Buying Stereo :a Guide

by FRS and DWT
STEREO PRIMER

(CLIP AND SAVE!)

Hello and welcome to this column.

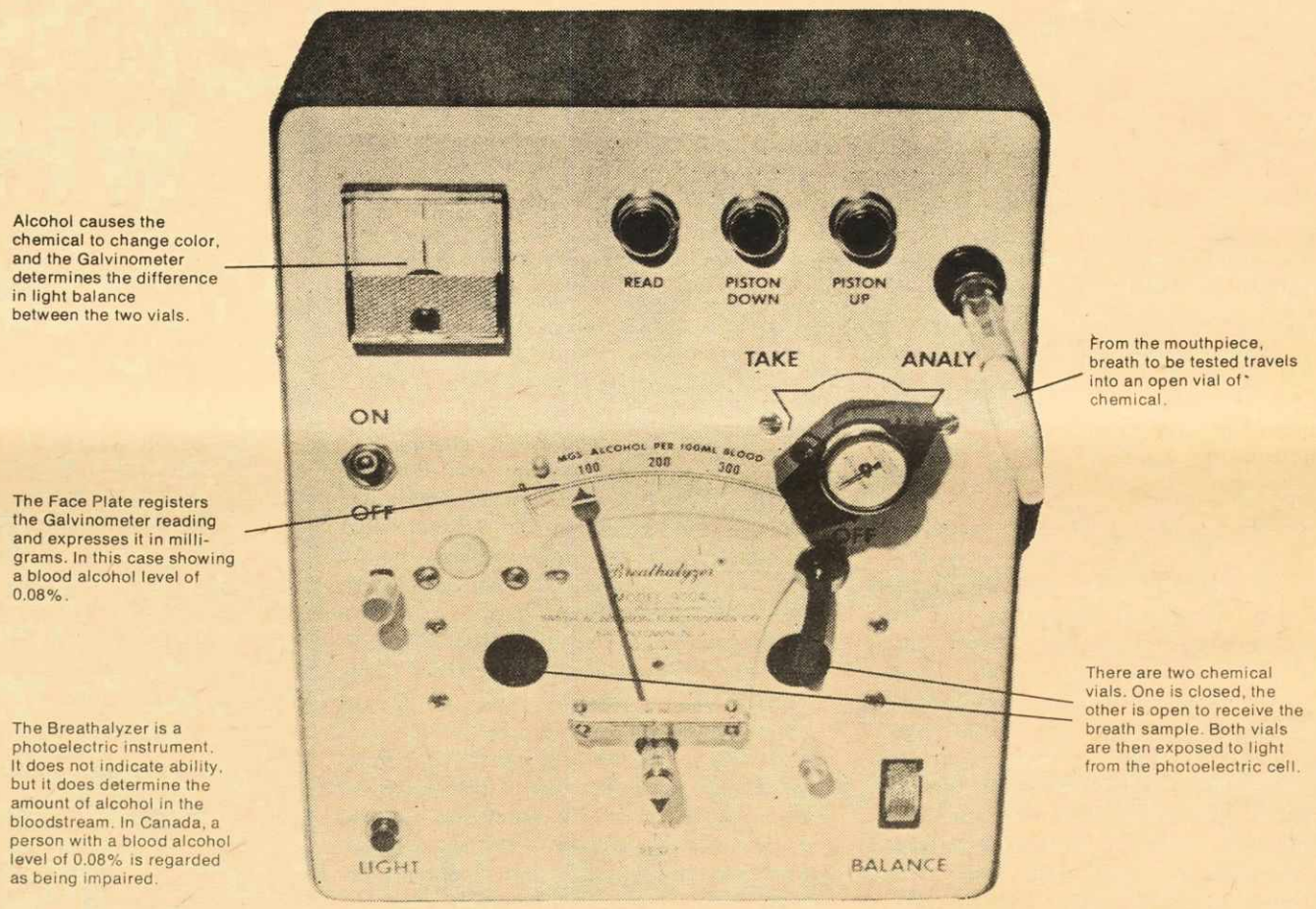
This is the first of what might, if we are not too lazy, become a column dealing with consumer-type sound equipment. If you have any specific questons on such equipment, you can leave them at the S.U.B. inquiry desk care of Dal Gazette and we shall try to answer them. For this week we should merely like to outline the fundamental sections of a sound system.

