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Hyperion MKII ES Moving Iron Phono Cartridge

rev 9

Owner's Manual and Technical Description

Mounting Instructions

The Hyperion has the ability to accept long mounting screws into its body due to the unique design. You do not need to use screws of an exact required length. They should not bind, or cross thread. If you encounter initial difficulty inserting screws that you supply, or any other screw, stop **immediately** and make sure the screws are the proper 2.5mm metric thread, or that you have not started them in at the wrong angle. The screws that we supply to hold the cartridge in its box are a very high grade non-magnetic stainless 304 material type. Please note the three white ALUMINA pieces supplied. You may use them as needed, and as described in the ES Owner's Manual Addendum file, also on the USB Key. **They can allow ELECTRICAL ISOLATION for HUM issues, as well as azimuth adjustment for arms that do not.**

Electrical Loading

The Hyperion is designed to be used with a Moving Coil Preamp at about 58 - 65dB of gain. Regarding the critical resistive load for the Hyperion, please look at the bottom of the wooden box for marking. The current production versions require a minimum load of 470 Ohms. Many people find this loading correct, but loading up to 1000 Ohms will brighten the top end, but only if needed for a system that is missing the top end.

Best loading is usually achieved between 470 Ohms and 1000 Ohms.

Bear in mind there is no harm in using more than 1000 Ohms, but you may experience a very peaked high end. Conversely, loading BELOW 470 Ohms WILL result in rolling off the high end, depending on how low you go. Although this loading value is often done to taste, loading much below the stated 470 Ohms WILL result in a marked loss of high frequencies, and top end presentation of the cartridge – it WILL sound dull if you go too low.

Capacitive loading may have some effect, but will be minimal. Loading requirements will be determined by your system, and your personal listening preferences.

PLEASE NOTE AGAIN that loading **well below** 470 Ohms for the 470 Ohm model will absolutely result in loss of some high frequencies and sonic performance.

Please also note; although not common, some designs of “current amplifier” phono preamp circuits will not allow loading in the range required, causing the Hyperion to sound very dull – basically caused by improper loading, resulting in SEVERE loss of high frequencies.

Unlike other low output cartridges, the Hyperion is a six sided fully shielded cartridge, and being such, is one of the world’s most hum-free and RF free cartridges. When properly used with shielded cable from your tone-arm, there should be absolutely no hum whatsoever.

Tracking Force

The Hyperion is designed to operate between 1.9 grams and 2.1 grams. Optimal force is usually 2.0 grams. Higher VTF may be used, but will result in the cartridge eventually “bottoming” on the record. The cartridge is designed such that no damage will occur to the record or cartridge when that happens. For best results, ALWAYS note the suggested VTF hand written on the bottom of each Hyperion box and stay within a reasonable value around that.

Hookup

Normal color codes are used for hookup: as viewed from the rear of the cartridge in the normal position, RED is top right, White is top left. Grounds are below them, green on the right, blue on the left.

Questions, questions, questions....

“Does the Hyperion require special stylus cleaning??

The answer is YES.

CLEANING:

The OCL stylus can collect debris, a bit more easily than other stylus designs. It is therefore highly advisable to dry clean each time before playing, as described below.

How do I clean the stylus?? Do I use a wet cleaner each time, or often?NO!!!

A DRY soft brush is somewhere between fair and “OK”, **but it is far better is to use some “Blue Stik”** – this is the blue clay-like stuff you get in the hardware store stationery department that is used to stick papers and light things to the wall without damaging the

wall surface. Use it just before or after every play. Squash a small ball flat onto a heavy coin – such as a quarter. Then place THAT coin on the platter. Then cue DOWN and up on the Blue-Stik several times. Be VERY care full not to DRAG the coin or turn the platter when the stylus is down on the Blue-Stik or you risk damaging the stylus or cartridge.

Do this several times, each time slightly moving the Blue Stik to a new spot when the stylus is raised, so that when it comes down it hits a new spot.

Using this method every record should eliminate the need to wet clean ever, BUT if this doesn't cure a distortion problem due to debris build up, THEN either use the supplied brush and some RUBBING alcohol (minimum 70% - NO COLORING OR FRAGRANCE) and gently stroke the stylus back to front only. Only wet clean when the dry clean doesn't work.

