Subject: Looking for tube advice
Posted by blades976 on Mon, 30 Jan 2006 23:42:51 GMT
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The tube preamp section in the Hartke 3500 basshead we are using is hissing pretty bad. The hiss goes away when the tube channel is turned down (we normally like it about half way up) but then the bottom end drops out (for us anyway). I'm just wondering if anybody knows a good replacement tube to get. I believe the preamp uses a 12AX7. I've done a few searches and the name Sovtech seems to come up a bunch.ThanksJohn

Subject: Re: Looking for tube advice
Posted by Wayne Parham on Tue, 31 Jan 2006 02:54:09 GMT
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Check with Aki at BOI Audioworks. He has a bunch of 'em and they're inexpensive so you can try

Electro-Harmonix, but there are plenty of other good brands to try too.

Subject: Re: Looking for tube advice
Posted by blades976 on Tue, 31 Jan 2006 20:45:04 GMT
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Thanks Wayne. There sure are a bunch of choices out there; right now I have my eye on an Electro-Harmonix tube. John

Subject: Re: Looking for tube advice
Posted by Wayne Parham on Tue, 31 Jan 2006 23:08:46 GMT
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I have a bunch of EH tubes too, and I really like them. Don't forget about Aki - He's a sponsor of ART, has good quality parts at reasonable prices and is and a real good guy. I've bought several tubes from him and many of them were matched. They measured spot on every time.

Subject: Re: Looking for tube advice

Posted by Shane on Wed, 01 Feb 2006 18:09:54 GMT
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Ditto what Wayne said, as it's good to buy from sponsors. On another note, I've had very good luck and sound from JJ tubes I've gotten at Eurotubes for my Peavey 5150 and Fender Vibrochamp. They were much better sounding than the Sovteks that came in the Peavey, especially in the preamp section.

Subject: Re: Looking for tube advice
Posted by blades976 on Sat, 04 Feb 2006 01:11:09 GMT
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I will be buying an EH tube from Aki in a couple of days, in the mean time I've picked up a groove tube 128X7C (gotta get the amp up and running ASAFP), I bought it because the plate structure looks kewl compared to the other offerings. Will be cool to compare it to an EH tube. John

Subject: Re: Looking for tube advice
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sat, 04 Feb 2006 19:10:03 GMT
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Let us know how they sound, differences, etc.

Subject: AMP FREAKS OUT
Posted by blades976 on Mon, 06 Feb 2006 04:24:39 GMT
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Well the new tube was great yesterday when I replaced it. We played it for about 15 minutes at a moderate volume just to make sure the thing works. It did and sounded nice and clean. Well today we fired it up and the bass amp worked great for about 45 minutes then just totally went to shit. Horrible distortion (VERY loud crackling and grating noises) kicks in when the amp is pushed to anything beyond quite operation. I'll try and replace the old tube tomorrow to see if maybe I got a bad tube. I hope the output section of the amp didn't get shorted out. The distortion comes out in the amps speaker level outputs and the balanced XLR as well. At first the distortion was heard as faint crackling in the PA then within 10 minutes the damn thing went nuclear and had to get turned off. The old tube is a plain old Groove Tubes 12AX7. Could this malfunction be from not having the amp re-biased? I understand that the tube can wear a bit quicker but an hours worth of playing? I bought the tube from a local guitar store, but I honestly don't think the tubes where

individually tested there. I hope this doesn't get expensiveJohn

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Subject: Re: AMP FREAKS OUT
Posted by Damir on Mon, 06 Feb 2006 13:15:50 GMT
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Two possibilities - or you got bad tube, or something in the amp "around" it (coupling cap, socket contact...) is damaged. Try it again with 100% good tube, and if it`s not the tube - you need the tech.P.S. you don`t need to "rebias" 12AX7 preamp tube.

Subject: Re: AMP FREAKS OUT
Posted by blades976 on Wed, 08 Feb 2006 05:15:51 GMT
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Ran the amp tonight with the old tube in it. No problems except for the excess hiss that made me buy a new tube to begin with. I guess I'll try and order another tube and see if I get better results.John

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Subject: Re: AMP FREAKS OUT
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 08 Feb 2006 15:01:00 GMT
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Wow, that's interesting. Not unusual, but interesting. I've noticed that in other equipment too. An example is the Bottlehead Paramour pops and crackles like a Geiger counter about half the time when used with the Valve Art 2A3 shipped with the kit. But Electro-Harmonix and other tubes are noise-free.

Subject: Re: AMP FREAKS OUT
Posted by Aki on Thu, 09 Feb 2006 18:18:40 GMT
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Well, since my alter ego is a wailing blues guitar player, let me see if I can jump in and help on this one. It's difficult to tell remotely, but it does sounds like you ran into a bad tube. But since the tube worked for some time, it's somewhat possible that somehow your replacement tube didn't

make good contact in the socket or some other odd thing went wrong.As for output tube re-bias, you don't need to do it unless you change the output tubes so you are OK there.You should be able to get a replacement 12AX7 at the store where you got it from. Typical guitar stores wouldn't have the equipment to test tubes (a number of them orders from people like me), and big franchises, as you know, couldn't care less. But if it's a friendly shop, you might be able to get them to try the replacement tube in their house amp for a while. At least that'll give you some level of comfort.If this problem does happen again with another replacement, I'd take the amp into a tech though.Aki

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Subject: Re: AMP FREAKS OUT
Posted by Shane on Fri, 10 Feb 2006 01:08:29 GMT
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I agree with Aki. You probably got a bad tube. I don't know where you live, but here in Amarillo we have a smaller guitar shop that has a tube tech. They'll test your new tubes for you before you leave the store to check for matching, etc... if you ask. You might check around where you are to see if there is a store that has a tube tech in house.

