

## Meta Update V

-ThereminGoat, 03/11/2023

It's really hard to believe it, but another trip around the sun has come and gone since I started writing reviews for this website. That's right, the website is officially *three years old* as of today, and even trying to wrap my head around it is a bit of a struggle to say the least. Over the course of the past several years I've graduated, went to graduate school, graduated once more, and had all manner of jobs in between each of those. Even as I crisscrossed between jobs and states the only thing that has remained constant in that span of time has been overly wordy switch reviews. It's crazy to think that is the case. While I often say that I would continue to do this even if I didn't have anybody reading, rest assured that your support, readership, and kind words over the past few years have been one of the biggest reasons I've been able to maintain it all given my never-stationary lifestyle. Let's have some cake to celebrate!



**Figure 1:** Don't worry, I really splurged out on the cake this year.

With all of that chocolate and M&Ms in hand, I couldn't help but celebrate the occasion in the only way I know how to on this website: With way too many words and details that nobody asked about. For those of you that are new here, Meta Updates are my yearly check-in content where I sit down and break down the numbers regarding content, readership, and changes made in the past year as well as forecast the year moving forward as well. In the earliest iterations (Meta Updates I and II) these were focused around notifying my then extremely small audience about life and content changes as I did not have any social media setup until the day of Meta Update II. As my communication and readership has grown substantially over the past few years, I've grown this into a sort of yearly recap article that is criminally under-read, in my opinion. As you will see below, this format will follow that of Meta Update IV and all the non-existent frills it has.

## A Year In Review

*Note:* There was a time in which I was making content *prior* to the existence of this website. Thus while this is the true 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday of the website, I have classified four separate years of content by their associated dates.

### Full-Length Review Content

#### Year 1 – (Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019 – Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020)

10 Total Articles

- 6 Reviews
- 3 Historical/Compilation Articles
- 1 Meta Update

#### Year 2 – (Mar. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 – Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

30 Total Articles

- 24 Reviews
- 2 Guides
- 3 Historical/Compilation Articles
- 1 Meta Update

#### Year 3 – (Mar. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022)

28 Total Articles

- 24 Reviews
- 2 Historical/Compilation Articles
- 1 Discussion Article
- 1 Meta Update

#### Year 4 – (Mar. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023)

25 Total Articles

- 23 Reviews
- 1 Meta Update
- 1 April Fools Content – Ultraclearine Switch Review

For Year #3 of the website, the top five performing articles for the year are, in order:

- #1. Gateron Oil King Switch Review
- #2. Alpaca V2 Switch Review
- #3. Gazzew's Boba U4 Switch Review
- #4. A Beginner's Guide to Switches
- #5. Cherry MX 'New Nixie' Switch Review

As of today, the website has had a total of 2,104,098 page views across its entire time live.

In addition to simply posting these longform articles, the following changes to their formatting and design have been implemented over the past year:

- Implementation of the force curve machine to better develop ‘Push Feel’ section notes.
- Introduction of force curve comparisons between the switch being reviewed and the comparative switch for all comparison switches.

### ‘Shorts’ Content

As of the start of 2022, I added a new tab to the search portion of my website titled ‘Shorts’, with the intent of publishing 1-2 short-length articles per month. As of this Meta Update, I only have two on the year because of my move away from graduate school and starting a career. In the year moving forward, I plan to continue to add to this rather new development with more articles focusing on the following topics:

- Interesting switch designs that I either don’t have enough of or enough details about to do a full length review.
- Switch related content focusing on packaging, sales, small historical quips, etc.
- Effectively anything I can’t work into a normal switch review *or* a full length article concept.

### Off-Site Content

Starting in Q4 of 2022, I was approached by Drop to begin writing short form content on switches specifically for their website. Surprisingly, a few other companies had similar ideas at roughly similar times as I have been approached by a few different individuals since. As of the time of publishing this update I currently have published a combined 12 articles between Drop and Kinetic Labs, and have another company joining the list very soon. Links to this content can be found in the ‘Archive’ tab of the website and will only ever be hosted on their respective platforms. Content ideas, edits, etc. *are* subject to their approval as part of our agreements set out in advance.

