

On the left side of the camera are a power switch and a record review button. Underneath these are the rotary iris control, which offers auto iris at its center click-stopped position, and a sensitivity switch with normal and high positions. Be-



NEC EM-A8U 8mm Camcorder

low are indoor/outdoor/auto white balance controls and the auto/manual focus switch with a button for one-shot autofocus in manual.

The front of the camera is stepped, with the lens at the bottom and the EVF mounted on tracks on top. The tracks let you position the EVF's viewing window back-

ward or sideways. A release lets you slide it between locked shooting positions or move it to a different set of tracks for better viewing.

The viewing hood with a rubber eyecup and a focusing magnifier may be flipped up. Below the 0.7 inch CRT are red, orange, and green LEDs that indicate the white

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balance, low light, recorder running, a low battery, and the tape's end. The EVF rotates 90 degrees above and below horizontal for convenient shooting at any angle. Screwdriver controls let you change contrast and brightness. Atop the viewfinder is an accessory shoe, with a fixed omnidirectional mic at front and a jack for an external mic on the right.

The recorder section is convenient and easy to understand. The controls are arranged in three rows along the top of the

camcorder. One row houses the power switch with indicator, the counter window, and the edit switch. In the middle row are the eject switch, counter reset, counter memory, insert membrane pads, and the record slider. In the third row are membrane pads for rewind/search, play, fast forward/search, stop, and pause.

**Operation.** Running it is relatively easy. Put in a battery and a cassette, turn on the power, set the iris, focus, and white balance in automatic, press the white bal-

## Test Report: NEC EM-A8U Auto-Focus 8mm Camera Recorder

### DATA

**Date of test:** November 1986  
**Suggested retail price:** \$1699  
**Weight:** 5 lbs., camcorder; 10 oz., battery; 1-1/2 oz., cassette  
**Dimensions:** 7-1/2 x 6-3/4 x 13-1/2 inches (h x w x d)  
**Power requirements:** 6-8.5 VDC  
**Power consumption:** 7W, approx.  
**Image sensor:** 2/3-inch CCD solid state  
**Lens:** f/1.2, 6x (9-54 mm) power/manual zoom with macro range  
**Filter diameter:** 49mm  
**Minimum focusing distance:** 4 feet  
**Minimum illumination:** rated—7 lux, sensitivity switch at High  
**Auto focus:** yes, switchable to manual with one-shot AF button  
**White balance:** switchable to indoor, outdoor, or one-touch auto  
**Iris:** auto, switchable to manual  
**Sensitivity:** dual range covering 7-100,000 lux  
**Viewfinder:** 0.7-inch CRT electronic with LEDs for low light (green), VCR running (steady red), low battery, end of tape, and auto white balance (orange).  
**Viewfinder controls:** magnifier optical focus, brightness, contrast, and physical positioning  
**Auto fade:** no  
**VCR controls:** power, eject, rewind, play, fast forward, stop, pause, record, edit switch, counter reset, counter memory, and insert  
**Microphone:** fixed omni-directional electret condenser type, with jack for external mic  
**Cable length:** not applicable, unitized  
**Jacks:** EVF, external mic, earphone, 6-pin for optional wired remote, multi-pin for audio/video/RF adapter  
**Tape format:** 8mm

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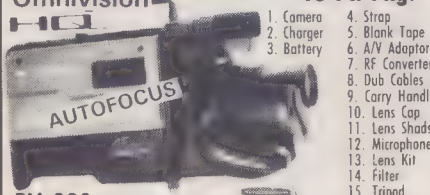
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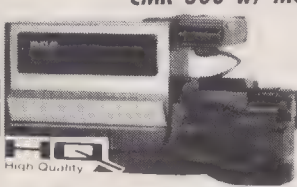
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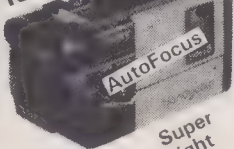
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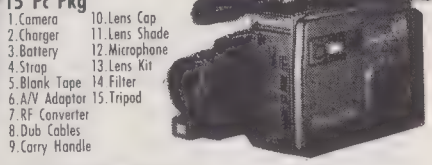
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ance button before removing the lens cap, take off the lens cap, point at a subject, and start shooting. You may miss auto fade but you can get variable speed manual fading with the iris control.

Turn the power switch and press play to review the image in the viewfinder. The RF adapter connects the camcorder to a TV for onscreen playback. Picture search has a little noise (it's a little slow at 3X), and there is no slow motion or frame advance. Ease of operation is good to very good.

**Performance.** With all the claims and counterclaims camcorder formats are making, the increases in 8mm quality have been getting very little notice. Horizontal resolution started at 230 lines—definitely less sharp than VHS or Beta—but on this unit it is between 240 and 250 lines, which however, VHS HQ circuitry produces less ragged edges.

Unweighted, the video signal-to-noise ratio is 45.6 decibels. Weighted, it is 52.2 dB. Chroma AM S/N is 44.1 dB and chro-



**Tape speeds:** SP, record/play; LP, play only

**Play speed select:** automatic

**Still frame:** yes

**Frame advance:** no

**Slow motion:** no

**Speed play:** no

**Rapid search:** see Cue & review

**Cue & review:** 3x, approx.

**Visible FF and Rew:** no

**Fast forward/rewind time:** 3 minutes approx. for P6-90

**Remote pause:** through remote connector

**Remote:** optional wired, not tested

**Separate eject:** yes

**Counter digits:** 4

**Counter memory:** yes

**Program start locator/index/cue:** no

**Audio dub:** no

**Video dub:** yes, insert edit

**Auto rewind:** no

**Linear audio:** none

**Hi-Fi/AFM:** mono

**Accessories:** ACC KIT-A8U with V-AC8U AC pack/battery charger, V-BC8U battery charge adapter, RFU-8U RF/A/V adapter, NP-22 battery pack, 75 ohm antenna cable, 75-300 ohm antenna transformer, V-AS100 antenna selector, and P6-15 cassette.

