

## WersiClub International

### *OAS-7 World of Synthesisers*

This optional module to OAS-7 is described in Wersi's original OAS-7 brochure as follows:

“The World of Synthesiser Sound Package is a professional, flexible synthesiser with 3 oscillators, analogue and wavetable synthesisers, true unison wave-form and multi-mode filter. This package comes with 256 sounds.”

Now, I don't know much about synthesisers: I've never owned one and only once ever played one, the Yamaha DX7, but didn't understand much about it. Therefore, the above description (translated, reasonably correctly I hope, from the German) doesn't mean much to me, apart, that is, from the last part “..256 sounds”. I can vouch for that. The other descriptors seem to refer to parameters offered within the “Sound Control” and “Sound Edit” functions of the instrument and as such provide 6 controls appropriate to each sound. Most of the 350+ parameters which occur throughout “Sound Control” are found in this package. This is not a VST so there are no general synth-type controls on-screen which a synth VST like FM8 would provide. So how does this package work, then?

In the German OAS-7 Programmers' Guide a list of all the Sounds in this package is given – well, not quite all; the first nine are missing. Unfortunately, this list is not included in the English translation of that Guide. I have therefore attached a PDF document of this list, in MIDI-Programme Number order (called ID Number) on the first two sheets and in Sound Name alphabetical order on the third and fourth sheets. If you are familiar with synthesisers I expect these names mean something to you: they didn't mean much to me when I first saw them but then, what's in a name?

What is much more interesting is how they sound. Many of them are dynamic sounds in that the sound changes while it is playing. These sounds are best used as pads because they require a long sustained note or chord for their full effect to be heard. Others are more usable as lead sounds, some of which are monophonic. Some have a repeating/rhythmic effect which is at the tempo of the rhythm unit at the time you use them. Then there are the three drum-kits.....

Now, before I get carried away, a full survey of all these 256 sounds containing a sound description, details of the editing parameters of “Sound Control” plus, perhaps, a sound demo track of each one would take quite some time to produce. If WersiClub International were to run a series of articles like this and each article referred to just four sounds each time, at a bi-monthly update rate of the website it would take ..... just over ten years to complete!

No, I'm not going down that road. It's not necessary, anyway, because anyone with this package can investigate it for themselves, after all. For members who don't have the package, all you want is a sample of what's on offer. I've therefore decided to limit this article to looking at just four of these sounds. My criteria for choosing the four were that I have used the sounds in some Total Presets, that the sound is pleasing to the ear and, for three of them, the way the sound is used is a little different from what may be described as “normal”.

The four sounds I've finally chosen are:

1. The Greek Pad
2. Jupiter Arp
3. Sweet Square Bell
4. M Drums 1

Let's look at each of these in turn. There are example MP3 Tracks within the Folders indicated. These Tracks will play in Windows Media Player and other such software.

### **The Greek Pad [072-000-030]**

This is a pleasant, synth strings sound. It is **Track A1** in the Folder "A - The Greek Pad" and is played at 8' pitch with all settings as Wersi standard.

The parameters which can be changed under Sound Control are as follows, with their standard values stated:

<b>Release</b>	83
<b>Attack</b>	32
<b>Reso</b>	35
<b>Tone</b>	96
<b>Delay Mix</b>	64
<b>Width</b>	51

Additionally, the standard sound has no reverb, chorus or delay added. It is set at 8' pitch and a volume level of 65.

Looking at the parameters and values within Sound Control, I always start with **Attack** and **Release**. These are the two "ends" of the envelope and are related to the Attack and Release values of the envelope in "Edit Long Waves" (otherwise known as Sound Edit). The **Attack** value of 32 corresponds with the slow build-up of the sound. Lowering this value will make the sound build up quicker and vice versa. I was curious to know how an attack value of zero would sound, this being the value for instruments like piano, guitar etc which rely on a definite quick start to their sound. You can listen to The Greek Pad with an attack value of zero in **Track A2**. Giving a pad an Attack value of zero can often turn it into a usable lead sound.

