

String Playtest

Head Sonic Pro Edge

Sonic Pro Edge is a new version of the well-known Sonic Pro from Head, the most obvious difference being that Sonic Pro Edge is a five-sided geometric monofilament, where Sonic Pro is a more traditional cylindrical monofilament.

In addition to its pentagonal cross-section, Sonic Pro Edge features uniquely processed co-polymer polyester, which is a specially-formulated combination of resins and fibers. According to Head, Sonic Pro Edge offers maximum spin and control, increased power for a polyester string, exceptional touch and feel, and increased durability.

Sonic Pro Edge is designed for players looking to create extra spin and control with polyester.

Sonic Pro Edge is available in 16-gauge only in anthracite. It is priced from \$13 for sets of 40 feet, and \$180 for 660-foot reels. For more information or to order, contact Head at 800-289-7366, or visit head.com. Be sure to read the conclusion for more information about your free set.

IN THE LAB

We tested the 16-gauge Sonic Pro Edge. The coil measured 40 feet. The diameter measured 1.28-1.33 mm prior to stringing, and 1.25-1.27 mm after stringing. We recorded a string bed stiffness of 73 RDC units immediately after stringing at 60 pounds in a Wilson Pro Staff 6.1 95 (16 x 18 pattern) on a constant-pull machine.

After 24 hours (no playing), string bed stiffness measured 67 RDC units, representing an 8 percent tension loss. Our control string, Prince Synthetic Gut Original Gold 16, measured 78 RDC units immediately after stringing and 71 RDC units after 24 hours, representing a 9 percent tension loss. Sonic Pro Edge added 16 grams to the weight of our unstrung frame.

The string was tested for five weeks by 36 USRSA play testers, with NTRP ratings from 3.5 to 6.0. These are blind tests, with play testers receiving

unmarked strings in unmarked packages. Average number of hours play tested was 24.6.

Installing Sonic Pro Edge is a little different from installing most other polyester strings. We did note that some of the edges on the mains became worn during the installation of the crosses, but this is normal for geometrics that have well-defined apexes between the facets.

One playtester broke his sample during stringing, 10 reported problems with coil memory, four reported prob-

lems tying knots, and four reported friction burn.



EASE OF STRINGING

(compared to other strings)

Number of testers who said it was:

much easier	1
somewhat easier	3
about as easy	21
not quite as easy	11
not nearly as easy	0

OVERALL PLAYABILITY

(compared to string played most often)

Number of testers who said it was:

much better	0
somewhat better	11
about as playable	10
not quite as playable	12
not nearly as playable	3

OVERALL DURABILITY

(compared to other strings of similar gauge)

Number of testers who said it was:

much better	6
somewhat better	11
about as durable	18
not quite as durable	1
not nearly as durable	0

RATING AVERAGES

From 1 to 5 (best)

Playability	3.6
Durability (14th overall)	4.4
Power	3.6
Control (2nd tie)	4.0
Comfort	3.3
Touch/Feel	3.3
Spin Potential (4th overall)	4.1
Holding Tension	3.6
Resistance to Movement (20th overall)	4.0

ON THE COURT

Even before we had all the results to tabulate, the positive comments by members of the playtest team gave notice that there was something special about this string. Once all the results were in, they echoed the other feedback we received: Sonic Pro Edge is a winner.

Of the 168 strings we've playtested to date for publication, Sonic Pro Edge tied for second for Control, placed fourth overall for Spin Potential, came in 14th overall in Durability, and placed 20th overall in Resistance to Movement. That's four top-20 finishes for a co-polyester string.

"Tied for second for Control" is plenty impressive, but wait until you hear the details. The other string with the same score is a premium multifilament, and the number one string in this category is a premium natural gut product. Did we mention that Sonic Pro Edge is a co-polyester string?

It seems almost anticlimactic to mention that Sonic Pro Edge also garnered excellent scores in Tension Retention and Power, and well-above-average scores in Playability, Comfort, and Touch/Feel.

Overall, Sonic Pro Edge is the third-highest-scoring string we've ever playtested.

Four of the playtesters broke the

TESTERS TALK

“ This is comfortable for a monofilament, with excellent control. It might be time to switch to polyester. ”

4.0 male all-court player using Prince EX03 Red strung at 48 pounds CP (Gamma TNT2 Pro Plus 17L)

“ Solid all-around performance. Excels in every area. This string is definitely playable enough to be used as a full set. ” *4.5 male all-court player using Prince EX03 Tour (18x20) strung at 54/57 pounds LO (Prince Lightning XX 16)*

“ This is a soft co-poly with a very precise response. The sharp edges bite into the ball and create great spin. This string definitely goes in my ‘top ten’ list. ” *5.5 male baseliner with heavy spin using Vortex ES 100 strung at 52 pounds CP (Spintex Exclusive HD 16)*

“ This should appeal to players who favor the softer feel of nylon or synthetic gut. ” *4.5 male all-court player using Volkl Boris Becker 10 strung at 60 pounds CP (Gamma Synthetic Gut 16)*

“ Very precise response. It holds up quite well over time. High marks for comfort. ” *4.5 male all-court player using Wilson BLX Six One Tour strung at 45 pounds LO*

sample during the playtest period, one each at 6, 8, 14, and 25 hours.

CONCLUSION

As of now, three of the top-four strings we have playtested are polyester-based. While it may be comforting to traditionalists to see that natural gut is firmly ensconced at the top of this short list, it is clear that manufacturers such as Head have made tremendous strides in the design of polyester strings, with Sonic Pro Edge being the most recent impressive example.

Head is so confident the USRSA members will like Sonic Pro Edge that it is including a free sample set with this magazine for all USRSA members in the United States.

—Greg Raven

(Luxilon Alu Power/Wilson NXT Tour 16L/16)

“ Great spin. Not as stiff as most polyesters. ” *4.5 male all-court player using Babolat Pure Drive GT strung at 56 pounds LO (Babolat RPM Blast 17)*

“ Great spin and control with above average playability and power. Good stuff! ” *3.5 male all-court player using Head Youtek Star Five*

strung at 50 pounds CP (Solid Core Nylon 16)

“ Decent playability, power, and comfort for a firm-handling string. ” *4.5 male all-court player using Babolat Pure Drive Roddick GT strung at 40 pounds LO (Babolat RPM Blast 16)*

(Strings normally used by testers are indicated in parentheses.) For the rest of the tester comments, visit www.racquetsportsindustry.com.

Cracks got you down?

Get ARMOR®

Proven successful since 1993

Used on over 2,000,000 feet of cracks

Thousands of courts have ARMOR® installed

Recommended by contractors worldwide

Engineers specify ARMOR® by name

Effective in sub-zero temperatures



the Original... and still the Best!

www.armorcrackrepair.com
1-877-99-ARMOR