## RESULTS & RATINGS

**Horizontal resolution:** 240+ lines measured

**S/N, video luminance:** 45.6 dB, unweighted; 52.2 dB, weighted

**S/N, chroma AM:** 44.1 dB

**S/N, chroma PM:** 42.2 dB

**Audio frequency response:** 20-14,000 Hz, +0.3/-3 dB S/N, audio: 65 dB

**Audio distortion:** 0.4 percent

**Overall picture quality:** very good

**Audio quality:** very good

**Ease of operation:** good/very good

**Overall performance:** very good

ma PM S/N is 42.2 dB with the hue compensation off. With hue compensation on the figures jump to 50.8 dB and 51.0 dB, respectively. Overall picture quality is very good.

Like all 8mm VCRs, the basic audio track is AFM (audio frequency modulation), the system used for Hi-Fi on half-inch machines. It produces a frequency response of 20 Hertz to 14,000 Hertz at the -3 dB points with an audio S/N of over 65 dB. Total harmonic distortion is 0.4 percent. Overall audio response is very good compared with other 8mm machines.

**Conclusion.** The NEC EM-A8U is a very good camcorder with a convenient layout that is generally easy to operate. You'll be impressed by the carrying handle, the recorder controls, and its light sensitivity. The picture and sound complement its overall quality, so we rate it as very good. Its suggested retail price is \$1699. Consider it seriously if you're in the market for a camcorder.

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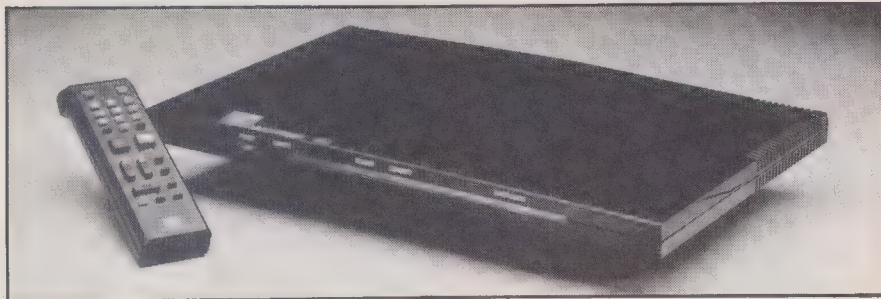
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**MultiVision 3.1 Digital Video Adapter**

## MultiVision Digital Video Adapter



If you're fascinated by the features on current "digital" TVs and VCRs, the MultiVision 3.1 could be all you really want. The word digital is the new

magic potion that is attracting many to upgrade their video equipment, but in most cases digital circuitry offers glitzy features rather than improved picture quality. The

MultiVision 3.1 delivers the most popular digital feature, picture-in-picture (PIP), and more on any TV you currently own.

The box houses two MTS stereo tuners that let you view different TV channels on the main screen and an inset screen. Most digital TVs have only one tuner, so the second picture must be supplied by a VCR or a second external tuner.

Here's a list of the picture combinations MultiVision will equip your TV for: broadcast/broadcast PIP, broadcast/cable PIP, broadcast/video PIP, cable/cable PIP, cable/video PIP, a variable PIP size, four PIP positions, vertical and horizontal modification of the PIP position, PIP freeze, auto scan of PIP channels, separate color and tint control of the PIP, and swapping the main picture with the PIP.

PIP lets you monitor a surveillance camera, monitor a VCR while watching another channel so you can delete commercials, scan through other programming without losing your main picture, and babysit by remote using a camera in the child's room, among other applications. Although more than one sound source is available, the sound heard always matches the main picture.

Audio has become increasingly important to videophiles, too. MTS stereo and synthesized stereo have been catching on rapidly since the introduction of broadcast stereo. Stereo balance control, switchable enhanced stereo separation, forced monaural reception to reduce noise, and a 2.5 watt-per-channel stereo amplifier complete the 3.1's moderately sophisticated audio system.

It has a mono RF output for connection to a standard TV and a line level video/stereo audio output. To get stereo when using the RF out you must use either the internal amplifier and speakers, or your stereo system. In short, the MultiVision 3.1 is a tuner/amplifier similar to those in component TV systems. It really requires only a viewscreen and speakers.