In addition to the regular writing contracts I have with these companies, I’ve also done some other one-off content with other websites and would like to continue doing so in the future. While only my KBD News advent calendar article has been posted last December, I also completed an article for arisancollector.com which will likely come out some time this year. Some talks have also been had with other vendors and websites about one-off content, as well.

### Scorecards and the Github Repository

While the scorecard system was first introduced in Year 2 and at the beginning of this year featured 154 scorecards, it has drastically expanded and changed since then. The amount of scorecards released as well as their changes includes the following.

Year 2 – (Mar. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 – Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

67 Total Scorecards

- 34 Linears
- 18 Tactiles

- 4 Silent Linears
- 3 Silent Tactiles
- 8 Clickies

Year 3 – (Mar. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022)

87 Total Scorecards

- 51 Linears
- 32 Tactiles
- 0 Silent Linears
- 0 Silent Tactiles
- 4 Clickies

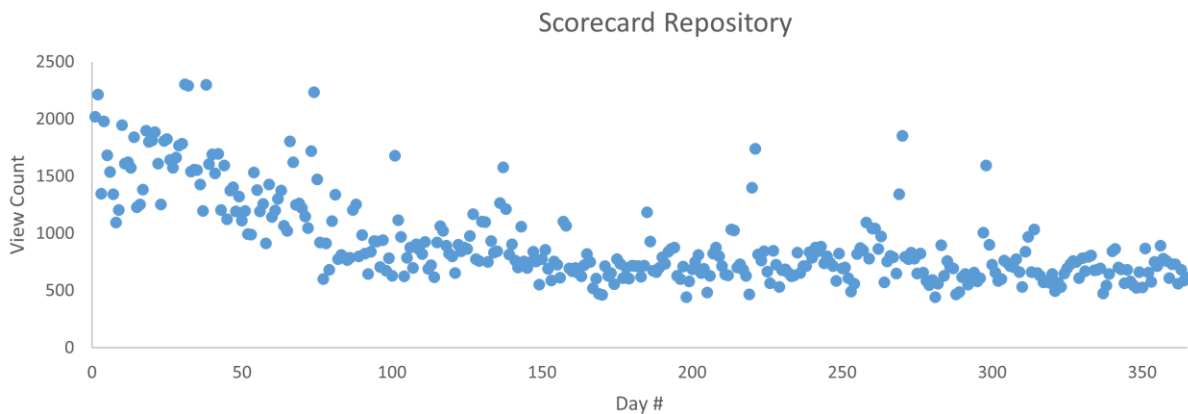
Year 4 – (Mar. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023)

69 Total Scorecards

- 35 Linears
- 21 Tactiles
- 5 Silent Linears
- 2 Silent Tactiles
- 6 Clickies

In addition to the scorecards posted, the following changes were made to the scorecard content:

- Renaming of Composite Scorecard Sheets in such a fashion that they appear at the top of the repository for accessibility.
- Marginal progress in continuing the Scorecard Update Project. There are scorecards which do still need pushed to the updated card format which includes type as well as manufacturer.
- Completion of a full year of behind the scenes tracking of day-by-day viewer traffic to the Scorecard Repository. (This was not previously done before Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> of 2022.)