The **Release** value is moderately high. A "normal" value for this would be 64. Less than that and the sound will tend to end quite abruptly when a key is released while raising it above 64 makes the sound hang around, decaying all the time. Be careful with a value of 127 – the sound may last forever (though not in this case). There is a tendency for a high Release value to be accompanied by a metallic effect to the sound, most inappropriate for natural instruments but often very acceptable with synth sounds. High values also muddy the sound from chord to chord. **Track A3** provides a Release value of 100 (Attack is back at 32 for all further samples of this sound).

It is when Release is set to 0 that we can hear how this sound has something else going on – a delay effect. **Track A4** provides a Release value of 0, not very usable in practice. However, I am now attracted to the parameter Delay Mix because of what is now being heard. Reducing Delay Mix to zero will remove the delay effect noticeable in File 4. You can hear it in **Track A5** (Delay Mix = 0 and Release = 0). Increasing Delay Mix above 64 will enhance the delay effect – **Track A6** has a value of 100 (Release still = 0).

Let's now return all parameters to their original values and have a look at **Tone**. As the value of Tone increases the sound normally becomes brighter, like any usual tone control. In this instance an increase to 127 makes little difference to the brightness of the sound. Lowering the Tone value does have a considerable effect in making the sound less bright. **Track A7** has a Tone value of 45 and demonstrates the contour of the sound itself coming through – something else is going on within the envelope of the sound.

**Width** seems to have little effect but **Reso** alters the level and nature of the very high frequency noise behind the sound. **Track A8** demonstrates this with a Reso value of 95.

Having tried adjusting these parameters I have to say that, in my opinion, the standard values provide the optimum sound for this pad. Small adjustments, though, do change the nature of the sound slightly without losing the overall character of the pad design.

## **Jupiter Arp [072-000-071]**

“Arp” is short for arpeggio. There are two sounds available here. If the sound is placed in the first layer of the Upper Manual it has a repeat which is rhythm tempo related. If placed anywhere else there is no repeat effect. **Track B1** of the Folder “B – Jupiter Arp” demonstrates the non-rhythm sound with all settings as standard. It is a monophonic sound and you can hear the long envelope changing the sound as a key is held down. The sound achieved when hitting a key depends on where the envelope is at that time. Pressing a key does not restart the envelope – it is continuously cycling in the background. **Track B2** of the same Folder demonstrates the same sound in layer 1 of the Upper Manual, where the rhythm tempo (which controls the repeat rate of the note) is set at 70. I have found this to be a very useful sound for the “Chariots of Fire” theme. All demonstration Tracks of this sound which follow use the repeating version.

The parameters which can be changed under Sound Control are as follows, with their standard values stated:

<b>Release</b>	25
<b>Attack</b>	0
<b>Reso</b>	51
<b>Tone</b>	64
<b>Sub Bass</b>	0
<b>Detune</b>	0

Release and Attack first. **Attack** is zero because the initial part of the sound is important. An Attack value of 100 removes this part of the sound. **Track B3** demonstrates this. **Release**, as before, determines what happens when the key is released. With the above value the sound disappears almost immediately. Raising the Release value would allow the sound to continue longer after a key is released. Tone also works as before, the above value being in the middle of the range. Raising the value adds brightness to this sound which can be quite effective. **Track B4** demonstrates a Tone value of 90. Make it too high and the sound doesn't change as much with time.

**Reso** acts like a tone control, higher values accentuating the higher frequencies of the sound's envelope. **Track B5** demonstrates a Reso value of 100.

**Detune**'s value of zero means the sound is not detuned at all. Raising this value to 127 gives an extremely small rise in pitch, insufficient to be worth demonstrating.

That leaves **Sub Bass** which sounds interesting. It's disappointing here because it appears to have very little effect. There is a very slight change in the nature of the bass part of the sound at a value of 127 though, again, insufficient to be worth demonstrating.

