

The Blue Guitar

Peavy Classic 50: Pot Shaft Problems

Introduction

Although the Peavey Classic 50 is basically built very well for a modern affordable mass-produced amp, a sore spot has been the 3/16" split knurled shafts on all of the controls. The chicken-head knobs will fall off in transit and if you try to pry the two prongs apart for a tighter fit you can very easily snap one of the prongs off. I believe that the basic problem is that there is just too little pot metal used in the smaller diameter 3/16" split shafts (most controls on guitars and amps use the more common 1/4" shafts).

Although I had some luck temporarily repairing a broken shaft for the reverb control, the shaft broke off at the threaded bushing when I tried to remove the knob later. So the best plan here is to reinforce the split shafts **before** they break, and if one is already broken I will outline a simple procedure to replace the control with a commonly available part (assuming that you do not have the time to wait for an OEM replacement pot from Peavey, which would be the recommended repair).

Reinforcing the Classic 50 pot shafts

To reinforce the shafts, I cut some 20 gauge sheet metal into strips 1/8" wide, and cut those strips into pieces approximately 1/4" long. After centering those inserts between the prongs of each pot shaft, I added a drop or two of Krazy Glue© to secure them in place. Not wanting the glue to get into the bushings, I tipped the chassis up on its side (heavy transformer down) and propped up the back approximately 1/2" so that any excess glue would migrate towards the end of shaft. I allowed the glue to set overnight before reinstalling the knobs. If after adding these inserts the knobs are still too loose, you can tightly wrap several thicknesses of plumbers' teflon tape around the shaft. If the knobs are too tight you can file down the knurls on the shaft a bit.

Temporarily repairing a broken Classic 50 pot shaft

To repair a broken shaft, I epoxied an 1/8" by 1/4" strip of sheet metal to the unbroken prong, holding it in place with a hemostat. After the epoxy had cured, I secured the broken shaft piece to the insert with epoxy and a hemostat. Allow the epoxy to cure overnight before reinstalling the knob, making adjustments as necessary if the knob is too loose or too tight. (Note: for reinforcing the more common 1/4" shafts, I use a 3/16" strip of sheet metal approximately 5/16" long; this trick is handy when using knobs with set screws on split-shaft pots.) If the broken shaft piece has disappeared Dan Erlewine explains how to repair it using a wooden dowel in the 2/99 issue of GP.

Good luck!

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Important note:

I recently learned that Fender makes a similar pot that is a drop-in replacement for the Peavey pots; it uses a 1/4" shaft which is much stronger than the 3/16" ones used by Peavey, but you would need to replace the chicken head knob.

Other Peavy Classic 50 files:

Tweed Bassman Mod:

<http://www.blueguitar.org/c50twdbm.pdf>

Tweed Bassman Mod (annotated schematic):

http://www.blueguitar.org/c50_mod1.pdf

Main schematic (preamp, reverb, fx loop):

http://www.blueguitar.org/c50sch_a.pdf

Auxiliary schematic (output section, power supply):

http://www.blueguitar.org/c50sch_b.pdf

Basic Mods for the Classic 50 (boost circuit, cap upgrades):

http://www.blueguitar.org/c50_mods.htm