

ULTRA TEC OWNERS NEWSLETTER...the SOME TIMES Summer, 1992

Dear Ultra Tec Owner--

There are people who buy a machine right before a newsletter comes out, and upon getting their first newsletter, think it's a monthly event. If that's *you* this time, please be officially disillusioned--we don't call it the "Some Times" for nothing.

There are two things, in combination, that motivate me to do a newsletter: a full file, and the guilt of not having written for a long time. You facetors supply both--information for the file, and the "guilt trip" too. There's usually one person, however, who pushes me to the brink. This time it was Ultra Tec cousin Hans Hamburger who called last Thursday from Germany (!) to see if he had missed a recent newsletter--and here I am on Saturday, pecking away at my computer keyboard--and feeling less guilty already. So blame cousin Hans.

NEWS--

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA GUILD--FACETERS FAIR. This grand-daddy of Faceters Fairs is traditionally held in January (but read about a change in scheduling, further down) followed by the Tucson show a couple of weeks later. That always resulted in a fatiguing stretch of work, so Maxine (my wife, for you first-time readers) suggested that Ultra Tec send "the kids" to Sacramento. She said "they can use the experience"--("That's true" I said). She said "they can probably do just as good a job as you can"--("I can't believe that!" I said). She said "You're not getting any younger"--("Izat so?" I said--"Well, I'm only as old as I feel!"). So I thought about how I feel, and I sent the kids.



"The Kids" were Gus Munoz and Robert Rubin, and it was good experience for them, and they did a good job, and it was good for me to be rested for Tucson.

Many of you who have had reason to call the factory have spoken to Gus or Robert on the phone. As I've written before, one of the good things about the shows is that you get to see the faces you've only been able to imagine from the

phone conversation--and that's a two-way street--so some of you got to see Gus and Robert, and they got to see you all.

At the show, there was no qualifying winner for the Ultra Tec Best Case award. This has happened repeatedly, in contrast to the first dozen years of the Fair. (It's led me to think about the state of faceting-competition. The more I think about it, the more I think it may be following a wrong path--despite the very best intentions. Rather than getting into it here--I've promised an article to the newsletter of the Northern California Guild. This solves my problem of what to write about--it'll be something like "Faceting Competition--Where has it taken us, and Where is it going?". I may have to subtitle it "How to lose friends and influence among the Faceting Guilds"--we shall see).

The "hot contest" at the Faceters Fair is a single-stone "Masters Award"--and Don Dunn, an Ultra Tec dealer in Ohio was again "absentee" winner, for the second year running, this time with a perfect score of 100. Congratulations Don.

Now, here's something for you to take note of--the next Sacramento Faceters Fair will be held in November, (not close to the Tucson show--and also avoiding "Super-Bowl Sunday"). Their next show: November 7 and 8, at the California State Fairgrounds.

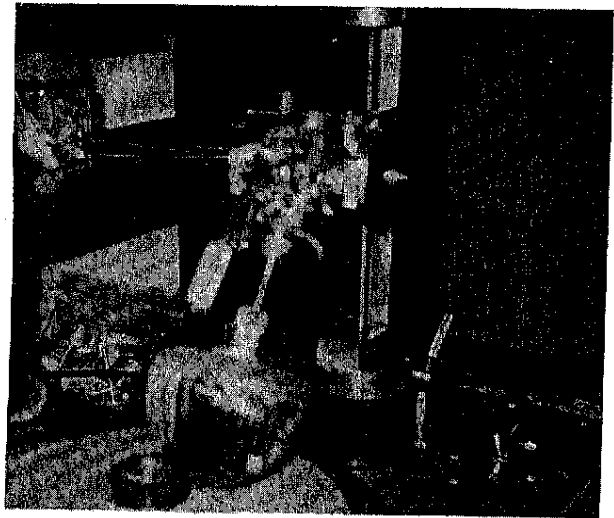
TUCSON SHOW. The Tucson Show was heavily attended. The crowd did not include the same number of visitors from overseas that it used to have, however, although it was up from last year when many didn't attend because of the Iraq war. Despite the general economic situation, business was brisk.

Of course, meeting with people, and in many cases seeing their faceting efforts, was a lot of enjoyment. There were so many that it seems wrong to just single one out, but Al Reigelman of Arizona showed us his "Kaleidoscope Cut", and it was super. I know it's been published elsewhere now, but I've included the design with this letter for those who have not picked up on it yet--it's a "fun" cut. Try it.

Unlike other years, I made time to shop for some rough, and I found some nice Rhodolite. That *was* nice because I had committed to cutting a Garnet--it was for a birthstone ring that my sister wanted to give her grand-daughter as a present (I offered it after she went shopping for a finished ring and gulped at the prices). It's always nice when something "forces" me to do some faceting, away from the business humdrum, and *of course* the stone came out great. "Of course", because I facet on my Ultra Tec.

