

## DV Tidbits

At Evergreen we are dealing with two of the three DV tape formats:

- Mini-DV (the universal consumer format) and
- DV-CAM (Sony's professional format)

The third format which we are *not* using is DVC-PRO (Panasonic's professional format). In addition to these three different formats, there are two cassette sizes.

- The smaller cassette size can hold up to 60 minutes when recorded in a palmcorder at normal speed, but only 41 minutes when recorded in a DV-CAM machine (because the DV-CAM format runs faster than Mini-DV). These tapes come labeled as "40" when it's a DV-CAM tape, but "60/90" when it's a Mini-DV tape (even though they all have the same actual length of tape). It's important to use the normal speed on the palmcorders, *not* the slow speed (LP), or the tapes won't be useable on the editing decks.

The larger size cassettes come in both Mini-DV format and DV-CAM, but in general the DV-CAM format tapes are more reliable and provide better image and sound quality. We recommend that in the linear edit suites, you edit *onto* a DVCAM tape regardless of your source materials. These tapes come in lengths up to 184 minutes.

- The palmcorders at Media Loan use the Mini-DV format. These tapes can be played in all the other decks we have (as long as they were recorded at normal SP speed). The PD-150's at Media Loan are capable of recording in DV-CAM mode which would only yield 41 minutes even on a tape labelled "60/90."
- Although timecode is automatically recorded on the palmcorders, it is possible to have 'breaks' or gaps in the timecode. This can happen when re-cueing a tape or re-inserting a tape and the new recording begins in a section of blank tape. Unfortunately, the timecode gets reset to 0:00:00 when this happens. This will be extremely problematic if and when the tape is used for batch capturing into a computer. You can avoid this problem by making sure that you always begin any new segment of recording at the tail end of a previously recorded section (cue the tape to the very end of your previous footage, but just *before* it goes to blank tape). This is one reason why you are always cautioned to **continue rolling tape at least a five seconds after the action has stopped.**
- Other than the palmcorders we have three types of decks, all DV-CAM capable:
1. Linear Edit decks (in Lib 1526 and 1504)
  2. Dubbing decks (in Mini Control - Lib 1502 and the Transfer Station - Lib 1520)
  3. Computer peripheral decks for lossless transfer into and out of the computer (one at each station in the Multimedia Lab and 24-hour suites) – These decks can accept the larger cassette size!
- For our purposes, the issue of blacking tapes is the same as with our analog video editing. Tapes that will be edited *onto* must be blacked before editing begins. Remember: **Source tapes never require blacking.**
- Currently making digital clones (perfect copies) of tapes can only be done in the linear edit suites unless you bring a digital palmcorder into the Transfer Station and connect it via Firewire using the supplied cable.