**Description.** The MultiVision 3.1 is a contoured black box whose top is larger than its base. On its front are indicators for



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**Multivision 3.1 Digital Video Adapter**

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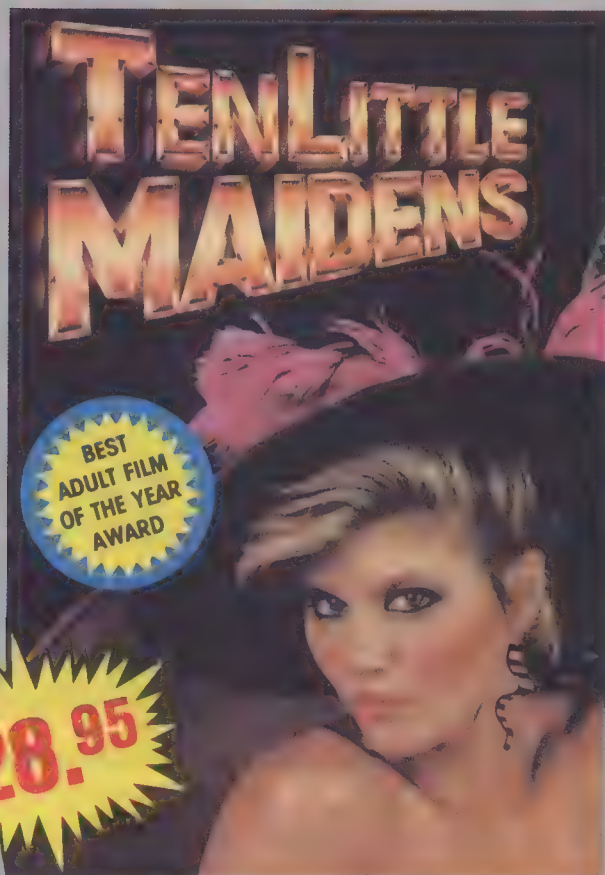
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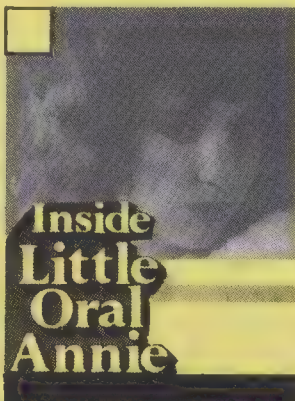
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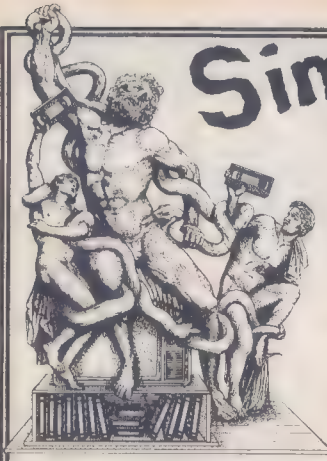
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## Videotests

However, we appreciate that space and isolation limited MultiVision 3.1 offers.

**Conclusion.** The MultiVision 3.1 offers more features than many tuners for component systems. Its digital circuitry brings picture-in-picture capability to all view-screens. On a large screen, the inset can be as big as 13 inches so you can really enjoy two football games at the same time. It lets you upgrade to MTS stereo for less than half the cost of a digital TV. Its performance is excellent/very good. Its \$499 suggested retail price is a steal. We recommend it highly.



### Test Report: MultiVision 3.1 Tuner/Controller

#### DATA

**Date of test:** November 1986

**Suggested retail price:** \$499

**Manufacturer:** MultiVision Products, Inc., 1751 Fox Drive, San Jose, Calif. 95131-2312; phone: 800-922-7477

**Weight:** 8 pounds

**Dimensions:** 3-3/4 x 17 x 10-5/8 inches (h x w x d)

**Power requirements:** 117 VAC, 60 Hz  
**Power consumption:** 35 W, approx., 50 W, max.

**Type of tuning:** quartz synthesis with automatic fine tuning

**Method of tuning:** on remote only, direct access and programmable scan

**Broadcast tuning range:** 2 to 82

**Cable tuning range:** 2 to 13, A to I, J to W, AA to ZZ, AAA to CCC, 4+, 5+, 6+, A-5 to A-1 with normal or HRC channel spacing

**Remote control:** IR wireless

**Video/Stereo audio inputs:** 2

**Video/Stereo audio output:** 1

**Video/Stereo audio tuner output:** yes

**Headphone jack:** no

**External speaker connectors:** spring loaded type for bare wire—8 ohm speakers recommended

**Internal audio amplifier power:** 2-1/2 watts per channel into 8 ohms with less than 1 percent THD

**Accessories:** remote control

#### RESULTS & RATINGS

**Picture sharpness:** 340 lines, RF input; 400+ lines, video line in

**Snowiness (S/N, luminance):** 53 dB, unweighted, RF; 56 dB, unweighted, line

**Chroma AM S/N:** 52.1 dB

**Chroma PM S/N:** 47.6 dB

**Overall picture quality:** excellent

**Audio frequency response, -3 dB:**

55-12,000 Hz, RF; 20-20,000 Hz, line in and amplifier

**Audio S/N:** 54 dB, RF; 85+ dB, line in; 72 dB, amplifier

**Stereo separation:** 39 dB, RF, 80+ dB, line; 72 dB, amplifier

**Total harmonic distortion:** 1%, RF; 0.04%, line; 0.8%, amplifier

**Overall audio performance:** very good, RF; excellent, line; very good, amplifier

**Ease of operation:** very good/excellent

**Overall performance:** excellent



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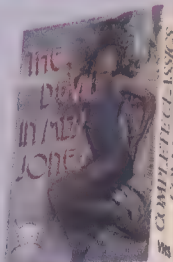
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## TAPE TEST GLOSSARY

continued from page 44

face—like a wheel going over a rock. In either case the head loses contact. Dropouts caused by debris disappear as the "rocks" are pulverized or knocked out of the roadway, so the dropout count for a tape normally falls for the first 10 to 20 passes. Dropouts caused by "potholes" may fill with debris, but they eventually enlarge as the tape is

used. We classify dropouts in microseconds, which measure the length of the missing information. If they are over 15 microseconds (about a quarter the width of one line of screen image), they are considered large; between 10 and 15 microseconds, medium; and between 5 and 10 microseconds, small. All VCRs have dropout-compensation circuits that minimize their effect, but when dropouts appear, you see annoying white or black streaks of noise in the picture.

