

# Lean On Me

**Promoted as the Rolls Royce of supports, Paul Rigby reviews the luxurious Track Precision 600 speaker stands.**

**T**o many users, hi-fi stands are a necessary annoyance. They're the things that add an irritating £100 onto your new bookshelf speaker bill. They're the items that lift the speakers up to ear level and stop them collecting dust on the floor. They're the fashion accessories that make the offensive speaker look slightly more palatable to your partner.

In actuality, they are so much more than that because the speaker and its attendant stand forms a synchronous, single sonic entity when music is playing. Speaker stands can make or break a speaker's overall sonic performance. Poor stands can introduce fifty-seven varieties of distortion into the speaker sound loop. Poor stands can also reduce your bass to a floppy, woolly mess, they can dull your midrange to resemble a wet Wednesday in Rotherham and make your soundstage sound as focused as a drunk after twenty pints of Theakston's Old Peculiar.

Like cables and isolation shelving, speaker stands are grossly undervalued. Which is why many will balk at the price of these stands from Track Audio, seeing them as rich men's toys: accessories for the guy who has everything, in fact. Not so, you should see them in the same way that you look upon a component upgrade. They are just as important.

Quite apart from the fact that they look gorgeous, quite a change from the agricultural designs I'm normally used to, the Tracks feature a variety of specialist technologies aimed at presenting your speakers in their best light.

Isolation mounts on the stands have been designed to minimise room resonance. Within the mounts, Track has integrated hydraulic dampers to tackle vibration, turning it into harmless heat which then dissipates. This decoupling should

improve bass performance and naturalise midrange performance. You will even find a spirit level built into each stand for levelling purposes.

Build quality is second to none with high grade stainless steel and a finely adjusted ball lock system altering leg height. Arriving with a ten year guarantee and available in satin black or silver anodised finishes, you can request other colours, if you wish.

Presented as a tripod design for solid support, the stands can be bought in different sizes and heights to support different types of speakers such as subwoofers and more, with different top-plate sizes.

## SOUND QUALITY

To best review the Track stands and seek out even the most subtle of tonal variations, I decided to concentrate on high resolution analogue as the exclusive sound test source. Spinning the 'Chet Baker Sings' vinyl, the first impression was of a mix that was acting more as a single entity than a collection of highlights. The stereo image was better integrated while the soundstage layout was enhanced and more democratic. Baker, himself, was set deeper into the soundstage, adding to the 3D effect, while his delivery had a tonally more correct approach. Bass was now more prominent and active within the track, driving the rhythm but also helping to improve a better balance to the presentation.

The lowering of the overall distortion, effected by the isolation technologies inherent within the design, also meant that the midrange lost an element of blurring and bloom which formerly made the trumpet sound diffuse while the now multifaceted treble appeared with

onion skin-like layering.

Turning to prog rock and King Crimson's compressed mix of 'Three Of A Perfect Pair', the stands introduced new instrumental separation which then released a raft of new detail to the ear. The reduced distortion lowered the aggressive compression effects. The treble, also a compression victim, now enjoyed greater isolation which aided sound quality, producing more detail. Finally, bass now sounded tighter, faster and more effective while bass guitar exhibited a highly defined presentation.

## CONCLUSION

The essence of the sonic improvements from the Track Audio Precision 600s hung on how the stands reduced distortion. By lowering the noise floor, the stands provided greater opportunity for a richer variety of frequencies to come forth. That made these works of supportive art audiophile essentials and, despite their relatively high price, an absolute bargain in terms of their improvement to sound quality.



## HI-FI WORLD

**VERDICT** ●●●●●

Beautifully designed but with audiophile-level sonics a priority, these stands will allow many music fans to truly hear their speakers for the first time.

**TRACK AUDIO**  
**PRECISION 600** £1,380  
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**FOR**  
 - attention to detail  
 - low distortion  
 - clean soundstage  
 - balanced presentation

**AGAINST**  
 - nothing