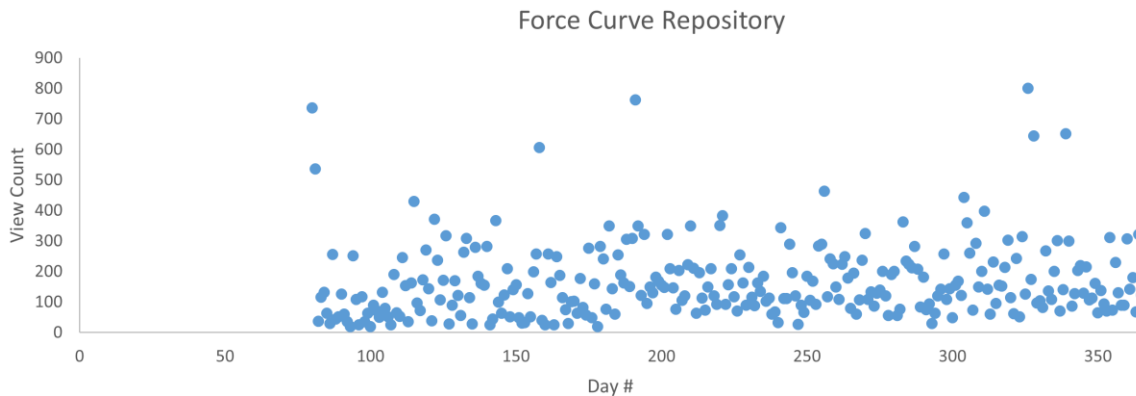


**Figure 2:** Daily Scorecard Repository view count. (335,541 total for the year)

## Force Curves and their Repository

One of the biggest highlights of the past year of content has been the introduction of the Force Curve Repository at the end of May, 2022. Gifted to me graciously by Drop, the Imada FSA-MSL-0.4 Portable Force/Displacement Tester is a professional-grade piece of laboratory equipment which I've been using to collect any and all force curves of switches I possibly can since then. Unsurprisingly, this drive to acquire data did somewhat take away from other side content which I had planned for over the year, *however*, at the cost of producing 568 different switch force curves I would say it is well worth it.

All of the force curves, their raw data, as well as all data processing which I completed by hand are *all* available in the Force Curve Repository hosted on my GitHub and are organized in folders by each switch. In time I plan to add replications of force curves, but for the first year or so of ownership I've been focused on collecting as many different switches as possible given just how few switches out there have consistent, high quality force curves from the same source. Additionally, I've been tracking the audience for the Force Curve Repository in similar fashion to that of the Scorecard Repo, which can be found in a similar graph below.



**Figure 3:** Daily Force Curve Repository view count. (47,655 total for the year)

## Measurement Sheet

One of the least known about forms of content that I have, much to my surprise, is the Measurement Sheet I have where I log all measurements of stem dimensions and switches that I complete with calipers in my reviews. Much like Scorecards and Force Curves, this also includes *many* more switches than what I just review and is updated incredibly frequently. This, like all of my other extraneous content, can be found under the 'Archive' tab of the website and links to a Google Drive containing the excel sheet with the measurements and an update log. *Note:* In order to properly view the box and whisker plots for comparisons between brands you *must* download the sheet for Excel, as Google Sheets is a piece of shit software and should be scrubbed from existence.

Year – (Apr. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022)

100 Total Measurements

Year 4 – (Mar. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023)

275 Total Measurements

- 175 New Measurements Added

Social Media

Given that my various social media accounts were opened sometime during Year 2, there is no Year 1 statistics as seen below.

Year 2 – (Mar. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 – Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

Instagram

- 1570 followers with 79 posts

Twitter

- 850 followers with 413 tweets

Patreon

- 20 patrons at the end of the year

Year 3 – (Mar. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022)

Instagram

- +4172 followers with 102 new posts
- 5742 followers total with 181 posts overall

Twitter

- +1374 followers with 388 new tweets
- 2224 followers total with 801 tweets overall

Patreon

- +12 patrons at the end of the year
- 32 total patrons currently

Year 4 – (Mar. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023)

Instagram

- +1173 followers with 91 new posts
- 6915 followers total with 272 posts overall

Twitter

- +850 followers with 456 new tweets
- 3074 followers total with 1257 tweets overall

Patreon

- +2 patrons at the end of the year
- 34 total patrons currently

## Sponsors

In Meta Update IV, I was happy to announce a solid growth of sponsors for the website over the past year of content and I must say that I am glad to announce that as well. In the span of the last year of writing, I added five new sponsors including MechMods UK, Dangkeeps, SwitchOddities, Kinetic Labs, and Cannonkeys. The complete list of sponsors in the order that they joined the website is as follows:

### Mechbox UK

- A small but enormously valuable UK-based operation which sells singles of switches that I've used in my review comparisons as well as personal collection. Matt has gone out of his way numerous times over the past few years to not only get me to this point, but to keep me afloat of all the awesome switches out there. You should definitely go check him out and buy something as it supports both him and I!