**Output loss at 2 megahertz:** a measure of picture detail reproduction. High frequency signals carry detail information, but high frequency signals lose strength in the recording process partly because of both the recording system and the tape. Measuring 2 MHz output shows how much the tape contributes to this loss of detail.

**Track Balance:** a rough gauge of how close the tape is to its correct width and to the evenness of the magnetic properties along its upper edge. The left channel of the linear audio track is recorded at the top. If the signal level varies from the right track when both channels are fed the same signal, the discrepancy indicates an inaccuracy when the tape was slit.

**Video S/N:** Signal-to-noise ratio, a measure of the proportion of noise in the video signal. It shows up as graininess or snowiness, and is one of the most annoying deficiencies in a video signal. If you're recording on the Hi-Fi track, it is a reasonable indicator of a tape's contribution to noise in Hi-Fi audio. Measured in decibels.

**On the data:** The numerical data in the chart reflects the unit in which that characteristic is normally measured—in decibels for the various S/N ratios, in hertz for the audio frequency response, and in actual counts for dropouts. Since the consistency, or dispersion, figure uses decibel measurements, that figure, too, is in decibels.

**On procedures:** The figures for consistency, the dropout count, audio S/N and audio frequency response were taken directly from the measuring instruments. However, our video S/N, chroma AM S/N, and chroma PM S/N figures were matched for accuracy with TDK's *Reference Videocassette, Revision 335*, the standard reference tape used by TDK in its manufacturing. The tape is based on JVC's VHS format standard. Our figures were calculated using the TDK standard as the zero point for these measurements and the dispersion figure. We believe this is the first independent tape test based on a standard directly traceable to the original format specification.

**On tape balance:** The ideal tape should be perfectly balanced, a quality that should appear as a perfect hexagon on our graphs. The closer a test pattern is to a hexagon, the closer the tape is to being an all-around strong performer.

**On licensed tape:** Tapes from licensed manufacturers carry the format logo exactly as it looks on your VCR and in the instruction manual. Unlicensed tape may or may not meet the format's specifications and may damage your machine.

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## HOW TO USE CHART

continued from page 45

In the real world of video stores, manufacturers' suggested prices mean next to nothing and actual selling prices vary enormously. You should check the prices in your area—through advertisements and the like—and add that information yourself.

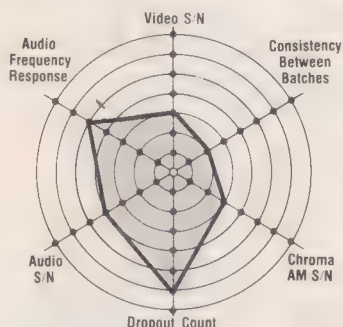
If you're willing to spend a little time filling in the blanks, you'll be able to find the tapes that best suit your needs. There's a universe of tapes out there suitable for every conceivable kind of consumer use. But only you know the characteristics that will give you the kind of picture you like best. —LB

continued from page 70

## GOLDSTAR

T-120

Goldstar is one of the few new manufacturers that coats its own tape and one of the first Korean firms to sell tape here. The tape may be weak in consistency, and just fair on video and chroma S/Ns, but a very good dropout count, good audio frequency response, and average audio S/N make this basic grade a near-average competitor.



## ROMANCE VIDEOS

continued from page 74

least three major firms are currently hitting the home video market with good old fashioned romances.

## LOVE IS THE DRUG

First up was Prism's *Romance Theatre*, originally created in 1982 for syndication and aired sporadically before being released to the VCR public. At \$11.95 for a roughly 90-minute movie, the price is cheap, but so are the production values. Louis Jourdan slickly introduces each of the

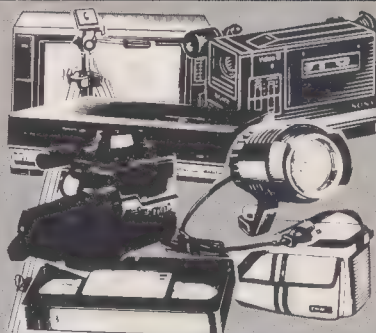
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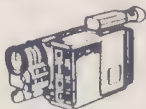
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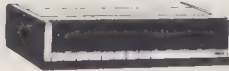
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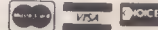
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tales with an Alistair Cooke-like demeanor, but illusions of otherworldliness quickly dissolve as the stories are played out against tawdry sets. Even daytime soap operas provide more dimensionality in their backdrops. With casts largely made up of unknowns, the performance level varies widely, though a recognizable name is no guarantee of ability. *For Love of Angela*, a Cinderella story with a down-to-earth newcomer, was actually less jarring than *Bayou Romance*, starring Annie Potts.

More interesting from Prism is the Granada Video series, *All for Love*, a 1982 production first broadcast in Britain. Five of the programs were aired on PBS during 1985. Although the definition of love here extends past romance, as in a mother's love for her child, many of the programs do examine romance, and in a rewarding, contemporary fashion. With typical low-key, classy British style, *All for Love* touches upon the brief love of a widower for a married woman he meets at a health club, gay relationships, and a wartime romance between enemies. Performances by such acclaimed theatrical actors as Maggie Smith, Jean Simmons, and Alec McCowen in leading roles are inspired.

