Rating Remote Mics

Power was supplied to each hardwired microphone through its accompanying radio via a single cable. Our single wireless microphone had its battery fully charged prior to testing. All the host radios were supplied with 13.8 volts DC provided by an Astron power supply.

Each test mic was run through a laundry list of operations. Testers reviewed each manual. The more capability a microphone demonstrated, the higher it was rated. Remote microphones that received an Excellent rating were able to control virtually every function on the host radio. Less functionality lowered the rating.

Microphone display screens were rated by the amount and quality of the data shown as well as size and lighting. Bigger screens displaying lots of data received the highest ratings.

To test the sound quality and loudness of each microphone speaker, we used the controls on the mic to set each radio to a weather channel we received well at our location. Testers, while listening to weather broadcasts, made sound quality determinations. We also ran each unit up to maximum volume, noting both the sound quality and maximum loudness each could generate in decibels. Sound measurements were taken at a distance of 1 meter using a Radio Shack decibel meter.

A dunk test was conducted on each microphone to confirm it was waterproof. Testers submerged them in freshwater for 30 minutes. After removal, we immediately checked them for proper operation and then tested them again the next day. Pass/fail ratings were assigned. All passed.

All six test mics were submerged for 30 minutes in fresh water and then operated to test their waterproofness. All passed the dunk test.

To access the customer service level of each microphone maker we looked at their website, e-mailed them a technical question, and called their technical service phone number, if one was listed. Better responses received higher ratings.