Packing your Linn Sondek LP12 for transportation in your car

I decided to produce this guide in response to many client requests for packaging help and also because if packed incorrectly, even in the original manufacturers box, there is potential to risk damage to your beloved LP12.

What follows is a series of annotated photographs, outlining in my opinion the best way to transport your LP12 whilst also pointing out a few possible pitfalls in the process.

Obviously its best If you have the original box and internal packaging as this is best.

Brand-new LP12 packaging is available from our website should you wish to purchase new LP12 packaging to protect your LP12, but if not, I suggest you try and find a suitably sized alternative box and improvise some internal cushioning within the box you have chosen as this would still be better than transporting your LP12 naked.

Firstly, before anything else, please remove your outer platter and mat along with the belt and place them in a safe place. Please, fit the stylus protection cover to your cartridge if you have one. See *Figure 1*.

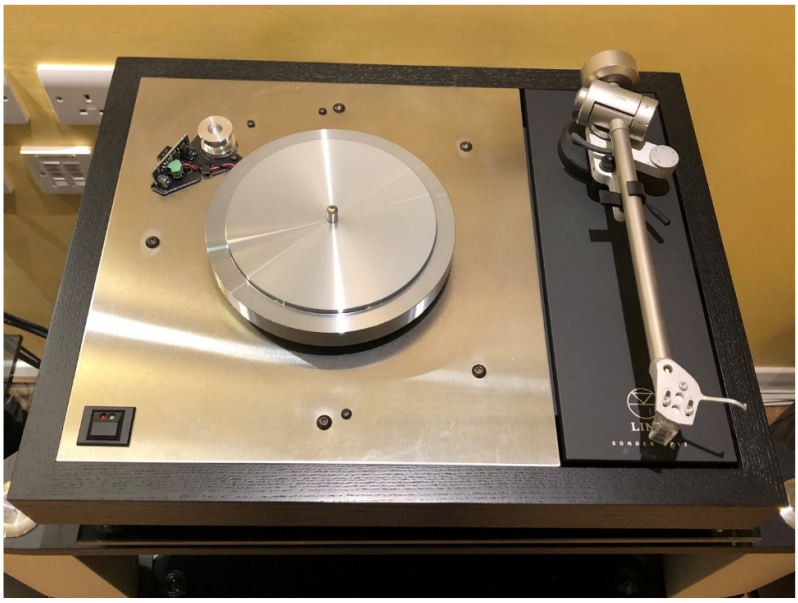

Figure 1 – outer platter removed and stylus guard fitted

Please disconnect your LP12 from the mains power supply. Additionally, disconnect your LP12 from the phono stage or amplifier to which it is connected.

If you refer to *Figure 2*, you will see that contained within the factory lid packaging, there is a square piece of polystyrene.

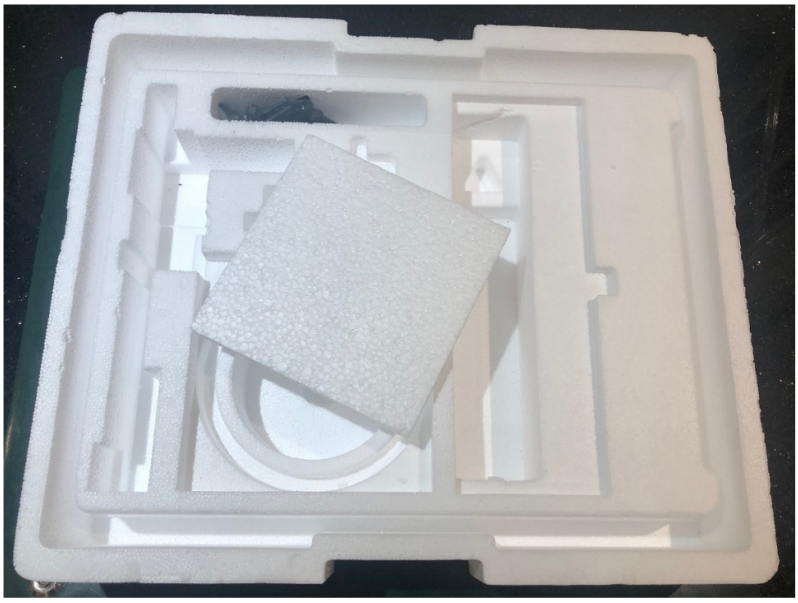

Figure 2 – showing the square piece of polystyrene

By cutting a small section out of it as shown in *Figure 3* you can make a very good inner platter support. If you don't have the polystyrene square, then you can improvise a packing piece to lift the inner platter.

