

AUDIO TEST

STEREO | STREAMING | HIGH END

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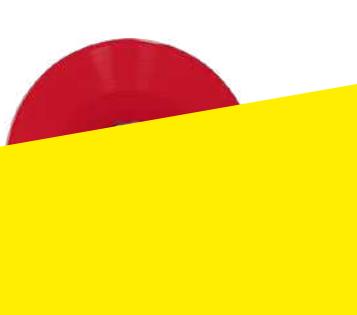
DIE BESTEN PLATTENSPIELER

Für jedes Budget, u.a.: Clearaudio, Dual, Luxman, Pro-Ject, Thorens, Transrotor

2023



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TEST-PDF
DUAL CS 429

07

PHONO-VERSTÄRKUNG

Pro-Ject Phono Box DS3 B und Rega Aria MK3 im Test



KÖNIGLICHES MC-SYSTEM

Excalibur Platinum Tonabnehmer



HIGH END AUS JAPAN

Soulnote E-1 Phono-Vorstufe verleiht audiophilen Glanz



Dual CS 429

Automatic for the People

Do turntables always have to be expensive and complicated to sound good? Dual answers this question very clearly with a “no”. You can find out what’s behind it in our test report.

Thomas Kirsche



AUDIO TEST
7.2023
Price-performance-Tip
Dual CS 429
www.likehifi.de

AUDIO TEST
7.2023
Very Good
(89%)
Dual CS 429
www.likehifi.de

The Dual CS 429 turntable was introduced in July 2022.

It is a fully automatic record player. This means we put the record on and press the start button. The CS 429 does the rest alone. The turntable starts at the previously selected speed and the tonearm moves to the beginning of the record. Once there, he lowers himself and the show begins. At the end of the record it lifts up and returns to its holder. The turntable stops at the same time.

Architecture of the record player

The Dual is delivered almost fully assembled. All we have to do is put the platter on top and, thanks to the “red

ribbon”, quickly place the belt around the shaft drive.

Of course we shouldn’t forget the heavy rubber mat for the turntable. Thanks to the bayonet connection, the cartridge can be easily plugged in and tightened. Then you have to push the counterweight onto the other end of the tonearm. On the back we connect the power supply and insert the RCA cable into the socket, not forgetting the ground terminal. If you want, you can still put the dust cover on. This is also very easy. Adjusting the tonearm is a little more difficult than the actual setup. After all, every cartridge needs a certain tracking force so that it sounds good. We adjust this force with the counterweight

at the end of the tonearm. That means we have to balance it first. This requires some patience and sensitivity until it finally floats horizontally. But that’s what makes the analogue passion so special. It is important here: the anti-skating must be set to zero, otherwise the arm will not stay in place. Once the tonearm is finally balanced, we adjust the tracking force of the mounted cartridge by turning it using the counterweight scale and that’s it. The whole process is explained explicitly in the very detailed German manual. If you want, you can now set the anti-skating. Dual recommends choosing the same value as the tracking force.

Cartridge

By the way, the Ortofon 2M Red is included within the scope of supply of the Dual CS 429. This MM cartridge represents a balanced sound signature with clear



Dual chose the Ortofon 2M Red as the cartridge. This MM cartridge sounds pleasantly balanced across the entire frequency spectrum

mids and highs as well as a well-defined bass range. The Ortofon 2M Red is often recommended as an upgrade cartridge for turntables that are delivered with simple factory cartridges. When choosing a cartridge, Dual takes a very good approach between costs and benefits. The recommended tracking force of the Ortofon 2M Red is 18 mN. But you shouldn't be too pontifical here. Feel free to play around with the tracking force. A little more or less weight may give the sound the colour you want. A different platter mat for the turntable can also change the sound impression. Feel free to place a felt mat on the turntable. These can be purchased online or in specialist stores for just a few euros. You will be amazed at how the sound of your favorite record changes. As a rule, the soft felt also makes the sound softer. Sounds strange, but it's true. Just give it a try!

Technology and features

The Dual CS 429 turntable offers a robust and sound-optimized construction. Its plinth is made of a solid MDF construction that is equipped with internal resonance absorbers. In addition, the feet have integrated resonance absorbers to minimize unwanted vibrations. The 30.5 centimeter measuring platter of the CS 429 is made of precise die-cast aluminium and offers a long-term stable construction. The heavy 2.5 millimeter high rubber mat on the turntable serves to dampen resonance and ensure better sound quality. The platter and mat together weigh 850 grams. The platter bearing is solidly designed, with a hardened steel axle that rests in a precision brass bearing bushing. The straight, weight-balanced tonearm of the Dual CS 429 enables both fully automatic and manual operation of all functions. The solid aluminium ball bearing construction ensures smooth movement of the

tonearm. The effective tonearm length is 221.5 millimeters and the tonearm has an offset of 25.6 degrees. The overhang is 19 millimeters, which allows for optimal alignment of the cartridge. The tracking force can be adjusted statically, with the range for the tracking weight ranging from 0g to 4g. This should allow for flexible adjustment depending on the requirements of the cartridges used. In general, the tonearm can carry cartridges with a mass of 5g to 9g. The turntable is powered by a belt-drive DC motor that provides precise optical speed control. 33, 45 and even 78 rotations per minute can be set. The synchronization fluctuation is less than 0.08 percent. The engine suspension is also vibration-damped to minimize annoying vibrations. A precision-ground belt ensures optimal synchronization, which has a positive effect on sound stability. With the dust cover closed, the Dual CS 429 turntable measures 43.5×14.5×36.7 centimeters. Its weight is 6.2 kilograms. Its power consumption is 0.2 watts in standby. It consumes 1.8 watts when a record makes its rounds – regardless of whether the phono preamplifier is connected or not. You read that right, the CS 429 has an integrated phono preamp. It can therefore be connected to any standard AUX input. This makes it also suitable for cheaper HiFi amplifiers, which usually do not have a phono input. We will now find out how well the internal phono stage works in the sound test.

