

UK Plugs that will accept heavy gauge cables are few and far between so when hifi Pig was given the chance to try out the MS HD Power plugs we jumped at the opportunity. Danny Worth



For as long as I can remember the audio market has been lacking an alternative to the Furutech 1363 audiophile standard plug which will accept thick cable and larger conductors. I actually mentioned in my last review of the LessLoss cables that I'm surprised someone hasn't already dealt with this issue and produced an alternative – there is clearly a market!

So, unknowingly and to my surprise a knock at the door produced a packet which when I opened it contained a UK plug that looked somewhat different to any other I had seen before.

With a semi smoked plastic body and a cable clamping system (much like the Furutech but with differences) the MS HD Power is air tight and patented. There are two screws either side of a plastic torsion grip, but my eyes were drawn towards the rear of the

plug (the smoked plastic part) where I could see through the outer body at what looked like three larger than normal conductor tightening screws side by side and horizontally along the inside.

The plug came from Air Audio who are the distributor for these 'MS' plugs, so I gave them a call and they explained that the plug is capable of accepting much wider cables – up to 16mm in fact and the poles can take conductors of up to 4mm. They added that the plugs are available in a standard, highly polished copper version and also with a range of popular plating options - silver, gold and rhodium, all polished inside and out. Looking at the gold version it's very apparent that the polishing is carried out to a very high standard and the metal surfaces really do look perfect.

The plugs meet every British Standard and are fully compliant with all the necessary regulations - this has

been a controversial point amongst some enthusiasts with regards some UK plugs that have been marketed as suitable for audiophile use.

Starting from £30 for an unplated version and rising to £60 for the heavily rhodium plated version, the MS HD Power UK Plug is a product that I for one have been crying out for

Opening the plug up reveals an amount of layout and routing for individual conductors that is a breath of fresh air. I dread to count the number of times I've wired MK and standard sockets and have had to chisel, chop and hack plastic out of the way to get the cables and I'm sure many of our readers have experienced this too.

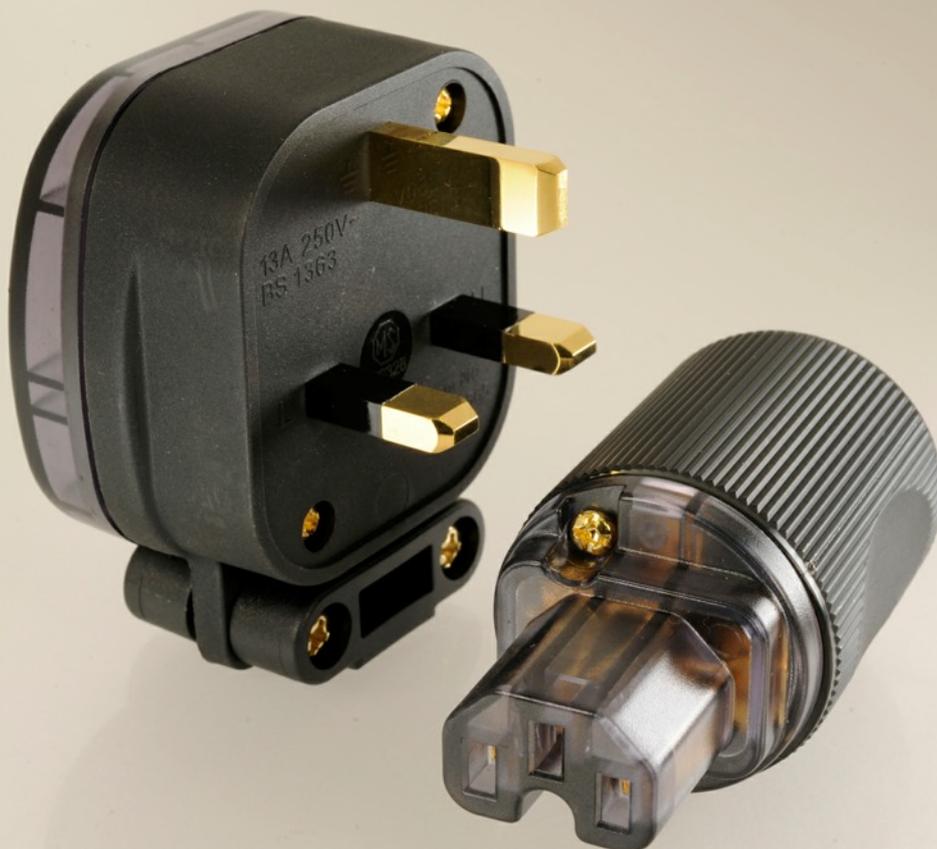
Between the live and earth terminals of the MS HD Power is a silver plated fuse which is also a nice touch and so I decided to get one of my big chunky DH Labs cables and test how simple it was to wire a thick cable to this plug.

The fixing point of the conductors into the pins consists of a large opening with a loose U shaped piece of matching metal passing through the top part of the hole. This clamps down on the conductor sandwiching it to the base of the hole once the screw is tightened.

Fitting a Thick Cable

The DH Labs AC Power Plus cable which is made up of 12 gauge conductors fit with ease and the thicker 10 gauge conductors from the companies Red Wave also fit nicely, so what more can I say than I was extremely impressed. The pathways to the pins were unobstructed and wide enough to take a substantial thickness of cable without any trouble at all. Three screws secure the three conductors, there are two screws to clamp and two screws to fit the case back together - it really couldn't be easier.

Inserting the plug into my extremely rare all copper MK unswitched socket gave a tremendously tight fit



Reviews

and the cable management bit of the plug keeps the cable closer to the wall and very easy to route. I have found that my right angled Furutechs have a tendency to be knocked occasionally when I'm playing with different bits in my setup as they come out of the socket partially to one side - I've actually never been a huge fan of this plugs build quality over the more robust straight plug, but then even that plug is terrible if knocked or a wire snags when reaching behind the rack – it's for this reason I must always ensure all plugs are firmly in place after fitting new kit. The MS HD however has a much lower profile and stays snug to the wall plate and even with a good poke it remained in place.

Sound

As far as the sound is concerned I can only submit my view of the gold plated version I received, against the Furutech 1363G with both sporting a 10 amp Bussman fuse. I found the MS HD to be a bit fuller sounding on the Red Wave cable with a tiny bit more weight which had a nice effect on the treble. There really isn't much in it to be honest and one

could argue the Furutech had a bit more air in the top

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end, but then it has been used for a long period of time now and fully “burned in” so I guess it would really come down to styling and cost at the end of the day as to which you would prefer to spend your money on.

Conclusion

Starting from £30 for an unplated version and rising to £60 for the heavily rhodium plated version, the MS HD Power UK Plug is a product that I for one have been crying out for for many year. The plug is a more affordable and with its BS1363 fully compliant standards, low profile tight fit, and the ability to be able to terminate very large cables it is a no brainer. I shall be ordering some very soon.

Highly recommended!