Subject: Re: AMP FREAKS OUT
Posted by blades976 on Fri, 10 Feb 2006 05:46:53 GMT
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It's no big deal as long as the amp didn't fry. $20 is a cheap lesson to learn all things considered. I'll be ordering a tube from Aki on payday and hope to have better results from somebody who specializes in tubes. It's amazing the difference the tubes make though. When the amp freaked out I plugged in the bass via the effect peddle to the board. Nice and clean but no balls. I'm starting to see why tube heads are so obsessed with the sound of tube amps. John

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Subject: Re: AMP FREAKS OUT
Posted by blades976 on Fri, 10 Feb 2006 06:02:34 GMT
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I think the tube had good contact. When I replaced the tube I also had to undo and re-attach an "arm" that put downward pressure on the top of the tube effectively holding it in place. The amp is solid state; the only tube in it is the one pre amp tube, hence my assumption to re-bias it. I'm a bit sketchy on the idea of going back to the shop. Its one of those guitar shops with used gear that's WAY too old and beat up. I'm willing to cut my losses at $20 for the tube and be grateful the amp didn't permanently roast. I'll try order another replacement from a specialist (I've heard of this company named BOI AudioWorks…) and not chance smoking a bass amp in order to save $2-3. I have my eye on the 12AX7EH-GOLD you stock. I'm hoping it will fill the bill. Clean is what I am looking for.John

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Subject: Re: AMP FREAKS OUT
Posted by Shane on Mon, 13 Feb 2006 00:29:00 GMT
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Hope everything is OK with the amp. I'm sure it will be. I know what you mean about tube gitfiddle amps. I used SS for a while and then bought my first tube amp when I started playing gigs 6 years ago--a Peavey 5150 combo. I still have that amp, but haven't used it much cause since we moved to TX. I usually use an old early 70's Fender Vibrochamp I picked up from an 80 year old man at church for $25. Best buy I ever made. Couldn't get him to part with his old Bandmaster head or Leslie speaker.

Subject: 12AX7EH-GOLD goes in tomorrow
Posted by blades976 on Tue, 14 Feb 2006 05:06:17 GMT
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I got my tube today (Very quick delivery), I'll be putting it in the bass amp tomorrow. It is a nice looking piece of work. I sure hope the amp likes this one...

Subject: Re: 12AX7EH-GOLD
Posted by blades976 on Thu, 16 Feb 2006 19:48:42 GMT
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The new tube is in and everything is working out great so far. The hiss is reduced although not gone (to be expected from tubes anyway) and the amp hasn't pitched a fit. No critical listening done yet though to compare the new tube to the old as last night's practice was kind of nuts with an extra guitarist, a drum machine, and a keyboard along with the regular band. Translation, it was loud as hell. Hopefully next practice will be a bit more subdued and I can get some critical listening done with the new tube sound. John

Subject: Re: 12AX7EH-GOLD Good to hear it works.
Posted by Shane on Fri, 17 Feb 2006 02:08:57 GMT
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Glad to hear that the new tube is working for you at least from the get go. I've heard tube amps that didn't hiss at all, though. But you should hear my 5150. That thing has so much gain that when you turn it up the hiss will knock you down. When we were gigging it was almost mandatory to have a noise gate on the thing.

Subject: Re: 12AX7EH-GOLD
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 17 Feb 2006 14:39:56 GMT
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Thanks for the update. Glad to hear the Electro-Harmonix tube worked out for you.Did you ever find out if the first tube you bought was bad? I mean, does it test bad, a defective tube, or is the Groove Tube brand just no good in your particular amp?

Subject: Re: 12AX7EH-GOLD
Posted by blades976 on Fri, 17 Feb 2006 16:19:03 GMT
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I have not had the tube tested and may send it in to BOI for giggles if they feel like dissecting the thing. The original tube in the amp was a Groove Tubes 12AX7 (This may not be Hartke's OEM tube as the bass head was purchased used), the first replacement was a Groove Tubes 12AX7C (Chinese Manufacture) that made the amp go berserk. So far the outcome is pointing to either a bad tube or a bad series of tubes; shame because Groove Tubes touts their QC process as being

extremely stringent. If the new tube holds up for a few weeks, I'll order another as a spare.Thanks for all the adviceJohn

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Subject: Re: 12AX7EH-GOLD
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 17 Feb 2006 16:25:58 GMT
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Ahh, I see. Probably just a bad tube then. Thanks for letting us know!

Subject: Re: AMP FREAKS OUT
Posted by MGDeWulf on Mon, 15 May 2006 11:18:11 GMT
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Sounds like the Groove Tube. I've had bad luck with Groove Tubes. Noisey and bad sounding stuff for the most part. They were 12AX7's. I know of at least one tube site on the internet that refuses to carry Groove Tubes. They say it's because Groove Tube doesn't actually make tubes, but buys tubes and rebadges them. I can't substantiate that.Marty

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