DO NOT WET CLEAN OFTEN - TO DO SO WILL POTENTIALLY CAUSE SEVERE DAMAGE TO THE STYLUS MOUNTING AND CAUSE THE DIAMOND TO COME OFF. USE THE ABOVE BLUE-STIK METHOD.

If you don't have a good VERY SOFT brush, purchase a WATERCOLOR brush with non-synthetic fibers, one that has bristles that are about 1/8" in cross section. CUT the bristles straight across with a small scissors, making them about 1/8" long. Break or cut off the wood handle so the brush is VERY SHORT, and has very little wood handle. This will minimize accidents and reduce jitter when handling and using.

RECORD CLEANING:

DO NOT TALK towards your records. They are neither listening, not do they need a talking to. You need to listen to them. The reason is this: when you talk, you spit. Yes, even you. Fine drops. You cannot see them because the record is textured with grooves. When the stylus hits the dried spit, this GLUE then sticks to all the dirt and dust in the grooves. It only takes a few revolutions for this to happen, and so much debris can build up on the stylus, **you will have worse than distortion** – The stylus may not even track the record...as below.....



< BEFORE AFTER >>



How long will my Hyperion last?

All diamond styli last approximately 1000 hours when aligned and used correctly. Soundsmith can re-tip your Hyperion when the warranty expires, as the Hyperion is fully warranted against manufacturing defect and stylus WEAR for a period of TEN YEARS to

the original owner. **Unlike many other manufacturers of fine cartridges, you will find that The Soundsmith is very interested in protecting your investment over the long term. If the Hyperion suffers a non-warranty failure due to severe mishandling, it can be fully rebuilt at this time for \$850 maximum charge.**

In order that the ten year warranty for stylus wear out (NOT damage) to the ORIGINAL OWNER ONLY can be honored, please fill out the warranty form at the end of this manual, and return it to us.

Adjustments

One of the advantages of the Hyperion is its ability to provide perform extremely well with critical alignment, so we strongly advise you do attempt to do so, just as you would balance the tires on your car before expecting performance from them. It is strongly advisable therefore, to perform cartridge alignments to the best of your ability. One must therefore align an advanced stylus design carefully and correctly to enjoy its benefits. While some expensive cartridge designs employ lower cost, less aggressive styli shapes and therefore enjoy the benefit of ease of alignment, they can also suffer at times from less than optimal performance. We made the decision to use one of the best stylus shapes available, to allow those who demand the best performance possible to realize such if careful alignment and record care are employed.

Azimuth

We have included a few pages on cartridge alignment with your Hyperion MK II ES, which you are strongly encouraged to read and follow. Although the Hyperion MK II ES will perform satisfactorily without critical alignment, we strongly advise you do attempt to do so, just as you would balance the tires on your car before expecting the best performance from them. It is strongly advisable therefore, to perform cartridge alignments to the best of your ability. One must therefore align an advanced stylus design carefully and correctly to enjoy its benefits. While some expensive cartridge designs employ lower cost, less aggressive styli shapes and therefore enjoy the benefit of ease of alignment, they can also suffer at times from less than optimal performance. We made the decision to use one of the best stylus shapes available, to allow those who demand the best performance possible to realize such if careful alignment and record care are employed. The new ES allows azimuth alignment even with tone arms that do not allow such. Please see the ES owner's manual for this important information.

Stylus Rake Angle – (or VTA)

Normal SRA is achieved when the cartridge, as viewed from the side, should have the top FLAT of the body (headshell) and tone arm parallel with the surface of the record. Adjustment up or down from that point will affect the high frequency performance and channel separation. The stylus SHAFT appears to be raked forward about 20 degrees – this is NORMAL > the tracing edges are hard to see and ARE at the proper 2degree angle when the top of the cartridge is parallel with the record.

Some thoughts about the Hyperion

What happens to the energy that is “Stored”?? The energy that goes up the cantilever moves the generating element. If that element can be made small enough, good things happen in cartridge designs. We have done that - but what happens to the energy that goes into the cartridge body?? The Hyperion employs a very unique “Energy Distribution System” to insure that the energy gets into the cartridge body properly, and into the waiting tone arm to be damped. It is one of the features of the Hyperion, and one of the major contributing design efforts towards perfection.