Ideally something that is between 10 and 12 mm thick and something that is not hard or sharp and so it will not mark either be inner platter or the top plate during transportation.

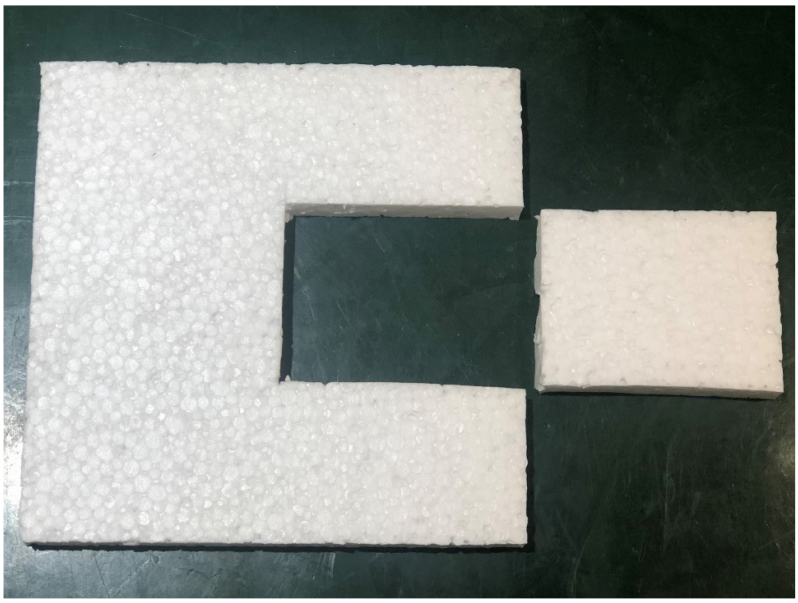

Figure 3 – showing the modified square piece of polystyrene

You could use a folded newspaper, magazine or even a paperback book as packaging support beneath the inner platter.

When the packaging piece is slipped between the inner platter and top plate, it should lift the inner platter up and away from the bearing contact surface.

This gives protection to the bearing contact surface when subject to the vibration of transportation but also does a pretty good job of locking up the suspension at the same time.

Additionally, it does not expose the bearing to the risk of contamination, which can happen if the inner platter is removed and the bearing surfaces are not carefully covered/protected by a bearing well cap and also a spindle sheath. See *Figure 4*.

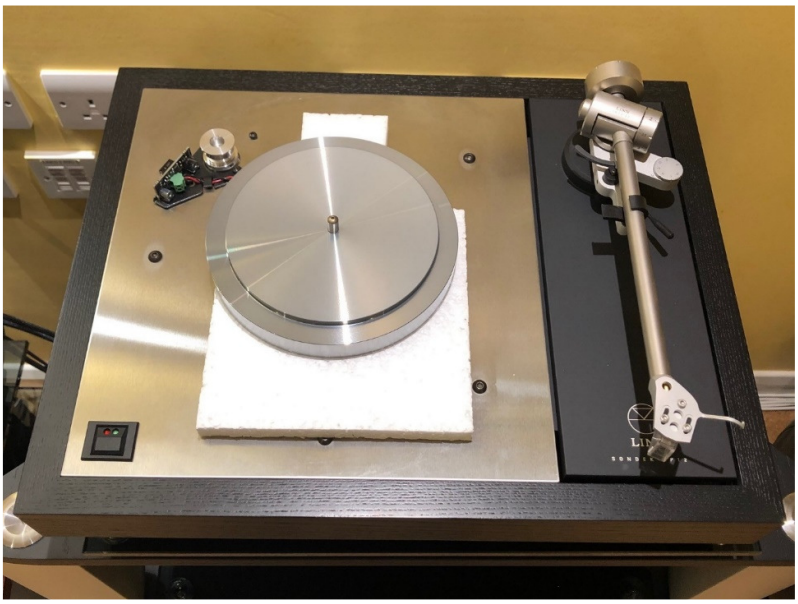

Figure 4 – polystyrene in place

Once the suspension movement has been mostly eliminated by the inner platter packaging pieces, then it is a good time to remove the counterweight from the arm and secure the arm in some way.

