

# New stereo modules more computerized

United Press International  
Home stereo equipment for the fall is nearly all electronic and computerized, meaning there are fewer knobs and obtrusive buttons to be concerned with.

Manufacturers seeking to tap a wider market will be offering matched (compatible) components, often with a cabinet to house the components.

Selecting and operating hi-fi equipment is becoming easier. Technical and cosmetic refinements eliminate the hassle the

hi-fi novice experiences. Home audio makers are responding to the popularity of the "media room," as more people devote a single room of their home to house audio and video equipment designed to work in concert.

The biggest news in home stereo hi-fi products comes from Sony, the maker of the new "Beta Hi-Fi," a video cassette recorder that also records high-fidelity audio impressively better than conventional open-reel-to-reel tape decks.

The Sony stereo VCR, model SL-5200, has a frequency response of 20 to 20,000 Hz, with 80 dB dynamic range, and has a list price of \$900, but can be had for about \$769.

To further bridge the gap between audio and video components, Sony offers the "Audio-Video Computer Control Center," which is an FM-AM receiver with video inputs. Sony's top model, the STR-VX 750, offers 70 watts per channel (8 ohms), total harmonic distortion of 0.006 percent from 20-20kHz.

The price tag is about \$399. Overall, makers of audio components, both popular brands and the more expensive "audiophile" variety, are touting technical improvements compatible with the demands of digital recordings.

Grado, a respected name among makers of turntable cartridges, has added a fifth model to its line this year. The Grado Gemini Silver, a medium compliance cartridge designed for medium to low mass pickup arms, incorporates advances

normally reserved for the company's hand crafted products. Ortofon has a budget version of the MC200 cartridge. The MC100 has the same moving coil and damping of the 200, and is available in two versions — integrated and universal — to fit almost any tone arm.

Headphones have come of age, too. With the coming of the compact digital disc players, Sony has introduced a stereo headphone to capture the full benefits of digital. The MDRCD7, the company says, is

designed to extract the best that digital sound has to offer.

The MDRCD7's drive unit has a diaphragm plated with 24-carat gold. The earpad is covered with skin-like urethane that allows a tight fit to give ambient sound insulation of more than 30 dB; frequency response is 20-24kHz. The MDRCD7 accommodates mini or standard size jacks.

Mayware has a new platter mat designed to replace conventional ribbed turntable mats. The company claims the new

mat will improve the quality of direct drive turntables.

To protect hi-fi equipment from annoying clicks and that result from outside interference, Bowthorpe EMI is introducing the Surge Protection.

To improve sound which becomes dull and muffled by lack of cleaning, Benson's CAT (clean and test) tape. It cleans the heads and whether frequency range, and flutter, left and right channels, are working correctly.

# Scientists searching sunken Civil War vessel, compiling data for planned recovery attempt

United Press International  
CAPE HATTERAS, N.C. — More than 120 years after it sank, scientists have returned to the USS Monitor, hoping to save at least part of the Civil War warship from the ravages of time and some of the most treacherous waters of the American coast.

days this week to videotape the wreck, compile more engineering data and recover the four-prong anchor the Monitor crew dropped in a vain attempt to save the vessel on the last night of 1862.

Tentative plans call for an attempt in 1985 to recover the round gun turret, which led

observers to describe the Monitor as a "cheesebox on a raft."

The Monitor was designed to fight in shallow coastal waters and went down about 15 miles off the North Carolina coast as it was being towed to Beaufort, N.C., to participate in the Union blockade of Confederate ports.

This week's expedition was

sponsored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and East Carolina University using a research vessel and a 32-foot submarine operated by the Harbor Branch Foundation of Fort Pierce, Fla.

Dr. Nancy Foster, director of the National Marine Sanctuary Program for NOAA, described

the Monitor as a "national treasure" that continues to draw widespread public interest.

