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LET'S GET ACQUAINTED WITH YOUR NEW PORTAFLEX, MODEL SB-12

At last a single-channel Bassamp - AMPEG-engineered to our own exacting standards - designed to take (as well as give) any SENSIBLE signal you may feed into it.

Excellent with acoustic bass; ideal for the AMPEG BASS, especially in school music situations where controlled dynamics govern volume levels.

WE DEFINITELY DO NOT RECOMMEND MODEL SB-12 FOR THE GUITAR TYPE BASS WHOSE PLAYERS FREQUENTLY FEEL THE NEED FOR EXTREME VOLUME. However, it is adequate for the seasoned professional who uses discretion in his volume setting. (More about this later).

This PORTAFLEX model (also fine for straight guitar amplification) puts out a clean, percussive 22 watts of power, contains a 12" heavy-duty speaker, dual inputs (two similar instruments may be played simultaneously), is compact, relatively lightweight and decidedly a boon to any bassist seeking the traditional AMPEG standard.

The AMPEG PORTAFLEX system* is without question the most efficient, practical, and rewarding solution to the many problems of musical instrument amplification. Exclusive with AMPEG, it is the only amplifier incorporating the fully-enclosed reflex-baffle principle in a portable one-piece unit. The superiority of the reflex baffle over open-back cabinets is universally acknowledged, especially in the lower frequency range.

Maximum sound, fidelity and power, with minimum expenditure of wattage is now possible. Sound is not wasted or dissipated, as in an open-back cabinet. In other words, less gain is required to achieve all the volume you will ever need for all practical purposes. Acoustical wattage is practically double that of the same amplifier in an open-back cabinet.

Now you do not have to over-drive the speaker to get the sound you want, thus minimizing the danger of speaker blowouts. (More about this problem later). Internal heat buildup is a thing of the past. Speakers last longer without "baking": tubes last longer, as their heat is dissipated freely, and are so easy to check and replace. Tube-life is further prolonged, as the shock-mounted amplifier eliminates microphonics normally caused by intense physical vibrations imposed on the tubes.

In short, you are now in possession of the ultimate development in portable musical instrument amplifiers - the AMPEG PORTAFLEX.

OPERATION:

- 1) Release the two cabinet clasps and withdraw the amplifier. Be certain all packing is removed from inside the cabinet.

* U. S. Pat. No. 3,183,305

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- 2) Invert and reclamp the panel. The control side may face in either direction. The cabinet clasps are the contact points for your speaker connection, eliminating need for external speaker cable. Therefore, be certain clasps are securely fastened.
- 3) With all amplifier controls at zero, and switches off, plug line cord into any 105-125 volt 60-cycle A.C. power source. DO NOT USE any other line voltage or severe damage will be done.

4) TONE AND VOLUME CONTROL OPERATION:

- A. AMPEG UPRIGHT BASS: The tone control is on the G-string side of the pick-up of the Bass. Your tone is generally most satisfactory when this control is turned completely counter-clockwise, i.e., full bass.

The control on the E-string side of the pick-up is the volume control. Let your ear be your guide.

When used with the SB-12 Portaflex, the most desirable settings are maximum bass and minimum treble, with volume to suit, keeping in mind the overload point of the speaker and never exceeding this point.

- B. ACOUSTIC BASS WITH AMPEG PICK UP: The Ampeg pick-up (800-S) for acoustic string bass has neither volume nor tone controls -- only a balance control for the inside and outside mikes, which gives the effect of a tone control. Therefore, all settings must take place at the amplifier. This acoustic pick-up is far more sensitive to feed-back, so be especially careful with the volume control.
- C. GUITAR: Treble and bass settings will be different for guitar. The player may desire maximum treble and minimum bass or something in between.

A very important point to remember when adjusting control settings for guitar is to try to work with the volume control on the guitar as wide open as possible, reducing the volume on the amplifier to the desired level. This will provide maximum fidelity. If you work with the volume control DOWN on the guitar and UP on the amplifier you cannot expect to get good highs. This is a very common error among guitarists.