In Figure 5 you will see I have used Velcro to secure this Linn Ekos SE/1 arm but obviously if you have a different arm, possibly from a different manufacturer, you need to think how best to secure your arm.

Please do not use things like freezer bag ties or tie wrap as the use of these could mark your arm tube or apply excessive force to the arm bearings in securing your arm.

I would recommend something like a piece of string or a shoelace to secure your arm. Failure to do so could result in damage to your arm, cartridge or even the top plate of the LP12!

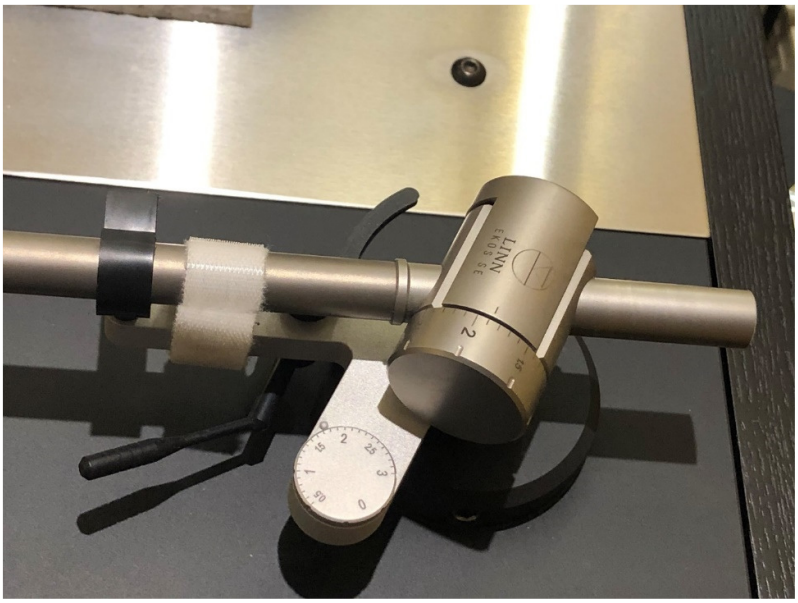

Figure 5 - Linn Ekos SE/1 arm secured with velcro

Whilst lifting the inner platter and supporting it is a great way of protecting the bearing and locking the suspension, there is still the potential for some movement in the suspension, which personally speaking, I would prefer not to have, particularly if you have a metal arm board such as a Keel or a Kore.

So, after a little bit of thinking and experimentation I have come up with the following solution which seems to work very well in limiting most of the remaining suspension movement. Please refer to *Figure 6*.

Figure 6 – limiting suspension movement

Take an ordinary sheet of kitchen paper towel, fold it in half and then half again.

Then, using a credit card or similar plastic card, you can gently push the card and carefully insert into the gap at the side and rear of the arm board adjacent to the plinth. It should be possible to gently push the credit card in to about 2/3 of its length. Please see *Figure 7*.

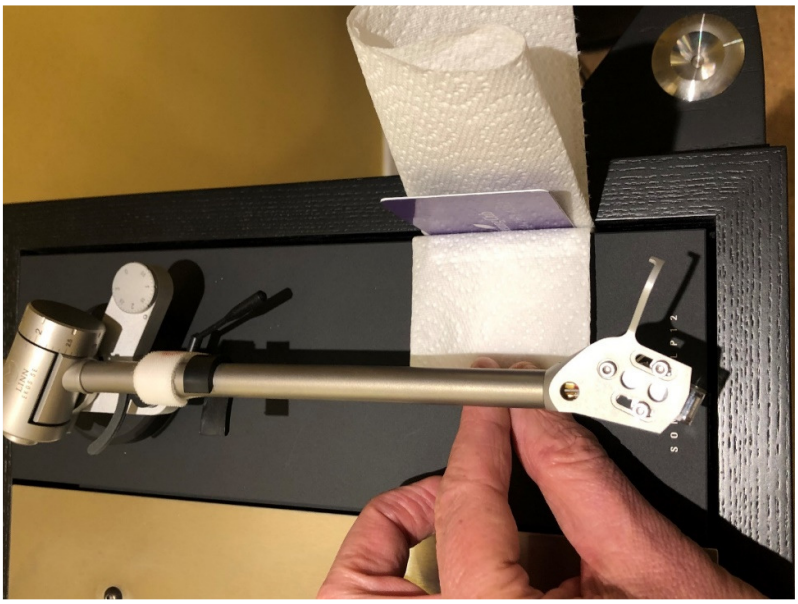

Figure 7 – using a credit card to insert the kitchen paper towel

You can repeat this process a further two or three times along the right-hand side of the arm board between it and the plinth and insert a single folded sheet at the rear of the arm board as shown in *Figure 8*.

