

# Spinning A Disc Slips A Disk By D.L. STEWART

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Being a disc jockey always struck me as an easy way to pick up a few extra bucks. You merely go to a dance, party, or wedding reception, play a couple of records, flash a winning smile at the audience, and take home a nice check at the end of the evening.

So when a local promoter asks if I'd like to try it, the offer sounds good to me. The woman who promised to love, honor and turn my table on the other hand, is skeptical.

"For one thing," She points out, "you don't have a portable stereo unit. And then there's your record collection."

"What's wrong with my record collection?"

"Oh, it's all right, I suppose, assuming you can book a wedding reception where they want to hear Luciano Pavarotti albums and the greatest hits of Jim Nabors."

"Well, that's no problem. He's going to let me use his unit and his collection of 5,000 records. All I have to do is show up."

Last Saturday evening I make my debut as a disc jockey for a wedding reception. My first job is to load the portable stereo unit into the station wagon. The unit consists of a portable double turntable, a portable amplifier, and two portable speakers, each of which is approximately the weight of a portable Sherman tank.

By the time I load them and the 5,000 records, every muscle in my back has taken a personal absence day and I am bent over with my chin six inches off the ground, which is three inches higher than the rear bumper of the station wagon.

I drive to the hall where the reception is to be and unload the equipment. As the first wedding guests drift into the hall, I begin to hook up. Hooking up a portable stereo system is a simple job that can be done by any reasonably intelligent person, with a PhD in electrical engineering.

Trying to remember the instructions the promoter gave me, I run the red wires from the turntables to the amplifier, the silver wires from the amplifier to the speakers, the gray wires from the speakers to the turntables. After 20 minutes I discover that I have more wires than places to plug them into.

Now the wedding hall has pretty much filled up with guests, so I pull out the wires and start again. Red wires from the speakers to the turntables. Silver wires from the turntables to the amplifier. Gray wires under the carpet. The unit still will not operate.

So now the wedding guests are putting on their coats. By the time I get this thing going, the guests will be gone, the hall will be empty, and the bride will be collecting alimony.

Frantically, I pull out the wires and start again. Perhaps the bride and bridegroom would consider doing the traditional first dance to a medley of my favorite jokes.

By the time I finally get it all together, the bride and bridegroom have been toasted, she has tossed her bouquet, he has tossed her garter, and it is time for them to dance. Quickly I reach behind me, grab one of the 5,000 records, and slap it on the turntable. After just a few bars, the bride and bridegroom stop dancing and glare at me.

"Play a different record," somebody hisses. I switch to a different record. I'm not sure what everybody was so upset about. I always sort of liked Jerry Lee Lewis singing "Great Balls of Fire."

While the bride and bridegroom dance, I get some more records ready. After three or four of them, a man in a tuxedo approaches me. I flash a winning smile.

"We don't want to hear so many fast records," he says. "Play something slow."

"Certainly sir." So I play some slow records. After two slow records, a woman in a long dress approaches me. I flash her a winning smile.

"Those slow records stink," she says. "Play something fast."

"But the guy in the tuxedo wants slow records."

"So what! He's with the bridegroom's family. The bride's family likes fast records."

After an hour, my winning smile has less wins than Charlie Brown. I have been approached with complaints about my music selection by everybody but the priest who performed the ceremony, and I am playing records at a wedding of Hatfields and McCoys.

The reception lasts three hours. When it's over, I disassembled the unit, lug it back to the station wagon, and head for home with a check in my pocket. Not to mention a set of springs that's going to have the station wagon in the shop for a week, and a back that's going to have me at the chiropractor's for a month.

All of that is going to cost quite a lot, I realize. Fortunately, I have an easy way to pick up a few extra bucks.