

Constantine Soo experiences
Furutech's latest, top-of-the-line power filter:
the \$6,400 Pure Power 6 Power Distributor

December, 2007



Specifications:

Chassis: CNC machined aerospace-grade aluminum alloy

AC Input/Output: 15A IEC input/3 UL-rated duplex receptacles

Materials Processing: Metal parts treated with α (Alpha) Cryogenic and Demagnetizing process

Ground/Earth connection: Chassis Grounding Post

IEC: Rhodium-plated IEC input

Receptacles: 3 High Performance FP-20A® Duplex Receptacles

Internal wiring: 3 gauges of high-quality twisted-multigauge Teflon-shielded high-purity silver-plated Alpha-OFC

Solder: Special alloy solder

Size: 8W x 8H x 3D (inch)

Weight: 22lb

MSRP: \$6,400

U.S.Distributor:

Elite AV

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THE STATE OF AFFAIRS

The modern day high-end audio industry continues to explore new performance frontiers by employment of integrated circuits with unprecedented levels of computational prowess, in tandem with progressively efficient transistors. The positive consequences of this trend have been in the culmination of better-sounding digital front-ends and physically more compact but no-less powerful amplifiers. Development in power conditioning devices has also paralleled this trend, giving us more complex designs that can now even regulate the sine wave for a more unified performance, for instance.

Yet, for any company to recommend use of a PCD in conjunction with its own product is utterly unthinkable, for this would appear to constitute an admission of technological inadequacy of its own design. Furthermore, there are companies that have provisioned for very advanced and thorough power management designs for use in their front-end and amplification products, such that save for the most uncompromising implementation of standalone PCD's, these manufacturers consider any such product as utter extraneous and even undesirable in the operation of their products.

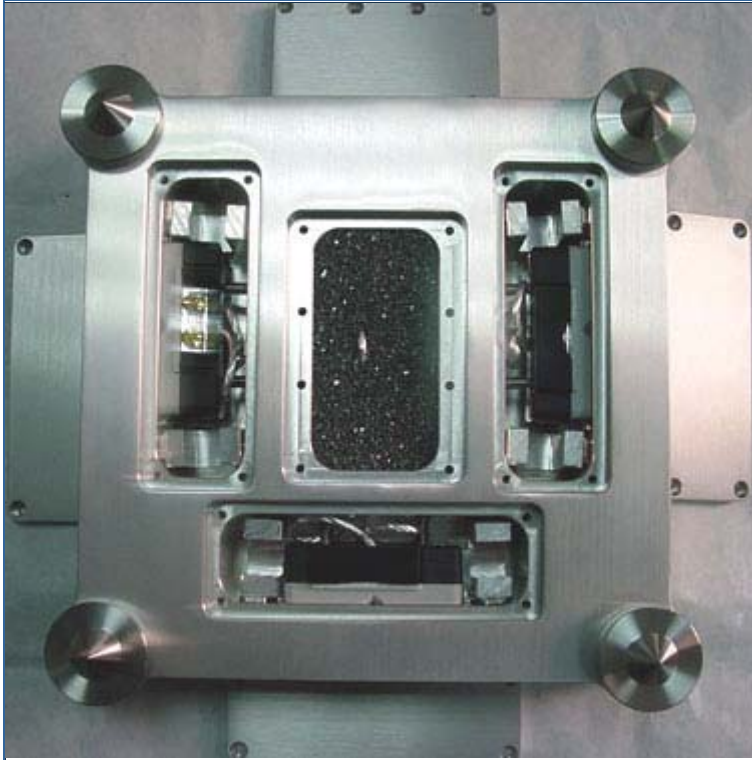
For instance, Wadia Digital advises users of its \$30,000, 3-chassis Reference Series 9 Decoding Computer that the system was designed to achieve the intended performance level without PCD's. In this case, Wadia believes in the level of technological excellence as presented by its Reference Series 9, and thus is more confident of an assurance of satisfaction to its customers without the unpredictability that comes with the probable limitation of its product's potential by an otherwise inferior PCD.

This is where the established norm of what constitutes a worthy high-end power conditioning device comes into consideration. The crops of PCD's can be categorized into the active and passive kinds. Active devices are power conditioners that utilize isolation transformers to decouple and stabilize the audio system from the city mains, and the primary cost of these active devices lies in the capacity and quality of transformers employed. Passive devices are filters generally designed to filter out the electromagnetic interferences (EMI) and radio frequency interferences (RFI) carried by power lines and a host of consumer electronics and household appliances. The devices mentioned earlier that utilize the latest technology to regulate sine wave constitute yet another class of power conditioning devices, an unprecedented one that attempts to manipulate the AC voltage with a proprietary circuit.

