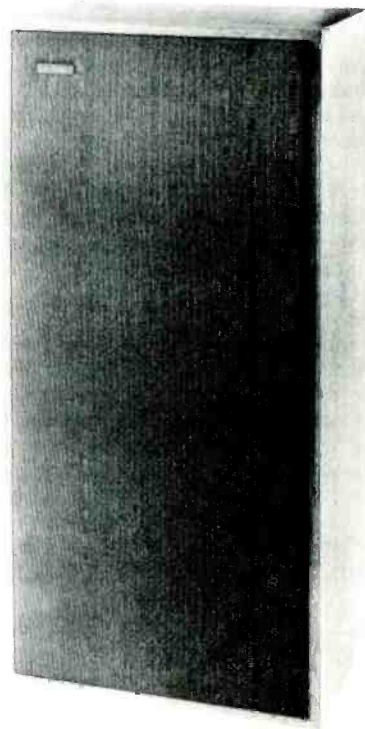


Big-Sounding Speaker from England

The Equipment: Ditton 44, a full-range speaker system in enclosure. Dimensions: 29½ by 14½ by 10 inches. Price: \$252. Manufacturer: Rola Celestion Ltd. of England; U.S. distributor: Hervic Electronics, Inc., 1508 Cotner Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90025.

Comment: The Ditton 44 is one of a series of sealed-box direct-radiator speaker systems made in England and being marketed on an organized basis for the first time in the U.S. Its three drivers (woofer, midrange, and tweeter) together with a frequency-dividing network are housed inside a neatly styled walnut enclosure designed nominally for vertical placement, although the system could certainly be positioned horizontally if decor considerations suggested such placement.

The manufacturer rates the Ditton 44's input impedance as 4 to 8 ohms, which was verified in CBS Labs' tests. The impedance dip at the nominal rating point in the low frequency range came to 3.7 ohms; from here to 20,000 Hz the impedance averaged a shade less than 8 ohms. Efficiency, for a sealed-box system, is moder-

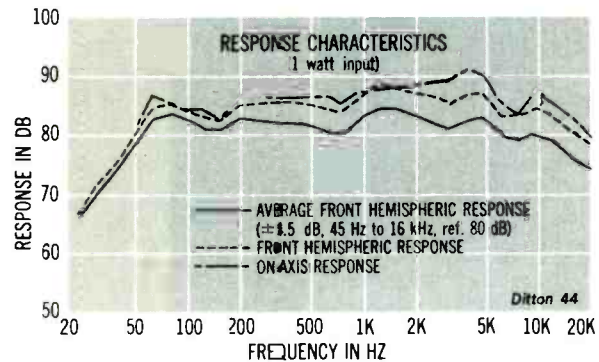


ately high; the system needed 4.5 watts of input power to produce an output level of 94 dB at 1 meter on axis. It could take 100 watts (at 300 Hz on a steady-state basis) to produce an output of 106 dB, and a power pulse of 486.5 watts (973 watts peak) to yield an output of 116 dB. These figures attest to both the Ditton's robustness and to its excellent dynamic range which must be counted as a contributing factor to the sense of realism it is capable of when reproducing music, including the most demanding, heavily-textured works. Another factor is its generally smooth response, which was charted at plus or minus 5 dB from 42.5 Hz to 20,000 Hz (with 79 dB as the median or "zero" reference level). The response curves show a general, but slight, tendency to a strong upper midrange with some directivity, and this was verified in listening tests: White noise response was smooth and well dispersed but with a hint of midrange emphasis; strong treble passages in music (massed strings; upper reaches of the voice) tended to sound somewhat thick on axis, but more dispersed and in balance off axis. At times we wished the system had been equipped with a high-frequency level control to cut back on the highs a little. This criticism (which admittedly is a matter of taste and room acoustics) aside, the Ditton 44 struck us as a well-balanced, full-sounding reproducer, with very good transient characteristics for the highs and an excellent bass response: On test tones the frequencies above 10 kHz remained fairly perceptible off axis. We heard some doubling at about 45 Hz, but it was distinctly less than we've heard on many other systems, and it did not increase as we went down the scale. Even when increasing the intensity of the input signal we could not get the Ditton to double more severely at 25 Hz than at 45 Hz, and we could detect fundamental bass right down to 20 Hz.

We'd say that the Ditton 44 is a speaker that could be used in just about any size room and with virtually any amplifier or receiver. Its upper midrange "forwardness" may be just the kind of sound many listeners these days prefer, and if you like everything else but that about the speaker, you can always tame it with your amplifier tone controls.

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As this issue is being readied for press, Hervic informs us that a conflicting trade-name registration prevents Hervic from using the Ditton name in this country. Hence what Celestion styles the Ditton 44 in England will be known as the Celestion 44 here. This renaming process will apply to all the Celestion "Dittons" imported by Hervic.



Ditton 44 Harmonic Distortion*

Output Level (dB)	Frequency			
	80 Hz		300 Hz	
	% 2nd	% 3rd	% 2nd	% 3rd
70	0.16	0.21	0.18	0.26
75	0.15	0.15	0.18	0.32
80	0.15	0.16	0.18	0.40
85	0.15	0.22	0.18	0.47
90	0.19	0.42	0.21	0.57
95	0.40	0.58	0.36	0.65
100	0.82	0.60	0.78	0.81
105			1.4	0.85
106			1.6	0.90

*Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10 per cent level or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.