

Unrivalled
Crystal Cable
Ultimate Dream power cable

Siltech
Triple Crown power cable

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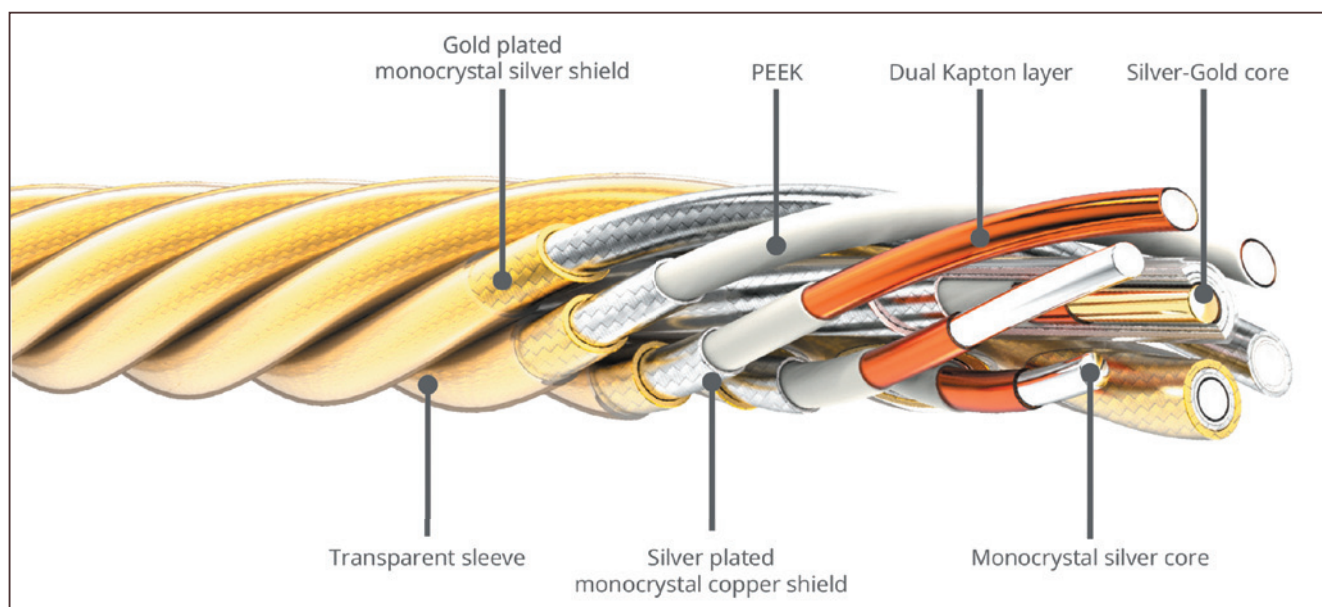


As a happy owner of the cable products made by Siltech and Crystal Cable from Netherland, I have been paying attention to what the new products they are coming up with from time to time. It was actually the CES show in January 2014 when I first saw a prototype of Siltech Triple Crown interconnects. However, I waited for a good year before I got them for review (Refer to Issue 407 for my comprehensive review). As far as I observed over the past few years, Siltech followed a pattern in their new product releases. When they launched their new cable products, interconnects, speaker cable and power cable were often released at almost the same time. On the other hand, even though Siltech and Crystal Cable adopt the same materials for creating the conductors for their cables, their fundamental designs and structures are very different. Therefore, every time when Siltech launched a flagship product, it often took a long time before Crystal Cable announced their corresponding flagship. This time, however, the situation was somewhat

different. When Siltech launched their new Triple Crown series, the factory encountered technical challenges in the production process and the gold plating with the metallic box and terminators of their interconnects. It took more than a year to transit from prototyping to full production. The Triple Crown power cable had an even more challenging situation. The cable went through a number of re-design iterations as the cable was too thick for practical purposes. It was not launched until March 2017. The two year R&D process broke the record of the factory's history. On Crystal Cable's side, the new flagship Ultimate Dream series was announced at the beginning of 2017 but strange enough - the first flagship product was their power cable, not their speaker cables, which were not available until 6 months later.

