

The MCCC Connection

A Publication of the Metroplex Commodore Computer Club
March 1996

Fujitsu DynaMo 230

Howdy! Today I got the latest MCCC News of Feb 1996. The leading story which compares EZ and ZIP drives caught my eye, as this is a choice I had to grapple with recently myself. I was surprised that the drive I finally selected wasn't even mentioned. I am referring to the Fujitsu DynaMo 230.

The DynaMO is a Magneto-Optical (M-O) drive. Writing to the disk is done with a combination of electromagnet and laser. Reading from the disk is done with laser only. This technology has been around a while in the form of large, expensive, high capacity drives. It's only recently that the smaller drives have begun to look affordable.

Each M-O disk is supposed to hold 230 MB of data. When formatted on my Amiga, I find 217 MB free space on the disk. Unlike the ZIP or EZ disks, the M-O disks are an industry standard medium produced by a range of manufacturers. The DynaMO will also read and write the older industry standard 128 MB M-O disks. The disks are exactly the size and shape of our familiar 880 K floppy disks, except twice as thick. They even have a write protect tab in the same location, and will take the same size disk labels. Although Fujitsu has been promoting their DynaMO brand of drives lately, other companies also make compatible units. The prices run about \$500, though this is always gradually dropping. That may seem a bit high compared to a \$200 ZIP drive, but the cost of the blank disks is what I really like. I ordered ten "bulk" 230 MB disks from MEI and got them for \$18 each. Please note, these disks each hold over 200 MG formatted, yet I am paying less than many people do for 100 MG ZIP disks.

The low cost of blank disks was one reason I went with M-O. Another reason was that I wanted a disk large enough to easily back up my hard drive. I was looking at a new 1 GB monster hard drive here. Using Quarterback, it is much more convenient to partition the drive and back up one partition onto each disk or tape. With ZIP, I would have to divide my drive into ten partitions. That would be unwieldy. The larger capacity of the M-O disks allowed me to cut the number of partitions down to a more reasonable level.

When I first unpacked the DynaMO, I had to set aside the PC hardware (a cheap SCSI controller card and cable). Fujitsu sell three packages: one for MAC, one

for PC and one "generic" bare SCSI drive. I might have chosen the last for my Amiga, except I didn't find out about it until later. Plus, I still don't know any place that carries that package. I bought my drive from a PC mail order business. This turned out all right for me, since I also have a PC and may want to use the M-O drive on it. BEWARE! Fujitsu is currently introducing a version of this drive for the PC parallel port. I do not think this would work on an Amiga.

Connecting the DynaMO to my Amiga was a snap. The drive looks exactly like an external floppy drive. It has a small external power supply. On the rear are some well-marked switches to select the SCSI device number and other options. There is even a small stand to allow setting the drive on its side.

Formatting the disks was a minor challenge. This requires some SCSI prep software. I used my old favorite MicroBotics HardFrame utilities, though any SCSI prep or partitioning software should do the trick. The purpose of this is to write Rigid Disk Blocks (RDB): essential data needed before the Amiga can work with the disk. It is advisable to set up one partition on the disk and to make sure all the disks are set up alike so there is no confusion later on when swapping disks. After The RDB is written, I go back to the Workbench menu and do a simple format. This is a very slow process. I haven't timed it, but it seems like about 30 minutes to format a disk. Fortunately, this only needs to be done once for each disk. After that I can use Workbench's Quick Format.

The performance of this drive is very good. The reading speed is much like a hard drive. The writing speed is somewhat slower, but not objectionable at all. It can certainly back up my hard drive much faster than using the old Viper tape. Once the disks are formatted, my Amiga recognizes disk changes automatically, as if it were a gigantic floppy disk. The only catch is that there must be a disk in the drive when I boot up, otherwise the drive is not accessible.

I have been trying the DynaMO for a few days now. I've not only backed up my hard drive, but I have also started archiving the stacks of floppies here onto a single M-O disk using Disk Masher (DMS). I couldn't be more pleased with the product, and I hope others may take a look at it rather than blindly jumping on the ZIP bandwagon.

...Tony Belding, MCCC

Library Hot Picks

Digitized scenic pictures	MCCC-A_1013
	MCCC-A_1014
	MCCC-A_1015
	MCCC-A_1016
Digitized swimsuit pictures	MCCC-A_1021
	MCCC-A_1022
	MCCC-A_1023
MUI v3.2	MCCC-A_1018
MUI v3.2 bug fix	MCCC-A_1024
Magic Workbench icons	MCCC-A_1019
MCP (Maser Control Program) v1.10	MCCC-A_1023
AmiPeg (MPeg animation player)	MCCC-A_1029
LJ4Boost (LaserJet 4 print driver)	MCCC-A_1032
TolleUhr (Analog clock)	MCCC-A_1033

If Microsoft built cars...

1. A particular model year of car wouldn't be available until after that year instead of before it.
2. Every time they repainted the lines on the road, you'd have to buy a new car.
3. Occasionally your car would just die for no reason, and you'd have to restart it. For some reason, you'd just accept this.
4. You could only have one person in the car at a time unless you bought a Car 95 or a Car NT. But then you'd have to buy more seats.
5. Sun Motorsystems mould make a car that was powered by the sun, twice as reliable, and five times as fast but would only run on 5% of the roads.
6. The oil, engine, gas and alternator warning lights would be replaced with a single "General Car Fault" warning light.
7. People would get excited about the "new" features in Microsoft cars, forgetting completely that they had been available in other cars for years.
8. We'd all have to switch to Microsoft gas.
9. The U.S. government would be *getting* subsidies from an automaker, instead of giving them.
10. New seats would force everyone to have the same-size butt.

March Calendar

March 5 — MCCC Board of Director's Meeting
7:30 pm — Okley Moss' Place
1049 Keith Drive, Hurst

March 9 — Metro C64/128 Chapter
1:30 pm — UNT Health Sciences Building
Lancaster & Camp Bowie, Fort Worth

March 12 — Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 pm — N. Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N. Richland Hills

March 19 — Amiga North Dallas Chapter
7:30 pm — Richardson Square Mall, Community Room
SE Corner of Beltline and Plano Road, Richardson

March 23 — 7:00 am — April Newsletter Deadline

Expiring Memberships

February 1996

Walker Brents	Phillip Chatman	Barbara Cramer
Gerald Faver	Hodari Kanyunyi	Fred McNabb
Jon Moreland	John Srader	Kenny Teoh
James Whitlow	Terry Wright	

March 1996

Ken Bohannon	Jim Carpenter	Kathy Cole
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Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

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