

TASCAM 424 Studio Master Cassettes

Rejuvenating the Sound of Analog



To this day, many aspiring and professional audio recording aficionados adamantly maintain that analog recording and the ‘good old days’ of tape will never be replaced by today’s random access digital solutions. And considering that many of today’s digital recordings are mastered at least partially in the analog domain for the ‘warmth’ that many musicians feel digital lacks, analog is likely to be with us for a long time. With that in mind, TASCAM is pleased to introduce the TASCAM 424 Studio Master High Bias Type II Cassette tape - specifically designed for use with the company’s Portastudio series cassette recorders.

The 424 Studio Master C-60 was developed for the 50th anniversary of TASCAM as a tribute to their rich heritage. In 1979, TASCAM/TEAC created the 144 Portastudio, the world’s first portable home studio integrating a mixer and multi-track recorder. The 144 truly revolutionized home recording for the masses, and an infinite number of artists and musicians created their music on a Portastudio. The 144 Portastudio and other follow up Portastudios such as the 244, 246, Porta One, Porta-02, 424 series and more used inexpensive and easily found Type II High Bias cassettes. In the early 1980’s TASCAM created the legendary “gold reel” cassettes, which are now collector items. But today, any high bias type II cassettes are very hard to find.

The new TASCAM 424 cassette was developed in close coordination with National Audio Company, Inc. of Springfield, MO, the world’s largest manufacturer of quality cassette tape and the world’s largest duplicator of recorded music cassettes. The TASCAM 424 cassette employs a hand assembled shell manufactured using

TASCAM 424 Studio Master Cassettes: Rejuvenating the Sound of Analog

Wednesday, 22 December 2021 10:27

traditional injection molding and 3-D printing to re-create the original TEAC shell with miniature gold reels from the early 1980s - in many ways, making the cassette a modern collector's item. The cassette packaging will read 'TASCAM 424 Studio Master C-60'.

Steve Stepp, President of National Audio Company, offered his perspective of the TASCAM 424 cassette, "The TASCAM 424 Type II cassette is a Type II High Bias cobalt formulation using currently available magnetic oxides to recreate the tape which Portastudios were designed to use. The recording bias and equalization settings for this tape are as near a match for Portastudios as possible with materials available in 2021. Operators familiar with Portastudios will easily be capable of 'fine tuning' for the new tape."

Stepp shared his thoughts on the popularity of tape and the warmth of analog, "In the words of one of our music cassette customers, 'Nothing sounds like tape!' The harmonics, that analog sound, the tangible product, and nostalgia for something 'real' are key attributes that, to this day, make analog a vital part of music production. And to ensure the utmost authenticity, we used a TASCAM 424 Portastudio that was refurbished to like-new condition for beta testing during the tape formulation process. These new cassettes are, without a doubt, the optimal media to use on vintage TASCAM Portastudios."



The new TASCAM 424 cassette is far from National Audio Company's only experience with TASCAM products. In addition to being the leader in both cassette tape manufacturing and duplication, the company uses TASCAM 122mkIII 3-head

broadcast series cassette decks in their mastering suites for quality control because of their durable construction and reliable performance.

Before shifting his focus to other company business matters, Stepp offered these parting thoughts regarding his company's development of the TASCAM cassettes, "The TASCAM 424 cassettes will satisfy the demand for new cassettes formulated to perform properly in Portastudios while capturing the look of and feel of the company's heritage. The fact that these cassettes were tested throughout development using a TASCAM 424 Portastudio shows how everyone involved in this effort wanted to ensure the highest level of authenticity. No more overpriced, years old NOS (new old stock), such as you might find available online, which may have been stored in less-than-optimal conditions - thus degrading their quality. These are the only High Bias Type II cassettes currently being manufactured today."

The 424 Studio Master C-60 Cassette is part of TASCAM's 50th anniversary celebration and offered as a limited-edition product. TASCAM Director of Product Marketing Paul Youngblood added, "As soon as we determined that the legendary gold reel TEAC cassettes could be recreated, we immediately decided this was a perfect way to celebrate the profound history of TASCAM and the Portastudio. I personally own at least 20 of the originals, which I used with my cherished 244 Portastudio".

The TASCAM 424 cassette tapes are expected to become available soon.

www.tascam.com