

Chord Company RumourX

Chord Company continues its excellent run of form with another class-leading speaker cable

Chord Company's recent track record has been little short of astonishing. We've had a stream of interconnects and speaker cables over the past few years and none of them has disappointed, each securing a place at the top table at its respective price point.

Along with all the five-star verdicts, the company has dominated our cable awards too - and the newly introduced RumourX doesn't look as though it's going to buck that positive trend.

Spreading rumours

The original Rumour was introduced way back in 1996, and at the time was only Chord's second attempt at a speaker cable. It says much for the original design that, apart from a few cosmetic changes, it has remained pretty much the same until now.

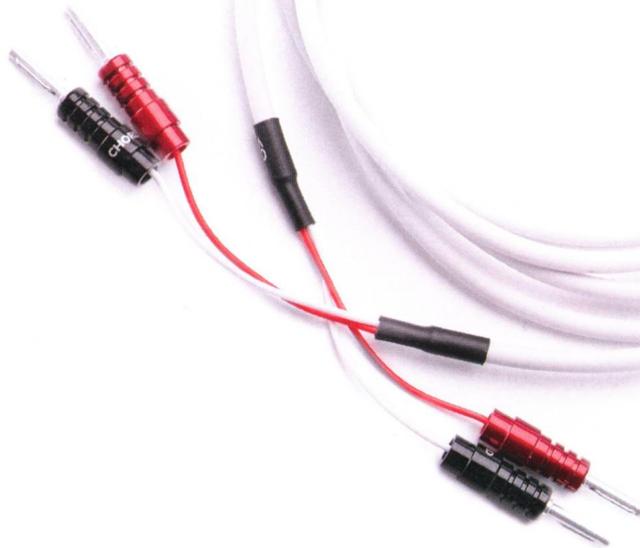
Chord's development work with high-end ranges, such as ChordMusic and Sarum T, showed that it was possible to make significant improvements to the Teflon dielectric material that the company had used until then.

While the subsequent high-end solution of Teylon proved too expensive to use in products such as the RumourX, a more reasonably priced alternative XLPE (Cross-linked Polyethylene) was found instead. This has been substituted into the Rumour recipe.

The rest of the cable remains much as it has always been, and that's no bad thing. This is a surprisingly thin-gauge cable that uses silver-plated high-purity copper conductors and measures just 6mm in diameter. The conductors are twisted to improve interference rejection and covered in a flexible white PVC outer jacket. The terminations on our samples are Chord's classy-looking silver-plated ChordOhmic 4mm banana plugs.

We try the RumourX in our usual reference set-up of the Naim NDS/555PS music streamer, Gamut's D3i/D200i amplifier and ATC's SCM50 speakers as well as a Naim Uniti Star/KEF R3 combination. It performs consistently, regardless of partnering system.

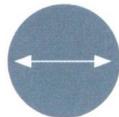
WHAT HI*FI?



KEY FEATURES



Twisted pair construction



6mm diameter

With the Chord plumbed in, our systems deliver a crisp, clean and dynamic presentation. We're impressed at the musically cohesive nature of the sound and the way our systems render subtle dynamic shifts with such finesse. There's plenty of punch to the likes of Queen's *Under Pressure* and the ability to latch onto that irresistible rhythm track with unwavering precision.

While similarly priced rivals, such as Audioquest's Rocket 22, deliver more in the way of sonic refinement and body to the sound, the Chord does enough in both regards to avoid complaint, while

adding more in the way of punch and rhythmic drive. Both are excellent cables in their own way.

Home entertainment

Tonally, the RumourX is well balanced and, as is Chord's way, falls just a little on the lively side of neutral. But the important thing is that, whatever type of music we play, from Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* to Kendrick Lamar's *To Pimp A Butterfly*, our system sounds at home.

While the Chord RumourX can't take full credit for that lively and entertaining sound, it certainly plays a big part.

WHAT HI*FI?

RATING ★★★★★

SOUND



COMPATIBILITY



BUILD



FOR

- Helps our system produce a lively, cohesive sound
- Thin design makes it easy to accommodate

AGAINST

- More physically impressive alternatives on the market

VERDICT

Chord Company hits the mark again. The RumourX delivers a great performance for the price