- D. ACCORDION: When adjusting control settings for accordion, be sure the volume controls on the accordion are off until everything else is adjusted (on the amplifier). Like the 800-S pick-up (for bass) this is also an acoustic pick-up, and hence is very sensitive to feed-back. You can destroy a speaker by letting your set go into a "loud squeal" (feed back). When you have what you think is a workable setting on the amplifier, move away from the amplifier,

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slowly open the volume controls on the accordion until you reach a workable or satisfactory volume and tone setting without feedback. If you have to re-adjust the amplifier, turn the volume control on the accordion down before walking back to the amplifier to avoid the feed-back or squealing problem.

While strictly a matter of taste, in general, it is safe to say that accordion players tend to favor more bass with minimum treble to mellow the metallic quality of its reeds. Guitar players more often want to emphasize the crisp highs. For optimum sound and performance, the proper balancing of all controls is a critical factor. It will pay you to spend some time adjusting slowly, listening carefully, and getting thoroughly acquainted with the subtle tone colorings made possible by the electronic design of this precision amplifier.

A FINAL WORD ON VOLUME:

Important: The volume setting (gain) should never quite reach or exceed the overload point of the speakers and can quickly destroy the cone if over-driven. Use your ear. The problem is most pronounced when amplifying the bass. The low frequencies are toughest on speakers.

We purposely leave numbers off the dials of our PORTAFLEX models to compel you to judge your setting by ear. The horizontal lines on the control panel may be used as indicators for the pointer of the control knob, and are to be considered merely as reference points for future settings. Once you have the control set to your liking, you may always return to that particular setting. If you hear a slapping sound in the speaker, you are asking for trouble. This means you have reached the point of overload on the speaker. CUT BACK ON VOLUME!

- 5) If you should use more than one instrument (pick-up) on the SB-12 be prepared for a slight volume drop and compensate with your volume and tone controls accordingly. Under some conditions, due to the nature of the pick-up, or microphone, you may experience a small problem in obtaining proper balance of volume, particularly when using a voice mike or any pick-up without a volume control of its own. A little experimenting will quickly determine the adjustments necessary.
- 6) Flip toggle switch. The lucite monogram panel on the control side of the tube cage will glow in a soft light green. (Incidentally, you may have your initials or a six-letter name engraved on this panel. Instructions will be found in your instruction envelope). When encountering line interference or hum, caused by disturbances in the line voltage, reverse the plug at the outlet.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE:

A good amplifier is a sensitive piece of electronic equipment. Treated with due respect and consideration, it should give you many years of trouble-free performance.

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A dampened, soapy sponge will quickly clean the tough, durable vinyl covering of your PORTAFLEX. We find that Glass Wax is best for polishing chrome surfaces. The grill cloth may be tightened if necessary by a heat lamp or hot plate held several inches from the surface, and kept in motion, applying just enough heat to shrink it. It should also be brushed occasionally with a soft bristle brush, especially if the unit is used in a dusty location.

TROUBLESHOOTING:

- 1) A complete wiring diagram (schematic) will be found pasted to the underside of the panel to which the amplifier is attached. The most common trouble in instrument amplification is in the external connections. Nine times out of ten loss of power (or gain), or unevenness of tone quality can be traced to this fault. It is usually in a cord connection, or broken shielding. Any good radio man should be able to make a complete continuity check between the pick-up and the amplifier, and isolate any serious trouble.
- 2) If the set is plugged in and you have neither pilot light, nor any sound whatsoever, you can easily check your fuse, located on the control panel. Replace if necessary with a type AGC 3-amp fuse only.
- 3) An annoying hum is sometimes caused by disturbances in AC line voltage. As mentioned before, this can often be corrected by reversing the plug at the wall outlet.

Another common cause of hum is inadequate shielding or poor ground connection on the microphone, pick-up or cable. If the hum becomes louder when you plug in an instrument cable, it is likely to be coming from the cable or pick-up. It is wise to have a spare cord.

Be sure to make all these checks if you suspect any malfunction, and feel free to write or call us on any question you may have. We will not let you down. Good luck and good music!

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