Recognizing the voracious appetite of millions of readers for Harlequin romances and their many imitators, both Harlequin and Karl-Lorimar are putting big money into producing original romances, specifically tailored to home viewing. In October, Showtime cable launched *Love with a Perfect Stranger*, the first of an ongoing series based on already published Harlequin books. Paramount will release the tapes. Filmed on generous budgets in such attractive locations as Italy, France, and the Scottish Highlands, the movies star such well-known actresses as Mirlu Henner and Kathleen Beller.

Pamela Wallace, who wrote the novel *Love with a Perfect Stranger* for Harlequin, was surprised when the producers re-wrote her girl-keeps-career-and-guy ending to have the girl abandon her career for the man, but says she understands why it was done. "I think they felt that what a primarily female audience would want from this film would be a very traditional story. They wouldn't want any hint of politics in terms of feminism. What you have is Cinderella—she gets the prince, and she doesn't have to sweep out the hearth anymore."

Interestingly, when the 37-year-old writer invited a dozen successful working women to view the movie, "All of them said, 'I would have made the same choice she made, if I had to make the choice.' I think that indicates how deep-seated our desire for fantasy is," she observes.


## SHADES OF LOVE

Perhaps the most ambitious project betting on a return to romance is *Shades of Love*, produced jointly by several Canadian and American companies for release by

Karl-Lorimar. Between October and December of last year, the first eight of what is hoped will be 32 annual 75-minute feature films were shot in Quebec, each on a budget of approximately \$1 million. Aside from the sheer money volume such a project represents, these films are just part of a massive merchandising plan for a multi-media blitz. Executive Producer Ken Atchity, a California professor of romance literature, journalist, and dyed-in-the-wool student of romance, has conceived the enterprise to include novelizations of the original story ideas and even a soundtrack

album of songs used in each film.

Atchity first solicited stories from top romance writers, then hired professional scriptwriters to draft each screenplay. In order to heighten female audience identification with the heroines—the films are done from the woman's point of view—newcomers were cast in the female roles, while recognizable TV stars—Dack Rambo, Parker Stevenson, Simon McCorkindale—were secured for the leading men's parts. Tied up neatly with a \$14.95 price tag, packaging color-coded to the differing "shades of love" in the title of



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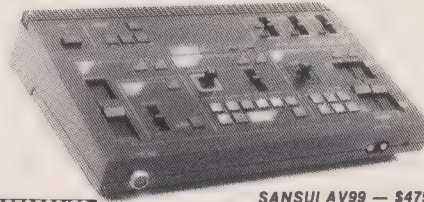
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each movie, the product is set to be sold not only in video outlets but in grocery stores and in the romance section of bookstores. Atchity anticipates major success.

"People have tried to transfer romance novels to the visual medium before but haven't succeeded for two major reasons, which this project has overcome. One is that the method which would allow romance videos to be distributed like romance novels—that is, mass distribution—wasn't available. Now it is, through videocassettes. The other is that Karl-Lorimar had the vision to make these sell-

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The wild riverfront country of Cap St. Jacques, 45 minutes northwest of Montreal, offered an authentically romantic setting for *Lilac Dreams*, even if the notoriously fierce Quebec weather wasn't always cooperative. During the two-week shoot, working up to 18 hours a day, the hardy Anglo-French crew valiantly postponed

## ROMANCE VIDEOGRAPHY

### All For Love

1982. 10 titles in series. Maggie Smith, Ian Carmichael, Jean Simmons, others. 60m. ea. VHS only. Prism.

### Casablanca

1943. B&W. Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, Claude Rains, Peter Lorre; dir. Michael Curtiz. 102m. CBS/Fox.

### Falling in Love

1984. Robert De Niro, Meryl Steep; dir. Ulu Grosbard. 106m. (PG-13) St cc. Paramount.

### The French Lieutenant's Woman

1981. Meryl Streep, Jeremy Irons, Leo McKern; dir. Karel Reisz. 127m. (R) CBS/Fox.

### Gone with the Wind

1939. Clark Gable, Vivien Leigh, Olivia De Havilland, Leslie Howard; dir. Victor Fleming. 220m. 2 cas. (G) cc. MGM/UA.

### It Happened One Night

1934. B&W. Clark Gable, Claudette Colbert; dir. Frank Capra. 105m. cc. RCA/Columbia.

### Love Story

1970. Ali MacGraw, Ryan O'Neal; dir. Arthur Hiller. 100m. (PG) cc. Paramount.

### Modern Romance

1980. Albert Brooks, Kathryn Harrold, George Kennedy; wr./dir. Brooks. 100m. (R) RCA/Columbia.

### Romance Theatre

Various dates, numerous titles in series; all hosted by Louis Jourdan. Approx. 90m. ea. VHS only. Prism.

