

Ecosse Reference SMS2.4

Best known for its high value audio cables, the Ecosse brand also makes luxurious leads for high-end systems. Review: **John Bamford**



We were impressed by the refined performance of Ecosse Reference Cable's MS2.15 solid-core speaker cable (£349 for a 3m pair) when auditioning it back-to-back with similarly-priced models in our Group Test at the turn of last year [*HFN* Jan '13]. This Reference SMS2.4 loudspeaker cable is in a totally different price sector and features a considerably more elaborate multi-core construction.

It's one of Ecosse's high-end cable range employing 'Super-Monocrystal' conductors in which the OCC (Ohno Continuous Casting) mono crystal wire undergoes an additional heating cycle in its manufacturing process. Says Ecosse: 'It's the purity of the grain structure which defines a conductor's ability to transmit audiophile quality sound, not just the purity of the copper ingot before smelting. By heating and re-crystallising the metal we achieve a conductor that exhibits exceptional linearity through the audio frequency band.'

Although large in diameter the SMS2.4 is highly flexible and consequently easy to dress in a system setup. Within the cable's PVC outer jacket each conductor has two concentrically wound bundles of multi-strand wires of differing cross-sectional area, insulated with a polypropylene dielectric. The bundles are tightly



ABOVE: An ornamental block conceals the exit of the main conductors. For the 4mm termination, Ecosse says its tin/silver 'Super-solder' provides high tolerance to vibration



ABOVE: Hollow 4mm 'z/x' banana plugs are compatible with BFA speaker terminals. Spade connectors can also be specified

woven in what's described as a rope-lay construction, twisted in a precise helix.

POTENT BASS

Auditioned through my Townshend Galahad speakers using both my usual Mark Levinson No.383 amplifier and T+A's new PA 3000 HV integrated, the Ecosse Reference SMS2.4 sounded wide open and uncompressed. Subjectively it certainly sounds like a wide bandwidth cable, dispensing extended and powerful bass and conveying plenty of 'air' at HF.

It's especially invigorating with rock recordings. Listening to the electric version of the title track from Paul Rodgers' *Muddy Water Blues* album [Victory Music 824 414-2] I found Pino Palladino's lugubrious yet intoxicating bass contribution especially potent, while Jason Boham's drum kit assault was truly explosive. Set against a spookily black background the musicians were depicted lucidly in the soundstage. Subtle variations in reverb applied to Rodgers' voice were clearly depicted

thanks to the cable's 'airy' quality – with a lovely sense of image space and depth.

Hi-res recordings similarly benefited from the cable's dynamically free and open sound. The *Presto* from Haydn's Quartet in D, Op.76 [2L Records, 24/96 download] was conveyed with hearty vitality with no trace of HF harshness. ⬇

HI-FI NEWS VERDICT

While certainly expensive this cable is a fraction of the price commanded by exotic cost-no-object designs that commonly employ pure silver or silver/gold conductors. Consequently it can be regarded as excellent value for high-end systems, its performance sufficiently transparent to do justice to the very best components. It sounds airy and open at the top end, and its powerful bass should ensure hearty performance from large floorstanding speakers.

Sound Quality: 86%

