

# 45rpm Phono Gazette

## Fire Player!

By Phil Vourtsis

This year at the AWA Charlotte Conference I found the saddest looking 45 player I've ever come across. It's a 9EY3 from 1949 which was damaged by a house fire. Interestingly the AC power cord was intact, while the cartridge wires were melted along with the volume control and the spindle cap. The entire machine was coated with black soot inside and out. The bakelite case was intact having a higher melting point than the other plastic parts. The heat caused many of the moving parts to bind up including the speaker cone. But after some flexing back and forth I was able to free up the speaker cone and it actually sounds fine now.



Fire Player -before-

I wasn't sure what I was going to do with this unit but as I took it apart and examined the parts, I became interested in trying to make it functional again with as many original parts as I could use. At times this was a tedious task because I tried to remove the black soot off each piece as I worked on it.

Starting with the bakelite case, I determined that there was no way to bring the case back to its original glory, so I opted to paint it with a crackle type finish to hide any imperfections caused by the fire. Next I worked on the spindle which needed a replacement spindle cap. I was surprised that the separators and shelves were still usable after cleaning them up. I replaced the turntable mat with the only one I had available from a 45EY. Next I removed the soot from the tonearm and gave it a repaint. The amplifier needed a recap and I was able to remove the soot from the outside of the amp case but not the inside where all the components are mounted. Then

came the disassembly of the record changer. This was the most time consuming part, removing the soot off

each piece and cleaning up the hardened grease from the heat of the fire. Surprisingly the motor was in very good shape and had correct speed. I took it apart anyway cleaned and re-oiled it.

I cleaned up the bakelite bottom and painted it black for some contrast with the silver cabinet. As a final touch I left the black soot on the RCA logo and used the original melted volume control.

It now plays and sounds great but there is still one issue with it. Despite all the cleaning, it still smells smoky, especially after it plays for awhile! Any thoughts on how to get rid of the odor? My wife has moved it to the garage until the odor problem is remedied!



Fire Player -after-

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## Crescent model with original box

By Bob Becker

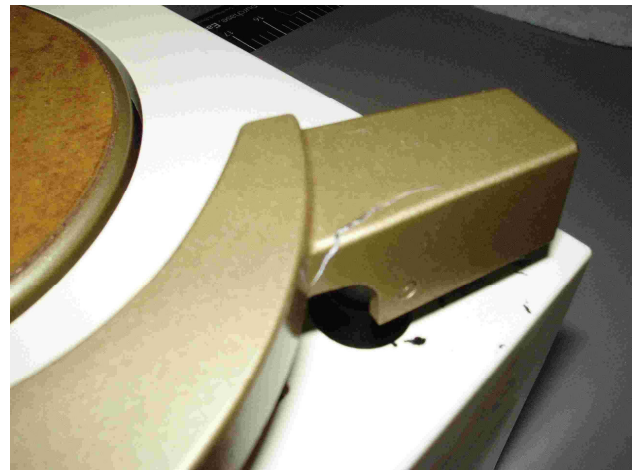
Back in the Fall, I attended an outdoor flea market in New Jersey and spotted a Crescent 45 player sitting on top of a table. I recognized it immediately as I already had a few of this model. I asked the price anyway, hoping that I might pick it up for around \$10. Unfortunately, the asking price was \$35 and I really wasn't interested. The player was dirty and the thin metal front grill work had some dents. I don't think I've ever seen this type of grill that didn't have some kind of damage.

The seller recognized my interest and began counter-offering once he saw that I was going to walk away. He said the player worked, which, of course could mean most anything. But I became very interested when he mentioned he still had the original box. It was in excellent condition and had two labels affixed to the top. The bottom label was from Almo Radio Company, 509 Arch Street, Philadelphia. The top label read Almo Radio Company, 550 Markley Street, Norristown, PA, and was addressed to a novelty company, Radio Company, 412-16 North 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA.

As for the condition of the player, not too bad. The reject mechanism needs work, but the records do fall properly with no hesitation. Turntable speed is accurate and we have volume. It certainly wouldn't take too much to restore the machine but it is hardly worth it, given the poor sound quality of this make and model. The selling price ended up at \$25 and the dealer was happy to sell it to a person who was an interested collector.



## RP168 tidbits



Cracked rp168 arm



Rp168 arms to accommodate different size cartridges

By Phil Vourtsis

\*In the past I had warned that the star wheel under the deck of the rp-168 looks like it is made of pot metal and one of my pieces had developed nasty cracks. Now I have come across cracks on one of my rp-168 tonearms. So it is likely that in the future we will be seeing these parts disintegrating in front our noses and there is no way I am aware of to prevent it.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> picture above shows a pair of rp168 tonearms The bottom arm is from a typical RCA Victor 45 machine and has the typical wide spacing for the RCA crystal cartridges. But the top arm is from a 45 machine that has a completely different Bakelite cabinet with scalloping in the front and two push buttons instead of one. These machines have names like Zenith and Crosley on them. Check out the picture on page 3. These companies must have worked out a deal with RCA Victor where they could install the more typical cartridges that were available at the time because the cartridge mounting is different only on these players. (Continued on page 3)