### Romancing the Stone

1984. Kathleen Turner, Michael Douglas, Danny DeVito; dir. Douglas. 106m. (PG) cc. CBS/Fox.

### Romantic Hero Video Calendar

1986. Nar. Tracy N. Smith; dir. Philip Marc Tarley; wr. Serita Stevens. 71m. Romance Video Limited.

### Romeo and Juliet

1968. Olivia Hussey, Leonard Whiting, Michael York; dir. Franco Zeffirelli. 138m. (PG) Paramount.

### Same Time, Next Year

1978. Alan Alda, Ellen Burstyn; dir. Robert Mulligan. 119m. (PG) MCA.

### Shades of Love

1986. Various titles in series. Dack Rambo, Parker Stevenson, Ed Marinaro, others. 80m. ea. Karl.

### The Way We Were

1973. Barbra Streisand, Robert Redford, Bradford Dillman, Viveca Lindfors; dir. Sydney Pollack. 118m. (PG) RCA/Columbia.

### West Side Story

1951. Natalie Wood, Richard Beymer, Rita Moreno; dir. Jerome Robbins, Robert Wise. 151m. CBS/Fox.

### Witness

1985. Harrison Ford, Kelly McGillis; dir. Peter Weir. 112m. (R) St cc. Paramount.

### Wuthering Heights

1939. B&W. Laurence Olivier, Merle Oberon, David Niven; dir. William Wyler. 104m. Embassy.

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dinner breaks to get scenes just right, knowing that they wouldn't have time for retakes. For Dack Rambo, the work was even more demanding than he recalled from his years on daytime soaps. But despite the 4 a.m. closing time, he maintained his commitment to a quality product.

"You don't make the story realistic," said Ken Atchity, as he ate a quick dinner in the fireplace-heated castle that served as a mess. "You go for the dream. You go for the impossible thing happening. We don't want it to be a compromise—we want the real thing to happen."

And unexpectedly, the real thing, more realistic but still romantic, is making some tentative forays back to the cinema. The time-spanning relationship between Kathleen Turner and Nicholas Cage in *Peggy Sue Got Married* exhibits those hesitant steps toward trust and acceptance of faults that may end up as love. Author Pamela Wallace, whose *Witness* is itself a powerful romantic drama, believes that *Children of a Lesser God*, starring true-life lovers William Hurt and Marlee Matlin, "is the quintessential romance of men and women in the 1980s. It is all about communication and each person being independent and fulfilling themselves, and yet being in love and making a relationship work. It's just wonderful."

Romance may not be plucked as easy as a Valentine's Day card from a shelf. Even in, our world it demands discovery by those willing to work for it. And as generations of lovers would testify, it's more than worth the effort.

## CARY GRANT

continued from page 77

and *Old Lace* has been dismissed by many critics for its abundant slapstick and hammy acting, especially Grant's. Although admittedly a broad farce, in many ways it offers video viewers a chance to see all the physical mannerisms so typical of Grant's special brand of humor: the look of distraction, pop eyes, whinny of exasperation, arched eyebrow, bewildered look, and cocked head, all silently communicating his reaction to outrageous situations.

## CHAPTER TWO

With the arrival of World War II, screwball comedies became passe, and Grant had to find a new film niche. He had made several attempts to play against type, swashing a buckle in fine style with Douglas Fairbanks Jr. and Victor McLaglen in *Gunga Din*, but looking woefully out of place in the revolutionary America of *The Howards of Virginia*. He did a commendable job in a war film, *Destination Tokyo*, but sleepwalked his way through the highly fictional Cole Porter biography, *Night and Day*. But perhaps no film hit closer to home

than 1944's *None but the Lonely Heart*.

The story of Ernie Mott, a petty drifter living in London's pre-WWII slums, showed a serious and dark side of Grant and won him a second Academy Award nomination. (His first, for the soap *Penny Serenade* in 1941, was lost to Gary Cooper. This time he lost to Bing Crosby. Grant finally got his Oscar, albeit a special one, in 1970 "for his unique mastery of the art of screen acting.") *None but the Lonely Heart* should prove eye-opening to anyone who thinks Grant was only good in comedies.

## THE HITCHCOCK ERA

Alfred Hitchcock was able to spot the dark side of Grant's persona. "I couldn't admire Hitchcock more," Grant said of the director who guided another memorable phase of his film career. "He was a most relaxed, intelligent man."

The two first worked together in *Suspicion* (1941). Grant played Johnnie, a charming but scheming newlywed whose wife (Joan Fontaine) suspects he is out to murder her. Hitchcock originally had Johnnie poisoning his wife, but the studios would not have America's number one romantic star commit murder. RKO edited out everything hinting that Grant's character was a killer and ended up with an extremely short film. They reluctantly allowed Hitchcock to re-edit, but insisted on a happy ending.

In *Notorious* (1946), Grant's second film for Hitchcock, Grant and Ingrid Bergman went looking for uranium in Claude Rains' wine cellar and gave audiences an exciting spy drama and a sizzling kiss that sorely taxed the American Film Production Code's three-second limit.

In 1954, after a two-year retirement, Grant was persuaded to return to the screen by Hitch, who used *To Catch a Thief* and the chance to work with Grace Kelly as the bait. "Grace Kelly was an extraordinary woman. She had a razor-keen mind. She was one of the best actresses I ever worked with—so utterly relaxed. I've never known such ease." And in their scenes together, it showed.

Grant's final film with Hitchcock was *North by Northwest* (1959), which involved the risky and dangerous scene where a cropdusting airplane attempts to mow Grant down in an Indiana corn field. With the plane swiftly closing in from behind, Grant ran towards camera, crew, and Hitchcock, who were only a few steps ahead of him. Grant recalled filming the scene. "If the plane were to get me," he mused, "I knew it would also blow Hitch to smithereens, so I wasn't that concerned."

Grant did a few more serious movies like the six-handerchief *An Affair to Remember* and the dull *Pride and the Passion* (during which, Sophia Loren claims in her autobiography, Grant fell madly in love with her.) But with the exception of Hitchcock's

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films, it would always be Cary Grant's comedies that drew the audiences.

