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Product Reviews

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New SC3 and SC4 Chucks from Record Power

Product by Record Power

Review by Michael Peace (writer_profile.php?writerid=34)

Four jaw scroll chucks are not essential for turning, but their convenience in holding a project on the lathe makes most turning projects faster and easier.

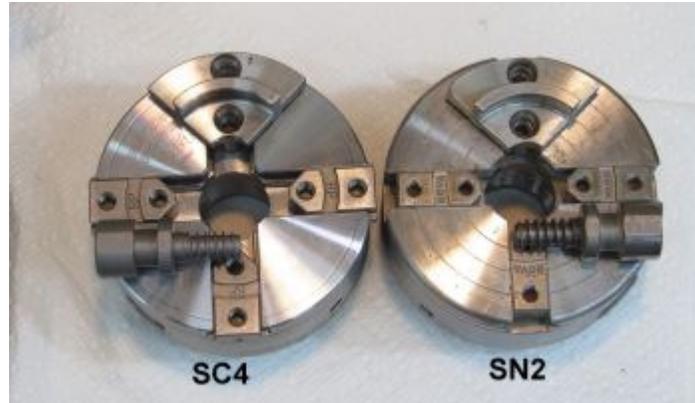
Record Power, a British tool manufacturer, recently introduced new chucks into the US. Their SC4 is similar to the popular Teknatool Supernova2 (SN2), and their smaller SC3 is similar to the Nova G3 chuck. What makes these chucks interesting is that they both feature jaw fixings which not only fit the Record Power series of jaws, but are also fully compatible with Nova and Robert Sorby brand jaws. This interchangeability of jaws is a rare feature among chuck manufacturers!





(/ckfinder/userfiles/images/2016/197%20-%20February%202016/michael%20peace/rec_pow_sc4_chu_wit_jaws-4.jpg) **Photo 1**

The SC4 chuck comes in a convenient plastic case with 50mm jaws, woodworm screw, chuck screws, spanner wrench, threaded insert of your choice, ball tipped 8mm hex wrench chuck key, Allen wrench for the chuck jaw screws, and set screw with leather pad for securing the insert as shown in Photo 1. Some inserts, such as the 1 1/4" x 8 which I reviewed, come with a set screw, leather pad and Allen wrench to secure the chuck on the lathe spindle to keep it from unscrewing off when turning in reverse.



(/ckfinder/userfiles/images/2016/197%20-%20February%202016/michael%20peace/SC4%20vs%20SN2%20front.JPG) **Photo 2**

Photo 2 shows how similar the SC4 is to the Teknatool SN2. Both are quite similar in size, weight, standard jaw profile and woodworm screw. While the SC4 and SC3 are similar to the Teknatool SN2 and G3 respectively, there are a few differences. The Record Power chucks have larger jaw slides which increase their torque and load bearing abilities. There is no play or slop in how the jaw glides fit compared to the Teknatool chucks. All of my Teknatool chucks have some side to side play in the jaw slides which disappears when tighten on the work. The scrolling on the SC4 is also very smooth. Another difference is the gearing moves in the conventional screw direction – clockwise to close the jaws and anti-clockwise to open them. The Teknatool chucks scroll in opposite directions. Since I started turning with Teknatool chucks, this backwards tightening/loosening has not been a problem for me, but for some turners is an aggravation.

Inserts

Both Record models have threaded inserts for most popular lathe spindle sizes. I found the threaded insert for my lathe, 1-1/4" x 8 very well machined and threaded into the chuck smoothly without the need for a wrench. I liked the way it registered against the back of the chuck so it was easy to see it fit. My Teknatool chucks use inserts that took some force with a wrench to seat and register inside the chuck. Some Teknatool users have reported on various forums run out until they discovered they had not tightened the insert enough to register against the inside of the chuck. I note that the Record chuck inserts are beefier than the Teknatool inserts. As a practical matter in use, this may not necessarily mean anything. The round insert has holes for the included spanner wrench. This is a nice feature for removing a stuck chuck from the lathe spindle as shown in

Photo 3. By way of comparison, the inserts for Teknatool chucks are hexagonal but do not come with a wrench. Note: Teknatool and Record have direct threaded chuck versions which do not require an insert.



(/ckfinder/userfiles/images/2016/197%20-%20February%202016/michael%20peace/SC4%20spanner.JPG) Photo 3

The indexed back plate on the SC4 has 72 holes versus the SN2 which has 24. Both are made of a composite material. Photo 4 is a backside view of both chucks.