Track B6 is a short demo of the beginning of "Chariots of Fire" using this sound in Upper Manual 1 with a Dynamic Curve value of 6. Upper Manual 2 contains an edited version of the sound "Dreaming" and Upper Manual 3 contains the sound "Matrix". All UM sounds are at 8' pitch. Lower Manual 1 contains "Sizzle 2 Pad" at 2' pitch and Lower Manual 2 contains "Halo Pad" at 8' pitch with Dynamic at value 4 applied. The Pedal Board contains "Jupiter Arp" at 8' but, of course, in the Pedal Board it has no repeat effect. A Dynamic value of 4 is applied in the Pedal Board. The rhythm is "16 Ballad", mapped under the 16-Beat button, at a tempo of 70, with ACC on and not edited. All other settings are Wersi standard as this is a Total Preset still in the course of construction.

The edited version of the sound "Dreaming" has a raised volume level from the standard 45 to a value of 60 and Reverb 2 is increased from zero to around 64. There are also changes to the parameters in Sound Control as shown below:

	<u>Instrument Value</u>	<u>Edited Value</u>
<b>Release</b>	36	40
<b>Attack</b>	0	0
<b>Color</b>	63	25
<b>Tone</b>	127	127
<b>Attack Shape</b>	0	2
<b>Delay</b>	0	83

### **Sweet Square Bell [073-000-051]**

This is an example of a sound which has a full, repeating arpeggio effect when placed in Upper Manual 1 and a partial repeating effect when placed elsewhere. In this case, the partial repeating effect is a decaying echo of the original played note. The best way to understand this is to listen to it. It can be found as Track C1 in the Folder "C - Sweet Square Bell". The speed of the double echo and the time between each decaying echo are determined by the tempo of the rhythm unit.

In Upper Manual 1 this sound also acquires an arpeggio effect whose speed depends upon the rhythm tempo. The echo effect is also present. Track C2 demonstrates this.

The parameters which can be changed under Sound Control are as below with their Instrument values stated:

<b>Decay</b>	64
<b>Sweep Amount</b>	64
<b>Reso</b>	39
<b>Tone</b>	102
<b>Delay Mix</b>	13
<b>Detune</b>	64

Additionally the standard sound has a Reverb 1 value of around 40.

**Decay:** This acts more like a reverb control where lower values remove the effect.

**Sweep Amount:** In conjunction with a Decay value of 124, the effect of this parameter can be heard:

- a) In Track C3 where it has a value of 10
- b) In Track C4 (in the Folder “C - Sweet Square Bell – zipped 2”) where it has a value of 110.

**Reso:** High values increase the higher frequencies as can be hear in Track C5 where Reso is set at 110. (I assume Reso is short for Resonance)

**Tone:** The Inst Tone value is set quite high giving a bright sound. Lowering its value removes the higher frequencies giving a more mellow sound.

**Delay Mix:** This changes the amount of the echo effect and needs using with caution. Too much and it all becomes very muddled. This parameter needs to be used in conjunction with the above parameters. Track C6 demonstrates a value here of 60.

**Detune:** This provides a very small measure of detuning, sufficient to give a honky-tonk effect with higher values.

There are several other sounds in this package which have a full rhythm effect when placed in Upper Manual 1 and an effect which has a rhythm tempo dependence when placed elsewhere. To complete this look at “Sweet Square Bell”, Track C7 demonstrates using it in Upper Manual 2 (no arpeggios) with the following Sound Control Settings (Inst values in brackets):

Decay:	75	(64)
Sweep Amount:	85	(64)
Reso:	95	(39)
Tone:	15	(102)
Delay Mix:	45	(13)
Detune:	105	(64)

The rest of the Total Preset has Strings 1 Soft in UM1, Vocal 1 @ 4’ in LM1, Stratocaster in LM2 and Pedal Bass 1. All other settings are Wersi standard. The rhythm is 8Ballad1 from the Ketron SD1 at a tempo of 150 (twice its default value!) via the OAA. Ketron styles are good but a Fill causes the rhythm to stop then start again at the second following bar.