His performances in such funny classics as *The Bachelor and the Bobbysoxer*, *I Was a Male War Bride*, *Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House*, *Monkey Business* (with Marilyn Monroe), the Christmas perennial *The Bishop's Wife*, and *Father Goose* still evoke laughter from modern viewers. The impeccably tailored Grant surprisingly admitted of his role in *Father Goose*, "He's closest to the real me. Jeans, stubble, a big shirt—I'm that sort of character."

## THE SILVER FOX

Grant's special film magic was being effortlessly funny and sexy at the same time. He offered a beguiling charm and humanizing humor that made him adored by women and envied by men. He was never aggressive in his cinema romances and, in fact, was usually not the pursuer. As critic Pauline Kael has noted, "Cary Grant must be the most publicly seduced male the world has known."

When Grant made *Walk, Don't Run* in 1966 a terrible thing had happened—he didn't get the girl. It would be his last movie. "It was enough," Grant said last year. "I had done it all." But there was a new interest in his life. His short-lived marriage to Dyan Cannon (1965-1966) yielded what Grant called "the best production I had ever made—my daughter."

Through shrewd, independent film deals and good business management, Grant had become quite wealthy. He retired from films and accepted corporate directorships with Faberge and MGM. That left him the time and opportunity to enjoy two of his favorite activities: traveling and spending time with his daughter, Jennifer.

In the last years of his life, he made occasional appearances around the country doing informal lectures under the title "A Conversation with Cary Grant." In fact, at the time of his death, he was preparing for such an evening in Davenport, Iowa.

As one of cinema's inimitable romantic idols, Cary Grant has entered the realm of the legendary. Fortunately, generations to come will have access on video to his unique style and talent. Perhaps they, too, like millions of filmgoers, will learn about the art of love from a true master.

## VIDEOGRAPHY

continued from page 77

### In Name Only

1939. B&W. Carole Lombard, Grant, Kay Francis, Charles Coburn; dir. John Cromwell. 94m. RKO, Blackhawk.

### Indiscreet

1958. Grant, Ingrid Bergman; dir. Stanley Donen. 100m. Republic.

### Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House

1948. B&W. Grant, Myrna Loy, Melvyn Douglas; dir. H.C. Potter. 93m. Nostalgia.



**Mr. Lucky**

1943. B&W. Grant, Laraine Day, Charles Bickford; dir. H.C. Potter. 99m. Nostalgia.

**My Favorite Wife**

1940. B&W. Grant, Irene Dunne, Randolph Scott, Gail Patrick; dir. Garson Kanin. 88m. Nostalgia.

**Night and Day**

1945. Grant, Alexis Smith, Monty Woolley, Eve Arden, Mary Martin; dir. Michael Curtiz. 128m. Key.

**None but the Lonely Heart**

1944. B&W. Grant, Ethel Barrymore, Barry Fitzgerald, Jane Wyatt, Dan Duryea; dir. Clifford Odets. 113m. Nostalgia, King.

**North by Northwest**

1959. Grant, Eva Marie Saint, James Mason, Leo G. Carroll, Martin Landau; dir. Alfred Hitchcock. 136m. B/V/LV. MGM/UA. CED. RCA.

**Notorious**

1946. B&W. Grant, Ingrid Bergman, Claude Rains; dir. Alfred Hitchcock. 101m. CBS/Fox. CED RCA.

**Once Upon a Honeymoon**

1942. B&W. Grant, Ginger Rogers, Walter Slezak; dir. Leo McCarey. 115m. Blackhawk.

**Operation Petticoat**

1959. Grant, Tony Curtis, Dina Merrill; dir. Blake Edwards. 120m. Republic.

**Penny Serenade**

1941. B&W. Grant, Irene Dunne, Beulah Bondi; dir. George Stevens. 120m. Images, Prism, Roach, Kartes, etc.

**The Philadelphia Story**

1940. B&W. Katharine Hepburn, Grant, James Stewart, Ruth Hussey; dir. George Cukor. 112m. MGM/UA.

**The Pride and the Passion**

1957. Grant, Frank Sinatra, Sophia Loren, Theodore Bikel; dir. Stanley Kramer. 132m. CBS/Fox.

**Suspicion**

1941. B&W. Grant, Joan Fontaine, Cedric Hardwicke, Nigel Bruce, Leo G. Carroll; dir. Alfred Hitchcock. 99m. RKO, VidAmerica, Nostalgia.

**That Touch of Mink**

1962. Grant, Doris Day, Gig Young, Audrey Meadows; dir. Delbert Mann. 99m. Republic.

**To Catch a Thief**

1955. Grace Kelly, Grant, Jessie Royce Landis; dir. Alfred Hitchcock. 97m. B/V/LV. Paramount.

**The Toast of New York**

1937. B&W. Edward Arnold, Grant, Frances Farmer, Jack Oakie; dir. Rowland V. Lee. 109m. King.

**Topper**

1937. B&W. Grant, Roland Young, Constance Bennett; dir. Norman Z. McLeod. 97m. Nostalgia, Blackhawk, Roach (colorized).

**NOTE:** All Blackhawk titles are now controlled by Republic Home Video; Nostalgia Merchant titles are available from Fox Hills Video. For abbreviation key and addresses, see "Directory" in programming section.

