

Hi-Fi: Tapes Provide Top Music Over FM Station

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Hi-Fi

By David Spurgeon

Tapes Provide Top Music Over FM Station

High fidelity fans within broadcast coverage area of CHFI-FM—the only Canadian radio station transmitting exclusively by means of frequency modulation—will be interested to learn that some of the music they hear from this source originates from tapes used to make master phonograph discs.

These tapes, which obviously must be of the highest possible quality, are received in Toronto from the U.S. by a recording service that cuts disc masters from them for record companies, which in turn make the pressings you buy in the record stores.

The radio station gets them through its owner, because he also owns the recording service. If your receiving equipment and your ears are good enough, you might be able to tell the difference between the tapes and LP's normally used.

If you've wondered about the difference in the quality of the

sound between daytime and night—it's a matter of tape speed. Daytime tapes, designed to provide unobtrusive background music, are run through the machines at 3 1/4 inches a second, which limits the frequency range they reproduce.

From 6 p.m. on, tapes are run at a higher fidelity 7 1/2 inches per second, or LP's are used. The master tapes are run at 15 inches per second.

Daytime tapes used to be fed via telephone lines from 42 Lombard St. to the transmitter on Adelaide St., but the lines brought about some loss in fidelity, so all programming now originates in the Adelaide studios.

The studios contain a library of about 200 classical selections, as well as other types of music, and records are continually being added.

Equipment used includes GE variable reluctance professional cartridges, Gray arms, Presto turntables and tape machines, and RCA transmitting equipment.

Mail received by the station

—and surveys done in the U.S.—indicate that FM listeners are a different breed from those who listen to AM radio. There are more adults, they have higher income and occupational status, a broader education, and more are homeowners.

The majority are music-lovers—dyed-in-the-wool audio addicts are in a minority—and they listen more, and more faithfully.

One of the things listeners like most about CHFI's programming, according to their letters, is its relative lack of commercials and the absence, as one official put it, of constant yackety-yack.

A good many housewives have been buying up FM receivers because they provide almost continuous music unaccompanied by the comments of disc jockeys and a constant flow of commercial claptrap.

In order to capture a larger audience (50,000 listeners already are claimed) the station soon will introduce a gadget you can attach to your TV set

to permit FM reception on an unused channel.

The gadget actually is a miniature battery-powered converter. It will fit between the TV antenna and the TV set in the same way that converters for UHF video reception are attached.

When in use, it will change the FM signal to the frequency of Channel 3 on the TV set, and the TV set will do the rest. When not in use, it will be bypassed for normal TV reception on Channel 3.

The fidelity will be no higher than that of the TV set with which the converter is used—which in most cases will leave a great deal to be desired—but the unit has the advantage of being small and cheap and easily installed.

Don Wright, station manager, will discuss the present and long-term outlook for FM broadcasting and describe the station's operations and plans at the Society of Music Enthusiasts' June 4 meeting. Time: 8:15 p.m. Place: North Toronto YMCA.