

Garrard Model 86SB Turntable

MANUFACTURER'S SPECIFICATIONS

Speeds: 33 and 45 rpm.

Motor: Synchronous type.

Drive: Belt to turntable.

Wow & Flutter: 0.06%.

Rumble: -64 dB.

Dimensions:

17¾ in. W
x 15½ in. D
x 7 in. H
(45.1 x 39.4
x 17.8 cm).

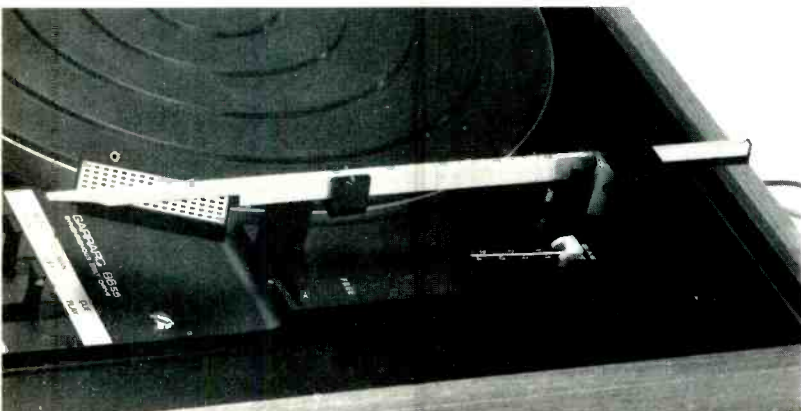
Weight:

25 lbs. (11.34 kg).

Price: \$159.95.



The Garrard Model 86SB is a two-speed automatic turntable costing only \$159.95, complete with base and dustcover. Like the Z-100-SB, it uses a belt drive mechanism with no variable speed. But as far as the basic performance is concerned, differences seem very slight. Styling is typically Garrard with a restrained black and silver finish contrasting with the light teak base. On the left, at the front, is a rotary dial, which controls the arm set-down positions for 7-, 10-, and 12-inch records, with a fourth position that also changes the



speed for 7-inch, 45-rpm records. On the right-hand side are three levers for *Start-Autostop*, *On/Off*, and *Cue*—the last named lever operating a narrow platform which raises or lowers the arm. Behind these controls is the knob which

locks the arm on its rest, and at the base of the arm is the anti-skating device. This last consists of a plastic bar with a sliding weight attached to the arm pivot. It is calibrated for both conical and elliptical styli with tracking weights up to 4 grams. The arm itself is tubular aluminum with an almost triangular cross-section, and the necessary offset is obtained by mounting the cartridge holder at an angle. A threaded counterweight is mounted at the rear, and the tracking force is adjusted by a small weight which can be moved over a portion of the arm in front of the pivot. This section, about 3 ½ inches long, is calibrated from 0-4 grams.

The turntable platter is dynamically balanced and weighs about 5½ pounds. As mentioned earlier, a belt drive is used instead of the idler wheel system generally employed by less expensive turntables. The motor is a standard Garrard Synchro-Lab type used on several other models, and the speed change is effected by a fork which moves the belt drive up or down the dual-dimensioned motor spindle. Adjustment screws are provided for set-down positions as well as arm heights in the automatic and manual modes, and the unit comes complete with a 45-rpm adaptor, a plastic gauge for correct cartridge mounting, and a small bottle of oil to be applied to the turntable bearing. The attractive smoky plastic cover fits into a slot at the back of the base and is held in position by a spring loaded arm. The unit itself is spring mounted to the wooden base which has four small mounting feet.

More Complete Information Dept.

In our May article "Record Cleaners Revisited," a poorly edited paragraph could easily have lead to the inference that the Zerostat gun is the only product which is truly effective in removing static from records. This is untrue, as a re-reading of our March, 1975 article "Do Record Cleaners Really Work?" will show that we found the Nuclear Products' Static Master "was highly effective in removing static charges . . ." and "after treatment . . . there was no measurable charge on the records."

