



## Editor's Corner

Dear Editor:

As you may have heard a number of manufacturers have dropped white leader tape from their magnetic tape accessory line. No doubt it was just a coincidence that Ampex and Audio Devices are now out of the running as far as white leader tape is concerned. I used to buy only Audio Devices white leader tape. I did so because:

1. It appeared to be one of the thickest leader tapes on the market;
2. It had printed on it alternating red and black timing marks every  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches. This permitted us to direct our students to splice in specific amounts of white banding between exercises.
3. The white coding was very opaque and worked well on tape recorders that used photo cells for captive tape operation. By that, I mean that because the white leader was so opaque, the photo cell could be adjusted in sensitivity so that it would pass white leader tape and yet stop automatically on clear leader tape. This is an important consideration when you are playing out tapes that have many bands of white leader dividing the exercises.

I have only found two current vendors for white leader tape. They are 3M Scotch and CBS Soundcraft. Each of these are unsatisfactory. The 3M product is so thin and the white coding is so light that photo cells cannot be adjusted to distinguish between white and clear leader. CBS Soundcraft's product is slightly heavier but it comes plain white without any timing marks every  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Since banded tapes must have a fixed length consistently from reel to reel, this means that we must have someone measure and mark every 1200-foot reel into segments commonly used by us (such as 10-foot segments, 20-foot segments, etc.). The time and cost on this process is astronomical.

Obviously, I am very sorry to see that Audio Devices, who produced the best product, is the one who stopped selling it. It occurred

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to me that there must be many other lab directors who are having the same problem. Therefore, I think it would be a legitimate use of the NALLD Journal to try to collect and direct various lab directors' sentiments on this problem to a place that will do some good. Specifically I have found out that a Mr. Preston, Project Manager for Audio Devices, was the person who made the decision to drop white leader from their line. I talked to this gentleman personally on the phone, and he said that the decision was definite but not irreversible and that if enough people expressed interest in this particular item, they might market it again.

I would like to suggest that we advise lab directors of this situation through our NALLD Journal and that we urge them to personally write or phone Mr. Preston to express their views to him. This seems perfectly ethical to me; we can hardly be accused of endorsing a product when that product is no longer manufactured. The person to contact is:

Mr. Preston, Product Manager  
Audio Devices Manufacturing Plant  
Stamford, Connecticut  
His telephone number is: AC 203-324-6761

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,  
T. R. Goldsworthy  
Director of Language Laboratories  
University of Wisconsin

*Articles of Interest:* Several articles of interest appeared in *Stereo Review's Tape Recorder Guide 1973*: "Which Reel-to-Reel Tape Should You Use?" by Scott Waverley; "The Battle of the Tapes" by J. Gordon Holt; "The Great Tape Robbery" by Craig Stark; "How to Select a Reel-to-Reel Tape Recorder" by Julian D. Hirsch; "Better Tapes" by Craig Stark; "Home Video Machines" by Aubrey Harris.

*New Money In New Media:* Professionally challenging. Financially rewarding. That's the promise for educators who enter the field of film production in their spare time. Producing a film-loop takes less time than writing a book, and can bring in far more royalties, according to film producers quoted in a newsletter put out by Technicolor Inc.

Earnings actually depend on how much work an educator does. "The more you do, the more you deserve. A finished film commands a larger slice of the pie than an idea-and-outline only," states the *Image 8* article.

In any event, producing films enables an educator to contribute new material to the school curriculum in a "fresh stimulating way." The newsletter offers lots of advice on preparing and submitting film ideas and lists two dozen producers interested in educators' efforts.

You can order single, complementary copies of this issue of *Image* from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Media and Technology, Stanford University, Stanford, California 94305. You can subscribe to the quarterly publication by writing Technicolor's Commercial and Educational Division, 299 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa, California 92627.

*Audio Cassette Buyer's Guide:* An excellent buyer's guide for cassettes has been published by the T. D. K. Electronics Company in Long Island City, New York, and is available on request.

*Audio Cassette Duplicators — The Speed Barrier:* Duplicating speeds are still relatively slow, averaging about two minutes for a C-60 cassette (30 minute program per side). The speed limitation is due to the physical construction of the cassette, allowing a safe duplicating speed of only 30 inches per second.

Ampex Company, of Redwood City, California, has broken the "duplicating speed barrier" by using a vacuum to literally suck the tape away from the cassette's non-precision parts and hold it in close contact with the recording head of the duplicator. A stacking chute holds up to 100 cassettes for automatic copying of the master tape. The Ampex vacuum system permits a duplicating speed of 75 inches per second — permitting 350 C-60 cassettes to be run in an eight-hour day. An interesting feature of the Ampex equipment is a sensing mechanism which automatically rejects cassettes which have any mechanical or tape defect — ejecting them through a slot in the front of the machine.



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