Basically, a sound system consists of a signal source (turntable or tape deck) which feeds a preamplifier (having volume and equalization controls etc.) which in turn feeds a power amplifier (often preamps and power AMPS are combined into one handy-dandy convenient unit). The power amplifier then drives speakers, or headphones, if your co-habitants make it necessary.

Each piece of equipment in the chain is very important, one ought not to skimp on any one item to be able to buy a better dojigger, hoping that a better dojigger will make up for the quality lost on the skimped article. Therefore, try to match all components in the system quality wise. Don't run a $1000 AMP into $50 speakers, or vice versa. Similarly, don't put a $19.95 cartridge in a $400 turntable. Incidentally, it really pays to buy a top notch turntable and cartdridge first even if the rest of your system is going to be inexpensive. This would ensure that your records (a major investment) will still be in new condition (even years later) when you upgrade the rest of your system. Ever heard a record, damaged by a cheap cartridge and a heavy, poorly-balanced tone arm?

If you are thinking of investing any amount of money in a sound system we should recommend that you presently stay away from four-dimensional (often erroweously called four channel, which is REALLY expensive) sound systems. Presently there are several conpeting types of four-dimensional, and most AMPS that attempt to play themall usually sacrifice quality for quantity. At this time you are paying for the novelty and can get a far, far superior two-channel (stereo) system for the same money. It is also probably that once one of the four-dimensional, or else discrete four channel, types gets official approval for FM broadcasting in the U.S.; most of the manufacturers will switch to that one system. Most people today start out with a medium to high quality sereo system which can easily expanded into foour-dimensional, or four-channel, relatively inexpensively. It is in-expensive since the rear channels don't operate nearly as loudly as the front. therefore, super high quality for the rear is redundant. The rear is mostly used for concert hall sound effects, solos in the rear channels only are rare in four-dimensional playback. If you simply must have four-dimensional playbacks, look at Dynaco's Quadaptor. It costs about $30, and merely requires two additional speakers, and not another stereo power amp. Back speaker solos are possible with this, if the records or tapes are properly encoded, ti also makes conventional stereo recordings sound great. Dynaco's SCA-80Q Power amp/Pre AMP is a high quality unit with a build in quadaptor, and is sold assembled or as a kit. Discreat four-channel is best, but expensive, and still in its infancy.

Well, here we are close to our word limit in the next few columns each section of a sound system will be discussed individually, starting with turntables, cartidges and tape decks. Hurry Back!



One way or another we have to face up to the problem of drinking and driving.

You're facing up to the problem when you're standing in front of the breathalyzer.

And even if the needle doesn't get to 0.08%, and the police don't lay any charges, you still have a problem.

You have a problem because you were driving after you had been drinking.

You have a problem because, on cold and sober reflection, you know you shouldn't have been behind the wheel.

Why all the fuss about drinking and driving?

Simply because 50% of all fatal traffic accidents involve drinking drivers.

And the vast majority of serious injuries from traffic accidents involve drinking drivers.

Maybe you are prepared to risk killing yourself or someone else.

Maybe you are prepared to risk losing your license. And your insurance coverage. And paying a large fine, or spending some time in prison.

Maybe you figure: "It just couldn't happen to me."

Don't you believe it. The odds are getting shorter every day.

And is it really worth it for a few drinks?

Don't wait until you find yourself in front of the breathalyzer before you face up to the problem.

Accept the responsibility for safe driving. Have the guts to say "No", to the second drink.

Or even the first.

Remember, with highway safety

It all depends on you.

Nova Scotia Department of Highways
Honourable Leonard L. Pace, Q.C., Minister