

# Necessary Accessories



## PRO-JECT SPEED BOX II

Turntable supply with electronic speed switching

My enthusiasm for Pro-Ject's outrageously funky Genie record player [see p74] – which at £140 complete with arm and cartridge costs less than a pair of good wires, for goodness sake – is tempered only by the awkward arrangement of the on/off switch. It's positioned at the base of the (separate) motor unit, itself a lightweight affair, consequently the mere act of switching the deck on and off can cause one to inadvertently move the motor out of critical alignment and alter the tension of the drive belt. Moreover, I've always hated having to move a turntable's drive belt from one pulley to another in order to swap between 33 and 45rpm.

Enter Pro-Ject's Speed Box II. Pro-Ject makes all manner of gizmos in diminutive boxes. Last month we looked at its 'USB Box' (a self-powered USB computer soundcard) and a quick call to Pro-Ject's UK distributor, Henley Designs, soon had this Speed Box II

arrive at *HFN* towers. Suitable for any turntable requiring a 16V AC power supply, it provides quartz-generated speed regulation and electronic speed switching at the touch of a button. Price is £85.

The captive cable from the Speed Box II's output [see photo, above] to the turntable's motor is only around 20cm, so be warned that the box *must* be positioned very close to the deck. One touch of the solitary Speed button changes the speed; holding the button switches the unit on/off.

Does it actually improve the sound of the budget Genie deck? If I thought that the title track of Shadowfax's *Too Far To Whisper* LP [Windham Hill WHA 1051] sounded more self-assured and expansive I might, perhaps, have been fooling myself. This wouldn't be the point... and I didn't dwell on it. I'd pay the asking price simply for the convenience of having electronic speed switching. It works a treat. **JB**

### VERDICT

If you enjoy listening to music in subdued lighting, the dazzling blue LED on the Speed Box II's fascia might drive you to distraction. Why does it have to be quite so bright? Nevertheless this is an essential accessory sure enough.

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### HI-FI NEWS SPECIFICATIONS

AC Output	16V/190mA
Outboard power supply ('wall wart')	16V/500mA
Dimensions (W x H x D)	103 x 38 x 103mm
Weight (without power supply)	540g
Speed change	33.33 and 45rpm
Price	£85