Figure 8 – adding more sheets

Ideally and only if you have a suitable stylus guard in place protecting your stylus you can insert an additional kitchen paper packing piece at the front of the arm board as illustrated in *Figure 9*.

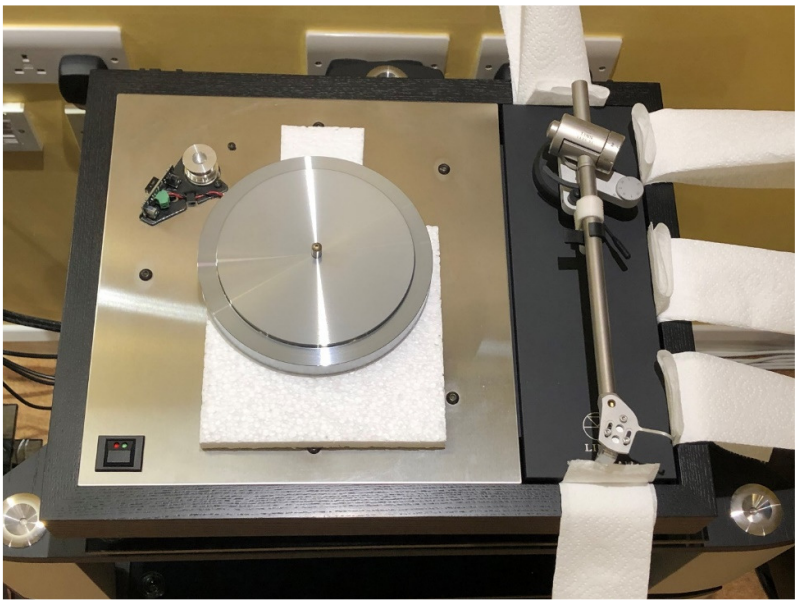

Figure 9 - additional kitchen paper packing piece at the front of the arm board

It is not possible to insert any effective packing pieces to the left side of the arm board adjacent to the top plate as the sub chassis is directly below and support on the other three sides of the arm board is sufficient.

At this point your LP12 suspension and inner platter are now sufficiently supported for a journey in your car.

If you refer to *Figure 10*, it is probably quite a familiar sight and the depressions in the polystyrene do a good job of indicating where things are to be placed.

Figure 10 – the depressions in the polystyrene

However, some owners occasionally turn up with the outer platter left fitted to the inner platter during the journey here for a service.

Not good as this can potentially cause damage to the top plate, bearing, inner platter and outer platter. So please bear with me with the following few images.

Within the bottom packaging there is a nice recess for the belt as can be seen in *Figure 11*.

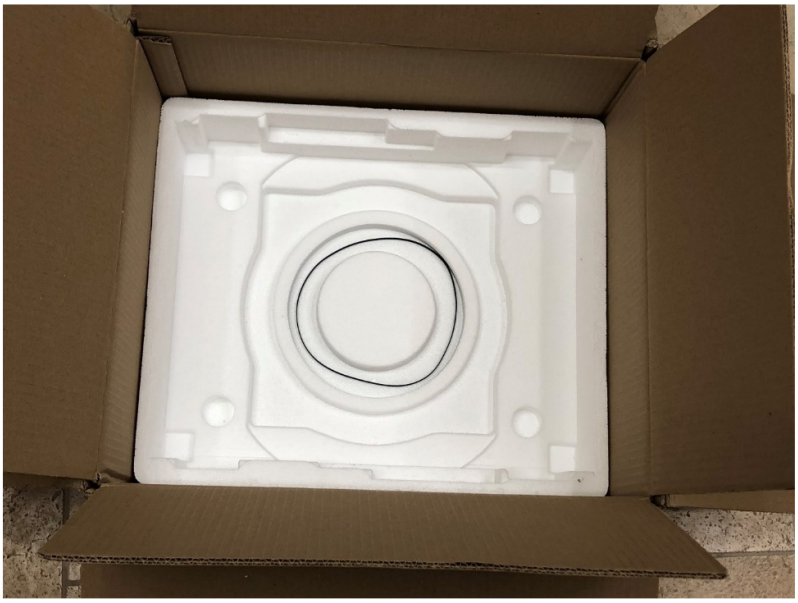

Figure 11 – the belt in the recess

The outer platter, if at all possible, should be protected in a plastic bag or as illustrated in *Figure 12*, a cotton bag.

