

CABLES

Furutech Evolution II

Absolute control

By now, regular readers of AVSA will know that Furutech produces an almost dizzying array of audio products, ranging from speaker cables and interconnects to connectors and various other accessories, including power conditioners, demagnetisers, record platter pucks, and more.

The Evolution II range is the latest version of Furutech's basic cable and interlink line – if you want to call anything made by Furutech basic, that is. The execution and finish is still top-class, with connectors that underscore the brand's obsession with quality.

The internals have been put together with equal care. All three the cables in the Evolution II range feature multi-strand conductors made of a special-grade copper Furutech calls Alpha-OCC.

The OCC nomenclature is short for Ohno-Continuous Casting, a process that allows a grain-free copper structure for improved conductivity and signal purity. The Alpha process is a two-stage procedure that includes cryogenic treatment and demagnetising.

The cryogenic process is supposed to bond the molecules together more closely, creating a more stable structure that is also more conductive, affording more efficient signal transfer. Ring magnetisation is used to demagnetise the cables, which has further benefits as far as conductivity is concerned – according to Furutech, that is.

The three Evolution II cables under evaluation here all feature Alpha-OCC multi-strand conductors, although the exact conductor configuration varies, depending on application.

Insulation is via air-foamed polyethylene to reduce capacitance and address damping-related vibration. OCC copper is also used for a braided shielding layer to prevent electrical noise and interference.

Finally, the cable is wrapped in a flexible PVC sheath, and covered in a black nylon yarn braid jacket. Despite all those layers, the cables are fairly flexible and easily installed, even in tight spaces.

The connectors are miniature works of art. The beautifully engineered, gold-plated RCA connectors, for instance, feature a 24-carat

gold-plated centre pin, a cast copper alloy body with 24-carat gold plating, and an outer locking shell.

In the case of the Evolution II speaker cable, a number of options are available, but our test pair came with cleverly angled 4 mm bananas with an inner that screws in, expanding the pin and creating a solid, positive fit.

I installed the Evolution II cables in my 'small' reference system, with the stereo analogue cable running between a Musical Fidelity DACV8 and the Marantz Music Link SC20 line-level pre-amp. The digital cable was used to link a Rotel RCD-991 CD player to the digital input of the DAC, while the Evolution II speaker cables connected a pair of Dynaudio Audience 52SEs to the Marantz Music Link MA20 monoblocks.

I soon realised that these cables enjoy working together, allowing a greater overall benefit than when reviewing the cables in isolation. This was confirmed when I used the same cables, both individually and collectively, in my 'big' reference system.

Therefore, this review focuses on the collective impact of all three cable sets on overall system performance. Similar, but less expressive sonic trends may be apparent when using only one cable in isolation, depending on the specific application.

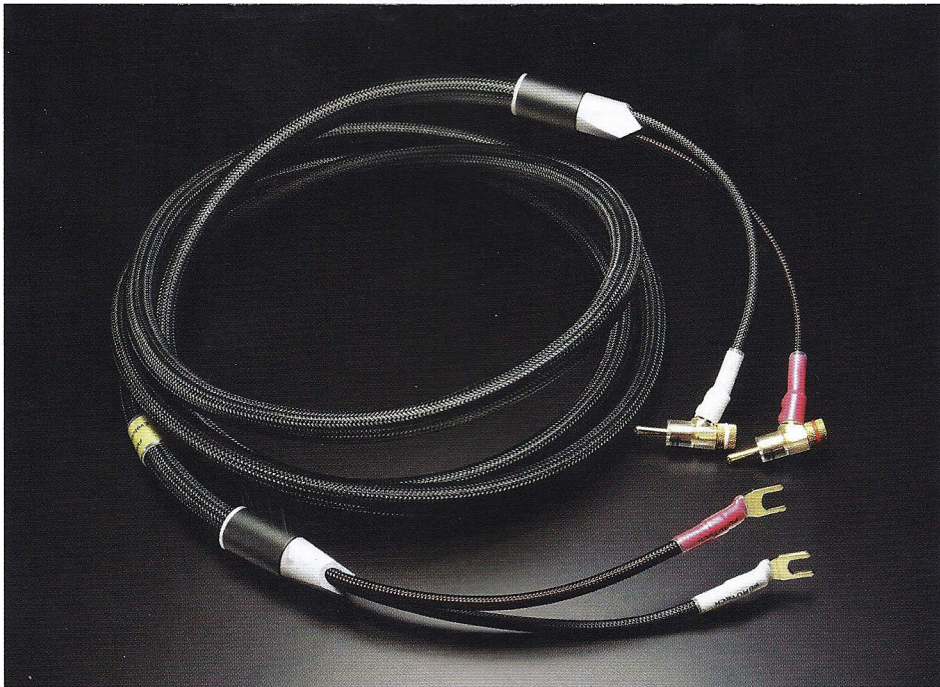
Software roped in for the review included the smouldering blues of Susan Tedeschi's 'Back To The River', Diana Krall's 'The Girl In The Other Room', and 'Tangos and Dances' by David Chesky.

I enjoyed the way the Evolution II cables allowed greater grip and control of the musical delivery, resulting in a punchier, more incisive sound without stymieing the pace and flow of the performance. The speed and dynamics remained admirable, but with added definition and a closer, cleaner focus.

Tonally, the sound tended towards neutrality, but with a smoothness ensuring accessibility, and no sign of aggression. The soundstaging was a further beneficiary, appearing more open and inviting, and showing off a greater penchant for depth and focus.

While the cables didn't appear to offer a greater harvest of detail, they were able to





make more of what had been harvested, allowing a fuller, more complete and thus more believable sound. I also felt that the system sounded more articulate as a result.

Of course, cables can only work with what they get asked to transfer, so the quality of the

system components will have a significant impact on how much improvement is achieved. But that the Furutech Evolution II cables will have a positive impact on most decent audio set-ups is beyond doubt.

Deon Schoeman



Vital Stats

Evolution II analogue interconnect

Cable type Single-ended interconnect, RCA terminated
Length 1,2 metres (pair)
Directional Yes
Conductors 80-strand OCC conductors, two cores twisted
Resistance 8,975 ohm/km
Capacitance 104,37 PF/m
Insulation 2,46 mm diameter polypropylene

Evolution II digital interconnect

Cable type Coaxial digital interconnect, RCA terminated
Length 1,2 metres
Directional Yes
Conductors 37-strand OCC conductor
Resistance 12,44 ohm/km
Capacitance 88,05 PF/m
Insulation Twin-layer polyethylene skin

Evolution II speaker cable

Cable type Loudspeaker cable, 4 mm banana plug termination
Length 3,0 metres (pair)
Directional Yes
Conductors 6 bundles of 20-strand OCC conductors
Resistance 5,4 ohm/km
Capacitance 48,2 PF/m
Insulation 5,1 mm diameter special polyethylene

PRICE

Evolution II analogue interconnect R7 187
 Evolution II digital interconnect R4 254
 Evolution II speaker cable R8 580

VERDICT

These cables work best in tandem and deliver a sound that is taut and resolute, without sounding constrained.

SUPPLIED BY

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WEBSITE

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