THE PASSIVE FURUTECH



Furutech offers the passive PCD's it calls "AC Distributors", that works supposedly to absorb the EMI and RFI noises using the company's proprietary GC-303 EMI-absorbent material, while the upper models in the line feature unique mechanisms to augment firmer IEC-coupling architecture. Now, the company introduces a new, top model along the same fundamental



concept, named Pure Power 6, but this time costing \$6,400 – a full \$4,900 more expensive than its former top design, the \$1,500 e-TP4+4, and \$5,420 more expensive than the \$980 e-TP609 I reviewed.

Weighing 22 pounds, Furutech's Pure Power 6 represented the company's most superlative approach to date to its line of power distributors. Furutech describes it as "built like a Swiss bank vault, a virtual black hole for EMI and RFI". Considering what the Pure Power 6 was made of, as well as the way it was made, I have to conclude that it represents a form of power filter as we have never seen before.

Foremost: Building upon the foundation of the company's proprietary, EMI-absorbing Formula GC-303 material,

Two-Stage Cryogenic and Demagnetizing Super α (Alpha) Treatment of all metal parts, and the double Axial Locks, Furutech equipped its latest Pure Power 6 with sets of twisted, heavy-gauge high-purity silver-plated Alpha-OFC cable, each individually wired into a duplex receptacles, and then housed meticulously in separately milled compartments for the ultimate measure in isolation.

Then, a centrally located chamber loaded with the EMI-absorbent (ElectroMagnetic Interference) Formula GC-303 material houses the hot and neutral conductors from the bundled wiring, absorbing both the the ground noise of the incoming IEC's, as well as current-induced noises. Last not least, the Pure Power 6 is given a glamorous, precision CNC-machined chassis made of solid aerospace-grade aluminum alloy, providing the ultimate and last degree in shielding against RFI (Radio Frequency Interference).

For \$6,400, the Furutech Pure Power 6 also contains the most extensive and secured IEC connection I've seen. All other IEC receptacle designs adopted by the industry today become simplistic and insufficient by comparison. When the entire industry is offering standard IEC receptacle configuration on the exterior of all of its products, Furutech developed a capture mechanism by taking a solid block of aluminum measuring 8 inches by 8 inches by 3, and excavating two 1.5 inch deep hollow inlets in the shape of an IEC receptacle on three of its shorter sides! This extravagant engineering feat is made to accommodate IEC connectors measuring up to 1.5 inch approximately in diameter.

Thus, Furutech's latest Pure Power 6 transcended even the most ardent, known measures in passive designs by other companies.

Whether it was Furutech's own \$1,045 Power Reference III, or the \$2,100 Isoclean Super Focus, or the \$920 Harmonix X-DC Studio Master, each of the cables' IEC connector, when inserted, were in effect embedded into the Pure Power 6 through its sides, realizing a connection fit that was the snugest, most encompassing and surreal I've seen.

This is an ingenious and simple product concept that is blatantly straightforward, tremendously effective to the age-old frustration of loose connection even between the most expensive cable and power conditioner. Retrospectively, Furutech's is also a solution that can only be accomplished by the rarest of enterprises with the necessary financial and technological resources.

But Furutech didn't stop at this level of design and technological extravaganza.



Inside the aluminum wall of the IEC inlet, the receptacles themselves are rhodium-plated, the top and bottom areas of the thus-connected duplex's flanges are then held in position with thick aluminum blocks that apply pressure along the entire width of the flange. As if all those extremities weren't enough, Furutech endowed each of the duplex receptacles with not one but two of its renowned Axial Locks, anchoring each receptacle for "ultimate mechanical integrity." The duplex receptacles assigned were the company's own high-performance FT-D20A®.

In the Pure Power 6's last and no less mindboggling design detail, provisions for pillars were machined out at the four corners of the body, and each pillar is fitted with a spike at the bottom, to be rested upon the accompanying, solid aluminum disc that decouples the unit from a shelf. Weighing 22 pounds, the Furutech Pure Power 6 has become the one piece of equipment of the highest proportion of aluminum content I've ever handled in my life.