Sophisticated Structure

Basically, Crystal Cable's Dreamline Plus, Absolute Dream



Crystal Cable Ultimate Dream power cable

■ Listed Price : HK\$223,000(1.5m) ■ Listed Price : HK\$268,000(2m)

Siltech Triple Crown power cable

■ Listed Price : HK\$240,000(1.5m) ■ Listed Price : HK\$296,000(2m)



and the new Ultimate Dream series share the same co-axial conductor structure. The centre is made of mono crystal silver conductor with two layers of ultra low density DuPont-made Teflon insulation. On top of the Teflon insulation, there is another thin layer of Polyether Ketone Resin (PEEK). The cable was double shielded. The inner shield was braided with 80 strands of silver-plated mono crystal copper. The outer shield was braided with 80 strands of mono crystal silver. According to the manufacturer, the effectiveness of this composite shield is 99.99%. Lastly, the shield was protected by a layer of transparent sleeve.

For the sake of comparison, Dreamline Plus was made of a twisted pair of strands of co-axial conductors. Absolute Dream adopted 4 in star quad geometry. Ultimate Dream adopted 7. Out of them, 6 were mono crystal silver strands surrounding a single strand of G7 silver-gold core. Each of the 160 strands of conductors forming the dual layers of shielding are made of mono copper plated with pure silver. The function of the silver-gold core is to reduce the impedance of grounding, effectively eliminate the ground loop noises.

It would be interesting to know how the cables are assembled with the power connectors in Ultimate Dream and Triple Crown power cords. But Edwin Rijnveld, Siltech's CEO, refused to disclose the details. All we know is that 6 mono crystal silver

coaxial cables are connected to Live and Neutral. The shielding of these coaxial cables are used as power cord's shielding. The silver-gold core is used for ground cable. The manufacturer tested with numerous connectors and eventually adopted the Japanese made Oyaide flagship M1 and F1.

Work of the highest regard

Siltech Triple Crown power cable is the masterpiece in which Edwin Rijnveld take the highest regard since he started designing pure silver cable 27 years ago. In order to produce a perfect power cable, Siltech's design team adopted the state-of-the-art COMSOL multi-physics software for simulation, as well as FW Bell (3D Gauss) and Audio Precision for measuring 3D magnetic properties and total harmonic distortion respectively. Therefore, Triple Crown power cable displays very stable performance when being used to supply power to digital or analog equipments, whether it is high current or low current, under all working conditions. The cable structure can effectively suppress electromagnetic interference which often pollutes the system. Moreover, even if other cables leak electromagnetic interference, Triple Crown cables will be immune to pollution or distortion.

There are 6 strands of massive 10AWG (diameter of 2.59mm) S8 mono crystal pure silver cores. They are shielded with DuPont





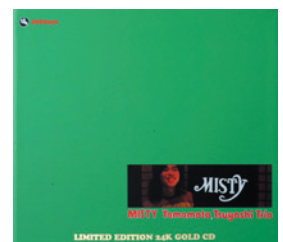
Kapton. 3 of them are connected to Live and the remaining 3 are connected to Neutral. There is a multi-strand mono crystal copper core surrounded by the 6 silver cores. It serves as the ground cable. The whole power cable is shielded by low loss metallic braid. Furutech's flagship FI-50NCF and FI-50M NCF were used to terminate the two ends of the cable.

Similar to Triple Crown interconnect and speaker cable, the power cable has a gold-plated aluminium case installed 14cm away from the two connectors respectively. However, there is no switch for grounding/floating as the ground cable has ultra low impedance and that it is for safety purpose. Similar to the interconnects and the speaker cable, the new power cable has impeccable construction and build quality. The only difference is that the power cable is much more massive given more silver cores have been used. As the cable is so thick (25mm for diameter), it is much harder to bend than the interconnect and the speaker cable. The two metallic cases do not allow the cable to rotate as what the user could do in the two other products. Therefore, the cable does require sufficient room behind the equipment. It's indeed a challenge for the user to ensure the cable was smoothly run from the equipment into the power outlet. If you ask me to compare it with Ultimate Dream, I found the flexibility and the usability of Ultimate Dream are much more desired.