I THINK THIS BELONGS WITH "NEWS",
RATHER THAN "TIPS".

Why? Well, you can consider it as a "tip", if you'd like--it does show what you can do with your Ultra Tec, with a Two-Inch Base accessory--but I think it's "news". This picture was sent in by Leon Agee of Idaho--well known cutter of "humongous" stones. Maxine saw it and said "you see, we can have faceted doorknobs--they're not too big to do"--I said, "OK, OK, I'll do it--as soon as I find some clean emerald rough". Anyhow, Leon's stone is too big for a doorknob. How about a cocktail ring.

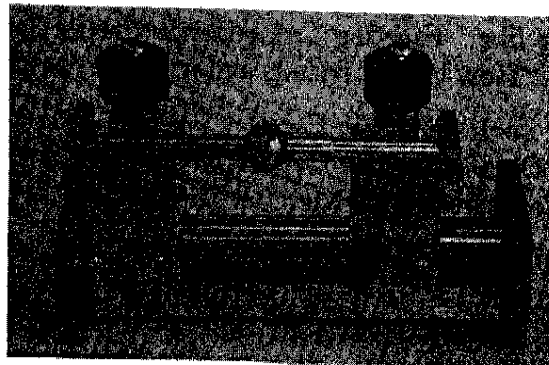


NEW STUFF With each announcement of something new, I think that it must be the last new thing, and if not the last, then the last for a long time. I realize, however, that "New Stuff" has been an almost regular section of the Newsletter. And, sure enough, there is something new this time:

A new **Standard Transfer Fixture**--we call it "Standard" because it is now supplied with each new machine. --As you remember, the current Spindle is a *keyed* design, and the keying feature, of course, allows keyed transferring--and for that we provided the "V-slides". That was a relatively easy way to modify existing Transfer Fixtures. But, we got complaints of "too many pieces", and so we went back to the drawing board--with a review of the various transfer fixtures we'd played around with over the years, and this is what came out:

There's a sliding V-block to bring the dopped stone to the receiving dop. The V-blocks include a feature to align the keys. The principle used to assure straight-line movement was borrowed from the Ultra Tec Mast. It can be conveniently be set horizontally or vertically, on a nice wide base.

We "floated" this design out into the world at the Sacramento Show and the Tucson Show to get reactions, so some of you have seen it there. The reactions were all positive.



As you can see, it is a more costly design for us, and the machine price has been adjusted, as has the price of the keyed-Spindle modification (since that now *includes* the new Transfer Fixture. On its own, the Transfer Fixture has a price of \$98. But, if you purchased a Spindle Mod, or a faceting machine that included the slides, your price, until Labor Day, is \$66, (yes, folks in the office, another "special-consideration" deal for you to work with--I'm sorry).

A TRANSFERRING "HOW-TO"--While we're on the subject of transferring, I've been questioned about how to remove the original dop from the stone after the stone is attached to the second dop, if cyanoacrylate glue is used (we had long advocated the remove-and-redop method, but now that we've supplied a keyed arrangement, I guess folks want to use it--hence the question). The method of doing it is similar to removing from wax: Wet a cloth and drape it over your hand to hold the stone, with the new dop extending into your covered palm. Hold the old dop over an alcohol lamp flame--it gets hot quickly--and with a pliers or a clothespin, snap the old dop off--with a sideways bend. Obviously, hold the stone firmly. It's all quick and easy. (In my experience, the glue remains on the stone--both stone and dop having been cleaned with acetone prior to the original glue application).

ABOUT ILLUMINATION. Several notes in my file are about the illumination to use while faceting. I remember, way back when, that Howard Stanley said that it was best to use a **clear (unfrosted) bulb** for examining a polish (at that time clear bulbs had vanished from the general market and Ultra Tec carried them in stock). Later on, as he also recommended a clear bulb, Al Heubler of New Mexico said: "...look for the reflection of the filament, then move the stone slightly--or better, move your head slightly--losing the filament reflection. The facet turns a little "grey"--it's hard to describe in words, but you'll know it when you see it...and any scratches, however slight, will stand out as silver threads."

And, on the same subject, as I skim through my file, the late Dr. Henry Owens suggested the use of polarized lenses--that elimination of the glare made it easier to evaluate the quality of the polished surface. In particular, he thought grey slip-ons that were available from Eddie Bauer were very good.

BRUSH YOUR TEETH. My notes of that earlier conversation with Al Heubler had his comment that it is good to use a regular toothbrush to clean Index Gear teeth. The gear can pick up a small particle, and even a very small one would affect the alignment of the stone. Good idea.