The mat can travel separately if you wish, just try and keep it flat as they can get crumpled or folded in transport if you are not careful.

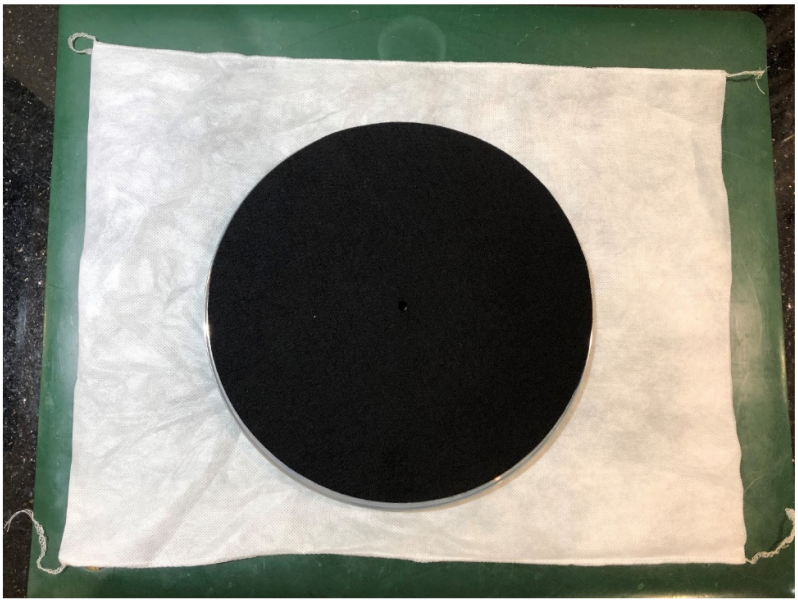

Figure 12 – a cotton bag to protect the outer platter

The outer platter can then be inserted into the recess in the bottom of the packaging as shown in *Figure 13*.

Figure 13 – the outer platter in the recess

If you have still retained the packaging cardboard sheet, this should then be placed over the outer platter to protect it from contact from the underside of the LP12 baseboard as seen in *Figure 14*, as there are central fixing screws at the front and the rear of the baseboard which could come into contact with and damage your outer platter!

If you do not have the cardboard, a newspaper or a small towel will do the same job.

Figure 14 – cardboard sheet protecting outer platter

If you do use the cardboard or some other protection above the outer platter the following precaution is unnecessary. However, for Trampolin or Urika owners this is an important one to watch out for! As if you place your LP12 in the packaging directly above the outer platter without any protection in place as mentioned above, it is worth pointing out that the Trampolin feet are pretty much a perfect fit for the four recess holes in the base packaging.

They are a very snug fit which can be a problem if you do not lift the LP12 out of the packaging perfectly vertically and what generally happens is that the LP12 is withdrawn from the box at a slight angle, this causes the Trampolin feet to snag on the polystyrene recess holes and, in some situations, the Trampolin feet can be pulled off and broken in the process!

So, if you wish to avoid this problem, it is a good idea to plug the holes with polystyrene or something else suitable, as illustrated in *Figure 15*.

Owners with existing packaging like the ones shown in the photographs and have Trampolin baseboards, may well see damaged polystyrene surrounding these holes, which is evidence of the Trampolin foot being caught in the packing recess and the near calamity of the foot being ripped off as a consequence!

It is certainly worth plugging these holes up in my opinion.

Owners with the very early LP12 packaging have a different designed base insert that does not have the same Trampolin foot snagging problem.

Figure 15 – the four recess holes plugged in the base packaging

Once the outer platter is placed in the base packaging and protected, you can lower your LP12 into the base packaging as shown in *Figure 16*.

Figure 16 – LP12 in base packaging

At this point if you have a protective bag to contain your counterweight, this could be placed at the rear of the plinth as also shown in figure 16, as there is a small recess in the packaging.

In this way you won't lose your counterweight when travelling to having your LP12 serviced.

At this point, you can close the lid of the box. It is absolutely crucial in my opinion, that you do not attempt to push the lid packaging over the LP12!

If you want to take the lid or lid packaging with you for the service with me or any other retailer, please take it separately.

