

Subject: Korg Mono/Poly tuning procedure....

From: "J.D. McEachin" <jdm@synthcom.com> To: analogue@hyperreal.com

Does anyone know the tuning procedure? I popped the top, and there's a board with a couple of trimpots labelled (something like) hi-scale and low-scale, so I presume that these have something to do with it. I'd also like to get all of the oscillators lined up properly - at the moment, they all sound slightly different!

My guess is that it's similar to the Poly6, which (I believe) has the same VCOs. I figured out how to tune a Poly6 w/o the service manual - it's just a matter of using your ears & your brain. Hopefully there's LEDs inside like on the Poly6 & Trident to tell you which voice is playing. Anyway, here's what I'd suggest:

- 1) Make sure you discharge all static before you open up your synth.
- 2) Open 'er up, staying away from where the power cord comes in to the power supply.
- 3) There should be a TEST switch inside that will put the synth in a test mode, which will put the synth voice in an easy to tune setting. Switch this BEFORE you turn on the synth - usually the CPU checks the state of the switch once during initialization. If there's no TEST switch, then choose a simple waveform, no resonance, max sustain, w/ the filter all the way up.
- 4) It sounds like you've already discovered the hi & lo-scale pots. Try playing a few keys & look at the LEDs to figure out the assignment scheme. If no LEDs, try tweaking one of the lo-scale pots until you hit upon the right voice. If possible, put the synth in UNISON mode and turn down the volume of 3 of the VCOs.
- 5) Now you need a good tuning reference; digital synths are usually good for this, but make sure that it's tuned to A=440Hz. I went over to a friend's once and everything was sounding screwed up. He said "I can't get ANY of my analogue in tune". I discovered that his M3R was set to A=442, w/ a Just Temperament!
- 6) Try pressing low C and tweak the hi-scale pot for that voice. Then, play high C and tweak the lo-scale pot. Repeat until they're both in tune.

What threw me about the Poly6 was that I tuned the low keys w/ the hi-scale pot and the high keys w/ the low-scale pot. It seems bass-ackwards to me. Maybe they fixed this on the Mono/Poly, but I doubt it, as I believe they were engineered at the same time.

While you're at it, you may as well crank up the resonance - look for the RES pot. That 2044 will howl! You should also check the filter tracking - turn up the resonance. Hopefully there's a test mode to set the filter tracking to 1 and the envelope mod to the right spot - that's the trickiest part about tuning a filter, which you may have to play with. Anyway, adjust the "fc" pot until it tracks. That's it - should take less than 30 minutes.