The ultimate setup

In order to fully experience the power of Ultimate Dream power cable, the most straightforward way is to replace the Absolute Dream power cables originally used in my Karah Acoustics KA Ph Reference phono amplifier, Audio Note CDT Six CD transport and Gaku-On mono block power amplifiers with Ultimate Dream. Although Ultimate Dream power cables look substantially thicker than Absolute Dream, it is still very easy to manage.

When it came to actual performance, the first impression was "clearing the cloud and seeing the blue sky" (a Chinese saying), just like what I experienced when listened to Triple Crown interconnects and speaker cables before but the feeling was much stronger. The most obvious improvement was darker background, richer details, more effortless sound, high frequencies without limit, finer textures and outlines in mid frequencies. The speed and the power of bass frequencies are a whole new world. The new flagship is so much better than Absolute Dream. I listened to the two CDs I used to audition Triple Crown interconnects and speaker cables last time. The first one was 24K CD of "Misty" performed by Tsuyoshi Yamamoto Trio from Three Blind Mice (TBM). Wow! The Steinway & sons piano was sonorous. The dynamic was extremely impressive. The softer passage was fluid and smooth. Every note was crystal clear. The loud passage was incredibly striking and realistic. I can vividly feel the strength of the fingers from the music. The harmonics was rich and lasting. Amazing enough, from the music, I virtually sensed the toughness in the strings of Isao Fukui's double bass and also how agile was his fingers plucking them. The scene of Tetsujiro Obara swiping a brush on his jazz drums, occasionally striking them softly, was extremely romantic. His gestures were virtually visible. I would like to say this is probably one of the best moments in my system in which I felt the ambience of the recording studio and virtually saw the performance in person.



When I started playing Diana Krall's "Wallflower" LP, I was immediately amazed by her sumptuous voice. I was very familiar with her voice in my system but with Ultimate Dream, I found



a lot of “new” details. I also felt more emotions in her beautiful interpretation. The accompanying piano, guitar, jazz drums and the whole team’s performance sounded more coherent and orchestrated. They sounded more integrated with Krall’s voice, which made me realise how Diana Krall and

the producer, David Foster, made this album a unprecedented success.

Synergy

Three months after I started using Ultimate Dream power cable in my home system, I received two sets of Triple Crown power cables from Siltech. As I said, the thickness and the stiffness of the cables made it fairly challenging to twist or bend them in the limited space behind the Hi Fi racks at my home.

In my home system, the only cables that run straight from my power distributor to the equipment are the ones running from Shunyata Denali D2000/T to Gaku-On Power Amplifiers. These two cables are good candidates to be replaced by Triple Crown power cables. Triple Crown and Ultimate Dream power cables share the same grade of S8 mono crystal silver conductors. The design concepts behind these two cables also came from the

same design team. The construction of Triple Crown is somewhat more complicated and costly to build, hence the listed price is around 10% higher than Ultimate Dream. From my experience with Double Crown and Absolute Dream power cables, both share very similar tonal characteristics and the acoustic performance. This time, Triple Crown and Ultimate Dream have a similar situation. Both give surprises in terms of their acoustic performance. However, Ultimate Dream was like an energetic young lady while Triple Crown was like a mature and gorgeous woman. Both have their unique advantages. With Triple Crown, Tsuyoshi Yamamoto’s piano was more sentimental. There was more residual harmonics in the double bass. The jazz drum was equally romantic. Diana Krall’s voice was more relaxing and floppy but still very charming. The best part of Siltech and Crystal is that these two brands are highly compatible and can be used together to create synergy. I found them very flexible and user-friendly when using these two brands together in a single system.

To conclude, I got extremely satisfactory acoustic performance with Triple Crown interconnects and speaker cables in my system. With the addition of Ultimate Dream power cables, I got apparently more “sunshine” in the music while preserving the transparency and elegance characteristics displayed by Triple Crown. When I was able to run 4 Ultimate Dream cables into the limited space behind my Hi Fi racks, I couldn’t help singing “Hallelujah”! Why? I don’t think I need to explain! 🎵