### KeebCats UK

- A switch peripheral company based out of the UK, these guys sell everything switch-adjacent that you could possibly think to ask for and have been lifesavers with getting me things like lube, films, and other stuff I always forget about until I sit down to build. **Using code 'GOAT' at checkout with them gets 10% off your order, as well.**

### Proto[Typist]

- An all-things keyboard vendor based out of the UK as well, proto[Typist] and Jae are regular stockers of everything from switches to the keyboards and even keycap groupbuys as well. While I've bought things from them many times in the past, they also are a sponsor of my work and allow me to get some of the great switches I write about!

### MKUltra Coporation

- We may have stolen a few government secrets to get this one together. MKUltra is a US vendor that truly fills all the gaps other vendors simply don't offer and is continuing to expand their switch and switch related peripherals by the day. **Use code 'GOAT' for 5% off your order when you check them out!**

### Divinikey

- Not only do they stock just about everything related to keyboards and switches, but they're super friendly and ship out pretty quick too. Divinikey has been a huge help to me and my builds over the last year or two of doing reviews and they'll definitely hook you up. **Use code 'GOAT' for 5% off your order when you check them out!**

### Zeal

- Do they really need any introduction? Zeal and crew kicked off the custom switch scene many years ago with their iconic Zealios switches and the story of switches today couldn't be told without them. **Use code 'GOAT' (or click the link above) for 5% off your order when you check them out!**

### MechMods UK

- A rising vendor based in the UK, Ryan and crew have been a pleasure to work with and have nearly everything you'd need to build your first or fourteenth keyboard. **Go build your latest or greatest one right now with them by using code 'GOAT' at checkout for a 5% discount!**

### Dangkeeps

- A longtime supporter of the website and the collection, Dangkeeps has quite possibly the widest variety of switches of any vendor out there. Not only is their switch selection large, but it rotates and is constantly adding new stuff too. **You're going to need 5% off your order with my affiliate to save off the cost of all those switches!**

### SwitchOddities

- The brainchild of one my most adventurous proxies, SwitchOddities is a place where you can try out all the fancy, strange, and eastern-exclusive switches that I flex on my maildays with. **Follow my affiliate code and use code 'GOAT' at checkout to save 5% on some of the most interesting switches you'll ever try!**

### Cannonkeys

- Does anybody not know of Cannonkeys at this point? One of the largest vendors in North America with keyboards, switches, keycaps, and literally everything you could ever want for a keyboard always in stock and with an incredibly dedicated and loving crew. **Follow my affiliate link above in their name to support both them and I when you buy yourself some switches!**

### Kinetic Labs

- One of the most well-rounded keyboard vendors out there, Christian and crew have been supporters of all my switch and switch-adjacent needs for some years now. **I'm honored to have them as an affiliate and think you should check them out using my affiliate link above to support both them and I when you check out their awesome products!**



## Switch Collection

There's honestly not much that I can say at this point that hasn't been spoken for in the content and reviews dozens of times over. As switch options have exploded over the course of the past year, and my supporters are helping me find even more and more niche offerings, I'm lucky to say that I just this week passed the 2000 switch mark officially. This is *not* counting the world's largest vintage switch collection I assumed care of recently *nor* all possible combinations of Tecsee Ice Cream switches either. (The latter of the two I only counted as 1 switch rather than the dazzling 192 different combinations the parts offered.) How this will continue to grow over another year of content is entirely beyond my ability to guess, though rest assured I will push for 3000 as hard as I did for the unbelievable 2000 mark! An updated, but not entirely complete family photo can be found below.



**Figure 4:** The official switch collection family photo as of 2006 different mechanical keyboard switches!

## Upcoming Year Plans

Much like in the Meta Reviews of the past, I hold absolutely zero promises on actually following through on any of this content as the plans that I make today may not be feasible nor hold up well in a week, a month, or a year down the road when I write another one of these updates. This is simply a list of things that I think would be neat doing over the course of the next year.

### Content

- Continue on the well-established path of full length reviews every other week as well as maildays, scorecard Sundays, and other fairly common types of content. The pacing, variety, and factors that each of them bring to the table continue to excite me and keep me interested thus far.
- Do more with the force curve content. I am currently trying to work on ways to quantify linearity, and have considered attempting to quantify tactility as a way to further display data *and* make for better comparisons between switches. This will, of course, be implemented into reviews when applicable.
- Really work on expanding the ‘Shorts’ section on my own website. Born out of a lot of ideas that I’ve had over the past few years that I’ve otherwise been unable to execute on in my normal article length, I think there is a lot of promise in this style of article.