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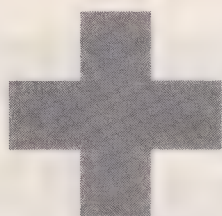
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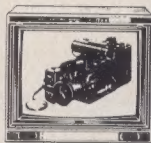
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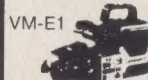
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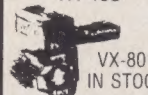
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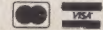
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# Off the Air

## The Last Word

### Born To Shop

By Bob Brewin

Linda Ellerbee, co-host of ABC's *Our World*, watched a home shopping channel for the first time late last year and was fascinated with the underlying social phenomenon it seemed to imply. Her insight about these channels is that they're not about shopping, they're about talking—maybe even about electronic friendship. Ellerbee, who has spent most of her adult life staring out at America through a camera lens, thinks that people who call up the Home Shopping Channel and similar services do so more out of a desire to communicate than to buy the remaindered schlock.

I think she's right. These are the first national networks with a call-in formula. They allow the viewer to have two-way, intimate (yet safe) contact with the TV "friend" that dominates so many American living rooms, bedrooms, and even bathrooms. Viewer response to home shopping services, in Ellerbee's view, ironically emphasizes the damage television has done to our culture. Television watching has, in many homes, replaced all forms of human interaction. Families don't converse except between commercial breaks. Friends are invited over not for an evening of reminiscing or talk about the issues of the day, but to watch a movie on the VCR.

But maybe the people who tune into the home shopping channels have finally realized that just watching is not enough. They want to do more than stare into the all-knowing video eye, but after four decades of TV, Americans have lost the social skills inherent in the most primitive cultures. So when TV finally gives them a

chance to talk back, they leap at it.

Think I'm kidding? Listen to the people who call into the shopping channels. Behind the superficial conversations about products like ceramic dolls, you can hear people whose loneliness, whose desire to connect is palpable. One hour of calls to the Home Shopping Channel has more pathos than a Dickens novel. If people call home shopping channels often enough, maybe they'll be able to make the leap from talking to a person who exists on TV to a real human being sitting next to them.

There will certainly be a lot of shopping channels. Recently even NBC considered adding a shopping segment to its programming schedule, a notion that horrified Eastern greybeards and pundits. Really, though, shopping channels are the most honest approach to commercial television yet. The true purpose of commercial television, as everyone knows, is to sell stuff, and until the home shopping boom, this meant wrapping programs (some good, many very bad) around the commercials. The shopping channels eliminate this programming fluff, leaving us with only the sell.


How refreshing. No expensive soft-focus commercials sucking viewers into buying stuff they neither need nor want. No subtle messages equating drinking a certain kind of beer with the survival of the republic. No romantic vignettes implying that the use of Brand X deodorant will lead to finding the perfect mate. On the home shopping channels, you get pure hard sell—and a chance to talk back to the TV.

Whatever reasons people

have to watch and buy from shopping channels, it's a booming business that's attracting the attention of big players. Until recently the shopping services were dominated by small retailers and wholesalers unloading "distress" merchandise. But with home shopping expected to bring in \$1 billion in sales this year, even Sears has decided to enter the fray.

While many of the other channels sell on price alone, Sears plans to parlay its reputation for quality merchandise with a channel that will bring in top dollars. The Sears channel, the QVC Network, will drop the frenzied, game show approach used by the competition in favor of segmented "infomercials" that will feature low-key product promotion. Sears will sell some discounted merchandise, but will emphasize quality and full-priced products that have not yet appeared in its catalogue.

Trans World Airlines' shopping network, the Travel Channel, shows that services as well as goods can be sold via the tube. The Travel Channel is the most programming-oriented of the shopping services, stitching pitches for vacations into artful travelogues. And the Travel Channel isn't just a TWA propaganda outlet—it's as happy to sell an Amtrak ticket to Whitefish, Montana as a two-week escorted tour of Europe. TWA also sells foreign and travel-oriented merchandise: for example, the channel plans to sell German Black Forest clocks because there aren't any other TV outlets that deal in them.

These guys are right. Not once has Dan Rather ever tried to sell me a clock, Black Forest or otherwise. 



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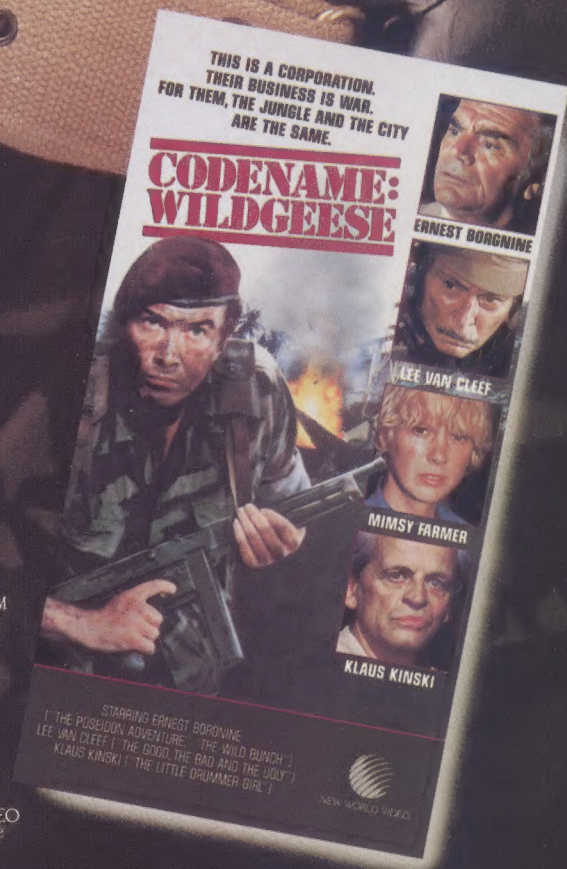
AND **KLAUS KINSKI** AS CHARITON

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