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The National Panasonic RS-755S - A Tape Recorder Masterpiece of 1964

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Some of the exponents in our museum have their own personal separated displays. For example this National Panasonic RS-755S, a remarkable tape recorder crafted in Japan in 1964 by the esteemed Matsushita Corporation.

This portable, self-contained device boasts a quarter-track transistorized stereo system that delivers exceptional sound quality. Encased in a splendid Royalite shell, weighing approximately 25 pounds, it exudes elegance and durability. The package includes two microphones, a complete reel of tape, a spare reel, patch cords, and splicing tape, leaving only one missing element: the enchanting melodies to grace its magnetic tape.

Operating the RS-755S is a breeze, as it relies on a single motor and features a user-friendly interface with just two controls. Engaging with this recorder becomes second nature, and its tape-handling capabilities are unparalleled. Positioned to the left of the head covers, a three-digit counter tracks your recording progress while the pause control looms above it, granting you effortless command over your audio. At the apex, nestled between the reels, sits the speed change lever, requiring both hands to transition into the fast wind or record mode. The normal tape path hovers delicately near the heads, aided by pressure pads that elevate the tape towards the record and erase heads. Akin to a symphony, the same mechanism propels the pressure roller into action. Alas, the tape run-out switch on the right side of the capstan assembly ceases its function during high wind modes, but it remains a small blip in an otherwise seamless experience.

Remarkably, a solitary head suffices for both recording and playback, with the electronics effortlessly adapting to the desired function. Each channel boasts independent volume and tone controls, endowing this recorder with remarkable versatility. The discerning eye will catch the level meters adorning each channel, offering a visual feast as you monitor the recording and playback levels. Power switching lies within the confines of channel one volume control, while speaker switching harmoniously coexists with the tone controls, allowing the speakers to serve as monitors or even cater to public address (P.A.) needs. In the Retro Audio Museum, we experimented with this masterpiece, crafting tapes with the included microphones and a multiplex tuner, and the results proved immensely satisfying.

Beyond its technical prowess, the Panasonic RS-755S holds immense potential as an invaluable companion for students. Its modest size and weight render it a seamless addition to any student's room. Besides offering entertainment, this tape recorder doubles as a tool to enhance their studies. Compact yet comprehensive, it embodies a complete, high-quality audio system.

Let us delve into its impressive capabilities. Rewinding 1200 feet of tape on a seven-inch reel takes a mere one minute and 45 seconds, while fast forward whisks you through the same reel in just two minutes and 15 seconds. Playing back a 7.5 ips NAB tape, channel one renders a captivating soundscape with a 3 dB reduction at 10 kHz, a 4 dB decrease at 250 cycles, and a delightful 4 dB increase at 70 cycles. Meanwhile, channel two enthralls with a 2.5 dB reduction at 10 kHz, a 4 dB dip at 250 cycles, and a gentle 3.8 dB decline at 70 cycles. Surprisingly, channel two experiences a positive 3 dB spike at 10 kHz and a 2.5 dB reduction at 300 cycles. Impressively, wow and flutter, when operating at the 7.5 ips tape speed, is limited to a mere 0.13 percent, whereas at 3.375 ips, it is a meager 0.156 percent. These figures illustrate the exceptional performance of this single-motor marvel. Please do not forget that it was manufactured in 1964.

Retro Audio Museum, Jul 5, 2023 #1

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