



CREEK 3140 FM TUNER

Manufacturer's Specifications

50-dB Quieting Sensitivity: Mono, 14.7 dBf; stereo, 36.1 dBf

Ultimate S/N at 1 kHz (CCIR/ARM): Mono, 74 dB; stereo, 65 dB

THD: 0.25% at 100% modulation, 1 kHz

Muting Threshold: 17.2 dBf

Alternate-Channel Selectivity: 100 dB

AM Rejection: 66.5 dB

Pilot-Tone Rejection: 66 dB at 19 kHz, 100 dB at 38 kHz

Capture Ratio: 1.3 dB

Stereo Separation: 24 dB at 1 kHz, 26 dB at 5 kHz, 27 dB at 10 kHz

Output Level: 2.33 mV for 100% modulation (RCA outputs)

Dimensions: 16½ in. W × 2½ in. H × 6½ in. D (42 cm × 6.4 cm × 16.5 cm)

Weight: 7¼ lbs. (3.3 kg)

Price: \$375

Company Address: c/o Music Hall, 108 Station Rd., Great Neck, N.Y. 11023

For literature, circle No. 95



I don't know who wrote the owner's manual for this FM-only British tuner, but whoever did must have been conforming to an unusual set of specification standards. I couldn't make head or tail of the specs found in the booklet supplied with the 3140; fortunately, the U.S. distributors of this fine-sounding unit from Creek Audio Systems were able to supply the specs listed above.

Having said all that, I must admit that a great deal of thought went into the design of the Creek 3140. As is true of many car stereo tuner circuits, this home component employs a form of automatic stereo "blend" so that, as signals become progressively weaker, the tuner makes a gradual

transition from stereo to mono rather than switching noisily between them.

The tuning indicator, mono/stereo switching, and the blend and muting functions are controlled by signals derived from three reception parameters: S/N, detuning, and overall signal strength. The frequency display is digital, calibrated in 100-kHz increments, but the 3140 does not have frequency-synthesized tuning. Thus, if a signal is not precisely on a standard station frequency (a problem with many cable FM signals), the unit can still be tuned accurately.

Muting is gradual, but still fast enough to make the tuning knob appear to operate like a clickless rotary switch, as the

My measurements for this tuner aren't the best, but that's not the full story. The sound was excellent, and imaging was realistic.

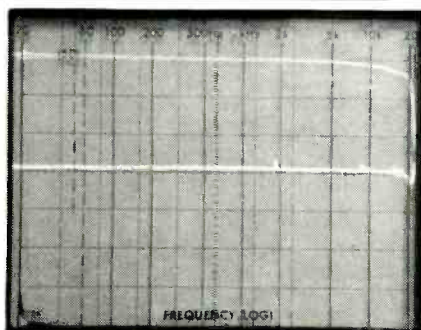


Fig. 5—Frequency response (top trace) and separation vs. frequency. Note how separation is maintained across band; see text.

was similarly constant, but about 5 to 6 dB lower, in narrow mode). Such uniformity of stereo separation is something I have never seen in any tuner before. Most tuners give up a good deal of their separation at the low and high frequency extremes; I suspect that some competitors would like to know how Creek managed to avoid this. Anyone who could

combine this uniformity with a higher separation figure would really have something to patent!

Capture ratio measured 1.2 dB for the wide i.f. mode and 3.0 dB for the narrow mode. Selectivity was 32 dB for the wide setting and 85 dB for the narrow. AM suppression was exactly 50 dB.

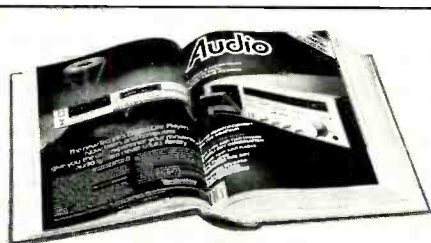
Use and Listening Tests

The understated appearance of the Creek 3140 is in sharp contrast to the emphasis its designers have placed on accurate tuning, accurate frequency response, and adaptability to all sorts of reception environments. Though the lab results fall short of the best I have ever encountered, as I have noted more than once, measurements don't always tell the full story. Separation of 30 dB is enough to provide realistic stereo imaging, and 0.27% distortion in the FM stereo mode is low enough so as not to detract from the otherwise excellent sound of a properly transmitted FM broadcast. What's more, unlike many other imports from the "mother country," this one carries a quite reasonable price tag. I do take exception to one statement made by Creek in the owner's manual: "Our philosophy is to design products with facilities which benefit the user rather than the reviewer. . . ." I say, old chaps! What makes you think we reviewers aren't users—and listeners too? Pip, pip, and cheerio!

Leonard Feldman

Audio

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