### **M Drums 1 [072-000-179]**

This is a drum-kit. J Drums 1 and 2 are another drum-kit as is Real Analog Kit. They work like this: placing the sound in UM1 causes the basic drum-kit to be available as in Manual Drums from key A2 down. From key Bb2 up it is different. (Changing the pitch changes the octave at which this split occurs.) Parts of the kit provide a rhythm at the tempo set by the rhythm unit, which is not turned on (unless you want it running as well). Track D1 in the Folder “M Drums 1” demonstrates this. Just one key is held down. Obviously if you let go of the key the rhythm will stop. The tempo here is 65. If this sound is placed anywhere other than UM1, only the Manual drum-kit from key A2 down will sound.

The parameters which can be changed under Sound Control are as below with their Instrument values stated:

<b>Toms Level</b>	60
<b>HiHats Level</b>	47
<b>Reso</b>	0
<b>Tone</b>	64
<b>Snares Level</b>	55
<b>Kicks Level</b>	55

From this it would appear that at least four instruments of the drum-kit are being used. Reso tends to enhance the sound of each instrument but especially whatever is providing the “chirp” effect. Tone brings out additional instruments which did not sound before. Track D2 demonstrates Reso at 64 and Tone at 95, just as an example of how much change is possible here.

Toms Level, HiHats Level, Snares Level and Kicks Level enable you to change the volume of these instruments.

M Drums 2 uses the same kit with a different rhythm.

J Drums 1 and 2 use a slightly different kit with two different rhythms.

Real Analog Kit uses a larger kit with a different rhythm again.

In all cases, the same parameters are available to adjust in Sound Control. This arrangement can be useful when a piece of music has changing time signatures where the rhythm unit would get out of step. As an example, Track D3 contains a demo of the theme from The Mission. Here is some information about this Total Preset:

UM1:	M Drums 1	
UM2:	Days Gone By	[072-000-103 from this package]
UM3:	Cou Pad	[072-000-076 from this package]
LM1:	The Greek Pad	[072-000-030 from this package]
LM2:	Milkyway Pad	[072-000-048 from this package – rhythmical in all manuals]
PB:	FM Bass	

All settings are Wersi standard apart from LM1 which has a Dynamic of 4 applied.

This has been a very brief look at *The World of Synthesizers*. I hope you have enjoyed the journey.

Colin Moore  
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## **APPENDIX : List of Sound Files in their zipped Folders (7 downloads)**

### Folder: "A – The Greek Pad"

- Track A1 : Standard sound
- Track A2 : Attack = 0
- Track A3 : Release = 100
- Track A4 : Release = 0
- Track A5 : Delay Mix and Release each = 0
- Track A6 : Delay Mix = 100
- Track A7 : Tone = 45
- Track A8 : Reso = 95

### Folder: "B – Jupiter Arp"

- Track B1 : Standard sound with no rhythm effect
- Track B2 : Standard sound with rhythm @ tempo of 70
- Track B3 : Attack = 100
- Track B4 : Tone = 90
- Track B5 : Reso = 100
- Track B6 : Demo of part of Chariots of Fire

### Folder: "C – Sweet Square Bell"

- Track C1 : Standard sound with no repeat effect
- Track C2 : Standard sound with repeat effect
- Track C3 : Sweep Amount = 10
- Track C4 : Sweep Amount = 110
- Track C5 : Reso = 110
- Track C6 : Delay Mix = 60
- Track C7 : Demo of using Sweet Square Bell in some music

### Folder: "D – M Drums 1"

- Track D1 : Standard rhythm at tempo of 65
- Track D2 : Reso = 64, Tone = 65
- Track D3 : Demo of using M Drums 1 in the theme from The Mission