But there is always some energy that is “stored” in the moving mass of the internal generating element, due to inertia. We have lowered the moving mass to a very large degree which is achievable in a moving iron design such as those Soundsmith manufactures. The Hyperion employs our most advanced design in the effort to reduce moving mass, which results in less stored energy – less inertia. Less stored energy means that less damping can be used, resulting in a more accurate cartridge.

A major step forward in cartridge design has been also been realized with the Hyperion in using a specially treated and hand prepared cactus “thorn” for the cantilever material which holds the diamond stylus. This allows - for the first time in cartridge design - a cantilever structure that is both rigid and damped along its length, resulting in superlative transient performance and a resultant listening experience unlike that of any other magnetic cartridge made. The cactus cantilever does most of its magic by serving as a mechanical “filter”; turning ultra- high frequency energy into heat as it travels up the cantilever so that it is not stored in the moving mass, as during the return of resonant frequencies, when they attempt to come back down the cantilever into the stylus. The end result is exceptional groove tracing, unlike that of any other cartridge.

Moving mass

Magnetic cartridges have three elements necessary to generate a voltage; a magnet, coil assemblies, and an “iron” or ferrous component of some shape. The performance of any magnetic cartridge is largely dependent on how little “moving mass” it has; this is both the mass of the stylus at the end of the cantilever, as well as the total mass of the voltage generating parts that the stylus must move. While there are some advantages to specific designs, both moving magnet and moving coil cartridges are at a distinct disadvantage in regard to moving mass as they are required to move either a relatively large magnet, or a “coil assembly”. The coil assembly in reality is a series of wire windings often on a metal core, more properly labeled as an “armature”.

In a moving iron design, one has the potential to reduce the moving mass to a very small value by virtue of the having the required two relatively massive elements (coils and magnet) held in fixed position.

It is important to understand that while it is true that all designs have trade-offs, a designer

must arrange the order of trade-offs carefully. Reducing moving mass is at the top of the list for Soundsmith; less inertia in the generating elements means faster starts and faster stops. It also means a much easier job of damping the unwanted “ringing” of the moving system, a system that must make sudden, accurate and controlled directional changes to follow the grooves of a record.

In order to obtain accurate vinyl reproduction, the stylus must remain in near constant contact with the groove walls. The larger the moving mass, the greater the jittering of the stylus, meaning that it is in reality taking “samples” of the groove walls from moment to moment, and averaging or guessing at what is taking place in between those samples. A “digital” sort of rendering, if you will. Lower mass? Less jitter. Less jitter means more time in contact with the groove, which means detail and micro detail. If a cartridge can’t stay in contact with the groove walls, you can’t hear everything that is on the record. In a very real sense, it’s that simple.

The obvious question, “Why doesn’t everyone make cartridges this way, if reducing the moving mass is an absolute requirement for accuracy?” the answer to that is simple as well. It’s very hard to do so. A properly designed Moving Iron cartridge requires an ultra-high level of precision in manufacturing, and potentially low product yield. It is not the best path for profitability, only sonic ability.

Another advantage of this design is the inherent high level of channel separation. Unlike MC cartridges, a rotation of the generating element in The Hyperion (moving iron) due to manufacturing tolerances haws far less effect on the separation performance. Furthermore, unlike moving coil cartridges, our Moving Iron designs CANNOT rotate out of position, maintaining the critical azimuth alignment position you have achieved stable for the duration of the cartridge mounting.

It is our hope that your carefully crafted, hand-made Soundsmith Hyperion cartridge will bring you many years of listening pleasure. The simple fact is, when we sit at a microscope for many days making each one, that is primary in our thoughts.....we hope that each one will bring some joy to the listener.

Peter Ledermann
President



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HYPERION WARRANTY FORM

Your Name _____

Your Address _____

Purchase Date ____/____/____

Your Dealers Name _____

Dealers Address _____

Please provide a copy of your purchase invoice – Proof of Purchase

Serial Number (Found on the bottom of the box, or, by magnification on the bottom of the cartridge, starting with 100.....)

Please go to our website to obtain a REPAIR AUTHORIZATION number –

Our website is www.sound-smith.com

Please go to the section marked “Retipping” and follow the instructions to obtain an RA number. Please include a copy of this form.

Your Signature _____

Today's Date ____/____/____