AUDITIONING



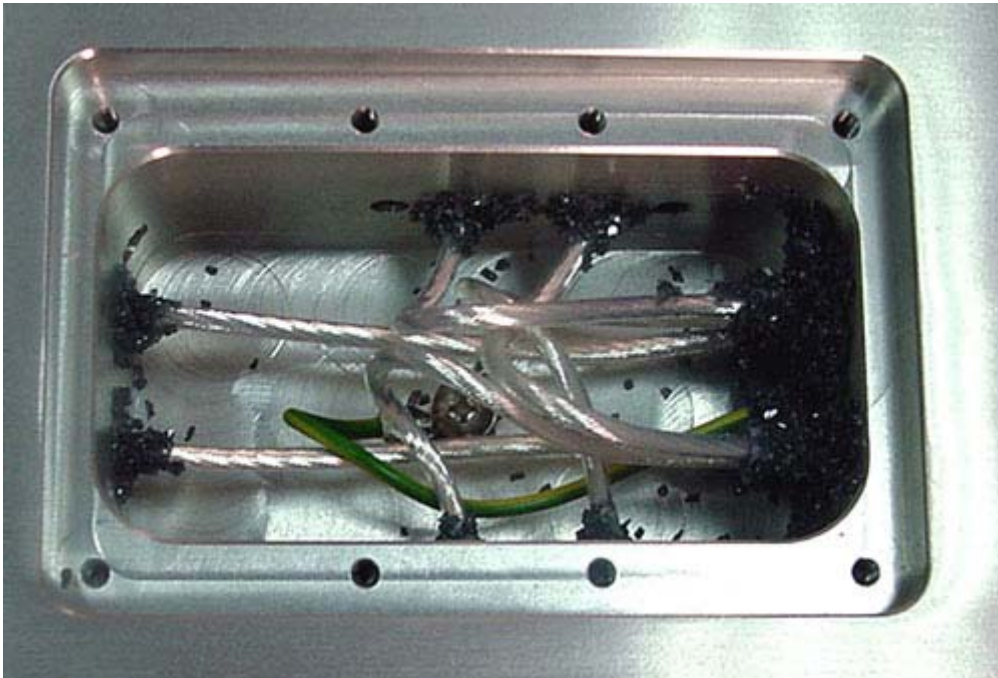
The power cable that connects the power conditioner/filter to the AC outlet determines the performance envelope of the said device invariably, which in turn determines the extent of benefits equipment downstream can reap from such an arrangement. For maximum performance, Isoclean's Super Focus was used in this crucial link.

For this review, Furutech also provided four of its \$1,045, 1.8 meter Power Reference III power cables generously. See my [review](#) of Furutech's e-TP609 AC Power Distributor & Power Reference III AC cable for details on the power cable.

In my system, the bare minimum number of power cables needed is seven: Two for the duo of 47 Laboratory 4700 Power Humpty power supplies for the \$26,800, 4704 PiTracer CD transport system, three for the three-chassis, \$30,000 Wadia Reference Series 9 Decoding Computer and two for either of Luminance Audio's latest, \$6,000 KST-150DM digital monoblock amplifiers or Wavac's \$17,250 MD-805m SET monoblocks. Taking the Isoclean that would be powering the Pure Power 6 itself in the first place into consideration, the number of power cable now has become eight.

For the first stage of the auditioning process, the two 47 Laboratory 4700 Power Humpty's for the PiTracer were plugged into the Pure Power 6 via Furutech's own Power Reference III power cables. Replacing them were the three-chassis Wadia Reference Series 9 with the trio of Furutech power cables. In the third step, the Luminance Audio KST-150DM digital monoblocks rotated with the Wavac MD-805m SET monoblocks with the same Furutech power cables.

The Pure Power 6 didn't seem to impact current delivery as demanded by the KST-150DM, and the Wavac's were certainly not exhibiting any shortfall with the Furutech either. Even in a full system connected to the Pure Power 6 sans the seventh cable that powered the Wadia 931 Digital Controller as relegated to connecting to the AC outlet directly, neither of the amplifications demonstrated any detriment in performance versus a direct connection to the AC outlets.



The result of my entire system employing the EMI- and RFI-cleaning action of the Pure Power 6 was the unveiling of purity in an extremely wide bandwidth, from the bottom-end to the top-end, an experience of such range that I never encountered from the other power conditioners/filters I have auditioned. For instance, already sounding more refined in instrument timbre and soundstaging over its hybrid SACD version, First Impression Music's Vivaldi "The Four Seasons" excerpt in the label's 100kHz/24bit-resolution K2 HD sampler, *This is K2 HD Sound!*, revealed more opulent tonal characteristics from instruments and an even higher level of tonal differentiation, imparting breathtaking recreation of the recording session.