For an explanation why, please see Figures 18 – 22..

One final recommendation I have which can be covered easily is, please leave your phono plugs and power supply plugs hanging outside of the box.

In this way they will not rattle around inside the packaging during transportation and therefore cannot damage your LP12, as shown in *Figure 17*.

Figure 17 – phono and power supply plugs left outside box

Many people are aware of the recess in the underside of the lid packaging. See *Figure 18*. Initially it looks perfect to accommodate the tonearm if mounted on the LP12.

However, with Linn arms, you will find there is not enough room!

There often is contact between polystyrene packaging and the finger lift on the head shells, the front of the cartridge, the lift/lower device and also the bearing assembly/rotary force dial on arms like the Linn Ittok, Ekos, Ekos SE and SE/1.

Figure 18 – recess in underside of lid packaging

Other arms like the Naim Aro also have problems being accommodated in this recess. In the case of the Naim Aro, even with the arm top removed and uni-pivot bearing protected, the arm rest is very likely to end up broken by the time it arrives at the shop if the lid packaging is in place as it will be having most of the load applied by the lid packaging acting directly on it. The anti-skate support wire will also be crushed!

Here are a few pictures showing what not to do with Linn arms and what happens if my advice is ignored, starting with *Figure 19*. Please don't risk this!

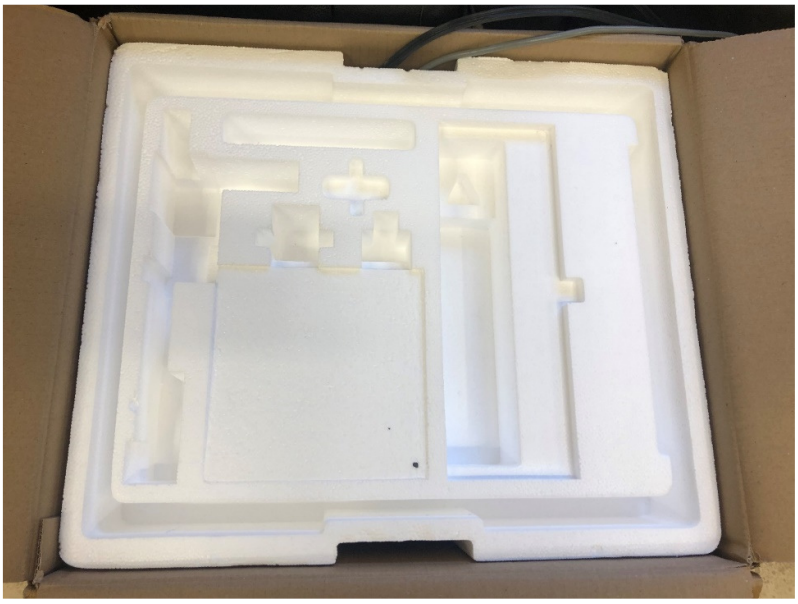

Figure 19 – Do not pack the lid packaging within the box like this for transportation in a car!

If you refer to *Figure 20* you will see dents in the polystyrene towards the left of the picture and in the centre. These were made by the cartridge!
The stylus cover had unfortunately become detached, pushed off by the polystyrene. Consequently, the cantilever was exposed and badly damaged!
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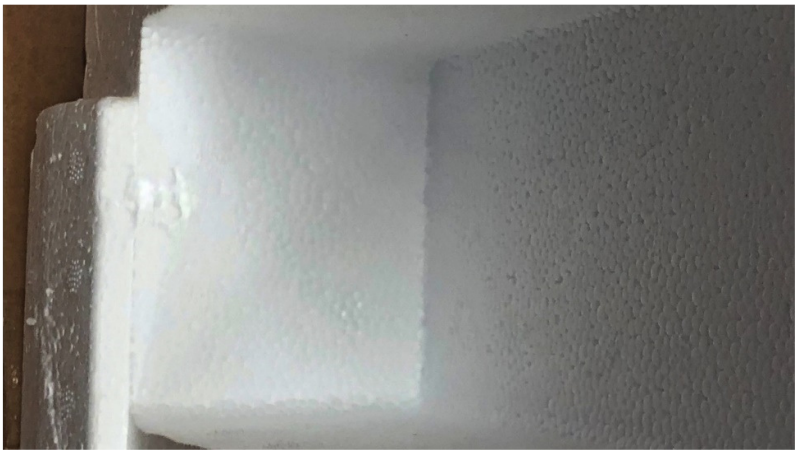

Figure 20 – dents in polystyrene caused by cartridge

In *Figure 21* the LP12 had been stored for a couple of years in its box and you can make out some indentations and a yellow stain in the polystyrene. This was caused by the rotary force dial of an Ittok and what I presume is some of the rotary force dial lubricant dispersing onto the polystyrene. The clamshell shaped indentation was caused by the lingo plug being left sandwiched against the base packaging!

