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NEWPORT GUITAR FESTIVAL IN MIAMI BEACH PICKS SONY PCM-D50

Eight Digital Field Recorders Capture 240+ Performances During 3-Day Event

NASHVILLE (Summer NAMM Booth #410) June 20, 2008 - When long-time guitar aficionado Henry Lowenstein, and his partner Ron Hill acquired the legendary Newport, R.I. Guitar Festival last year, they saw great potential for the event in South Florida. The Newport Guitar Festival in Miami Beach was noteworthy on multiple fronts. As Miami's first hand-built and vintage guitar festival, it attracted 120 top luthiers, 50 vintage guitar dealers and over 7000 dedicated guitar collectors and music lovers, and was highlighted by more than *240 mini-concerts*. Celebrated acoustic, blues, country, and jazz performers including International Finger-style 2007 Champion Don Alder, Muriel Anderson and Michael Chapledaine dazzled attendees with their virtuosity.

To facilitate the highest-quality recording of each live performance Lowenstein purchased eight Sony PCM-D50 digital field recorders. "We had an incredible number of artists playing on four sound stages and in 23 'quiet rooms' throughout the 3-day event," he reports. "We were committed to capturing each of these performances both as an historical audio-document and for release in a 'Best Of Show' CD. It was imperative that we had the ability to record in 96kHz/24-bit , stereo sound, and that the process be transparent, highly portable, easy to use, and totally reliable."

Lowenstein and his engineering team researched the best portable field recorders on the market. While the Sony PCM-D1 pulled the highest overall marks, its \$2000. ticket price made buying a full complement of four units prohibitively expensive. "At the same time we were considering the PCM-D1, we also looked into Sony's new PCM-D50,

which I first saw at the Winter NAMM show. At \$600 it's much more affordable and, more to the point, it has extraordinarily high quality sound, built in 4 GB memory, 6 hours recording time, two position X-Y and Wide-Stereo electret condenser mics, PC/MAC compatible high speed USB port to streamline the file transfer process to master storage units. They also have an extremely rugged aluminum case able to bear up to what we knew would be an extremely demanding schedule," he says. "We recorded a live concert with a sample unit Sony provided us with, and were convinced that the PCM-D50 could do the job. Ultimately, we purchased eight units and a dozen memory sticks, which enabled our 8-man recording team to document virtually every performance throughout the festival.

"We had runners swapping out the Memory Sticks, downloading them to our hard drives and rushing them right back into action," Lowenstein adds. "If we missed a session with the Memory Stick, the PCM-D50's four GB internal memory captured the performance. The units were in constant use and rotation, whether plugged into AC or operating on batteries. I don't think we ran low on battery life or memory the entire weekend. We got over 600 hours of absolutely spectacular recordings which we will share with millions of people linked through our two websites www.13thfret.com and www.newportguitarfestmb.com this summer"

The range of material recorded during The Newport Guitar Festival ran the gamut from jazz to classical to country and western. "Virtually every playing style was represented and the performers ranged from wizened professionals to a nine-year-old prodigy who walked on stage one day and blew everyone away with a virtuoso performance on a solid body electric that was almost bigger than he was," Lowenstein says with a laugh.

Peter Farber a local Miami favorite gave over 15 performances at the festival, playing on some of the best hand-made guitars in the world. "Everywhere I played at the Festival someone was recording the performance on one of the Sony's," he said.

Sometimes your best cuts just pop up out of nowhere. By having these high-quality PCM-D50's everywhere I got some of the best recordings of my career.”

Paul Foschino, senior manager for professional audio in Sony Electronics' Broadcast and Production Systems Division reports that The Newport Guitar Festival in Miami Beach represents “a perfect case study of the performance and durability of the PCM-D50. They used these digital field recorders constantly throughout the entire event, recording hundreds of performances and workshops. The units were in use from morning to night, and Henry Lowenstein reports they did not experience a single malfunction or missed opportunity.”

“A particular advantage of the PCM-D50 was the virtually non-existent learning curve,” Lowenstein concludes. “Our engineers were delighted to replace the racks of gear they were originally intending to use with these compact field recorders. They found the Sony's equally efficient in hand-held or tripod-mounted applications. The LCD menu readout is clear and easy to read, and the furry Wind Screens completely eliminated extraneous mic noise. And, because these field recorders are built to last, we're confident that we'll be using them in future Newport Festivals for years to come.”

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Photo Caps: Peter Farber performance at the Newport Guitar Festival in Miami Beach, recorded by one of eight Sony PCM-D50 digital field recorders covering the show.

Tripod-mounted Sony PCM-D50 captures a Peter Farber performance at the Newport Guitar Festival in Miami Beach

For additional images of the Sony PCM-D50 in use at the Newport Guitar Festival In Miami Beach please contact Howard Sherman hshermanpr@gmail.com

For a video overview of the Newport Guitar Festival in Miami Beach visit:

www.slaterproductions.com/clients/newport_guitar_festival/ngf2.mov

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