On top of providing a more intricate and insightful perspective to the intrinsic beauty of the strings, an experience that culminates in the purpose and the very essence of our hobby, the Furutech Pure Power 6 also provided the ultimate platform for the listener to experience the majestic sound of soloist Giuliano Carmignola's 1722 Petro Guarnei violin. This phenomenon was especially pronounced when listened through speakers of remarkable extensions, such as the Bösendorfer VC 7.

The Pure Power 6 also provided a calmer, cleaner background for a more proper appreciation of subtle performances, such as the occasional but precious moments of deep reflections in master guitarist Mario Suzuki's Argentine folklore guitarra performances (Master Music – JVC XRCD²⁴, *Masterpiece*, XRCD24-NT001). This was Mr. Kazuo Kiuchi of Combak Corporation's premiere release of a series of audiophile CDs in his own label, Master Music. It was hard to fathom the multitude of CDs that I had not yet played and have thus missed the opportunity to experience the subtleties of their sound while the Pure Power 6 was still in my keep.

But more importantly, this experience prompted the realization that I may not yet have extracted the premium CD production's full potentials, and at the same time it was akin to what I encountered when the PiTracer took reign of my digital system and exposed the layer of electronic haze of all transports that went before it. The Pure Power 6 removed yet another layer of such artificiality, a shock I feel very difficult to ignore for as long as the Pure Power 6 is in my system.

This pane of shadowy, concealed tonal ambiguity that the Furutech purged imparted a persistent tinting of all instruments and music, which re-exerted its shadowy existence when I took the Pure Power 6 out of the chain and reinserted the system into the AC outlet.

Large scale orchestral recordings that I cherish are primarily those from non-audiophile mainstream labels, such as Deutsche Grammophon, Philips, Decca, etc., and despite the ongoing efforts of these labels to improve upon the sound of their recordings, RCA Victor's SWR-Studio 20-Bit recordings, particularly the piano solo recordings by Evgeny Kissin, showed marked benefits with the Pure Power 6.

This time, it was not merely the subtle and pianissimo passages benefitting from a calmer signal background, it was, in fact, the fortissimos and the decisive sculpturing of an artistic statement of the highest order that benefited, coming through with the delicious, vibrant tones loud and clear. With the Pure Power 6, I was actually craving for more of such musically passionate and technically perfect piano power. Alas, there was only the RCA Victor; and then, there was only the Furutech.

CONCLUSION



More than a year after I published a review on Furutech's top 15-ampere capacity, 6-IEC AC filter, namely the \$980 e-TP609, the Japanese company has now become the only one in the world able to create the ultimate in connection integrity, and non-electronic implementations of designs in combating AC line noise for high-end audio purposes.

In our world, sonically pure electricity, as it is for high-end audio purposes, does not exist. Lest we run our audio system from our own power generator in the garage or basement, wired with the highest quality of conductive materials and best of parts, the condition of the electricity coming out of our outlets is already suboptimal. Strictly speaking, our listening

experience is inevitably influenced by the sonic characteristics of the distortions all the way from our public utility's power grid with all of its generators and transmission lines, down to the quality of cables used for carrying the power to our house, not to mention the errant EMI and RFI permeating our environment as amplified along with the music.

But live concerts are also not immune from external influences. Drink a full glass of caffeine soda before you go to a classical concert, and you will find the music-making experience more enlightening, unless you have a small bladder. Luckier yet, imagine how much more enjoyable the concert would be if a lovely lady was sitting next to you. You may even remember the performance for years to come.

For readers who have assembled a top-notch system with first-rate resolution capability, the assurance of immunity from EMI and RFI is likely being addressed by the numerous types of accessories, the application of which involves direct placement of said devices over the treated equipment, plus a full deployment of shielded cables. But in the pursuit of AC purity, the ultimate phase will culminate in a device made of a substance compact in size, feathery in weight and supreme in EMI and RFI absorption capability, which will serve as the central hub for all power cables to draw the AC.

A part of that future is now here, and Furutech's CNC-machined solid aerospace aluminum alloy Pure Power 6 signifies as modern day's supreme embodiment of that perfect future. The world may and may not be ready for it; but to all you spenders and connoisseurs of all things refined and peerless: Thou shan't pass up the Pure Power 6 experience.

Because from the implementation of a design concept at the most budget level to the most superlative version of it, the consideration of cost and market readiness have always been the key factors determining quality of products in any economy. Conversely, for the most upscale consumer segment in our audio hobby, the probability of these financially more secured among us being able to procure the most visionary design in any given product category depends on the existence of companies with the necessary financial and technological might to make such product a reality.

That company is Furutech, and an experience of the Pure Power 6 may shed the most unambiguous light on the true sound of your system.

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