

1. INTRODUCTION

READ THIS FIRST

Congratulations on your purchase of the Steadicam JR.

The Steadicam JR is a camera stabilization system for lightweight camcorders based on the professional Steadicam widely used in professional film and television production. Camcorder video quality is now excellent, but unstable shooting still looks amateurish. When you master the JR, you will be able to move your camera smoothly, with a high level of artistic and creative freedom. With the JR your moves can be virtually indistinguishable from those made by dollies, cranes and the big Steadicam.

The Steadicam JR is one of those inventions that requires some know-how and practice from the user. Please read the rest of this introduction and then carefully follow the recommended procedure for setup and operation. You'll save time in the long run by not rushing into it, and minimize the risk of damaging the unit.

HOW TO USE THE JR MANUAL AND VIDEOTAPE

The JR manual and videotape are designed to be used together. They are divided into corresponding sections. Watching the video for each section will show you the basic principles and operations of the JR and give you a feel for how to perform them. Then the manual takes you step by step through the same operations on your JR and camcorder. We recommend that you proceed as follows:

- Read this introduction all the way through and prepare for setup as described. From this point on, each step requiring a specific action on your part contains space for a check mark and should be checked off as performed.
- Then watch section 1 of the videotape. Watch it all the way through, and don't attempt to follow along with your JR. We've found that it's almost impossible to work with the JR and watch TV at the same time!
- At the end of video section 1, stop the tape and turn to section 1 of the manual. Perform each step as requested, and check them off as you go. If you determine that a step does not apply to you, check it off as well.
- It is important to perform the steps in the proper sequence, to avoid both frustration and the risk of damage to the JR. Do not unfold the unit or attempt to mount your camera except as directed.

THE JR COOKBOOK

In addition to this manual, you have received the *JR Cookbook*. It contains pre-setting instructions for most commonly available lightweight camcorders. You will be referring to the specifications for your camcorder as you proceed through setup. Before we begin, locate your camcorder in the Cookbook and check the box next to it. Keep the Cookbook open to the appropriate page for reference.

If your camera is not in the Cookbook, we recommend the following:

- ① If you know that your camera generically resembles one that is listed, try using the specifications for that camera.
- ② If specifications for your camera are not available, read on; follow the steps you can, and later (in Section 8 of the video and manual) we'll provide instructions for balancing from scratch.