(/ckfinder/userfiles/images/2016/197%20-%20February%202016/michael%20peace/SC4%20vs%20SN2%20back.JPG) Photo 4

SC3 Chuck

I did not evaluate an SC3 but can say the specifications make it appear to be quite similar to the Nova G3 chuck with a similar open back and a geared chuck key. It is lighter and more compact than the SC4 making it more appropriate for small to medium sized lathes. It does have the same larger jaw slides as the SC4. Depending on the vendor and package this chuck may have an insert or might be direct threaded 1" x 8. Some packages come with a 2" Faceplate Ring and optional jaws so check the description before buying. Again, it can use the same jaws as the SC4, Patriot and Nova chucks.

The Record chucks are manufactured in China and come with a 5-year guarantee. I note that Teknatool, whose chucks are also manufactured in China, just recently extended their chuck warranty period from two years to six years.

Jaw Options

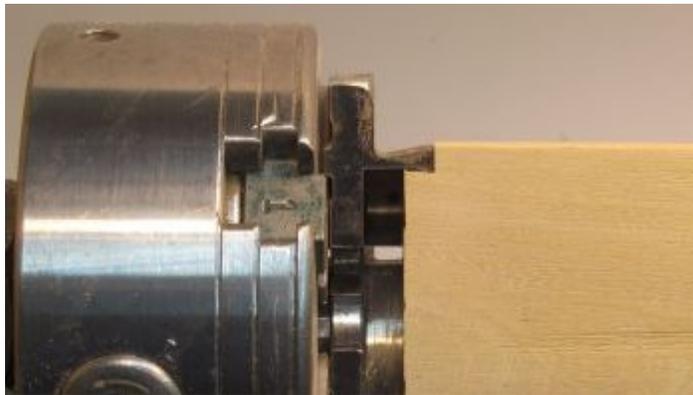
Jaw profiles are very much a personal preference based on what type of turning projects you routinely do and your budget. I started with a Teknatool Supernova2 eight years ago

because it came with the used mini lathe I got started with. My jaw sets are shown in Photo 5. My used setup came with long nose jaws, 25mm bowl jaws, 35mm bowl jaws, 50mm jaws and 35mm spigot jaws. Some of these sets I would never have purchased and get little use. I have since obtained a Nova Titan chuck with Powergrip jaws, a Nova G3 and a Precision Midi chuck.



(/ckfinder/userfiles/images/2016/197%20-%20February%202016/michael%20peace/jaws%2021382.JPG) Photo 5

For anyone owning a Teknatool, Robert Sorby Patriot or Record chuck, they can now look beyond the manufacturer of their chuck for additional chuck jaw options. I really like the profile of the standard Nova jaws. They have a standard dovetail for gripping with a recess. But for tenons they have a tiny dovetail ridge, which Record Power aptly describes as a “hawk beak”) which bite into the wood without the need to cut a dovetail as shown in Photo 6. The Record chucks carry this same design on the standard 2” (50mm jaws). The 2” refers to the minimum recess required.



(/ckfinder/userfiles/images/2016/197%20-%20February%202016/michael%20peace/hawk%20beak_1374.JPG) Photo 6

Many of the optional jaws for the Teknatool, Sorby and Record chucks are, in my opinion, virtually identical with little difference in quality so you may want to buy the least expensive. But, one manufacturer or another may offer a unique profile that will best meet your turning project needs. For example, if you need a smaller version of the standard 50mm jaws for smaller recesses and tenons and like that hawk beak profile of the standard 2” for gripping tenons, the smaller Record Power 1-3/8” (35mm) Standard Jaws have that same profile. If you don’t like that profile but prefer a true dovetail for tenons for your standard jaws, consider the Sorby 1-3/8” jaws. Teknatool appears to have a gap in their chuck lineup for jaws capable of gripping a tenon of about one inch. If you like jaws that are also designed to hold wooden accessory jaws, Teknatool has a 100mm

and 130mm jaws with this unique feature.

Tip: A number of SN2 users have reported excess wear on the pinions from the ball head design after some years of use. If you own a Supernova2, Patriot or SC4 chuck using the 8mm ball tipped hex wrench, consider cutting off the ball tip. This will provide a better fit and much less wear on the pinions.

Craft Supplies USA and Woodcraft sell the SC4 chuck in the US. It is also available from Amazon. Highland Woodworking has started carrying the smaller SC3 chuck.

Conclusions

After using and evaluating the SC4 chuck, I believe it to be very well designed and easy to use. It appears to be of excellent quality and a solid choice for most any woodturner. The cost is comparable to the competing Sorby Patriot and Nova chucks. I have been quite satisfied with my Teknatool SN2 chuck but do like the SC4 chuck better.

Click here if you wish to watch my YouTube video on the SC4 chuck un-boxing.
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3UB6fuQNwc>)

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