Sound test with phono preamp

First we connect the Dual CS 429 to our Rotel amplifier. Since we want to test the internal preamplifier of the fully auto-

matic turntable, we go into the AUX input of the Rotel. Of course, on the back of the record player we must not forget to set the switch to Line. We're putting on Ennio Morricone's album "Jubilee". This brings together the most famous pieces by the master of film music, newly arranged by the composer himself. The very gentle new recording of the well-known "Once Upon A Time In The West" with piano and violin starts very, very quietly. We have to turn the amplifier up quite a bit to hear anything at all. But then the familiar melody increases and goosebumps inevitably run down your arms and tears well up in your eyes. Only the old master can create such beautiful and heartfelt melodies. The Dual turntable presents it in a very balanced way. Since it is a kind of chamber concert – in any case,



Instead of using a counterweight, Dual works with a small adjustment wheel (to the right of the tonearm base) for anti-skating, which makes adjustment comfortable



The CS 429 relies on a belt drive. The wow and flutter of the system is less than 0.08 percent. We use the switch to the left of the power supply connection to control whether we use the Dual CS 429's internal phono preamplifier or not

the mixing or recording is really intimate – the crackle of the record plus its analogue warmth immediately bring a closeness to what we are listening to that we rarely feel. The stereo space and depth gradation are correct here, as is the level of detail. Of course, these things mainly depend on the cartridge, so the Ortofon 2M Red is Duals right choice for this turntable. However, we do miss a little plasticity and perhaps a touch of better precision work. But that could also be due to the mixing of the record. We are therefore switching to "45 Years Excellence Edition" Volume 1 from Clearaudio. We listen to the piece by Dominique Fils-Aimé "Birds". The song's mix is much more voluminous than Ennio Morricone's „Jubilee“. The plasticity is now very tangible and the details have definitely increased. The singer's voice fits perfectly into an intimate yet wide sound space. The dual works particularly well with the transients and the distinctive bass line. The CS 429 also highlights background noises that don't make it clear where they come from. Now we want to know and put on a really old LP. With Frank

Schöbel's "Friends Are Everywhere" from 1975, we pay homage to our East German past. The songs from the Amiga pressing, which are a mixture of beat music and pop songs, sound very fresh and calm from our speakers. This makes the journey through time seem very lively. But wait, we forgot something. How does the Dual sound when we use it as a running gear without internal preamplification?

Sound test without phono preamp

We plug and switch our test setup. Now we hear the record player via the phono stage of our Rotel. As editorial colleague Patrice Lipeb likes to write in such a place, "We detect": The sound increases in volume again, appears thicker and more powerful. The details and spatiality improve and overall the Dual now makes listening to music even more fun. The synchronization is still phenomenal – there are no speed

fluctuations with the device. The sound of the other songs we heard is also now much "fatter", to put it in one word. The Dual definitely has sound potential beyond its internal preamplifier. That's why it's not only suitable for vinyl beginners, but also for the discerning record gourmet who likes to squeeze the last bit of sound out of the black discs. ■



We can not only choose from speeds of 33 and 45, but also 78 rotations per minute – of course, a different cartridge is necessary for the corresponding records

SUMMARY

The Dual CS 429 is a fully automatic turntable that makes it easy for everyone to immerse themselves in the world of analogue sounds. For example, it has an integrated high-quality phono preamplifier and can therefore be connected to any AUX-In. In addition, it also enchants real vinyl fans, because there are some tuning options and really solid drive technology and all at an almost outrageously low price.

FEATURES

- internal preamplifier
- three speed types (33, 45, 78)
- record size adjustable (correct starting point for singles)

Advantages + balanced, detailed sound
+ very good synchronization
+ easy to use

Disadvantages - internal preamp lacks a bit of volume

FEATURES

General	
Device class	Turntables
Price band	Mid range
Manufacturer	Dual
Model	CS 429
Price (EIA)	649 euro
Dimensions (H/W/D)	44 x 15 x 37 cm
Weight	6,2 kg
Information	hifi.dual.de

Technical Information (manufacturer)	
Cartridge (mounted)	Ortofon 2M Red
Motor	DC-motor
Type of drive	Belt-drive
Control type	Fully automatic
Inputs	1 x RCA
Phono-preamp included	Yes
DAC included	No
Bluetooth	No

BEWERTUNG

Reproduction quality	<div style="width: 80%;"></div>	54/60
Equipment/workmanship	<div style="width: 87%;"></div>	13/15
User-friendliness	<div style="width: 87%;"></div>	13/15
Appreciation/Depreciation		None
Interim result		80 von 90 points
Price-performance	Very Good	9/10
Result	<div style="width: 89%; background-color: #008000;"></div>	Very Good 89%