### Supplementary to Content

- Work with much more rigor to complete the Scorecard Update Project as well as consider retouching old full-length content. While I don’t expect rewrites to be a plan in the slightest, things as simple as updating photographs for really old content as well as adding force curve comparisons to older reviews may be a nice touch.
- Again consider audio-visual content. With a more set in stone schedule and free time in my full-time career, I hope that I will be able to consider exploring these waters like I’ve wanted to previously. (That is aside my one-off stream that isn’t mentioned here because the VOD didn’t save sound!)
- Work on spreading content awareness. Be it by third party collaborations, marketing of some form, etc., I think getting more readers aware of my content is both a noble goal as well as one which can help spread knowledge about switches and the hobby further in the year to come. I’ve got only the most vague of ideas about how to do this.

## Personal Life Updates

If you read the beginning of my articles week in and out, there’s no doubt that you’re fully up to date about the roller coaster that my life has been over the past few months. Knowing full well that some people skip over this, however, I felt it was worth the time to go ahead and add a brief summary here given that there have been quite a few changes. Additionally, this more or less dictates both how I do content in the future as well as why I may not have accomplished all of the goals I’ve set out in the previous Meta Updates over the years.

- As of the beginning of March, 2023, I graduated from the University of Minnesota with a Master's degree in Chemical Engineering and have started a full time position in Ohio working as a process engineer. I chose to leave graduate school as a result of an incredibly abusive advisor situation that was destroying my mental and physical well being for entirely way too long.
- In moving back to Ohio, I've acquired a larger place and now have a separate content room dedicated entirely to switches and keyboards. In addition not allowing me to spread out a bit, this will 100% help with organization and cataloguing of the large vintage collection which I gained control of late last year.

## Final Conclusions

At both the front and the back of Meta Update IV, I had mentioned the weird, mixed feelings I had had surrounding the idea of being called a "content creator." Not taking that idea personally to heart quite yet, it's very evident that I was a bit conflicted about the responsibilities and situations that arise out of being a content creator through and through. Surprisingly, even though the website itself hasn't grown in the past year nearly as much as it did leading up to Meta Update IV, I feel like I have had an incredible amount of personal growth over the past year or so. Whether this is a function of being gifted expensive laboratory equipment or having my first of many stints with individuals seeking to spam and harass me until I altered my content in some form or another, I can't say for certain. What I can say for certain, though, is that I've fully internalized the idea of being a "content creator" and have only become more resolved in trying to improve upon, alter, and present content in new and exciting ways each time I get. While I am still very much "just a collector of switches", meticulously cataloguing them, measuring them, and providing any sort of opinion of them has seemingly grown into the routine of switch collecting for me. It's hardly just about adding another switch to the testers I have in my room. In fact, I know I've commented several times to friends over the past year that the idea of writing reviews and doing informative content as such as fundamentally altered how I view my own personal involvement in hobbies of any kind. It's a rather strange realization to come to that the thing that was once secondary to your main hobby has become such an integral part of it.

One thing that has undeniably helped me internalize this change as a content creator over the past year or so has been you all, my readers and supporters. Even as the hobby has contracted over the span of the past handful of months and I, myself, have changed responsibilities and moved once more, the readership and support on each and every post has felt more or less constant. Knowing that there are people out there who want to see whatever meandering posts I have or whatever thousandth force curve I've posted as soon as they go up does help really keep that fire that I have for doing content lit and going strong. For that, I can't thank you all enough. To my sponsors, my Patreon donors, and anyone who has read a review on this site and thought that it helped them to some degree: It means the absolute world to me. With the shift in perspective I had mentioned from the previous paragraph in mind, it only further makes me want to get back to writing reviews, collecting force curves, and working on alternative content. While it may not be the best years by the numbers, nor the most fruitful in terms of sheer volume of content, I have a feeling that this year and the years to come hold better ideas, better content, and better execution than has been achieved over the past three years of the website thus far. Guess the only thing we can do is find out if I'm right.