



VIVIDLY COLORFUL

The traditional manufacturer Nagaoka brings its „Jeweltone“ series into the MM market. The top is marked by the black-robed JT-80 BK – a cartridge that shines in all colors. ■ By Lothar Brandt

This body shape with the barrel vault at the bottom – does look familiar, right? Indeed: For the limited edition of the Technics SL-1210 GAE (AUDIO 11/20), the compatriots and cartridge specialists from Nagaoka exclusively manufactured the JT-1210. This moving magnet system was the advance party, so to speak, for the Jeweltone series of the Japanese company. Their top model is named JT-80 BK (as in Black), costs about 600 euros and differs from the JT-1210 externally only by its completely black generator housing – and as well from the JT-80 LB (as in Lapis Blue), which is offered for 230 Euros. The latter was also provided for testing, but with a dynamic compliance of over 50 $\mu\text{m}/\text{mN}$ our lab found it to be too compliant for common tonearms. Therefore, the BK had to compete alone. With values of 23 (vertical) and 25 (lateral) it is still well suited for the light to medium-heavy arms common today.

Nagaoka celebrated its 80th anniversary in 2020. So the company is experienced in cartridge construction, be it moving iron or even MM. In its top MM system, an elliptical, naked stylus tip (according to their own information, Nagaoka grinds about 90 percent of all stylus tips used worldwide) sits on the cantilever which is made of boron – making it as light as it is stiff. But also the generator is made from the finest materials.

In any case, the most expensive Jeweltone cartridge lived up to its name. The voices of Katja Werker, Llyod Cole or Stephanie Lottermoser shone like jewels, „The Orchid“ by the Maciej Golyzniak Trio blossomed in all possible sound colors (for all music tips see vinyl section). But even with all the splendor, nothing seemed artificial, the unobtrusive naturalness shone without dazzling. The relatively silent Nagaoka JT-80 BK seduces to long-term listening – and to buy a top MM stage.

CHARACTERISTICS

NAGAOKA JT-80 BK	
Distribution	Auditorium phone 02381 93390
www.	nagaoka.de
Suggested Retail Price	595 Euros
Warranty period	2 Years
Cantilever/Stylus Tip	Bor/elliptical
Tracking force/Recomm. arm	16 mN/light to medium
Trackability	110 μ
High frequency distortions	0,13 % (l); 0,28 % (r)
Output voltage (DIN)	5,5 mV (l); 5,66 mV (r)
Impedance/Inductivity	930 Ohms/750 mH
Recomm. Connection/Terminator	MM 47 kOhms
Weight (w/o screws)	8 Grams

AUDIOGRAM **AUDIO** 06/2021

<p>➕ Super MM system with very natural, dynamic sound</p>	<p>➖ Needs good MM Pre to be able to play out all of its advantages</p>
Sound	91
Features	good
Handling	good
Build quality	very good

AUDIO SOUND VERDICT 91 POINTS
PRICE/PERFORMANCE OUTSTANDING

CONCLUSION



Lothar Brandt
AUDIO editor

I can also be enthusiastic about MMs, but only a few have really swept me off my feet. Such as the Nagaoka JT-80 BK. Its black body delivers a scope of color which is just unparalleled. One of the best MM systems ever.

MEASUREMENT LAB

The frequency response is unusual linear and almost independent of channel, with just +1.5 dB at 20 Hz and 20 kHz. The right to left cross-talk attenuation of 23 dB (green curve) is weaker than the left to right attenuation (34 dB at 1 kHz). The 110 μ trackability at only 18 mN tracking force and the very low distortions are excellent.