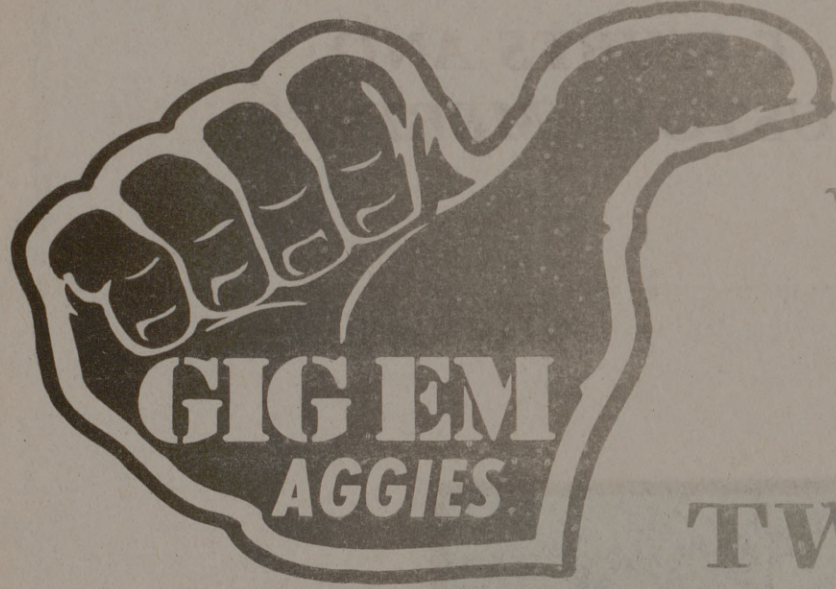
"The thing that has made it so interesting to the public is because of the historical significance," she said. "I mean school kids from the first grade on have heard of the story of the Monitor and the Merrimack."

"It is also important from an engineering standpoint. It changed the whole complexion of the Navy."

The Monitor now rests, upside down, in more than 200 feet of water. Scientists feel the turret is creating stress on the hull and something must be done to prevent the Monitor from

breaking up.

Scientists will now spend months evaluating the data obtained during the expedition, which was estimated to cost between \$90,000 to \$150,000. "What we are trying to do is fool around and let the Monitor sit, let it collapse and let it go," Dr. Foster said.



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# Farmers checked for weed control

United Press International  
DES MOINES — Having black nightshade, jimson weed or other weeds on acreage set aside in the federal payment-in-kind program could cost farmers more money this year than if the weeds were on cash crop lands.

Officials of the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service have begun spot checks of PIK acres to make sure participating farmers comply with the program's weed control requirements.

"If a farm is spot-checked and is determined to have weeds, it could reduce a portion of the farmer's program benefits," said Gene Johnson of the ASCS office in Des Moines.

He said there is no set penalty for violations of the weed control rule, but farmers with severe cases of untended weeds could even be thrown out of the program.

"This depends on the county committee's determination of the weed problem," Johnson said. "It could be a flagrant case

or maybe a fellow has some weed control but it hasn't been adequate."

Johnson said weed control is important not only for the aesthetic value of the conservation land, but to maintain the quality of PIK-idled fallow land for farming.

"We want to continue to eradicate the weeds. In row crops they reduce the yield and soil moisture and nutrients. We certainly wouldn't want any part of anything that would initiate a weed problem," Johnson said.

Other ASCS officials said that weed control prevents PIK acres from infesting neighboring land where a farmer might be trying to

# Cruise ships chasing whales from Alaska

United Press International  
SEATTLE — After an abrupt disappearance five years ago, humpback whales may be returning to Alaska's Glacier Bay, raising again the argument over whether whales and large tourist cruise ships can thrive in the same waters.

The whales attract the tourists, but conservationists say that the more tourist ships there are the more likely the whales will up and leave.

Now Chuck Jurasz, a veteran whale researcher and high school science teacher in Juneau, fears if the whales do return it will mean more cruise ships, which in turn will chase the whales away again.

Jurasz has long maintained the whales' exodus was linked directly to the increase in 20,000-ton tourist cruise ships steaming through Glacier Bay, site of some of the most specta-

cular coastline scenery in the world.

Others shared his views in 1980 the National Park Service cut ship traffic back to 1976 level.

But those restrictions change quickly. Government figures show humpback residents in Glacier Bay dropped from 21 in 1973 to three in 1978 and then creased to six in 1982.

Wayne Hall, a board member of the Alaska Wildlife Alliance, says the whales are in a precarious situation.

If the humpbacks increase their numbers in Glacier Bay, cruise ship companies will offer relaxed vessel-traffic restrictions, he says. Yet if studies term whale populations getting smaller, the companies will say the restrictions helped and traffic may increase.

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