SECOND THOUGHTS--Third or fourth thoughts(?)--About synthetics. For a long time I've been in the "synthetics-are-OK-but-not-for-me" camp. I think I'm still there--but I'm thinking. At Tucson I picked up a piece of synthetic, or more accurately, I should say "imitation", Alexandrite. Remember I said I cut that Garnet for my sister's grandchild--it was her birthstone? Well, I had the presence of mind to find out about the birthstone of her other grand-daughter, and it is Alexandrite (as a matter of fact, it is Alexandrite for Alexandra)--and I could see what's coming. One thing that's not coming is a real Alexandrite for this kid--so I'm prepared with the synthetic. And you know what? I know that stone will cut beautifully--there will be more cheers from the family.

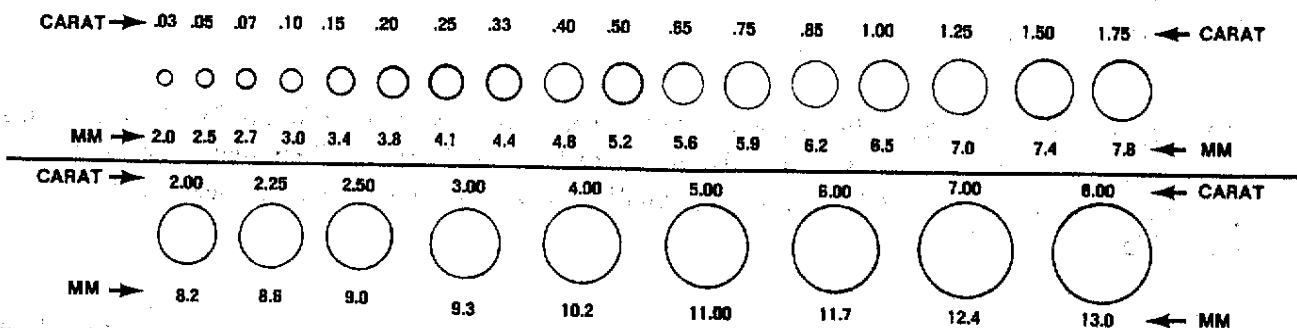
I remembered a note from Jim Feldman, in which he expressed *his* second thoughts about simulants and synthetics, allowing that he's come to think that people who just rule out synthetics, no matter what, are "missin' the boat". He talked about how super some of the colored CZ's look. He went on to comment on the man-made Emeralds, like Gilson and Chatham which are sometimes available as rough--he felt the were "great!". Which leads me to a question I'd like to "float out"--we don't anticipate being rough dealers, natural or synthetic, but there's a chance I could arrange for a limited-time availability of good quality man-made emerald rough. If there's interest out there among you Ultra Tec cousins, float back an answer. If there's enough interest, I'll look into it further.

And on the subject of synthetics--we've been asked to provide the critical angle information for the popular synthetics, and here's a little chart:

Material	Hardness	Refractive index	Pavilion Angle	Crown Angle
Corundum	9	1.76	42	40
CZ	8.5	2.15	41	35
Glass	5.5	1.5	43	42
GGG	6.5	2.0	41	37
Spinel	8.	1.72	42	40
Strontium Titanate	5.5	2.41	40	35
YAG	8.5	1.83	41	38

The true "synthetic"--a man-made duplication of a natural gemstone, by definition, has the same technical characteristics as the natural stone. Those numbers above were provided by a visitor who declined identification in the newsletter--my usual offer of "undying fame"--in exchange for not having to put up with the "corrections" (which will start pouring in any minute now).

The same gentleman gave me this handy chart--handy to you CZ'ers--showing the corresponding sizes for diamonds of certain carat weights--the interest coming from CZ's disparity with diamonds and the desire of many to use CZ's as diamond simulants. (Now I beg my printer NOT to reduce the size of this page--he said he wouldn't--but check the millimeter size that's printed. Don't just trust the little circles. These are the DIAMOND sizes, not CZ)



MISCELLANY....Coming up in September--on the 26th and 27th, is the 1992 Faceters Gem Fair of the Southern California Guild--at the Orange County Fairgrounds in Costa Mesa....and, an important bit of "miscellany": After seven years (I) in the front office, Delores has left for a new job. If you called us during those years, it was Delores who answered the phone. She and Gus were married about five years ago. Now, I can *understand* her reason for leaving--but I thought it was a *super* idea that she and Gus had nothing to talk about except Ultra Tec when they got home. We wish her the best--and we know we'll see her. She liked the idea of joining me in sending all you folks the very best regards.So long, for now.

Joel Rubin