We stand behind those tests of a year ago and commend the Static Master to our readers' attention. We also apologize to our readers, as well as to Nuclear Products, for this unintended misdirection.

Measurements

As the cables supplied were low-capacity types, a CD-4 cartridge was used for the preliminary tests, changing over to a stereo model later. The two selected cartridges were an Audio-technica AT-20 and a Shure V-15 MkIII; neither presented any difficulties in mounting. A standard Garrard cartridge carrier is used, and after mounting the cartridge (using the gauge), it is simply plugged into the arm. The first tests were for wow and flutter, and the combined figure measured was 0.07% using the DIN standard. Rumble came out at -60 dB, also very commendable for a machine in this

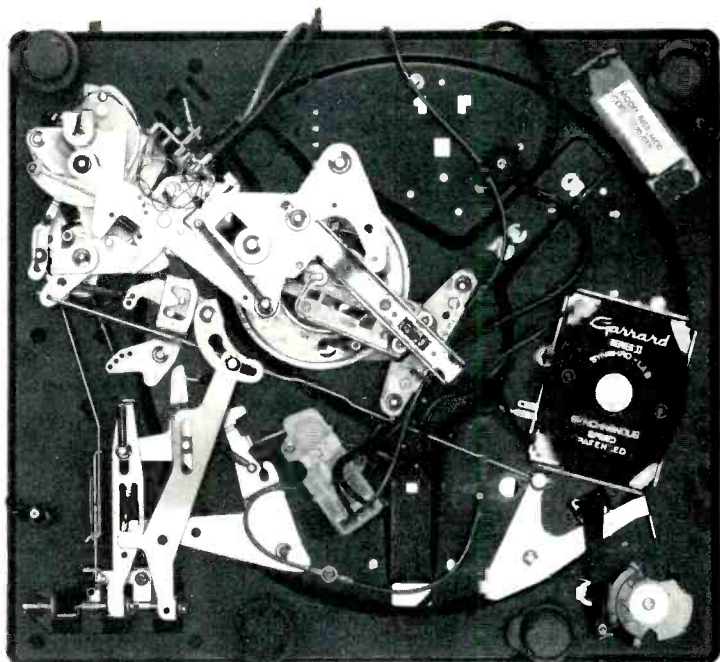
price range. No doubt about it, a well-designed belt drive is hard to beat! Tracking error was within the normal 0.5 degrees per inch, and the lateral arm friction was assessed at 0.1 gram—a bit higher than I would have liked. On the other hand, vertical friction was too low to measure—so was the arm resonance. This is due to the construction of the counterweight which has a flexible insert tending to decouple the mass from the arm and spreading the inherent resonance. Arms having a high-Q resonance will often misbehave on warped records, as well as causing other problems!

The anti-skating dial seems to be calibrated differently than the tracking force dial, since the optimum setting of the anti-skating mechanism was about 0.5 grams when set up for the 1 ½ grams preferred by the Shure cartridge. Calibration of the tracking force "slide rule" was extremely accurate—one advantage of this type of adjustment. The force required to operate the automatic arm return mechanism is quite small and not likely to bother the most fragile and compliant cartridge. Speed accuracy was exceptionally good, being right on the nose at both speeds and not affected by reasonable voltage variations.

Listening Tests

No adjustments were found necessary—either for arm height or correct stylus-landing positions. In the automatic mode, the arm is returned to its rest position at the end of the record, and the motor is then switched off. If the auto control lever is moved to *Start* when a record is playing, the pickup will return to the beginning of the record, and complete manual operation is achieved by simply using the manual starting switch. The cue control is well-damped with a slow downwards movement and a fast retract, and the mechanism is quite positive with no annoying side-play.

The instruction book is written in four languages, but no



mention is made of the low-capacity cables actually supplied, the illustrations showing a DIN-type connection. The supplied leads terminate in standard RCA-type plugs with the grey wire for the left channel and brown to the right. A green wire is provided for the ground connection.

Summing up: The Garrard 86SB offers rather good performance for its modest price and should prove an ideal unit for a budget system where a top-quality phono cartridge is to be used.

George W. Tillet

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