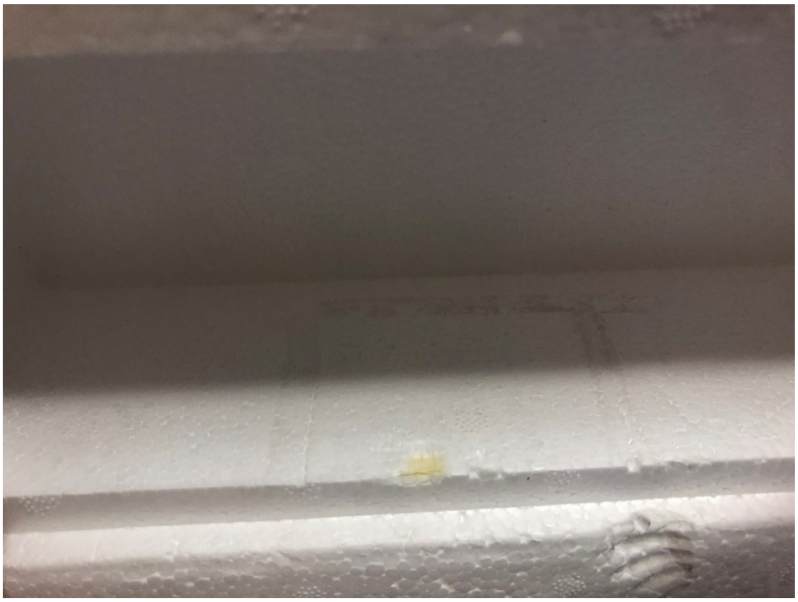

Figure 21 – marks left after incorrect prolonged storage

Figure 22 shows both indentations from the cartridge towards the right of the image and indentations from the finger lift of the headshell which are in the centre of the image.

Figure 22 – indentations caused by cartridge and fingerlift

Hopefully, the pictures 19 through to 22 will persuade you not to place the lid packaging on top of an LP12 in the packing box when being transported in the car.

Please transport the lid packaging separately if you wish to bring it along at the time of the service.

Where is the safest place for your LP12 to travel in the car?

If the LP12 has been packed correctly. I strongly recommend placing your box in the boot of your car wedged in place at the front of the boot firmly against the rear seats with other boxes to the side and to the rear so it cannot slide around. The boot floor is generally flat in most cars and in the event of emergency breaking, the box will be unable to move forwards.

The other slightly less favourable place for the LP12 would be for it to travel in the front passenger foot well or possibly front passenger seat. There is not much space for a box of this size to move in the front passenger foot well, or if the box is on the front passenger seat, having the seat pushed fully forward, so as to wedge the LP12 box against the dashboard.

Again, one is trying to minimise movement of the LP12 box forward or sideways if you have to brake suddenly. I would also recommend cushioning the box against the dashboard with a cloth or similar to avoid the risk of marking or damaging the dashboard during transit.

Having the LP12 on rear seats secured by the safety belts, really must be viewed as the last resort, unless it is possible to push the front seats back to pin the box into the back seat, as in the event of heavy breaking, a loosely attached seatbelt will be of little use in preventing the box moving forward rapidly increasing the likelihood of damage or worse still, joining you in the front of the car! Again, protect your seats with a cloth to avoid damaging them.

Hopefully, all the hints, tips and images above will be of use to you in ensuring your LP12 travels safely with you in your car. I hope it goes without saying that your LP12 needs to be transported in its box the correct way up and the box needs to be kept as flat as is practically possible.

Best wishes,

Peter Swain

Important footnote.

This is just a helpful guide should you wish to use it. Consequently, no liability can be accepted for any damage actual or alleged.
For shipping an LP12 that is set up or in kit form using a carrier, either locally or internationally, **the above advice is insufficient to prevent damage to your LP12.**

For shipping via a carrier, please contact me or your Linn Products Ltd retailer for advice.