

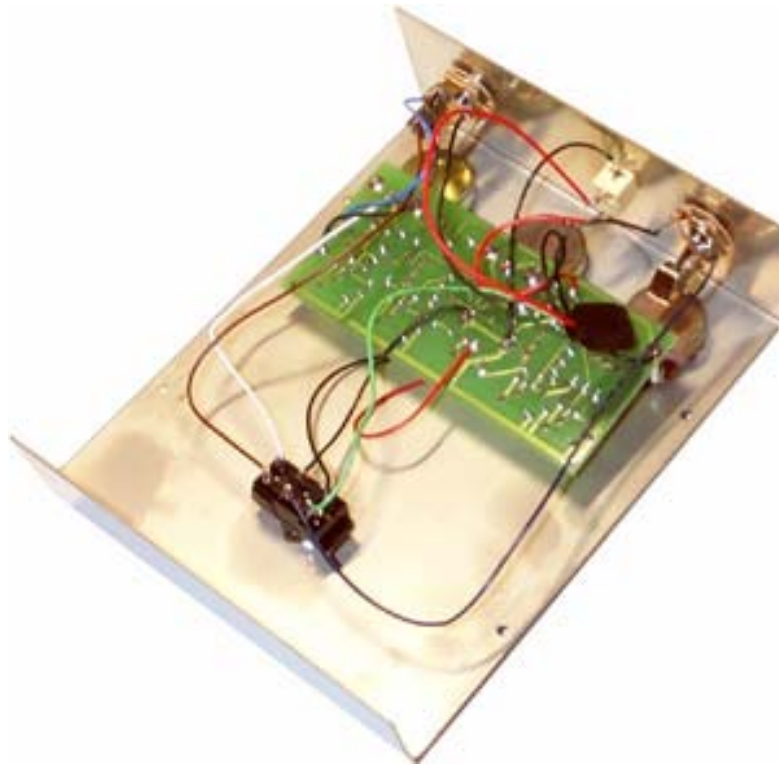
Adding True Bypass to a reissue (NYC) Big Muff



The EH "Reissue Big Muff" (aka "NYC Big Muff") is the actual top-of-the-line model, produced in the USA. The quality is top-notch and it really has the tone and the vibe of the vintage boxes, so for me there is no need to mod it in any way. If you really like to play around with the guts, I suggest to desolder all four trannies, put in four sockets and reinstall the trannies. So you have the possibility to try different trannies for tone shaping. Try the 2N508x family, they work well inside and Mike Matthews himself suggest them for the Big Muffs. The 2N5087 sounds very smooth and creamy with less gain, the 2N5088 has a similar sound with more gain (Mike Matthew´s favourite) and the 2N5089 is a high-gain device for a walls of distortion. By the way, the vintage boxes had those exotic FS36999 trannies but it´s almost impossible to find them today, the only way seems to be to cannibalize from original boxes ;-)

I spent a lot of time investigating this trannies and from what I can say they are VERY similar to todays BC239 trannies, so give them a try if you want the true vintage tone. You can also replace all diodes with the original 1N914 to get closer to the original. In general the vintage Muffs are just standard NPN Muffs with 0.1uF caps and low gain transistors, there is nothing too special about them. To get the best sound, tweak the collector resistors to ground until each of the collector voltages is 4.5v and you will have the optimum. If you want to go down deeper into the technical details to do some really wild mods I suggest to read "The Big Muff and RAT eBook" from Jack Orman. You can order it at www.muzique.com This book is incredible good and a fantastic value for the money. Another good idea is to replace this exotic AC jack with a standard Boss style 2.1 mm plastic jack. The reissue Muff is negative ground. And if you like, you can aslo change the little red status LED to any size, type or color you want to ... if you want to ;-)

So far so good, the modern Muffs are normally true-bypass when leaving the factory, only the older models (ca. 1998-2002) are not stock true-bypass. When you open them, you will find this:

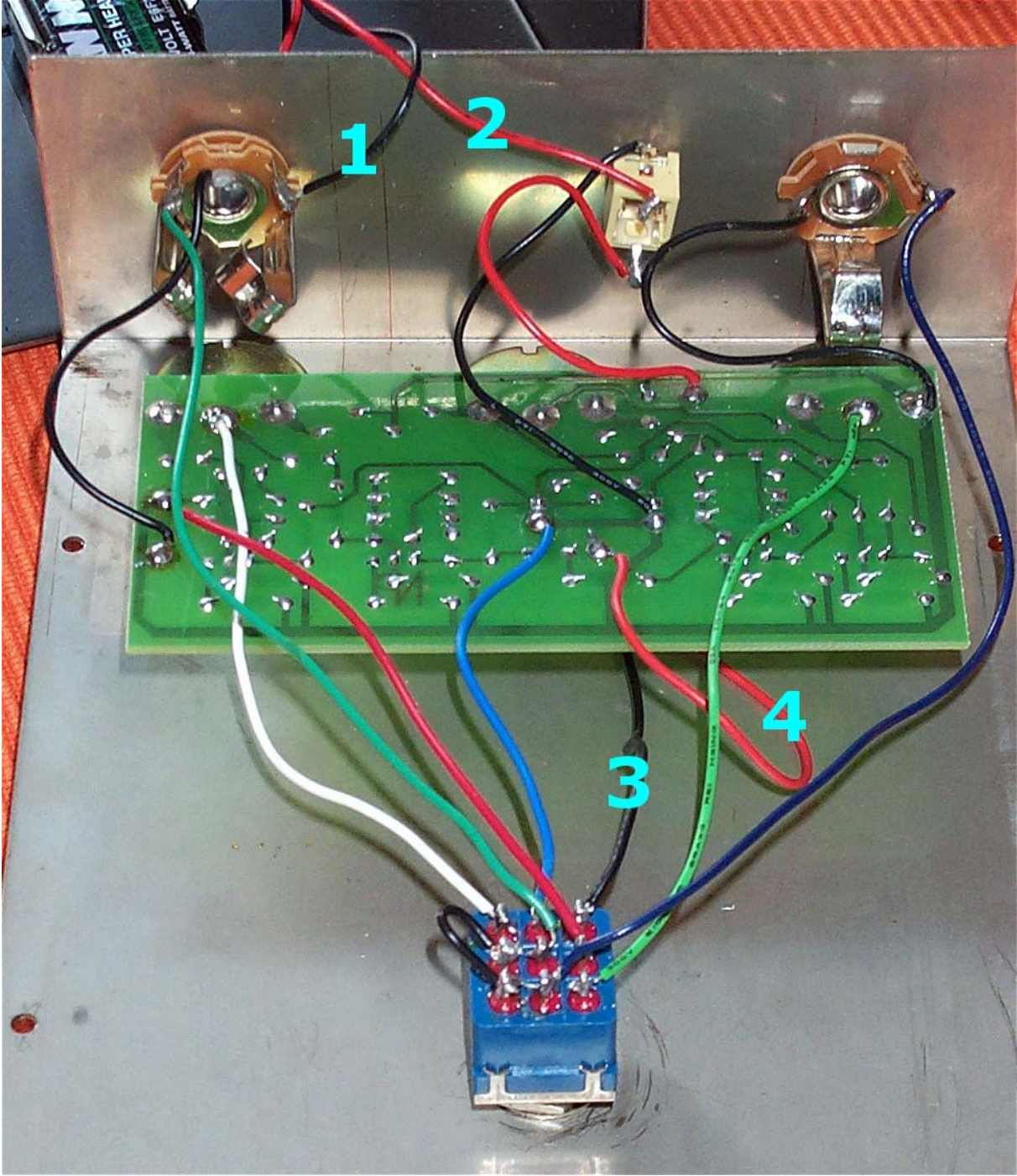


It´s easy to see if your model is true-bypass or not: if your switch has six lugs (DPDT) you have one of the older boxes and it is not true-bypass or maybe modded to true-bypass without LED indication ! If your switch has 9 lugs (3PDT), congratulations - it is a newer model and factory equipped with true-bypass.

If your box is not true-bypass, don´t worry, you can mod it within 10 minutes, all you need is a standard 3PDT switch and some inches of a good cable. And this is THE chance to change the LED if you want to, because you already have to rewire it during the true-bypass procedure. Look at the photo beyond and you will see how to connect the cables to the new switch. Cable #3 and 4 go to the LED (don´t forget the resistor !) and cable #1 and 2 are going to the battery clip.

For more details you will also find the circuit drawing of the Reissue Big Muff here.

Have fun and happy true-bypassing :-)



Schematic (American Big Muff)

