

## IsoTek

# Evo3 Corvus nine-way mains distribution block and conditioner



**IF YOU ARE** looking to introduce mains conditioning to your hi-fi system, something that can prove immediately off putting is that many devices simply can't accommodate all the different components in a well-specified setup. If you have a turntable, external phono stage and then music streaming networking hardware plus amplification needs to manage, four or even six-way socket distribution systems just aren't going to be sufficient.

IsoTek has taken this on board and its Evo3 Corvus has nine sockets and the power handling capacity to accommodate some fairly substantial setups. As part of its entry-level range, the Evo3 Corvus is designed to counter Common Mode and Differential Mode mains noise as well as RFI. Each of the sockets is star earthed and individually wired rather than in series and is fitted with a version of IsoTek's Delta filter with a view to resisting external noise sources. The Evo3 Corvus doesn't allocate any of the sockets for high-power devices such as an amplifier, so you are free to choose whichever outlet suits your needs best for a tidy installation.

### Block rocking beats

The mains input is a 16A IEC – rather than the more common 13A version – and it comes supplied with a suitable Evo3 Premier mains cable in the box – £75 when purchased separately. Externally, the Corvus is solid if not visually spectacular. The sockets are arranged in opposed pairs (different configuration shown) and the ninth socket sits in the centre opposite the IsoTek badge, which is useful if you have a plug that sees the cable exit the top – which can often foul the opposite plug in a pair. The entire chassis can be wall mounted and while it isn't exactly a thing of beauty, it feels solid and well-engineered and doesn't take up significantly more space than a conventional six-way inline mains distribution block.



In one extremely important way, the Corvus closely mimics the behaviour of IsoTek's £2,295 Evo3 Sigmas that sufficiently impressed me when I reviewed it in *HFC 394*. This is not a device that will correct any perceived faults in your equipment, so if you're at all unhappy with how your system sounds you should really go about rectifying this first.

For those that are already in love with the sound of their system, the Corvus allows it to continue to do what you enjoy but from a background that is quieter and more controlled. This is especially apparent with vinyl. With a Rega Planar 6 (*HFC 427*) connected to a Cyrus Phono Signature (*HFC 408*), the difference compared with a respectably solid individually switched mains block is readily apparent. The Corvus drops the already low noise floor to make it inaudible, allowing fine details buried in the mix of Public Service Broadcasting's *Every Valley* to be easily observed. The archive vox pops in *Britain Will Always Need Coal* are considerably easier to decipher with the IsoTek in place.

The effect with digital material is similar, but as most competent digital

devices already have an inaudible background, the realisation here is a little different. What the Corvus does with a Naim ND5 XS network player (*HFC 352*) and a Melco N1A NAS drive (*HFC 397*) is to gently expand the sense of dynamics and scale in the performance delivery. This extra scope is readily apparent in a DSD64 of Pink Floyd's *Welcome To The Machine* where the brooding space is more tangible, giving instrumentation that little bit more space to breathe plus an effortless boost to dynamics.

### Cloud nine

Crucially, none of these benefits have much in the way of appreciable downsides. The Corvus does show a fractional reduction in the absolute bass depth available compared with the significantly more expensive Evo3 Sigmas, but the improvement over a standard mains distribution block is marked and I don't know of any similarly priced rival that can better it. This is a no-nonsense piece of engineering that can handle expansive multi-component systems and help to deliver even more of the qualities you enjoy. **ES**

#### DETAILS

**PRICE**  
£695  
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#### OUR VERDICT

