

The 45rpm Phono Gazette

RCA Victor's first portable 45 Player



Model 9EY31

By Phil Vourtsis at 35,000 feet

RCA Victor's first portable 45 player used the rp-168 record changer, a three tube amplifier and a five inch speaker. These units were well built and sounded surprisingly good. One unusual feature was the use of two rca jacks on the amplifier. One for the phonograph and the other was a ground. Since the input was also grounded it is a bit of a mystery why they did this. Perhaps it had something to do with the mute switch. Most of these early machines used 4 inch speakers so it was a plus to have the bigger speaker. The speaker is mounted on a metal grill which comes off the main amplifier, so everything is in one piece when you remove it from the cabinet. Because it is a portable, the arm rest has a little clamping bar which you don't see on the non portable models. This unit must have spent most of its life with the top closed because the top of the changer is absolutely pristine.



Amp and Speaker mounted on metal framework

The 45rpm Phono Gazette

Workbench

Mystery Radio by Phil Vourtsis

Since some of these fine 45 phonographs also come equipped with 'all American 5' radios, I think you would enjoy the story behind this radio. Most American table radios by the 1940s were using a 5 tube compliment to handle superhetrodyne duties. At first the tubes were octals and then migrated to miniature 7 pin tubes in the early 50s. This table radio has a very well kept Bakelite cabinet and a handsome dial near the bottom of the front. However when you look closer there is no identification on the radio anywhere. So I looked at the back of the radio and things started looking peculiar. The antenna was hot-glued to



th

the cabinet (fig 2). Examining the bottom of the cabinet it was evident that extra holes had been drilled and the chassis was mounted in the new holes. So it is becoming pretty obvious that someone went through a great deal of trouble to replace the original radio chassis with a different chassis. I removed the chassis from the radio and was amazed at what I saw next (fig. 3). The original bezel had been replaced with a home-made affair and was glued in place. From the inside it looked very amateurish but from the front of the radio it looks quite



professional. The last home-made touch was an 'L' bracket that had been fashioned to line the speaker up properly in the

cabinet. Well enough about the appearance, lets get to the troubleshooting. The first thing I did was replace all the capacitors in the set. Many times this is all a set needs to get it back in working order but that was not the case here. The volume was quite low even with the volume control turned all the way up. First thing I did was connect a 45 attachment to the volume control of the radio to see if the audio circuit was working properly. It came through loud and clear. Then I checked the voltages supplied by the rectifier and they looked good. Now it was time to check IF stages. At this point I did some unorthodox things and I don't recommend these steps, especially to beginners. I decided to do a quick check of the alignment by listening to the signal going through and tweaking the IF windings for the loudest volume. I have a knack for this but most people don't.

I looked for my aligning tools and could not find them anywhere. In desperation I reached for a metal screw driver (not recommended). Placing the metal shaft of the screw driver in the vicinity of the IF transformer can effect the adjustment. I turned the first set of screw adjustments and found the IF was peaked nicely. But as I started removing the screw driver I accidentally touched it to the metal outside can. A small spark jumped and suddenly the radio started blasting loudly. I lowered the volume and found the set was now working perfectly! I



banged on the IF can to see if it was a temporary fix but it kept playing perfectly. I ran the set all day and have not had a lick of trouble since!

The 45 rpm Phono Gazette is a quarterly publication since 1995.

\$6/\$8 for 4 issues, \$12/\$16 for 9 issues. (USA/Int'l)
Send to Phil Vourtsis, 13 Cornell Place, Manalapan, NJ, 07726
or you can use Paypal (Account is pvourtsis@optonline.net, no credit cards please)